

## Editorial

Tuesday, July, 17, 2018

### Is the State Govt. underestimating the MU Community?

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh's government three point proposal submitted to the Union Minister of Human Resource and development failed to cool down the anger of the Manipur University community. A high level committee to look into the allegations against the Vice Chancellor fails to explain on whether the Manipur government understand the demand of the University community or underestimated the intellectual wisdom of those in the highest academic institution in the state. Except putting a demand for a high level enquiry committee the memorandum submitted by the government did not mention the exact definition of the so called High Level Committee they are referring.

July 12, the MHRD had ordered to constitute a fact finding committee to enquire into the allegations against the Vice Chancellor which comprises of two members - 1) JK Tripathi, Joint Secretary UGC and 2) Surat Singh, Deputy Secretary Central University Division MHRD. Perhaps it is hard to find the differences of a High Level Committee and the Fact Finding Committee constituted by the MHRD.

Point number 2 that the state government proposed is to direct the Vice Chancellor to proceed on leave and third to appoint one Pro VC during the enquiry.

The memorandum that the state government submitted to the MHRD showed the timidity character of the state government. Instead of urging points that is required the state government simply requested which the MHRD may accept but will the acceptance to the proposal be accepted by the Manipur University Community and also by the people of the state.

The state government need to understand that - from inside the Manipur University Complex the issue now has cross beyond the complex. College students which have been affected due to the negligence from the part of the government had called total shut down to all colleges affiliated to the Manipur University. Students' body started street protest by even thronging to the Raj Bhavan and also the office of the BJP which is heading the state government.

Remember, the simmering democratic protest of 2015 demanding ILPS in the state was converted into a violent protest after the death of Sapam Robinhood in Police Action.

July 7 protest by the College students in front of the Chief Minister's bungalow here in Imphal which was similar with the kind of protest by the AISF at MHRD gate at New Delhi were treated like animals by the police deployed when the Police at New Delhi prevented using force. Some injured.

Yesterday's protest by DESAM was also democratic and police committed extreme excess that a student leader Oniam Sital nearly got killed after he was pushed by a police man to a running heavy vehicles. It was miracle that the student leaders sustain only some fracture at hands and legs. Some other students were also injured in police action. Had the student died Manipur today would have been different as the anger of the people would go out of hand.

Now, unable to tolerate the ignorance to the demand of the Manipur University Community as well as police brutalities towards the students, MUSU seemed to be left with no choice but to called a 48 hours general strike. People of the state were fed up of Bandh and Blockade and criticism always pour when any organisations called bandh or blockade. The miseries were well experience and almost every people of the state have started saying no to bandh. But this 48 hours bandh called by the MUSU is being supported openly by many organisations both from the students' Community as well as from the civil society organisation.

For reason best known to the Chief Minister almost all the BJP MLAs, Ministers and Party workers including former President of the BJP Manipur Pradesh are camping at New Delhi and are appraising the Central Ministry to resolve the multiple issues plaguing the state.

Among other issues what the Chief Minister of Manipur should consider most urgent is the issue of Manipur University which is being created by a one man called AP Pandey. Who is Prof. AP Pandey why is he getting so much protection by the MHRD? How could he fool the Manipur government by showing a demand letter from UG and connecting it to the present uprising by the Manipur University Community? Why and for what reason Chief Minister N. Biren simply cannot put pressure in a manly way to take the person who is ruining the whole student population of the state? A matter need to ponder.

# Roasting Manipur : The Context and Structural Violence

By: JN Lai (Asst. Prof, International College, the University of Suwon, S Korea)

When the mighty Himalayas leaving his snow-white height going down for the deep green of Southeast Asia, there trapped a hilly terrain with a tiny valley in the middle stressing north-south. Over the centuries, she was having changing names Meckley, Meitrapak, Kangleipak with changing boundaries enlarging up to 72,000 sq km between the Brahmaputra and the Chindwin River. She has been known as Manipur shrinking to 22,327 sq km, and been a controversial part of India since 1949. She is bigger than East Timor and smaller than Rwanda. There are about 40 ethnic peoples whose culture reflects ending tail of South Asia and beginning head of South East Asia. Showing a hybrid display in Indo-Myanmar region.

Uniqueness adorns Manipur in its own way. The multiethnic peoples, compounded problems are all sucked into this small landlocked geography. The historical memory of the socio-cultural turmoil of Hinduisation is not able to evaporate so soon and the gone days of Annexation by India is still posing an unsettling political hiccup. The present experience is becoming a staggering predicament of the past stumble.

Present BJP power perhaps condescends that the world's longest political hunger strike happened here. The game of Polo was born here. One of the earliest universal suffrages in Asia too was practiced here. This is one of the biodiversity hotspots of the planet, the abode of the natural resources and the power house of sports in the Indian subcontinent.

For decades Manipur has been witnessing multi-faceted conflict. The silent war between Political Armed Organizations (PAO) and the

Government of India (GoI), and inter-ethnic conflict among the Meetei, Naga, Kuki, non-Naga, non-Kuki, Pangal (Muslim) have brought violence and human rights noise. As a result, thousands of lives have lost, many more have been undergoing pain and trauma, and communities have been living with fear and distrust.

The violence and tension are seen in a landscape where Hinduisation drew a thick and sticky backdrop, haunted by the issues of the Controversial Manipur Merger to India, Militarization under an Extraordinary Armed Forces Legislation, and Hills-valley Dichotomy. They have imprinted their own roots in the socio-political-economic layout by displaying fractured justice, broken peace and twisted 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.

On 23 September 1969 when Indira Gandhi visited Imphal she said in her public speech, "You must behave like a civilized people. You must behave like people who know how to handle the affairs of their city and their state." Her speech was criticized in December publication, 1969, The Lamyamba, for affronting peoples of Manipur. Because she ignored the real uncivilized Indians who broke her head in the previous election. In various Indians cities there had been violent clashes between students and police, and Siva Sena burnt houses, vandalized

properties, she thought her Indians were civilized. Whereas Manipuris who were living harmoniously with outsiders and did not show any violent acts upon her visit to Imphal, she called uncivilized. The Lamyamba questioned - the ruthlessness of Indira Gandhi in addressing Manipur as something do not know how to handle affairs of city and state, ignoring the fact that Manipur had been an independent sovereign state for centuries before her India dismantled it suddenly.

In the following decades, leaders from the New Delhi have been singing Manipur and Manipuris as a rich heritage, rich arts and culture, peace loving peoples, with a heavy tone of need of militarization, a concern for insurgency, law and order situation. One interesting fact that contradicting the reality is the comments come out as posthumous responses from the retiring military officers. In most of the media briefings, the moment they are leaving Manipur, they opine "Military is not the solution to Manipur problem."

One similar example is of the former Union Home Secretary to the Government of India, Gopal Krishna Pillai articulated strangely. In his talk at the Internal Security Lecture Series organised by Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA), YouTube video Published on 6 Feb 2012 underlined that, thousands year old ancient kingdom of Manipur was forced to diminish to a mere Part C State of the Dominion of India overnight. In the illegal process of Merger that was carried out by the then Dominion Government of India had definitely made serious mistakes, for which he very boldly made a call for the Prime Minister or



the Home Minister of India to apologise for the past mistakes that had been so dictatorially executed.

For a holistic approach to the structural violence and multiple challenges of Manipur, we should not forget the Action, Behavior and Context or ABC. So, for example, the border pillar and other crisis are just AB not the Context C. Instead of addressing fundamental root causes, New Delhi, this time, Bharatiyananata Party merely plays multiple repressive cards as usual. BJP does dilute and divert crucial issues of Manipur whereas state government displays the most submissive diplomatic treatment upon them so far. Knowingly and unknowingly N. Biren has screwed up his responseto the people of Manipur and the corridors of power in Delhias well. Now he is getting the heat which some of them are really unbearable - Naga framework and border pillar conspiracy though the ongoing academic crisis and the demand for protection indigenous peoples' land and rights are somehow manageable.

## Gauging ongoing Manipur University Impasse from the Precedent Cases of Removing Vice Chancellor

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The sources said, the President wants the ministry to accept the resignation and has informally conveyed its unwillingness to sack Dattagupta, which the government wasn't keen on doing so as it would absolve Dattagupta of all the allegations. The delay in acting against Dattagupta seemed to have made students and faculty of the university in Visva-Bharati restless. About 20 intellectuals and professors, including Rajya Sabha member D Bandhyopadhyay, wrote to the President and the Prime Minister, urging them to act quickly on this matter. HRD ministry then had sent the file to the President recommending dismissal of Dattagupta. According to sources in Rashtrapati Bhavan, the HRD Ministry followed "due process" in its probe against Dattagupta and that the VC was given a fair chance to present his defence against the allegations. Rashtrapati Bhavan, however, returned the file asking the government to clarify if the proposed removal was legally tenable and, also, whether the VC should be sacked without a chance to present his case in person. The Attorney General, in his opinion, clarified that the President can grant Dattagupta a personal hearing, although the latter has already had a chance to present his defence in writing to the government. He had challenged the legality of the fact-finding committee instituted against him by the government. After his plea was shot down by the Calcutta High Court, he had e-mailed his resignation to Rashtrapati Bhavan

on September 30, 2015. Accepting the Ministry of HRD's recommendation, President of India, Pranab Mukherjee on Monday removed Sushanta Dattagupta from the post of Visva-Bharati University's Vice-Chancellor (VC) on 15 February 2016.

**2. Pondicherry University:** The President of India gave his approval to HRD ministry's recommendation to sack Pondicherry University Vice Chancellor Chandra Krishnamurthy, facing allegations of plagiarism and misrepresentation. Pondicherry University VC Chandra Krishnamurthy had been issued a show cause notice after a UGC committee found her guilty of plagiarism and misrepresentation. She took charge on February 1, 2013 for a five-year term. On August 2015, she was served the show cause notice asking her to explain why she should not be dismissed. However, the VC had challenged the "procedural fairness" in issue of the notice, but after a court verdict found nothing wrong in it, she replied to it earlier this year. Her reply was studied by the ministry which had then sent a report to the President recommending sacking her. She had also tendered her resignation last month. This is the second instance when HRD ministry has pushed for dismissal of vice chancellor of a central university. Earlier this year, it had dismissed VisvaBharati vice chancellor Sushanta Dattagupta, who faced allegations of financial and administrative irregularities.

**3. Garhwal University:** After Sushanta Dattagupta of Visva-Bharati University and Chandra Krishnamurthy of Pondicherry University, Kaul was the third Vice Chancellor dismissed by the incumbent government. President Ram Nath Kovind is learnt to have approved the sacking of the Vice Chancellor (VC) of Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal (HNBG) University, Jawaharlal Kaul, for alleged administrative. However, this is the first instance of the NDA-II government going after its own appointee in a central university. Kaul was appointed in November 2014, when Smriti Irani was HRD Minister. He had little less than two years left in office by the time he was removed. As first reported by The Indian Express on 21 November 2015, HRD Ministry had forwarded a proposal to sack Kaul and justified it on two counts. First, he allegedly allowed colleges to increase intake in some courses to 200 seats, even though university rules permit only 60 seats in each programme and 80 in exceptional cases. Second, he took a decision to charge a college affiliation fee lower than the prescribed amount. Kaul was served a show cause notice in February 2016 year based on conclusions of a two-member fact-finding committee set up to probe complaints from the Central Vigilance Commission last year, alleging administrative mismanagement. He was given three weeks to present his defense regarding five allegations, including the charge of approving backdated affiliation to a few teacher training institutes. The notice also accused him of allowing the university to

declare examination results of some private institutes when the status of their affiliation to the university was under the scanner. Kaul's defense against allegations of allowing colleges to increase seats above the permitted limit and undercharging affiliation fee was found unsatisfactory by the ministry and, hence, shown as grounds for sacking.

In the case of Manipur University also, the allegations labeled against the incumbent Vice Chancellor are of serious and grave nature which merit thorough probe by a competent independent body headed by a retired Judge of a High Court. One glaring example of the unwanted outcome of his perennial outstated holidaying which so far has not come out prominently is the cancellation and abandoning of the first ever post graduate examination of Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences (JNIMS) for Pathology and Microbiology held on 08 May this year. Regarding this, JNIMS authority wrote to the Manipur University Administration in January informing that informing that post graduate examinations would be held and ensures that one Medical Council of India (MCI) is deputed for the same. The University took three long months to send the JNIMS authority's letter to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare along with the final examination schedule on 14 April. The documents sent by the Manipur University reportedly reached the Ministry on 27 April. If better sense prevails, his honorable exit and saner option would be resignation.

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