

Editorial

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Unfair Game

Allegations and the clarifications over the issue of the Border Pillar 81 reinstated at Indo-Myanmar border of Manipur sector finally is turning to an unfair game which will definitely do no good either to the people of the state as well as for the country.

The issue of border dispute along the Manipur sector of Indo-Myanmar international boundary is not a new one. Since the time that India and Myanmar had reached an agreement for fencing of the International boundary villagers who had been guarding the territory of Manipur has been making hue and cry over the loss of land after Myanmar authority allegedly encroached to Indian territory by shifting some of the border pillars towards Indian side. In addition to the claim made by the Indian villagers from the border area, civil societies of the state including UCM, AMUCO, ICHAM etc. joined the voice of the villagers of border areas of Indian side and the joint movement finally urged the then congress government to urge central authority to put halt of the construction of border fencing.

A meeting was held between the authorities of India Government and that of Myanmar in 2016, from September 6 to 7 at Dehradun and discussed to settle the border dispute. Representatives of the Manipur Government too attended the meeting as per invitation from the Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India. That was a time when the Congress was in power in the state while the BJP led NDA is at the centre there was no specific report of the resolution adopted in that meeting. But the then Chief Minister Okram Ibobi had stated that he along with the then Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Dr. Suresh Babu had objected the continuation of the construction of border pillars until it was properly surveyed and demarcated.

Well recently, District Administration of the Tengnoupal District had once more hatched the matter about the intrusion of the Indian Territory by the Myanmar Authority while reinstating the Border Pillar No. 81. He declared it through media. Following that almost all political parties and members of civil society organisations had visited and took stock of the alleged encroachment by the Myanmar Authority near Kwatha Village.

Even the BJP Manipur Pradesh team which had taken stock of the situation agreed that the border pillar has been reinstated inside the territory of the country. Hours after the BJP Manipur Pradesh team accepted that Myanmar authority had intruded to the Indian Territory. The Union Ministry of External Affairs had issued an official press statement saying that there is no dispute along the Manipur Sector of Indo-Myanmar Border.

Days before BJP Manipur Pradesh went to inspect the site, a high Level Committee constituted by the Government of Manipur chaired by CAF& PD Minister Karam Shyam visited and poured his anger to the villagers asking them if any of them had seen the border constructed by the

Myanmar Authority. He stood firm with a statement that there was no encroachment by the Myanmar Authority to the Indian side. It was in contradiction to the report of the District Administrator of his government.

Well Chief Minister N. Biren Singh of the BJP who is leading the coalition government had stated that the issue needs to be relooked and a procedure is necessary to find out the truth as the matter is between two countries which may spark serious crisis. And Karam Shyam, a minister in his government from LJP and he flatly denied the villagers and peoples' allegation about the border pillar being built inside the territory of the state.

Now what seems to be ironical is the statement of the BJP Manipur Pradesh which agreed that the villagers of Kwatha are right.

The new contradiction between the Convenor of the High Level Committee of the state Government and BJP Manipur Pradesh speaks volume. Is there an unfair game being played as talks about reshuffling of Ministers is major topics among the BJP MLAs? Is Karam Shyam going to be made a scapegoat? This is being assumed as Minister Karam Shyam of the LJP has been directed to speak which may face music of the people's wrath.

The Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC)'s revelations on the sequence of event regarding the border dispute issue make the matter a clearer picture of what is happening to the border crisis.

Well the MEA statement regarding the border dispute will not be able to convince not only to the people of the state but also to the people across the nation.

The state BJP which is heading both at the center and also in the state make it clear that there is dispute in border pillar No. 81.

In the wake of the recent development over the issue of the international boundary, the statement issued yesterday seems to be an unfair game to the fate of the erstwhile nation (Manipur). And the same unfair game seems to be loomed large by the BJP Manipur Pradesh which is also heading the alliance government here in the state.

Woken Youth Clubs in the season of 2018 FIFA World Cup

By: Takhenchangbam Shadishkanta

Manipur has been known for its culture which is being preserved by the various ethnic communities for the last many centuries, however, there are also external influences from various actors to suppress the indigenous people from getting developed and also to vanish the indigenous people inhabited in the area as many of the natural resources are being protected by the indigenous people which are eyed by many multinational extractive industries. Responding to the external forces many local Youth's Club and Local Meira Paibis Groups earlier had taken a tremendous role, however, the distressing area is that forgetting the role which they took earlier many of the Youth Clubs and Meira Paibi Groups are now appeared to be in existence to organize only Youshang Sports, Housie, Mela, Lottery and other entertainment activities.

It could be seen that since the 2018 FIFA World Cup starts many clubs are awake and seen opening after been closed since the end of the Yaoshang. It's been interpreted that screening of the 2018 FIFA World Cup at office of many of the Local Club is to inspire the football lovers and the young players while many of the office bearers and members of the clubs get along to watch the football matches till late mid night under the influence of alcohols and other intoxicated substances and sometimes the office of many of the clubs looks like a local alcohol vendors. Many have not realized that in the name of watching football matches they are also contributing to destroy the society at large. On the other hand there are many frights and unwanted incident which occurred among the spectators and to the neighbors as there was an incident on the 18th of June, 2018 wherein a married woman was attempted to rape inside her bedroom by a married man while her husband was out to watch a late night football match between Portugal and Spain. We can also be sure that many hospitals whether private or government will be excited enough to diagnose many of the patients of post 2018 FIFA World Cup.

It further could be observed that many of the Youth Clubs are opened during the festive season and have failed to monitor what actually the members of the locality are facing in reality like failure in access to governmental schemes, educations, health, water, housing, or other basic necessary needs. If such monitoring and intervention were done as a responsible Youth Club of a locality it would have been much advanced. Instead of such intervention it could be experienced that when an incident occurs or a crime has been committed many of the Local Clubs and the Meira Paibis Groups tried to resolve the matter by taking the law into their hand. It will be interesting to highlight a case which occurred in April, 2018 wherein two boys who went out for "Thabal Chongba" at some area of Imphal East wherein one had received a call from his girl friend asking him to visit her. As a result they went and met them at around 8:30 pm near a Thabal area. The girl came out with one of her friend, unfortunately soon after they met they were surrounded by some boys of the locality and took them to a local club wherein they were beaten up and insist them to say that they were doing some unwanted activities. As two of them had not done anything wrong which is socially unacceptable, their stands were firm, therefore, the local Meira Paibis, members of the Youths Club and member of the Village authorities were called to solve the matter which was created by the boys of the locality. After their intervention it could be found that both the girls happened to be a minor and another concept was created by them and was imposed

upon the two boys that they will be charged and booked under the POCSO Act, 2012. Both the boys were detained for the whole night after their mobile phones were ceased by those local people. The next day the family members of the boys were called and tried to settle the matter wherein the two boys reacted that they have done nothing wrong and are ready to go to the police to find out the truth, however, the local leaders of the area tried their level best to resolve the matter at their level but have failed. Therefore, they were taken to the police station of the area which later was transferred to the Imphal East Women Police Station, Porompat as the matter was to be handled by the WPS. After thorough inquiry by the Women Police officers, it was found that the case has no merit to be accepted or filed and asked both the parties to settle the matter at their level. As a result the secretary of the Village authority, president of Meira Paibi and Secretary of Local Youth Club of the girl's side had insisted the family members of the boys to pay a sum of Rs. 1,20,000/- as a compensation and to settle the matter once and for all. Due to heavy pressure from the secretary of the local youth club they were compelled to pay the amount and later it was learned that those local leaders had charged Rs. 50,000/- for assisting the case which actually was a fake case.

Beside such bad experiences there are also experiences of good role being played by many Youths Clubs and Meira Paibis groups by taking a major role to intervene on the issue of selling and using drugs and other intoxic substances locally. Here the question arises on how sustainable these interventions would be? As there are no mechanisms or techniques seen being adopted to provide counseling and rehabilitate those user friends so as to mitigate, transform and inspire them to leave their habits after being tied up Government Institutions, NGOs and other experts on these fields. On the other hand it could be a role of many of the Youth Club to establish a monitoring mechanism under them in collaboration with various related institutions to provide alternative livelihood means for those who sell drugs and alcohols. Forgetting the facts of the role which they could play, it could be observed that vandalizing the shops, vandalizing houses, beaten up inside the club's office, settling a crime related incident and ostracizing the families which sell drugs and alcohols are the common activities of many of the Youth Clubs in the state.

We also cannot deny that organizing Yaoshang Sports by many of the local youth club also gives an opportunity for many community elders, young people, and members of the locality to get together and celebrate the beautiful Yaoshang Festival. As a part of Yaoshang Sports various activities are carried out in which many talented young people and members of the community took part and shows their expertise, however, it seems many of the local Youths Clubs are not interested to identify those talented people and provide career counseling, providing training on their interested fields, etc with the help of experts from various field. It can also be identified and found that the family members of those identified people happened to be economically backward then the particular Youth Club can also provide training or other inputs for their sustainable livelihood processes and also can lead them to get access to various Government's schemes, loans, etc, if such practices are adopted then there is a high possibility that this could be one of the area which will



(Photo for representation only)

contribute to develop a locality and societies at large.

There are many area where many of the Youth Clubs can also think about their role on a critical juncture of issues like the large scale influx of illegal migrant, coming in of many multinational natural resources extractive companies, territorial boundary issues, framework agreements of Nagas, unemployment for youths, crime against women and children, drug and alcohol issues, child marriage, etc which many of the local Youth Club need to be awake, diagnose and initiates some work so as to bring some development at least at their respective control areas. It is high time to avoid waking up only when the festive season approaches. The initiatives of each youth club could be to bring together the energetic young generation and facilitate some activities after a thorough need analysis and make way forward for them with the help of experts from different fields and one most important thing is to avoid the older generation those who are of no use and uncontrollable. We should understand that outsiders who came to Manipur in search of job are earning not less than 500-1000 per day, therefore, at least the local youth club could identify those interested people of the locality and allot some task by providing proper training on their interested field and also to make way to encourage them instead of washing off hands. If this could be practiced well by many of the youth club then we cannot deny that the clubs are taking tremendous role to fight back the influx of illegal migrants and their domination in the market could be slowly overcome by our own people and also believe that work culture will also increase which will definitely contribute to safe the future generation of our motherland Manipur.

One most important area which we must not neglect is that a question will arise on "how a Youth Club and Mera Paibi group will function without having a fund?" and the most interesting reply would be "without organizing Yaoshang Sports, Lottery, Housie, Mela, other Donation how will be collect fund and operate?". Receiving such reply will be very unfortunate as "why the clubs are dependent fund only from the donation and fund raising activities?" "Why not provide trainings on skill development, animal husbandry, poultry, organic farming, fishery, production of bio-fertilizer and local indigenous products, etc?", under the initiative of the club in collaboration with different government sponsored programs or schemes and many other NGOs working on the field. These programs could be under a strict monitoring of the respective youth clubs and meira paibi groups as a result it will contribute for the development of the state at large and will have enough funds to donate

for the needy people and dependency on the others will be decreased.

Not only the issue of the locality need to be observed by the youths club but also need to understand that large number of cheap labours from outside are employed at many of the developmental projects being implemented in the state unfortunately it could be observed that large number of them are continued to settled at our land, then why not the state has taken up any steps to avoid such settlement by producing more local skilled people and experts which is required at the earliest before getting dominated by the outsiders. This could be seen in the oil exploration side where the oil companies like Asian Oilfield Service Ltd are conducting 3D seismic survey wherein not a single expert from the state could be seen and it is very unfortunate to experiences that who will be benefitting and who will be lost from it is still in dilemma. Also it will be important for many of the youth clubs to know about the defunct Dams in Manipur like Khuga, Loktak, Singda, Mapithel etc which had assured of youth employment prior to the project is still a dream since the 1980s and also have destroyed large number of agricultural field and have failed to generate the capacity of powers to be produced as planned after the investment of crores of Rupees which could have been invested for the education of the young people by establishing reputed educational institution in the state.

Lastly it is good to know that during the election season most of the Clubs seems to be active after been split from the earlier club and one could also observe large number of groups of meira paibi functioning in the localities by opening number of meira shang during those time, however, none of those groups or clubs could be seen when one goes to meet them after the election.

Here the humble appeal is kindly stop operating the clubs during the festive season and stop teaching such culture or double role to your younger generation instead stand as neutral bodies and raise voice to those depriving the rights of the civilians by looting the daily basic needs which are meant for the needy people.

Note: Many of the playground control by many of the Youth Clubs are converted into community halls as a result hardly any players could be produced as compared to the earlier time but many of the clubs do not consider the fact instead they pretend to promote young players for the future which is completely baseless. It is highly suspicious that most of the contract work to construct the community halls are taken by some of the office bearers of the particulars youth clubs.