

Editorial

Thursday August 23, 2018

The barrier within: break it

Technological advancements are an all-pervading phenomena, one which is impossible to miss. And so, our small and relatively remote state has been engulfed with such changes that are hard to ignore. Though physically and geographically hard to access, technology has made its mark on the public.

The virtual world has shrunk and information is now just a click or a swipe away. The state Government is also doing its bit to promote and propagate the integration of technology in every department and systems, albeit in a rather frustrating and for-the-sake-of-it manner. Despite such advancements and progress; or attempts at progress, the plight of a section of the public with disabilities and difficult physical deformities remains almost impossible when it comes to accessing these public facilities and services.

The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 was an Act to give effect to the Proclamation on the Full Participation and Equality of the People with Disabilities in the Asian and Pacific Region. However, almost two decades on, we still have yet to see even the most basic groundwork to implement the recommendations and directions of the laws which is aimed at making all and every public facility accessible to the differently able and physically challenged persons. More surprising is the fact that these recommendations are not something which would put a financial constraint on the Government as it entails very basic changes and alterations or additions to the present infrastructures to make them more accessible.

The total absence of such facilities at the public places in the state indicates a total lack of regard and consideration for this section of the society more than anything. Discounting the weak and infirm will only add to the woes of the Government. It should instead focus on making the most of its citizens by empowering them to contribute to the society.

The contributions of outstanding persons like Prof. Stephen Hawkins, a multiple paraplegic in the field of science, or that of Marta Runyard, the first legally blind paralympian to compete in the Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia, or Ludwig Van Beethoven who composed some of the most famous musical compositions after he became completely deaf cannot be ignored. One would surely admire the achievements of Helen Adams Keller, the deaf and blind American author, political activist and lecturer.

All these extraordinary people managed to overcome their physical and mental constraints and outshine everyone in their respective fields because of the support, guidance and understanding provided to them.

A government which cannot render even the most basic assistance for its disadvantaged citizens, for all its achievements and advancements, cannot claim itself ideal. Understanding the everyday ordeal of these people can shape the holistic development of a state or a country. It is for all of us to try and make the world that little bit easier for the physically less fortunate citizens, and the Government has a very urgent and important task of living up to its own claims of a fair and considerate setup.

Open Letter to Hon'ble Minister, Water Resources, Government of Manipur

Hon'ble Sir,

With due respect, I beg to draw the attention of the Honourable Minister of Water Resources, Government of Manipur regarding the slow progress of the repairing of riverbank at the eastern side of Imphal River at Singjamei Torban Kshetri Leikai in Imphal East District (Khangembam Mapa).

The piling and construction of retaining wall at this point (around 50 metres) have been going on now for the past couple of months. This point of river bank is in a very dangerous condition as far as the recurrent flood on Imphal River is concerned.

Frequent floods on Imphal River have caused tremendous hardships to the local people, more than once in the past few months. Still flood may come anytime and the unfinished works will surely be a panic to the local people. If there be any breach of the river bank at this point, the whole people of Torban Kshetri Leikai, Khongman and even Bashikhong will suffer like anything.

Here, I on behalf of the local people of surrounding villages, would like to draw the attention of the Concerned Minister of Water Resources, Government of Manipur to expedite the progress of the works. It seems that the materials and manpower supplied by the contractor for this work are not sufficient to ensuring progress of the work. The Department is requested to advise the contractor concerned to accelerate the pace of the works, and also to maintain the required quality so that the local people may not suffer during the floods.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Yours sincerely,
Seram Neken
Member, Imphal East Zilla Parishad
(14-Uchekon Nongchup Zilla Parishad)

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Transcending Patriots' Day(s)

By-Yengkhom Myrtle-Zest

As periodical 13th of August arrives, an inevitable vibe surround us being Kngleicha's. What kind of vibe? Shan't we enquire? Indeed fundamental question, yet for many appear the question trivial and naive. If one starts digging on this basic, may extract and unravel 'subjective variabilities' to the extent of oil and water juxtaposition. Led to observing and analysing ground realities contextually at present with respect to the celebratory or commemorative spirit not only of those magnificent brave-replete historic days whilst evoke of where as an 'entity' we stand today. And what engulfs present scenario? How the patriotic spirit we celebrate can be endorsed in tune with the present parameters or does it demands a radical signature? Undeniably, times have changed and is changing, with its flux of parameters and their interactions germinating and branching out in many spheres and dimensions unimaginable scale as evident today. This changing dynamics of time, it's past to present and would be future trajectories and implications urge us being part of many living species, an emergent idea of sustaining, progressing and holistic advancement of the planet by avoiding unnecessary lack of vision or daft or severe combustible incidents that will left only ashes as everyone's future.

Invoking present ground realities; preserving aside safe those memorable, historic and bravish past moments, pompous fantasies and prouddness of their descendants; it behoves us that sooner now than later we observe, analyse and identify who and what are our present threats, enemies and vulnerabilities? Whopping! Ain't it? The cumulative effects and consequences evolving like superbugs have its causation for sure. The so-called leaders- be it king, political leaders, administrators and heads at various point of time-these representatives' negligence, myopic vision, selfish-acuity and vested interests petrified them and paralysed together led to lapse of their patriotic zeal, tethered their bravery and heroiness to face timely problems and challenges on their part is sure the cause, eventually culminating and gravitating vicious cycles which are hard to untangle out still. They, in a sense, are staggeringly unlike 'the patriots known and unknown, sung and unsung' who stand up, dare against the invaders, trespassers and oppressors to defend sovereignty, self-determination, dignity, harmony, inhumane exploitation and malevolent policies interfering our affairs at that time. Reminiscently and concurrently, we also can't forget clan-based conflicts, proselytization, hegemonic influences and dissonances coerced through kings, disunity and greed of power among princes, lack of jurisprudence when it comes to them, British invasion and divisive policies, sprouting of hatred and divisiveness, etc. Believe-not that people were well, flourishing and enjoyed enough as they deserved or bestowed or live in a sort of utopia during those olden days but at some period, history suggests of apropos self-sustenance, sense of pragmatic patriotism, dignity and integrity reverberated across hills and valleys, close-knit interdependence and co-operation, co-existence and oneness as a composite society.

In retrospect, with asserting today's existential crises, there has been a long lapse of bravery and unity on the part of lawmakers or political heads representing us. Excluding these leaders and representatives; not to forget, there was and has been heroic souls who sacrifices, dedicates, who stand up unsilent (not as armchair-activist), protest in feasible varied ways against suppressions, oppressions and injustice. Their legacies and guts will thrive and survive no matter who and what position they held in society as they are look upon and

condescend by some. Surprisingly or unsurprisingly, those elected leaders who should/are expected to be having the utmost guts, responsibility and astuteness, hardly learn, practice and unite for the upliftment and rectification of today's shamolic system and its shabby practices prevalent. Many usually ask "Who elects them?" which hardly brings nor approach solution at all alike the conundrum "Egg first or chicken first?". Where have their commitment, promises, harangues and the notion of responsible representation gone after elected?

Now hoping against vain hopes, Kngle'i's resilience and sturdiness should resuscitate, revive and resurgence, immanent intact in the spirit of never too late to stand up, show up against inclinations of break-away denaturalisation, shredding by vested interests and venomous designs to regain our erstwhile harmonious hand-in-glove composite society, establish social-equilibrium and political stability.

Some present-day threats, quandaries and ruminations:

Reminding of present pandemonium, some hard factual threats infamously known instances, happenings and impending can be brought into consideration in tune with this unwhished awhile vibe of patriotism on this widely ritual-esque Patriots' Day celebration to gather and blend ourselves united through understanding objectively for approaching and actuating the needful bravely and resolutely!

1) Elusive and highly malevolent is the nature of Naga Framework agreement. Is the outcome a forgone conclusion or still shrouded with unpredictability?

Time and again, policies, talks or agreements whoseover the Indian govt. or state govt. have with ethnic-based political or insurgents in our composite society imbued us and our ombureance with apprehension, exasperation and misgivings followed by chasms, disorientation and disorder often resorting to taking a great toll and toil affecting in overall aspects of our socio-economic development in short and long term. Lack of timely intervention, dithering tackling and handling rather than rational, amicable and constitutional judiciousness to the situation concern always aggravates the situation and becomes rigid causing cantankerous in practical matters and viable-options closed at last.

Before any sectarian or ethnic based demands, we need to remind ourselves an inescapable and unavoidable fact. Inseparable of Hills and valley is such that Manipur without Hills is incomplete, so do without valley is incomplete Manipur for hills and valley are just geographical topographies, dear part and parcel of Manipur. Swallowing this reality is not hard but a nectar when we relate and intermingle ourselves practically in any sphere, through interactions that will unveil the interwovenness immanent, realise and become more aware of organic inter-relationships and inter-dependencies. Objective and rational understanding of history a must, unavoidable links and great deal of amicable existential ways will help arrive wilful concrete resolutions to defend against our attenuating compositeness as an entity thus resolving the differences together voluntarily and solemnly, understanding each other grievances and differences to remove the venomous slivers and splinters within thus letting melt away certain misleading vested interests in whatsoever form.

2) MU impasse's long duration,

which is being handled unqualifiedly and unnecessarily political (as alleged) by the concern authority or govt. is heinous and undeserving for the university has its own appropriate statutory obligations. The demanded Independent judicial enquiry is a must in the present circumstances. No subterfuge please. Highly likely will branch out severely unwanted and unnecessary consequences in long and short term. What if happen in a bigger state is also a pertinent question asked around?

Here, state govt. lack guts and resolute stand. Appears state govt. have been playing second fiddle to HRD or Centre for best reasons known only to themselves. And many where informally and formally, there was blistering rejoinder just after that alleged well-organised rally which is really uncalled-for. Please shun gaming politics here and do the needful objectivity to the extent of finding and punishing prior misappropriations and offences if formers' were found committed too. The incumbent VC said to be from a holy land of India is infamous for his unholy, corrupt, misappropriations, etc. which claimed too true to be alleged. What's in the air about longpending due intervention some muse as of coming election related, nepotism, magically influential so and so! So there is nothing to be surprise and shock on the concern authority's long negligence. And particularly, why not boycott this current HRD minister when he visit for election campaign next time which he used to do and quite lovingly long-stay during campaigns in our state and now not dare to visit or remain mute or neglect due quick intervention to solve the ongoing impasse!!

Furthermore, It seems incompatible to clubbed that the army station in the campus should be removed at the earliest as demanded time and again but yield vain assurances. It can be utilize for many educational and cultural importance. Say, replacing the army station with an Astronomical Observatory on this lofty hillock will be a beautiful worthy initiative thus too induce awareness of light-pollution which is a neglected issue in many deserved places or a Historical and Cultural Museum will be of high value.

3) Tergiversating border pillars' issues and laxity of Indian border-armed guards at Indo-Myanmar is a fact not a speculation as per many reliable reports. Highly strategic move by the centre as some say! Strategic at the cost of us? Recently, the so called high level team led by Surveyor General of India visiting the state border not on spot but vicinity (later dragged and sling their timidity or arrogance by our brave Kotha women) to inspect (rather say somnambulism visit than inspection) the current border alarming issue with Myanmar is ridiculous and ironically shows their "Burmese Patriotism" being Indian in relative to other case of Indo-Pak or Indo-china border issues. Those concerned officials are seriously uncalled-for but on-record their sheer negligence indelible and undeniable. Incredible India!!

4) North-East India can't be any sort of lebensraum by passing Citizenship amendment Bill.

The motive itself is more of much-talked cynical Hindutva stuff which is ridiculous in a self-praised secular country. After all, it is not a matter of secular or non-secular for us. Unending debates aside, the fact is of existential crises, sensitive resultants and its awful trajectories. It can be largely connected with the alarming dreaded dis-ease and suffocation the world started facing called Demographic Explosion. Population control throughout the world is amust no matter what ideology, religion or dogma one subscribes or bound by its doctrines. As of now, Earth is the

only planet inhabitable known to us and proportionality of land and its habitats matters a lot.

5) Sprouting of well-engineered-like incidents almost nearing internecine strife from certain issues and sometimes diversified, ramified then detained to extent of chronic erosion in many spheres at the cost of live and resources, inescapably boomerang back reaping the bitter consequences dueto unnecessary mediation from third parties or incompetent authorities or negligence in timely intervention by the state govt. as evident in many cases founded colossal time and resources deviated from potential developments. Loth to accept or negotiate through objectivity, inventiveness and benevolent ideas can pent-up emotions among communities or may create threatless barriers. Of course, trust-deficit, misunderstanding need be restored mutually but remain vehemently stubborn to certain demands deteriorates together spiralling backwards.

6) Centre always appears and has been riding roughshod over us on many sensitive and delicate issues without sound knowledge and understanding be it cultural, historical, strategic, sociological and economical. Be it fanciful Projects which return unimaginable exploitation and dislocation, many still pending and delayed in granting deserved returns or assurances.

Through upcoming railway-projects and Act East Policy, the large wheels of commerce will start rolling for sure apart from lack of intricate readiness and requisite setups, narky and unwantingly influx of beggars or its related activities is highly probable through train routes or other routes which should be forestalled. Maintaining our sanctity of beggar-free society since immemorial is a must. Undeniably, there are undefined groups extorting and demanding money like a powerful-beggar but we shouldn't add another burden pestilence of overt-beggar inflowing here, that preavailing in many parts of India and world at large. Our railway station need be declared 'Beggar Free Zone' and necessary drastic measures be set-up at any cost, like special task force or Anti-beggar force or whatever. Without properly heeding ecology, topography and its aftermaths, project and mining activities shouldn't be consented or initiated. Furthermore, deprivation of constitutionally valid rights, thence made struggle unnecessarily, investing peoples' time, resources, blood, lives and vital energies in innumerable cases- say some; stavehood demand, language inclusion, repeal AFSPA, Indigenous protection issues; proper justice for extra-judicial killings, inhumane torture, rapes and extortions, etc. continues to wreak havoc compounding directly or indirectly on masses and states over-all development. Recent 300 odd army officers' Supreme Court move is a sort of blatant confession yet desperate cry to condone their illegal actions and misused of power by ironically evoking security and integrity of nation should atop constitution.

7) False projections, discrimination and abuses for racially different or different food-style and lifestyle justifies the much-uttered step-justly treatment and prejudices towards us. OH! Less MP. Hollow is thy Unity in Diversity! And pathetically, pliable and shabby-genteel nature of State govt. at different periods and episodes have also its lion's share of timidity, submissiveness and impotent-patriotism. Problems of trafficking and smugglings need to be tackled with efficient and fair measure starting right from law-enforcing officials themselves is the opinion of hoi polloi. Lack of judiciousness and incompetency of the govts. have been the norm if not always.

(. to be contd.)