

Editorial

Imphal Thursday, February 9, 2017

Game of throne: playing with blockade politics

When almost all the people are looking forward for a change, the game players in the state has successfully diverted the aspiration of the people by drugging them with mass hysteria in the name of protecting the territorial boundary of the erstwhile kingdom.

Corruption, nepotism, human rights violation etc., has seem to be totally sideline in the upcoming 11th Manipur Legislative Assembly election. People have now been carried away with hate feelings towards a specific organisation, which was known by almost everyone of the region that their main agenda is something that is not favoured by majority of the people.

Well at this juncture, it is worth recalling the writings of late Prof. N. Sanajaoba, at which he stated that distorting the boundary of Manipur will be a far away dream for any power as far as history of Manipur is concerned and the authority regards the merger agreement of the erstwhile kingdom to the Indian Union in 1949.

There is no denial that the prolonged economic blockade along the two national highways had made people suffered a lot. Except for those in that organisation almost all people irrespective of their communities had criticised the blockade. Everyone knows that this is not the first time that such economic blockades are called in the highways. While knowing that such a blockade is a curse to the state, why the government had failed to find a solution in these 15 years and started being serious only at a time when election dates have been announced?

The fact is that the blockade, the support garner by rebel group is the fall out of the corrupt and grotesque practice by the government.

If the voters forget and sidelined the real issues and are driven by the game being played by a political party which had ruled the state for 15 years, then our future generation will surely blame us for what we the voters have done in this election.

The demand for a separate state by an underground group ensuing peace talk with the government of India is of course a serious concern for all the people here in the state. But if one goes to the timeline of this underground group then they will definitely find that this UG is struggling hard out of frustration. And there is no room that they succeed as peoples' mandate is what actually required in such a journey. And working out of frustration had never succeeded.

Another speech which is worth recalling from late Prof. N. Sanajaoba is that no pan movement in the world had ever succeeded. And so the so called movement out of frustration by the armed group is also a pan movement and this will not succeed. Then why people will allow themselves to be carried by some game players of the upcoming election putting this issue as their poll plank.

It is surprising that a spokesperson of the political party said that corruption, misgovernance is not an issue but the economic blockade and the territorial integrity is what is concerned. This showed that the political party which had ruled the state for 15 years now is certain that without this blockade they have no other issue.

So, on second thought, one need to ponder is - who is the real architect of this blockade. A matter every voters need to think for a better Manipur.

Pass Book lost

I, the undersigned, have lost my passbook bearing Account No. 33388328650 issued by SBI Head Office Imphal Branch, Gandhi Avenue on the way between Kongthong to Singmalet on 5/2/2017.

Finders are requested to kindly hand over it to the undersigned.

Sd/-

Ningthoujam kunjamani Devi
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National & International News

More than 1,000 Rohingya Muslims feared killed in Myanmar army crackdown: UN

Source: Reuters

More than 1,000 Rohingya Muslims may have been killed in a Myanmar army crackdown, according to two senior United Nations officials dealing with refugees fleeing the violence, suggesting the death toll has been a far greater than previously reported.

The officials, from two separate U.N. agencies working in Bangladesh, where nearly 70,000 Rohingya have fled in recent months, said they were concerned the outside world had not fully grasped the severity of the crisis unfolding in Myanmar's Rakhine State.

"The talk until now has been of hundreds of deaths. This is probably an underestimation - we could be looking at thousands," said one of the officials, speaking on condition of anonymity. Both officials, in separate interviews, cited the weight of testimony gathered by their agencies from refugees over the past four months for concluding the death toll likely exceeded 1,000.

Myanmar's presidential spokesman, Zaw Htay, said the latest reports from military commanders were that fewer than 100 people have been killed in a counterinsurgency operation against Rohingya militants who attacked police border posts in October.

Asked about the UN officials' comments that the dead could number more than 1,000, he said: "Their number is much greater than our figure. We have to check on the ground."

About 1.1 million Rohingya Muslims live in apartheid-like conditions in northwestern Myanmar, where they

are denied citizenship. Many in Buddhist-majority Myanmar regard them as illegal immigrants from Bangladesh.

In addition to the information the two UN officials gave Reuters, a report released by the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on Friday gave accounts of mass killings and gang rapes by troops in northwestern Myanmar in recent months, which it said probably constituted crimes against humanity.

The government led by Aung San Suu Kyi said last week it would investigate the allegations in the report. It has previously denied almost all accusations of killings, rapes and arson.

But mounting evidence of atrocities by the army puts Suu Kyi, who has no control over the armed forces under a constitution written by the previous military government, in a difficult position, Myanmar-based diplomats say.

The Nobel peace prize winner has been criticised in the West for her silence on the issue, undermining the goodwill she built up as a democracy champion under years of junta rule and threatening international support. Challenging the generals, however, could put Myanmar's democratic transition at risk.

COUNTING THE DEAD
Independent verification of what has been happening in Myanmar is extremely difficult as the military has cut off access to northwestern Rakhine.

The OHCHR report cited supporting evidence including bullet and knife

wounds sustained by refugees and satellite imagery showing destruction of villages.

A second senior U.N. official, from a different agency in Bangladesh, told Reuters that the report only described "the tip of the iceberg". The OHCHR report was based on interviews with 220 people, the majority of whom said they knew of people who had been killed or disappeared.

Reuters also has reviewed a separate, internal U.N. analysis using a much larger sample size. In this unpublished report, based on interviews with families comprising more than 1,750 refugees, there were 182 reports of killings of people just in the interviewee's home village, and 186 reports of people from their village disappearing, more than 10 percent in both cases.

The document acknowledges the actual number in both categories was likely lower as interviewees from the same village may have separately described the same incidents.

The U.N. says 69,000 people have crossed the border since October, so if the proportion reporting people killed or missing among all the refugees was consistent with those in the report the total number would run into the thousands. **HARROWING ACCOUNTS**

According to refugees' accounts provided to Reuters in camps in Bangladesh over the past two weeks, the army intensified its offensive in northern Rakhine in mid-November, unleashing what the OHCHR report

described as a "calculated policy of terror" after an incident in which several hundred Rohingya attacked an outnumbered group of soldiers, killing an officer.

The OHCHR report details deaths in random firings, including from helicopters and grenades; targeted killings of imams and teachers, slitting of throats with knives and locking people inside burning houses.

Reuters reporters have heard similar accounts from refugees in the camps in Bangladesh.

Khatun Hazera, a 35-year-old woman from the village of Kya Guang Taung, told Reuters that soldiers shot her husband, a teacher at the village madrasa, as he was returning from school with his students.

"They shot him and then turned the body upside down, dragged it, put a sword inside it and took pictures," she said. Her elderly parents-in-law, interviewed separately, gave similar accounts.

Reuters could not independently confirm these accounts.

Presidential spokesman Zaw Htay said the authorities "will try to verify" such reports, adding: "If it's true we need to find out the reason and the background data about the incident." **WHERE ARE THE MEN?** The OHCHR report says that the vast majority of the new Rohingya refugees were women and children, raising questions about the fate of the men left behind, U.N. officials said.

"Boys and men between the age of 17 and 45 were particularly targeted, as they are considered to be strong and seen as a potential threat to the army and authorities," it said, adding that many accounts describe men of that age being rounded up and taken away with their hands tied behind their backs or heads.

Zaw Htay said the police and army were doing their jobs in making arrests.

Myanmar authorities have given little information about how many may have been detained, although prison officials told a U.N. human rights envoy last month that they were holding about 450 people.

"If you look at the new arrivals - the majority are women - so many of them talk about a killed husband, a slaughtered uncle or a missing brother. Where are all the men?" said the first U.N. official.

DAE Plans to Develop Uranium Deposits in Meghalaya

Shillong, Feb 9: The DAE has planned to develop large deposits of uranium in Meghalaya that have the potential to generate substantial nuclear fuel for atomic power plants in the country, the government said on Wednesday.

In written response to a question in the Lok Sabha, Jitendra Singh, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), which looks after the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), said it has already made a plan to develop the mineral resources at Domiasiat under the name of "Kylleng-Phendengsohiong-Mawthabab (KPM) Uranium Mining Project". "Uranium mineralisation in Meghalaya has been found over a large area around Domiasiat, Wahkyn, Lostoin. The project has the potential to generate substantial nuclear fuel for the atomic power plants of the country," Singh said, adding that a detailed project report (DPR) of the KPM project has been approved by the Atomic Energy Commission.

"Environmental clearance for this project has been obtained from the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) in December 2007.

Recycling tyres to save environment

ANI

Dimapur, Feb.9: Rows of basins, buckets, flower pots and more, made from used tyres, sold along the highway in Dimapur's Burma Camp area, indicates that nothing goes wasted if one is creative.

Salim is a perfect example to that. When he came to Nagaland 20 years ago without any work, Salim's earning livelihood was in a muddled.

However, things turned easier after he learnt the art of making buckets and basins from used tyres.

He said, "I came to Dimapur and learnt how to make basins and buckets from scrap or waste tyres. Somehow, I can manage my family today."

Today, he sits in his workshop near

the highway with a small sharp knife, slicing the tyres and manufacturing his own products.

The price of the bucket ranges from Rs.100- 200, according to its size, while a basin costs around Rs.150-600. He easily earns Rs.400-500 a day, by making 10 buckets or basins for sale.

Like Salim, Mahamud Mazur Rahman also purchase scrape tyres for Rs.30-50 per piece and accurately slices them before he puts into shape. This way he feeds his family of six.

The recycled tyre products, though rugged in looks, serve well for rough use and is more durable than the classy company plastic tyres.

These recycle tyre buckets are

basically used for fething water from well, basins for feeding domestic animals.

"Demands are more from the rural people who use it to pull water from their wells. They also purchase the basins to feed their domestic animals and to wash clothes," a seller says.

Special mention may be made here that every family in Dimapur digs their own well.

On that note, with increase in the number of automobiles, used tyres have caused serious threat to the environment, with government finding no obvious way out to dispose it.

Thanks to Salim and Rahman, they not only make a living for their own, but save the environment too.