

Sunday Special
Poetry Section

Alphabet of Silence

By - Parthajit Borah.

Burnt heart can't be smelt,
Wan faces can't be kissed
Flying hopes over the heart
Never made impractical.
Building an arcade to nourish
Fallen dream is an unanswered question.
Flawlessness of black clouds spewing
Blackish deeds in the heart of darkness.
Silence mouthed the night
Solitude armed the sight.

Silence

By - Dr Nunglekam Premi Devi
Independent Scholar

I hear you, I hear you
You're a soft smooth shush, full of lyrical tranquility!
Your presence is peace to all,
You're secrecy is our quietness;
You're speech is concealing, still I hear you;
You know no boundaries; you avoid restrains,
You're beauty, beauty of goddess
You unwind charges; you undo unhappiest,
You're easier; you blunt sorrowfulness,
Miserable and depressions and mournfulness,
And gloomy and sorry and pains,
And sad and feeble and poor and heartbroken!
You're magical serene peaceful compost!
You edit all; worries and fearfulness, and
Troubles and dying and egos;
You're shadow to wholly, still you're quite utterly.

I hear you, I hear you
You're a soft smooth shush, full of lyrical tranquility!
Your presence is peace to all,
You knock me in boundless and untold;
You make me live immensely infinite, cool and
Calm and lavishing free;
I pay you alluring pleasant, heavenly pleasing so rich!
I speak fathoms of my inner;
And I expounded wonderful sublime of psyches;
I smiles thousand and thousand soul music;
I bounce and I leap with thy twinning;
I perceive thy melancholia, divine beguiling;
Still you erase woes,
You're supreme divine magnificent euphoria;
Still I hear yeah! All is good feeling thy about rich.

I hear you, I hear you
You're a soft smooth shush, full of lyrical tranquility!
Your presence is peace to all,
You're one companion to solitary lone,
You listen to thousands and millions loons talking and sharing;
And still I do talk numerous isolations,
I sit upon thy bosom loving;
I speak billions, again and again concealing unpopularity;
I cried on thy lap multiple untold and unseen histories;
I asked thou too many shield questions?
Still you're silent, undeclared and mute to too perfectly;
You're the supreme answer to wholly unconditional emotions!
You heal every passions, lust and hunger;
Still I hear you unreserved.

I hear you, I hear you
You're a soft smooth shush, full of lyrical tranquility!
Your presence is peace to all,
I touch thy tenderness spirit,
And I float and I drive cheerfully,
I sing and I dance to thy rhythmic kiss serene;
You hold perfectly key to worldly fellow-feeling pities;
You're clear truth, companion to some greatly,
You long for valid closeness to all spirits,
Still I hear you and let it be and let it go.

A tribute to patriots of Manipur Manipur needs another Tikendrajit

By : Seram Neken

During prehistoric times and even in early historical periods, infighting among the small groups inhabiting in a territory was very common in various part of the world. Various ethnicities and communities indulged in bloody warfare, burning and raiding villages, killing one another only to grab lands and properties. The occurrences were more or less similar in Europe, Asia, Africa, Arab and American territories. However, at certain period of history, warring groups assimilated into bigger nations, thereby incorporating diverse cultures, languages, race and communities. The turbulent and gory past experienced by various nations of the world is of history. Nowadays, the process of construction of nations and their march towards development characterize this modern age. Like the other nations across the globe, Manipur too had the experience of an unfastened conglomeration of multiple tiny kingdoms in the very beginning. Amidst the frequent warfare among small tribes, the loose composition of Manipur (in whatever name it was) existed for a long period with mutual assistance and ethnic ties. The Meiteis/Meteis have been taking the parental role in the process of assimilation and construction of a Manipuri nation. History reveals that Meitei Kings took the role of saviour of smaller groups from foreign invasions, and in turn the smaller groups had mutual trust and understanding on the Meitei Kingships. During the hectic period of British

hegemony in India, the mutual distrust and frequent infightings among the royal brothers led to ruin of the Manipuri Kingdom. After the Anglo-Manipur War of 1891, Manipur was formally occupied by the British. The British flag was hoisted at Kangla on 27th April 1891. The 13th of August every year is a red letter day for the Manipuris residing at the extreme north eastern corner of India. On this very day, during the onset of dusk, the gallant freedom fighters namely BirTikendrajit and Thangal General were hanged in public at the Imphal Pologround, on charges of waging war against the British Government. The two heroes, although failed to save the motherland from the British subjugation, had taught a lesson to the posterity that 'the responsibility to save the motherland lies on us all' and 'Foreign intervention in the affairs of the nation must be prevented at all cost'. In the aftermath of the 1891 Anglo-Manipuri War that led to occupation of Manipur by the British Government, Maharaja Kullachandra along with his two brothers and twelve noblemen were also sent to Kalapani Prison in Andaman and Nicobar Islands for life imprisonment. Apart from these recorded names, a number of Meitei fighters fled their homes, vanquished and remained underground. The British described the Manipuri freedom fighters as 'Murderers and Instigators' who revolted

against the British Queen, because the British had the notion that the Manipur had already been under their sovereignty well before the War. History is a lesson to us all today that frequent infightings and antagonisms within ourselves gives ample room for the alien power to interfere into our own affairs. In fact, the infightings among the Manipuri Kings of yore were also a major factor for our submission to the British reign. On the one side, the British Indian efforts of colonial expansion attempted to find a land route to Burma to accomplish its mission to sway hold over Asian territory. On the other, the Manipuri princes frequently fought among themselves for grabbing power hegemony. Such a coincidence resulted to Manipur becoming a colony of British India. Patriotism, the trait possessed by the Manipuri Heroes such as BirTikendrajit, Thangal General, PaonaBrajabashi and a host of other fighters, was so immense that they never retreated in the face of the mighty British forces at no point. The writer may quote the lines from what PaonaBrajabashi shouted during the Khongiom Battle, "The enemy's shell can land in our camp, whereas ours cannot in theirs. My fellow countrymen, it is a disgrace to die fleeing. Death is now certain for us, but we will never retreat". Their love for the motherland is worthy of celebration for all times to come. Now during this highly sophisticated and globalized environment, it is worried that the quantum of patriotism or national character has either been

considerably lessened or totally lost among the youths. Patriotism nowadays should be redefined as having a national character in ourselves. The patriotism of the 1900s was cultured through physical excellence, competence in martial arts and war-craft. However, in today's world, patriotism may be redefined in terms of grooming good citizens having national character. National character as a Manipuri should be imbibed in our young minds, who would one day become administrators, medical professionals, engineers, teachers, sport stars, music icons, cultural celebrities etc. While certain small sections, instead of vying for unity, harmonic assimilation and development of Manipur, are trying hard to carve out of the composition and establish their own administrative hegemony. Demands for separate administrative units within this considerably small state of Manipur, the size of which is smaller than any big state of India, may be termed as over-selfish, and a tradition of prehistoric tribalism. At this hour, this generation needs Tikendrajits and Thangal Generals among our political leadership, who can well serve the wishes of the people, and who can sacrifice their selfish ends for a larger objective of Manipuri as a nation. When our political leaders have the required spirit and courage to serve the nation at the cost of their selfish ends, the observance of Patriots' Day every year will be significant and meaningful. (The writer is a Freelance Columnist & Social Activist)

The Ithai Barrage: A Development Decision Gone Awry

By : Amar Yumnam

Introduction

Theoretically as well as practically, we say that an investment project is worth taking up if the calculated benefits for the lifetime of the project exceeds the calculated costs. Since an economy does not have unlimited resources, whenever an investment project is undertaken it necessarily implies that some other project is being given up. In such circumstances, we see to it that the difference between benefits and costs is higher in the case of the chose project. Besides, in any real world situation, whenever an investment project is undertaken it will necessarily benefit some individuals or groups while hurting the interests of some other individuals or groups. We see to it that the gains of the beneficiaries exceed the losses of the losers. In other words, we recommend the undertaking of the project if the gainers can hypothetically compensate the losers and still have certain benefits left for themselves (gainers). Now the problem with the Ithai Barrage is that the promised benefits have not been fully realized whereas the actual costs have far exceeded the calculated costs. This has had two dangerous effects, one social and another physical. The social effect is the disturbance of the social harmony of the people about it by directly affecting their means of livelihood. As regards the physical effect, not only is the survival of our historically and mythologically significant Loktak Lake being threatened, many of our specific flora and fauna are feared extinct. **The Trade-Off** In such circumstances, we can have to begin with, two "ideal" solutions to the problem, one from the perspective of the authorities and another from the perspective of the people adversely affected by the barrage. The authorities would say that the "ideal" solution to the problem is one whereby keeps his

mouth shut. The opposite "ideal" solution would be one where the public would be the angle of the Ithai Barrage is immediately scrapped and they are allowed to resume their farming activities all over again. Both the above solutions will not be real solution and will only cause further problems. The first one fails to recognize that grievances of the Ithai people are genuine and must be attended to for otherwise the result can only be disharmony and turmoil. The second solution does not recognize that the Ithai Barrage is more or less an irreversible investment. If the barrage is scrapped now, it not only implies bringing to naught all the investment on it so far but also hurting the interests of those who have been benefitted by it (i.e. repeating the same Ithai Barrage mistake). This violates one of the most important welfare principles: the pare to improvement. Now our problem is to find out another solution since these two conflicting solutions will not work. We have to see if there is any possibility of a compromise between these two, and if not, we have to search a third alternative. In order to find an answer to these queries we have first to search out where the Ithai Barrage went wrong. This we do in the next section. **Development Decision** As Denis Goulet says any development decision is the result of an interaction or singular play of three actors, the technocrats, the politicians (and bureaucrats) and the public; these three put forward three respective rationales on the basis of which the investment decision is to be based. They are technical rationality, political rationality and human's rationality. The technical rationality is an exercise in hard logic and tries to reach the objective in as efficient a way as

possible by overcoming or crushing any opposition whatsoever on the way. The political rationality is exercised by those wielding power and the main objective is to retain the status quo. The rationality has little concern whether the objective is realized or not. The basis of the humane rationality covers a wide canvass ranging from purely individual selfish interests to purely moral or value judgments. Its legitimation is based on either a belief system or daily experience of common people wielding no power, status or expertise. In an uncertain future, these different rationalities would not behave in an overriding fashion on their own. A good development decision should be the result of a dialogue among to these rationalities. A good development decision should satisfy many a criteria and no single, on its own, cannot fulfill all these. One great advantage of a decision based on dialogue is that any unwanted situation arising later on can be easily solved without confrontation. **Where Fault Lies?** In the context of the Ithai Barrage, the technical rationality is represented by the engineers and other members of the technical team who first established the feasibility of the dam and the present team of engineers manning it, the political rationality by the power wielders then and now, the humane rationality by the Ithai people now fighting for their right to livelihood. The problem with the Ithai Barrage lies in the fact that the decision on it was taken only on the basis of technical and political rationalities. The third rationality was not taken into consideration thereby ignoring the cultural and belief system of the people and the livelihood fall-outs of the dam in the Ithai people. We can more or less ignore the political rationality as a rationality of convenience. But what further aggravates the problem is that the

technical rationality has turned out to be faulty and imperfect in itself. First, it did not take into account the environmental changes which were taking place in the state. Secondly, it left out of consideration the environmental and cultural effect of the dam out of the purview. Thirdly, it did not conduct a proper calculation of the costs, direct and indirect, of the dam over its life span. Lastly, it over-stated the likely benefits of the dam and thereby misled the public to appreciate only the potential benefits of it and be ignorant of the potential costs. In other words, the technical rationality lacked the objectivity which should undoubtedly be present in any such rationality. Hence the present crisis. **The Solution** In order to thrash out the various issues involved in the present crisis, an immediate dialogue among the three actors should immediately be initiated in right earnest. And for the matter, it should be emphasised that in all future development decisions of the Ithai Barrage type, it should be seen to it that the three rationalities are properly taken into consideration. In order to facilitate the conduct of a smooth dialogue among the three actors, an immediate official survey of the extent of damage caused to the Ithai people. The solution to the problem has to be sought from two but not mutually, exclusion angles, time and scale. In the short-term time span, schemes should be taken up in right earnest to economically rehabilitate the affected people. But this cannot be the ultimate solution to the problem. In order to find the ultimate solution, we have to find out what should be done at the local level as well as at the statewide level. Here it must be clear to us that the Ithai Barrage problem is a problem not only of the Ithai people but of the entire state with dangerous environmental and cultural ramifications.

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