

Poetry section

# An Umbrella

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Should I carry! Should I carry not!  
With heavy hearted, doubting  
Ah! Weather's good, Monsoon's fine;  
T's sunny bright; loud and lighter  
T's beautiful and all brighter;  
All's dry and all's parch; holding her tight  
Busy strolling, I neglect opening her  
She's unyielding, dense and hard as I hold;  
She utters not words, she claims not freedom;  
I am compelling holding her down;  
She moves not, she shades me not;  
Pacing faster as much as I could; striding  
Down the street, I knew not my swiftness;  
Mopping and wiping rapidly; I employ not her as long as I carry!

Should I carry! Should I carry not!  
With heavy hearted, doubting  
Ah! Weather's good, Monsoon's fine;  
I step out lightly and all's I breathe superior;  
Long as I march, down the street holding her  
She's flying swiftly, as I unfurl her  
Dancing wildly with this breezy rhythm,  
She's all colorful; She is red, bright red in color  
She's happy and she's smiling;  
All spirited, with this sudden gusty wind, timid and wild;  
Flurrying and swirling;  
Spinning and twisting;  
She breaks her wings; flinging and flinging  
Ah! What a push  
Make her gloomy all's her day.

Should I carry! Should I carry not!  
With heavy hearted, doubting  
Ah! Weather's good, Monsoon's fine;  
I sing of climate; No rain, no rain  
T's All's dark and musky; half-light  
All I do is praising, praising and praising  
Murmuring No wind, no rush;  
No roar and no whizz  
I walk without hesitating, holding her unfurling  
But her wings all broke! Shattered  
I am smuggling her all; miserably  
Still routing and Running; holding her tightly  
Securing both her and I through frightening bolts; with heavy roars  
With thunders and lightening, come raining  
Pouring and pouring down upon her; terribly  
All's discouraging All's dreary!

Should I carry! Should I carry not!  
With heavy hearted, doubting  
Ah! Weather's good, Monsoon's fine;  
She's weak and she's all wetted;  
She compiles me not, any comfy  
All's wet and all's feeble; as I nod  
She secure me not; still I assemble her strength  
Her color is all I favor, walking lower her shadow  
She apologies nor compose me a word!  
Still I fancy her, carrying.

# Armed Conflict of Manipur

By Jinine Lai, Asst. Professor,  
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Has New Delhi being the bigger stake holder of the conflict, shown meaningful and sincere response to the political armed organizations of Manipur? Does the situation demand a conducive atmosphere and Confidence Building Measures towards initiating productive dialogue? Why there fails Collaborative Approach to enjoy the win-win experience? New Delhi says Manipur is part India but political armed groups of the soil deny this status quo. Thus they are heading to different directions. It appears incompatible goals between New Delhi and armed groups causing conflict in the region. Though small, there have been combatant activities claiming one another because of the other side is. Nowadays many may think the narrative about armed conflict of Manipur is becoming less relevant, for we are looking forward to violence free and economically wellbeing direction. However, this is a usual fact that if roots not are not properly dealt the offshoots will sprout now and again.

It looks very visible that New Delhi has been waiting for some sort of natural death of the political armed movement to be happened sooner or later. However it is very likely that waiting games may not be fulfilled so wishfully, may be because of patriotic retention among Manipuri bloods, and seen, unseen forces of China and others. Even the form of movement may migrate from armed struggle to democratic endeavor. Can't Delhi mind the character of this people though small - introduced the game of Polo to the world, owns a script, power house of sports in south Asia and a good few professionals? Armed groups may also be waiting for domestic crumbling of India on her own in terms of splitting her territory into three or more or political paralysis triggered by Hindu fundamentalism, colossal

corruption, indigent governance, corporate game, etc. (Although the recent Modi-wave is working at some extent so some changes are on the horizon in fixing Hindu nation.)

**Root Causes:** The violence and tension have been seen in a landscape of Manipur where Hinduisation drew a thick and sticky backdrop, haunted by the controversial merger to India, militarization (and hill-valley dichotomy). They have imprinted their own roots in the socio-economic-political layout by displaying fractured justice, peace and human rights. They are sources of fear and conflict for the communities in the region. They are the structural violence of Manipur that have deprived the rights of indigenous peoples in terms of safety, respect, participation, economy, identity and culture. Interestingly the former Home Secretary of India, JK Pillai has also acknowledged this kind of violence.

Again, the continuous acts of racism and violent incidents against North East people by the mainlanders have generated clamors. Definitely, the situation causes mixed contemplation on an alternatives, reconnecting the dim dots to visualize a different North East layout in the Indian political map.

Too big is India to acknowledge fairly the torment of North Easterners and attend adequately the woes of the others. Have India already got galore of complicated haywire of system for their own in the mainland. The disability is too big to reset the legislation, executive and judiciary in places. Hence, realizing the fact of mammoth limitations of India, it will be a rational move for patriotic bloods to initiate something towards mitigation of reality bites from the mainland.

**Internal Weaknesses:** Only blame the external forces, Government of India without addressing own weaknesses makes no sense at all. Armed groups need to check their internal weakness again and again. In the middle of the battle,

a sick and weak soldier should not cry out to the enemy that what he is frailty now is because of the enemy. The multiple weakness are open and seen over the period. Party first Manipur, second has been the popular modus operandi. Much non-issues put on the table and real issues leave aside. Party oriented and indignant way of operation among themselves have paralyzed the desired collective force.

Heard the voices from some quarters of the armed oppositions that wanted either to let the corruption remain unchecked or rather be cooperative to proliferate such practices to justify the real intention of Indian colonial governance. Under the so called system, the majority of the people are becoming badly corrupt, corrupt in almost every aspect. It has been evident mere a suicidal experiment. How far can fishes sustain themselves in toxic water?

**Needs, Interests, Positions:** Theoretically, towards resolving the conflict we need to be omnibus to identify - what are the Needs, Interests and Positions for the stake holders involved. To eat food is a need and eat it on table or floor or with finger or spoon is interest. People of Manipur in general is the principal stake holder in the conflict - so what are the needs for the people? Fundamental Human Rights for Individuals, Restoration of Sovereignty, New Political Layout of NE India, or all of these?

What about this example of Needs? When a good governance shows up; an indigenous mother works and earns decent income like other families across Manipur. Today she is visiting an old college friend who lives in a village bordering another hill state. So she comes out of her house to catch a late night public bus. Her teenage daughter is seeing her off as she wants long walk to maintain her healthy shape. The girl would return home alone treading the clean sidewalk of the streets where well-lit lamps flanked. After a week mother

returns home enjoying the triphrough the highways and roads where no military, no gunmen, no bumpy ride, no dust experienced. She has seen her friend's family enjoying organic harvest satisfactorily in the year there comes no rain, all the kids go to a government schools cleaner than temples and the sick people get adequate medical attention from the nearby health centre.

If we are able to enjoy the above condition under the status quo, will we continue protesting against New Delhi or will the restoration of sovereignty be able to deliver the same condition?

The Needs that people should entertain are usually - right to decent life, freedom that do no harms to others, protection of individual and community, the access to fair trial and political participation.

**Necessity Evil** The 1000 strong men-New Delhi hurls their power over the 10 weak men-stake holders of Manipur often by ignoring the principle of universal human rights, international norms and undermining people's aspirations. Delhi deal the complexity of the North East by playing communal card, divide and rule policy, they handle the situation with no serious and sincere response; confidence building measures are not taken into account, mere a bargaining oriented move to retain occupying position over. On the other hand to counter the bargaining strategy, armed groups also use available means by hook or by crook. For them making noise with armed propaganda and violent response are becoming necessity evil. Thus the situation continues rattling in a cycle of violence. To end necessity evil and resolve the armed conflict, New Delhi and state government are to be keen on meaningful response. Hope, new Chief Minister of Manipur, N. Biren feels the same and be sensitive enough to move this historical discourse towards a progressive direction.

# State Government needs to Adopt Major Festivals of Manipur

By : Z. K. Pahrui Pou

**As a way of Introduction:** Our festivals are becoming very expensive with very less benefit. Time has come to learn to celebrate festivals with less expense and more benefit. Festivals should not be confined to merry making and of eating and drinking alone, but of building relationship, a time of thanksgiving to God, and a time to retrospect and decide for future. Hence, every festival must have a specific focus. It should be creative, innovative and eventful. I would like to suggest the followings main festivals of Manipur to be fully recognized, adopted, and sponsored by the State.

**1. Sangai Festival of Imphal as Communal Harmony Festival:** Manipur is blessed with different ethnic groups. It is a mini-India. We have Meiteis, Meiteis Pangan, tamils, Punjabis, marwaris, Nagas, Nepalese, Chin-Mizo-Kuki, and others. Sangai Festival will be a celebration of oneness in diversity. This festival will give emphasis to the importance of communal harmony. Exchange of gifts among various ethnic groups and traditional techniques and methods of making friendship and peace can be part of the programme. Various artist groups (singers, dancers, actors, etc) from the hill and valley can perform together dance or songs or dramas. Members of religious faiths and religious affiliations can exhibit their rich culture of peace, of love and communal harmony.

The adverse effect of ethnic conflict can make known through speech, writings, dramas, or songs. The benefit of communal harmony should be the main emphasis of Sangai festival.

**2. Orange Festival of Tamenglong as Agriculture Festival:** This will be a festival of farmers of the state. Farmers are the backbone of our state's economy. We need to recognise their contribution. This will be a yearly Agri Expo event showcasing the different produces of the farmers such as varieties of rice species, vegetables, fruits, tubers, etc. As part of festivity, different food dishes can be prepared with local produce. This will be also a food festival where cooking competition with local produce can be part of it. Exchange of seeds among the farmers will be an interesting event. The state can encourage the farmers by giving prize to the best farmers. Exhibition of handloom products and handicrafts should be part of this festival. Availability of loan and subsidy for the farmers can be properly made known to the farmers during this time. The importance of fishery, bee keeping, piggery and others such income generating activities that will enhance their income needs to be properly communicated. Creating awareness on the importance of food security and sustainable agriculture should be part of this festival.

**3. Shirui Festival of Ukhrul as Youth Festival:** Let this festival

be a festival of youth of the state. We need vibrant youth to have vibrant state. During this festival, mountain trekking can be organised. Other events such as youth talent contest, music concert and entertainment programs that are connected with youth's life can be included. There can competition in Games and sports especially volley ball and football. Shirui Miss Contest and fashion show will be interesting events.

**4. Kut Festival of Chin-Kuki as Cultural Festival:** This festival will be a festival of culture displaying the varied and rich cultural heritages of the people of Manipur. It will be a very colourful festival with display of cultural attires, dance and songs. All the ethnic groups and communities will come and participate in their traditional dress. It will be a festival of reviving cultures which is under the constant threat of globalization and modernization where homogenization is actively pursued. Exhibition program cum competition of various traditional games, dance and songs will make the festival a memorable event.

**5. Barak Festival of Senapati as Environment Festival:** This festival will be a festival of remembrance of our oneness with nature. It will be a Thanksgiving Day to the Creator and a day of showing respect to the Mother Earth. Discourses on the importance of rivers, forests and land will be part of this celebration. Creating awareness on the

reckless activities of hunting of birds and animals, poisoning the long stretch of river for catching fish and destruction of forests should be part of the celebration. Documentary films on the extinction of birds and animals, destruction of nature by mega-developmental projects, the danger of deforestation and global warming can be screened. Traditional knowledge and methods of preserving nature can be shared, revived and adopted to maintain nature's health. We need to learn many things from each other. If we keep nature alive, nature will keep us alive. Without water, land and forest, life is not possible. The different ecosystem of Manipur can be made known. Therefore, Barak Festival will be a very important festival of Manipur.

**Conclusion:** I have given the gist of how to celebrate each festival meaningfully. I hope the state government will give a serious thought on it and bring together the whole people of Manipur into one family through festivals. The duration of each festival should not exceed more than three days. No minister should be allowed to attend any other festivals or any special programme of any ethnic group, tribe or village apart from the ones officially recognised by the State. This will save huge amount of state's coffers. However, ministers should be allowed to attend any new developmental project taken up. Let us make Manipur a unique, vibrant and developed state.

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