

# Editorial

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## The day after tomorrow

The Day After Tomorrow, a science fiction movie directed and produced by Roland Emmerich which was based on the book The Coming Global Superstorm by Art Bell and Whitley Strieber, depicts a catastrophic climatic effects following the disruption of the North Atlantic Ocean circulation in a series of extreme weather events that usher in global cooling and lead to a new ice age.

The Hollywood blockbuster which had successfully spread the message about the deteriorating climatic condition is not the concern of this writer, as the concept of the necessity of being Humanism is also a message of the movie. This writing is a speculation about the fate of the Indians particularly those living in the North Eastern part of the country and Manipur. Like the way that the earth freezes in the movie due to lack of common sense and humanity to human kinds, we the people of this region see sometime see a total disaster of our children in the day after tomorrow. From being Manipuri, we have become Meitei, Naga, Kuki, Meitei Pangal. The concept of Manipuri is fading away slowly and the concept of Meitei, Naga, Kuki, Meitei pangal etc. has already taken its shape.

This writing is not about the probable disaster that the Human Being may face in the coming days depicted in the Hollywood blockbuster movie, but this writing is about forecasting the fate of our children of tomorrows.

After British left India 70 years back, India is yet to complete to sort out a workable policy programme which would make all the citizen - a sense of Indianess. The largest democracy which constitutional expert always pointed out still seem to have left out some provisions that would make all citizen felt that we are Indian. The continuation of the programme and policy that the British had adopted to rule the country making laws in their own conveniences disregarding the tradition and culture of the different ethnic community make the lower class and middle class people felt that "Are we a Free Citizen".

70 years the rich keep on earning more, the powerful gets more power, the farmers and lower class people continue to sacrifice unable to bear the atrocities committed the ruling regime. No matter the change of guard in the government make no differences in the country as the system still continue to exercise when it comes to the issue of lower class people. In North Eastern part of the country which was merged to the Indian Union people are treated better by the colonial British ruled. Various acts which lawmakers and activist called draconian law still impose to suppress the poor and harass people in the name of building the nation stronger.

The longer rule by a specific political party make stronger those who stood against their policy. And it was out of the anti-incumbency that another political party comes up and hold power in the center. All things expected did not happen. The people face more alienation from the nation called India as the rule and their policy incline more towards a specific majority community. The government which is running the country is no difference from those of the fascist authoritarian regime of the 19 century.

The need of the hour is a collective move for a change India. Untold stories of Adivasis have slowly come up in the limelight. Story of how indigenous people are slowly absorbing by major community is known by everyone. Quasi federal structure is slowly becoming history with the present regime centralizing all power. And the day after tomorrow may be an India with only fascist Hindu without Muslim, Christian, and Meitei. The logic for this speculation is that when the once upon a time Manipuri started introducing them as Meitei/Meitei, Naga, Kuki and Muslim, the pride of being Manipuri of the erstwhile Asiatic nation, the community will become meager which definitely meant that it will be surely dependable and some critic or activist may come up to take advantage by merging the identity with the majority one.

This was witness in the state of Manipur. Due to wrong; somewhere in the process of making the Manipur Nation, we had seen the NSCN-IM accumulated all minor ethnic community and formulated a Nation like character call NAGA.

Recent development in the Manipuri society is that the Meitei/Meitei now started demanding to become Schedule Tribe. This demand is coming up out of necessities and more likely - a struggle for survival.

The Day After Tomorrow needs to be saved for the children of tomorrow.

# Intl Human Rights Day and Draconian law

Will Slapping Draconian Laws such as NSA Act worked for the citizens upholding the values of democratic values and deter the fence sitting Media bodies to towed the lines of Governmental diktats. ???

By : Rajesh Khongbantabam

The pertinent question that normally pegged citizens in a local hotel for a morning tea has of late been a hot topic for discussion although a sympathetic tone is being observed in every conversation.

"Yes, he did use the 4 letter words which is totally uncalled for, could've been avoided but then, NSA detention is too harsh". Manipur, a land not new to Civil unrest, Insurgency, Arbitrary detention, Fake encounters, and with gross violation of Human Rights summing it all up, have some or the other in a locality having this nasty experience of being incarcerated under the same inhumane act or a narration about some of their near and dear ones having to through this traumatic detention - What exactly is this so much dreaded NSA Act?

Simply in a laymen terms, the same NSA provides for the detention of a person for three months at a time and for a maximum period of 12 months and still sub-section (3) of section 3 provides that a detention order may be amended, if felt necessary by the state government. "To extend such period [of detention] from time to time by any period not exceeding 3 months at any one time" - Effectively implying indefinitely. Further, Section 14 (2) explicitly provides that "The revocation or expiry of a detention order shall not bar the making of a fresh detention order under section 3 against the same person". And the grounds for making such a fresh detention order need be nothing more than the fact that the "Central government or state government or any officer mentioned in sub section (3) of section (3), as the case may be, is satisfied that such an order should be made".

Living aside the technical legalities, what actually is the implication of a Citizens' discussing over a cup of tea and snacks is all about?

"It's meant for hard core insurgents,

who're quite a problematic for Authorities such as having the liberty of taking bail too frequent or of someone who is amongst the leadership too important for the authorities not to let go off the hook".

"After all, even then not all the outlaws insurgent are detained under the same act".

Well then, what exactly has this preventive detention been at the center of issues that's left, right and center? Is it merely to act as a tool against "Dissenters" to dissuade the same others from following the trends or trails?

Looking back towards the historical episode, Sardar Vallabhai Patel introduced the preventive detention act in 1950, and thus started the saga of colonial measures in post colonial India. Sanctified by the very constitution meant to protect the citizen from the whims of those in power, Laws like NSA provide the executive tools to escape the scrutiny of the judiciary.

More often than not, preventive laws are used by the Ruling party against their Opposition. Personal Liberty is the mainstay of Dissent and Dissent is the bed rock of the democracy. If we desire the democracy to survive and thrive, it is time we do away with preventive detention laws. These are supposed to be war measures and today, at least there is no war - except the one the government is waging against anyone who is dissenting, criticizing and showing distastefulness.

Rather, it is used as an unconstitutional measure to deprive an individual of their constitutional rights violating the basic jurisprudence; the accused must be presumed to be innocent until proven guilty, and the onus of the prosecution to prove the guilt remains the same.

The National Security Act (NSA) - which was first promulgated as an ordinance and few months later legislated by the parliament in 1980 - is a preventive detention law

which has been used time and again to deprive an individual of their constitutional rights violating the basic tenets that the accused must be presumed to be innocent until proven guilty, and not the other way round.

Tracing the preventive detention to the early days of colonial rule, the then enactment of Bengal State prisoners' regulation III of 1818 allowed detention without trial. Later on it was extended to other provinces and finally taking the shape of Defense of India acts of 1915, justified as World War I measures. It was a measure of indefinite detention, incarceration without any provision for trial or judicial reviews which again were indefinitely extended under the Rowland Act of 1919.

The Jallianwalla Bagh massacre ordered by General Dyer was against the "dissenters" flouting the Rowland Act.

Recently, on September 14, Chandrasekhar Azad, the 31 years old lawyer and a firebrand Dalit leader walked out of Saharanpur Jail after spending 15 months behind bar under the same NSA Act, slapped by the U.P. Chief Minister and his stint in Jail under NSA, "Preventive Detention" as it were, had led to a widespread agitation garnering international headlines, despite the Allahabad High Court granting him bail on November 2, 2017 and terming his arrest as "Politically Motivated", Chandra Sekhar Azad was again slapped with charges under preventive detention by the BJP administration of U.P. under the National Security Act on the next day and was kept under detention for 10 months, only to be released on September 14. After his release, he said - that he had become an eyesore to the BJP after he prevented a clash between the Dalits and the Muslims orchestrated by the ruling BJP.

A few days ago, Journalist Kishorechandra AKA Wangkhemcha Wangthoi was

arrested under the provision of the same National Security Act for a Face Book video post abusing or accusing (it's all about perception) the Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and their party by questioning the relevance of Rani of Jhansi in the context of Manipur. This came just days after he was set free by a court from charges including sedition for the same crime - but it's not the first time, the same Journalist has found himself in trouble for a social media post, in August 2018, Kishorechandra had been already arrested for inciting hatred between communities (At least that's what the Authority perceived) after expanding BJP as "Buddhu Joker Party". And it's still not clear which community might have felt offended by this terminology, sometimes pondering if indeed Buddhu Jokers are an Indian community. ? The Misuse/Abuse of draconian provision of Law - including the charge of sedition and the National Security Act - for something as relatively minor as a Facebook post abusing or criticizing a couple of politicians is something one associates more with regimes such as North Korea, China, Saudi Arabia than with India, the nation that pride itself as the World's largest Democracy. If abusing or criticizing politician on social media is a threat to national Security, then a few lakhs of supporters of different parties, including the BJP, would need to be arrested everyday and the prison has to be as large as the planet itself. And in any case, the bulk of online abuser is in any case spewed by so called Right Wing handles on Twitter. Right Wing leaders such as Subramaniam Swamy, routinely and consistently calls rival politicians as Buddhu, Jokers and worst. None of them ever ends up in Jail for sedition leave alone an FIR - And that's how it should be in a Democracy that promotes Freedom of Speech and Expression.

## LIBERAL FEMINISM

Liberal feminist thought has enjoyed a long history in the 18th and 19th centuries with thinkers as Mary Wollstonecraft (1759 to 1797), Harriet Taylor Mill (1807 to 1858), Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815 to 1902) arguing for the rights of women on the basis of liberal philosophical understanding. The movement for equal rights to women, esp the struggle for the right to vote was primarily based on liberal thought. Earlier liberal political philosophers, like John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau who had argued for the rule of reason, equality of all, did not include women in their understanding of those deserving of equality, particularly political equality. They failed to apply their liberal theory to the position of women in society. The values of liberalism including the core belief in the importance and autonomy of the individual developed in the 17th century. It emerged with the development of capitalism in Europe in opposition to feudal patriarchal values based on inequality. It was the philosophy of the rising bourgeoisie. The feudal values were based on the belief of the inherent superiority of the elite - esp the monarchs. The rest were subjects, subordinates. They defended hierarchy, with unequal rights and power. In opposition to these feudal values liberal philosophy advanced a belief in the natural equality and freedom of human beings. Mary Wollstonecraft belonged to the radical section of the intellectual

aristocracy in England that supported the French and American Revolutions. She wrote 'A Vindication of the Rights of Women' in 1791 in response to Edmund Burke's conservative interpretation of the significance of the French Revolution. In the booklet she argued against the feudal patriarchal notions about women's natural dependence on men, that women were created to please men, that they cannot be independent. Wollstonecraft wrote before the rise of the women's movement and her arguments are based on logic and rationality.

Underlying Wollstonecraft's analysis are the basic principles of the Enlightenment: the belief in the human capacity to reason and in the concepts of freedom and equality that preceded and accompanied the American and French revolutions. She recognized reason as the only authority and argued that unless women were encouraged to develop their rational potential and to rely on their own judgment, the progress of all humanity would be retarded. She argued primarily in favour of women getting the same education as men so that they could also be imbued with the qualities of rational thinking and should be provided with opportunities for earning and leading an independent life. She strongly criticized Rousseau's ideas on women's education. According to her, Rousseau's arguments that

women's education should be different from that of men have contributed to make women more artificial weak characters. Rousseau's logic was that women should be educated in a manner so as to impress upon them that obedience is the highest virtue. Her arguments reflect the class limitations of her thinking. While she wrote that women from the "common classes" displayed more virtue because they worked and were to some extent independent, she also believed that "the most respectable women are the most oppressed." Her book was influential even in America at that time.

Harriet Taylor, also part of the bourgeois intellectual circles of London and wife of the well known Utilitarian philosopher James Stuart Mill, wrote "On the Enfranchisement of Women" in 1851 in support of the women's movement just as it emerged in the US. Giving stark liberal arguments against opponents of women's rights and in favour of women having the same rights as men, she wrote, 'We deny the rights of any portion of the species to decide for another portion or any individual for another individual, what is and what is another proper sphere'. The proper Sphere for all human beings is the large stand highest which they are able to attain to, ... no 'We deny the right to any portion of the species to decide for

another portion, or any individual for another individual, what is and what is not their 'proper sphere'. The proper sphere for all human beings is the large stand highest which they are able to attain to, ... "Noting the significance of the fact that society had not extended equal rights to women, she wrote, 'The world is very young, and has but just begun to cast off injustice. It is only now getting rid of negro slavery... Can we wonder it has not yet done as much for women?'

In the next phase of the women's movement in the late 1960s among the leading proponents of liberal ideas was Betty Friedan, Bella Abzug, Pat Schroeder. Friedan founded the organization National Organisation of Women (NOW) in 1966. The liberal feminists emerged from among those who were working in women's rights groups, government agencies, commissions etc. Their initial concern was to get laws amended which denied equality to women in the sphere of education, employment etc. They also campaigned against social conventions that limited women's opportunities on the basis of gender. But as these legal and educational barriers began to fall it became clear that the liberal strategy of changing the laws within the existing system was not enough to get women justice and freedom. (Contd. on Page 4)

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