

Editorial

Imphal Friday, February 17, 2017

Toying with the ultimate paradox

"What happens when an unstoppable force meets an immovable object?" - the classic paradox also referred to as the ultimate showdown has been deliberated and pondered upon by many thinkers, and although widely considered flawed and self-contradictory, the possibility of a real-life situation of this paradox is getting tantalizingly close in the state. The paradoxical stand of the UNC of continuing with the indefinite economic blockade which is in reality has turned out to be a boon in disguise for the people of Manipur in more ways than one could count on their fingers has strengthened the already unshakable resolve taken up by various CSOs and groups of defending the territorial integrity of the state at whatever the cost it may take. And while the psychological and communal chasm continues to widen, those at the helm of affairs, whether in the capital of the nation or the centre of the state have aggravated the vitiated communal atmosphere by turning the increasingly threatening situation into an opportunity to start a blame game for paltry political mileage at the backdrop of the ensuing state assembly election. The outcome of this simmering tension can be anything but pleasant, and unless parties on the opposing ends learn to comprehend and compliment the plurality of our society, the threat of the very undesirable aftermath will always remain a very real and distinct possibility. And despite the earnest efforts of a number of groups and individuals to find a way forward to solving the protracted issue of resorting to disruptive activities such as blockades, bandhs and shutdowns which affects the common people rather than the officials and representatives of the people towards whom these activities are being targeted at, there does not seem to be a practical and pragmatic solution in sight for the time being or in the foreseeable future for that matter. The state government's reluctant efforts to bring in the rapidly dwindling essential supplies and commodities using state and central security forces cannot be and should not be adopted as a measure of choice. But while they are at it, there should not be any doubt on the minds of the transporters about any disruptive elements sabotaging the efforts or causing any physical harm to them. The state authorities should be able to provide the psychological and personal assurance and assistance required for the task. More than anything, what the state sorely needs is an administration that is stringent yet fair, one that caters to the needs and aspirations of the people in the best possible manner. The state requires a government that can implement and impose its resolutions and decisions throughout every nook and corner of the state. What the people of the state can do without is a bunch of blabbering dimwits who cannot see beyond the return on their 'investments' made during election time. The emergent need in the state however, is for the people to turn away from the enticements being doled out by the candidates in exchange for the patronage and vote. We need to start seeing our universal suffrage as the most potent tool to shape our future and the destiny of our future generation. We should stop taking our democratic power for granted or put up our rights for sale to the highest bidder.

Lal Shahbaz Qalandar shrine blast in Pakistan kills 75: What we know about the IS attack

Islamabad, Feb. 17: An Islamic State suicide bomber struck inside a famed shrine in southern Pakistan on Thursday, killing at least 75 people in the deadliest attack in the country in more than two years. The bomber entered the main hall of the shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar in Sehwan and detonated his payload amid dozens of worshippers, according to three security officials, who said at least 20 women and nine children were among the dead.

The officials spoke on condition

of anonymity because they were not authorised to brief reporters. Fazal Pajev, a senior health official in Sindh province, confirmed the toll. The Islamic State group claimed the attack in a statement circulated by its Amaq news agency, saying it had targeted a "Shiite gathering." The Sunni extremist group views Shiites as apostates and has targeted Pakistan's Shiite minority in the past. It views Sufi shrines like the one targeted Thursday as a form of idolatry.

National & International News

Army Chief's warning only asserts that freedom movement is not confined to few: Hurriyat

Srinagar, Feb. 17: The opposition in the J&K Assembly and Hurriyat leaders condemned the statement of Army Chief Bipin Rawat that civilian protesters at encounter sites would be dealt sternly and treated as anti-nationals, saying the army has declared war on the civilian population, which would further complicate the political issue of Kashmir.

The most influential Hurriyat leader in the state, Syed Ali Geelani, stated that Rawat's statement should serve as an alarm for "Indian rulers that the whole population is determined to offer sacrifices for the cherished goal of freedom and the movement was not confined to few."

"This is army's threat to start another killing spree of civilians, which they have been doing since 1947...the egoist nature has made them (Indian establishment) blood thirsty," said Geelani adding, "Leave alone civilians, they don't even care about their own soldiers and thus continue with their stale thinking and arrogance to perpetuate political uncertainty in the state."

The largest opposition party in the state assembly, National Conference stated that the Army Chief's remarks were belligerent and such posturing has further



alienated youth of Kashmir and would only increase hostility in the Valley.

In wake of the recent protests at encounter sites in Kashmir during which civilians were also killed and injured, Rawat warned that the protesters would be dealt sternly and also treated as over ground workers of militants. J&K police and the civil administration has also reiterated the order of imposing section 144 near encounter sites. The government has asked people to stay indoors and not to gather in the radius of at least 3kms near the encounter site.

"Youth rushing towards encounter sites and incidents of stone-pelting on the forces during encounters are worrying and alarming signs of the sense of alienation and disenchantment in Kashmir," the NC statement read. "Threatening and warning youth who are already anguished and irrational to the sense of caring little for their lives will be of little consequence but would only push them farther from reconciliation."

Hurriyat leader, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, said that Rawat's threat to the people of Kashmir is unfortunate and reflects a

tyrannical mindset towards the people of Kashmir.

The opposition MLA, Engineer Rasheed, said that Rawat's threat was a confession that militants have mass support and has also exposed New Delhi's claim that Kashmiris were India's own people. "New Delhi has miserably failed to consolidate its constituency in J&K," Rasheed said.

CPI (M) leader and MLA Kulgam Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami claimed that Rawat's statement would prove counter productive on ground and compound the already hostile situation in Kashmir.

"They (stone pelters) want to be heard but nobody is listening. The response to stones with guns is highly unfortunate and unacceptable," read Tarigami's statement.

This was the time for taking Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) said Tarigami, adding, "the present situation is the outcome of trust deficit and reflection of accumulated anger over the decades."

The Army Chief's statement puts a question mark on PDP-BJP government's claims that they want to persuade local militants for surrender and manage their re-entry into mainstream of education and development.

Pakistan asks Afghanistan to immediately handover 76 wanted terrorists

Islamabad, Feb. 17: Pakistan on Friday summoned officials from Afghanistan embassy and handed down a list of 76 wanted terrorists to be handed over to Islamabad.

"Afg Embassy officials called in GHQ. Given list of 76 Ts hiding in Afg. Asked to take immediate action/be handed over to Pakistan," tweeted military's media wing DG ISPR Major-General Asif Ghafoor.

The officials were summoned at the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi to lodge protest against the use of Afghan soil by terrorists to carry out attacks in Pakistan.

The move comes in light of the recent terror attacks, the latest on Thursday night at shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar in Sehwan that has so far claimed at least 70 lives

while dozens of others were wounded.

Post the attack, Major-General Asif Ghafoor had vowed response towards the recent terrorist acts that he alleged were being executed on directions from hostile powers and from sanctuaries in Afghanistan.

"Recent Ts acts are being exec on directions from hostile powers and from sanctuaries in Afghanistan."

We shall defend and respond," he tweeted.

Post the shrine attack on Thursday, Pakistan shut down the Torkham border crossing with Afghanistan for an indefinite period of time.

Torkham border connects Nangarhar province of Afghanistan with Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Contd. from yesterday issue

My open letter to the politicians of Manipur

By: Shanta Nahakpam

To this argument of yours I would like you to remember the many letters which you wrote to the General Manager of District Industries using your very letter head asking them to favour your candidate. At this point I simply doubt you will say you don't have the knowledge that several of your workers collect some amount of cash for your letter. Even if the DIC selects your candidate they fail to pass the examination of the projects done by the Banks, Banks at various points will degrade their business and they will not sanction any amount in many of the cases. Even if they

do it will take a lot of time and struggle or in some cases managers are bribed. There may be few who get through honestly in the process of getting such grant or help etc. In my case Mr T Rajen the then GM of DIC Imphal West managed to push through my application but this was not the end the application got stuck at the Bank which took several months and letters DIC to Bank and Bank to DIC. And that was the time I realised there is no political will in the start up of small scale industries as there was a major gap between the DIC and the Banks due to which the person selected for was stuck in between.

In this area your political will of creating small industries has completely failed as the banks re-check and re-interview the candidates and many of the selected

projects will be thrown in dust bin of various banks. Common man like me will get tired and leave the thought of starting a small industry. To my understanding of creating various jobs or industries you are mostly dependent on the schemes of Union Govt of India and the many manifesto I come across does not have an iota of vision on how you will generate jobs through the plan if you ever become a part of the new Government how you plan to help the common man in the way they earn. I as a common man doubt your passion on how you look at yourself as a leader who will lead us into a self sustaining society but I can certainly see the vision that you have an eye on the projects and schemes of Union of India has for the people at various regions and levels and that you understand most of the schemes and projects, the plan of investment etc which you claim your party will deliver it to us the common man.

Here I would say as a common man we sacrificed every penny to start a business or get a job at both situation but you are still looking at the Union of India's scheme and plan of investment you do not present any vision or plan as to how you will synchronize the earning of the state irrespective of the schemes the union of India has so that the economy of the state improves during your tenure. Let me again remind the struggle

with the system you have created, if we as a common man go to any department for the basic schemes and allotment of projects the state has to share some amount as in the case of Department of Horticulture it can be 80:20, 60:40 or 70:30 the little amount of share 20, 40 or 30 in some cases even 10% is a hindrance in acquiring any funds from the central projects of livelihood, town planning and many more sectors. You as a politician do not present us any of the vision in which you present a plan as on how you will improve the State's funding through your Governments earning at various level so that the unemployed youth can be allocated with different projects without any hindrance from the part of the state. As in many of the cases the concerned department will say since we are a poor state we do not have the state share part so the funds are delayed!

Sometimes days would be wasted waiting in front of the officers chamber just to try and convince him of what I wanted to do to be a part of the development of the State and that would break up the stamina of the common man to invest the idea for a better society. Tired from this honesty and chasing of a project which does not have state share I finally decided to open a small cafeteria where I decided to settle down. The Bund, Blockade, Strike etc started to

trouble my little world of juice cafe. No doubt I became a popular person every now and then my cafe would receive sponsor application and I would willingly agree to sponsor in some cases the amount was quite huge but I still did it believing it's a give and take policy as it is in every business.

Again I put forward all my knowledge and earnings to help others on sponsoring their programme etc for a give and take relation that I believe that they would also help me during many of my programme. It was already late and I had invested a lot of sponsorship when I realised during my State Level Watermelon Festival when many of them even did not turn up for the good cause of the society.

The issues of Manipur did impact my new venture in a way that I had to look for options to earn from other sources. Even though I was using local fruits and Vegetables to run my cafe bunds and blockade did not impact much on my purchase of products for value addition but the sales were sometimes badly hit. I still remember one time I requested my father to help me pay the salary of my staff since my sales were down and he did advise me to leave such business where you need to ask your father for help in paying the staffs salary. I had a heated agreement even then I did not leave my cafe business. (To be contd...)

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