

Editorial

Imphal Tuesday, March 28, 2017

Tragic, but a wake-up call

The tragic accident that took place at three different places taking the life of at least 22 people, leaving several others with critical injury is one of the most unfortunate accidents in the history of Manipur. We can't predict accident, it may happen anytime, anywhere, but yesterday tragic accident is a wake up called for all the people of the state especially to those concern government department.

The past few decades that concern government had never took interest in the streamlining of the vehicular traffic in the state. Safety measures to avoid fatalities, if in case any such accident happened, were never seen taken up in the so called two National Highways of the state which connects the mainland India with the state.

And how could any of us expect such a measures along the National Highways, when the concern government authority did not give a damn of the traffic flow in any of the town of the state, particularly in Imphal City.

Of now, people of the state witness several traffic control measures by spending huge amount of money, which were of never use to make a smooth functioning of the traffic movement. The painting of zebra crossing, erection of electric traffic control lighting system and moreover the installation of CCTV at many places both for checking of crimes and wild drivers still remain name-shake instruments to fill the pocket of some contractors who were awarded the job.

This is a fact and an open secret where even a rickshaw puller knows it.

We in the Imphal Times have high hopes to the new government led by Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren Singh. When Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Aditya Nath Yogi can terminate 58 officers whose post has been extended within days of becoming the chief Minister, Why not our new Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren make an enquiry to the whole process of the installation of the Electric Traffic Signal system as well as the failure of the CCTV installed at almost every nook and corner of the Imphal city.

The culture in Manipur at which works are completed and let them free without bothering whether it works or not need to be change. Those who make the people of the state suffered and those who are responsible for that should be awarded punishment after proper enquiry.

On the other hand, government should now issued a notification to assure that a meeting of the TRPC (Traffic Regulation and Parking Control) is held every week, besides strengthening the Traffic Police department. Equipments like walking talkie sets, motor cycle should also be provided to the traffic police, instead of letting them stand at junctions creating trouble to vehicular movement.

Those accidents which killed at least 22 peoples injuring over 30 people need to be condoled by everyone. But those accidents are wake up called for the new government led by Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren. We expect the government to take up more stringent measure to assure that traffic in the city as well as in the High Ways are well maintained.

Gunfight underway between militants and security forces in Budgam; one civilian dead

Budgam, March 28: One person was killed and four others were injured on Tuesday in security forces' action against stone-pelting protesters near the encounter site in Chadoora area of central Kashmir's Budgam district. Security forces launched a cordon and search operation in Durbugh area of Chadoora in the wee hours following information about the presence of militants in the area, a police official said. He said the search operation turned into a gunbattle after militants opened fire on security forces. As the security forces were engaged in the exchange of firing with holed-up militants, a large number of protesters started pelting stones at the law enforcing agencies, the official said.

He said one person was hit by a bullet in the neck and rushed to a hospital. He succumbed to injuries on way to the hospital. Four others suffered injuries as security forces fired pellet guns and tear smoke shells in a bid to disperse the protesters, the official said. The gunbattle between security forces and militants was going on till last reports came in, the official said. Meanwhile, according to *The New Indian Express*, some terrorists barged into the residence of an assistant sub-inspector of police and a constable in Kashmir's Shopian district and ransacked their houses in Jammu on Monday night. The terrorists fired gunshots into the air before fleeing from the spot.

The Buddha Advised The People to follow the Moderate Way (the Middle Way) of Life - Part II

By **Thangjam Sanjoo Singh**

The Middle Path in Buddhism does not mean having a biased view or superficial understanding only. The "Middle Path" represents a distinct theory and way of Buddhist practice that is not common to other religions. Buddhism lays great emphasis on human thought and action in dealing with the natural environment, society or individual problems. It is concerned with the relationship between thoughts and behaviour, and the relationship between behaviour and its consequences.

By observing the activities of mankind in real life, the Buddha mastered the principles of human behaviour. He then taught the two characteristics of the Middle Path: The Middle Path of Dependent Origination and the Noble Eightfold Path. The Law of Dependent Origination explains the process of human activity. The Noble Eightfold Path shows the way of practice that enables one to uplift oneself.

"The Tathagatha avoids the two extremes and talks about the Middle Path.

What this is, that is; this arises, that arises. Through ignorance volitional actions or karmic formations are conditioned. Through birth, decay, death, lamentation, pain etc. are conditioned. When this is not, that is not; this ceasing, that ceases.

Through the complete cessation of ignorance, volitional activities or karmic formations cease.

Through the cessation of birth, death, decay, sorrow, etc. cease."

(Samyuktagama, Chapter 12)
 "What this is, that is; this arising, that arises" is the principle of the Law of Dependent Origination; the Conditioned Genesis that says that, "Through ignorance volitional actions or karma-formations are conditioned" is the content of the Law of Dependent Origination.

The Law of Dependent Origination based on the Middle Path avoids attachment to the two extremes. This can be clearly seen in the Samyuktagama. Based on the Theory of Dependent Origination, in Chapter 12 the sutra says that "It is not one nor different". It also says that "It is not permanent nor discontinuous." In Chapter 13 it says, "It is not coming nor going." In chapter 7 it says, "It neither exists nor does not exist." (This is the "Eighth Negation of the Middle Path" in the Madhyamika Sastra, an abstract from the Samyuktagama). The basic principle of the Law of Dependent Origination is, "What this is, that is; from this arising, that arises; when this is not, that is not; this ceasing, that ceases." It explains the creation, cessation and existence of all phenomena and all things. How does human suffering happen? The Buddha said it is not something that happens without any cause. It also does not arise because of perturbed causes created by a god or Brahmana. It has its own causes. All things exist in accordance with the Law of Cause and Effect. When there is a cause there will be an effect. When causes exist, effects exist. The rising and existence of things are determined by causes and conditions. This is why the Buddha says "what this is (cause), that is (effect); this arising, that arises". This is the Circulation Process of the Law of Dependent Origination. It explains the existence of worldly phenomena.

We may also see this formula in its reverse order. According to the Law of Dependent Origination, in order to end suffering, we must stop its causes. Thus, "When this is not, that is not; this ceasing, that ceases." When there is a cause there will be an effect; when there is perturbed thought, there will be wrong behavior, and this will certainly result in evil consequences, i.e. sufferings. On the contrary, when there is no cause, there will be no effect. Once the perturbed thought is corrected,

wrong behaviour will stop and sufferings will also cease.

All things arise due to causes and conditions. As causes and conditions are impermanent and will cease one day, all things will also cease correspondingly. When there is rising, there will be falling; when there is existence, there will be extinction. The rising and existence of things has its natural tendency towards cessation and extinction. It is like a wave; it comes and goes. Thus, when one sees the truth of "what this is, that is; this arising, that arises", one should also see the truth of "when this is not, that is not; this ceasing, that ceases". The Law of Dependent Origination pointed out the possibility of ending worldly suffering. It shows the way of liberation that corresponds to the Law of Cause and Effect.

"When one is born, one will die. One who admires high status will fall one day."

This is the natural Law of Cause and Effect. It is also an inner implication of the Law of Dependent Origination. It can be called the Cessation Process of the Law of Dependent Origination.

The two complementary processes active in the Law of Dependent Origination, of the Middle Path, are two processes that are in reverse or conserve sides of each other. They explain the Laws of Circulation and Cessation. This rise and fall of causes and effects is still a worldly principle, and an explanation for superficial phenomena. Although it was not the final truth, it is from this that the ultimate truth was realized. The ultimate truth was drawn from the empty nature of the Law of Dependent Origination. Thus, the Sutra says,

"Tell the Bhikkhu, the ultimate truth of emptiness, realized by the Enlightened Ones, corresponds to the Worldly Law."

(Samyuktagama, Chapter 12)
 By understanding these two processes of the Law of Dependent Origination, we may see the truth of emptiness, which is the ultimate truth. Chapter 13 of "The sutra on the Ultimate Truth of Emptiness" in the Samyuktagama says:

"When the eyes see, the scene comes from nowhere. When they shut, it goes nowhere. Thus the eyes see unreality. All that arises will be destroyed... except the truth of the Worldly Law. The Worldly Law says that what this is, that is; this arising, that arises."

Through the rising and falling of the Worldly Law of Dependent Origination, the Buddha explained the First (ultimate) Truth. The ultimate truth averted attachment to either existence or non-existence; to permanence or change. This is similar to the "True Jhana" (The Vipassana that leads to the realization of the First Truth) explained by Katyayana:

"To contemplate the unreal nature of all things, there is nothing real. Various names arise due to the coincidence of causes and conditions which are unreal. When one sees the truth of emptiness, one will realize that there is no Dharmā (the perturbed view of existence) and non-Dharmā (the perturbed view of extinction)."

(Samyuktagama)
 All Dharmā is unreal, for it is mainly the coincidence of causes and conditions. These are worldly (mundane) views. Through this worldly understanding we can see that it is conditioned. The Enlightened Ones see and realize the Truth of Emptiness. They relieve themselves from attachment to both the existence and non-existence of Dharmā, and hence realize the Ultimate Truth. This is why the Buddhas always preach about emptiness, hoping that beings may be detached from perturbed views. The Buddha also said,
"If we can see the truth of the causes of worldly sufferings, we will not be attached to the view

of nothingness.

If we can see the truth of cessation in the world, we will not be attached to worldly existence.

By avoiding the two extremes, the Tathagatha teaches us the Middle Path, which is, what this is, that is; this arising, that arises..."

(Chapter 12, Samyuktagama)
 When worldly people see existence, they think that there is a real existence. When they see cessation, they think that it has really ceased.

This is the perturbed view of the two extremes. By compassion the Enlightened Ones, when they see Dharmā arising, know that it is not nothingness, while at the same time not becoming attached to it as something real. When they see the Dharmā disappear, they do not become attached to its extinction nor at the same time do they think that the extinction is real and means nothing at all. This is because, according to the Law of Dependent Origination, when there is a cause there will be an effect. When the cause ceases, the effect ceases. The Dharmā is alive. It can exist or cease, rise or fall. If it is something real that has a permanent identity, then it should not cease and become extinct. If it is nothing, then it should not rise and exist. The Dharmā rises and ceases, it can exist and become extinct. If we investigate the core of all things, we will realize that everything is conditioned and has empirical names. Things have no permanent identity, existence, extinction, rise or fall. Their nature is empty and silent.

Thus, when we talk about emptiness, we do not deny the rising, falling, existence and extinction of all phenomena. In fact, emptiness explains the truth of rising, falling, existence and extinction. This is the main teaching of the Tathagatha. Do not misunderstand Circulation and Cessation as two separate identities. From these Laws of Circulation and Cessation, we can see the creation and extinction, rising and falling of all phenomena and hence realize the truth of emptiness in all things. This is the Principle of Emptiness of the Middle Path, the ultimate explanation of the Middle Path. It is also the special characteristic of Buddhism — the Truth of Emptiness and of Dependent Origination. This is also "the immediate moment is empty" that is always mentioned by Mahayana scholars.

We should not think that this is only an old saying. We should know that this is the part of Dharmā that is beyond all worldly knowledge. The

worldly religions assume a god, the creator of the Universe; and the real characteristics of "I" as perfect, permanent, and happy. With such philosophy, their faith tends to be emotional. The Buddha emphasized reality and explained that all things are impermanent, and in constant change. There is nothing that rises but never ceases. There is nothing that is permanently unchanged. All things rise and cease due to causes and conditions. There is no independent identity that can exist without other conditions. The permanent, independent god that most worldly people believe in is denied by Buddhism.

From the Law of Dependent Origination, the Buddha expanded the truth of emptiness and articulated the Three Universal Characteristics. As the sutra says, "All volitional actions are empty. There is no law that is permanent and unchangeable. There is no I nor mine."

(Samyuktagama, Chapter 11)

As all things have the nature of emptiness, there is thus no law that is permanent and unchangeable. There is no ego that is permanent and independent. With continuously changing phenomena, the existence of all things is a web of interrelationships. Understanding the Law of Dependent Origination, we can realize the Truth of Impermanence and Egolessness and hence the nature of the emptiness of all things. Emptiness also implies Nirvana, that is the renunciation of the perturbed view of permanency and ego, leading to the realization of liberation. Thus, the sutra says, "One who thinks of impermanence will understand the truth of egolessness."

The Enlightened One lives in the state of ego-lessness, renounces self-conceit and hence progresses towards liberation and Nirvana."

(Samyuktagama, Chapter 10)
 To realize the Three Universal Characteristics of impermanence, ego-lessness and Nirvana from the standpoint of Emptiness in Dependent Origination and on the Middle Path, is the basic teaching of Buddhism. Often people tend to become attached to worldly phenomena, and think that only the phenomena that change are impermanent and that the origin of things is still permanent. They think that egolessness means that "I" has no real identity; that it is only an image formed by a co-operation of factors and that there is no "I" but that Dharmā is still real and does exist nevertheless. *(To be contd.....)*

Letter to the Editor

Making a mockery of peoples' mandate for change: A BJP government with Non-BJP MLAs

The more one looks, the more it looks the same. Then where is the mandate for change? Just imagine who was part of a corrupt regime all throughout his political career all of a sudden decided to switch side, and in two months time he is the "masco of change". What a story to tell — would it have happened had it been in another state? NONE. What is more shocking is that it is happening with the largest political party, which prides itself as the only ideological based party, in the world. Where is the BJP ideology?

The second in-command is someone who joined the party only a few months earlier. It makes the story of BJP in Manipur more interesting. And, of course, the whole process is orchestrated by an ex-Congressman, who in last 2012 election, engineered the biggest electoral success of O. Ibobi Singh on Manipur. We are not, then, far from the truth to assume that the current BJP government is the B-team of Congress? The combined age of BJP legislators who are in cabinet is less than 18 months. To make matters worse all the allies have asked for their pound of flesh — the NPP have pocketed 100% ministerial berths in the new government; the NPF have received equal number of strike rate in ministerial berths and likewise the independent and AITC have been given similar weightage. Well, how on earth the real BJPs will be represented in the new Government. The two who are in the ministry have less than two years of BJP life experience. Then who is going to pursue and the BJP's interest in the state.

Winning a battle is very important (dislodging of Ibobi government), but one should not lose sight of the larger goal. It's a BJP government with Non-BJP MLAs.

By : Dr. Natabar Hemam

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