

Editorial

Friday, June 22, 2018

MU impasse: Kind attention Mr. Prime Minister

The present crisis at Manipur University over the last 23 days, putting halt to all academic related activities is uproar over the incompetency of the head of the institution.

The impact of the ongoing stalemate at Manipur University not only disturb the academic atmosphere of University but has finally started affecting to students of colleges and institutions which are affiliated to this University. This is going to be one serious issue if the concern HRD Ministry fails to tackle it immediately as there is a saying that "better late than never".

Well and good, Joint Secretary of the Department of Higher Education, Union Ministry of Human Resource Development, Mr. G.C. Hosur has been sent to Imphal to take stock of the situation. Prime Minister Narendra Modi Government is very committed towards improving the academic curriculum of the country. He had a dream to make the youth of the country playing vital role in the world economy by 2022. The present scenario which is happening in the Manipur University is nothing but an "insult to the Prime Minister Modi" and the Union Human Resource Development Ministry should find immediate solution to make the academic atmosphere return to normalcy.

What is more disappointing is hear that the Joint Secy HRD while talking to representatives of the of the Manipur University Students' Union (MUSU) had stated that his visit to Imphal is not to solve the issue of the present impasse. May be the answer is given on the fact that the present impasse at Manipur University cannot be settled at his capacity as the matter at the University is directly against the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Adiya Prasad Pandey .

Well this is not the first time that bad news from the Manipur University has been coming in public sphere. Earlier too, the state had many times witnessed crisis which crippled academic atmosphere of the University. A Vice Chancellor was shot at CGI for his alleged involvement in corruption and a VC is under CBI scanner.

Academic council of the University survives as just for name shake. No review of the syllabus, which is mandatory, has been stop since the last couple of years. Scientific data which has been changing every single second for subjects like Geography, Earth Science, and other science streams as well as the political science have not been reviewed and the data of yester year is still force to learn to the students.

On the other hand most Vice Chancellors, outgoing as well as the present one seems to be busy in implementing and awarding contract works. The way things are happening in Manipur University showed that - the future of Manipur is to have more contractors than the academicians.

Manipur University which was once included in Grade A has been reduced. Maladministration by the authority now fails to retain university ranking. Lack of faculties now left the students with no choice but to leave the state for higher studies.

Tezpur University, which was established much latter than the Manipur University now is included in good list of the UGC. Adequate faculties in each department now produce better students.

But when it comes to Manipur University most students aspiring to go for higher studies are frustrated .

After the conversion of the Manipur University as a Central University - academic circle of the state had high hopes and there was no protest or dissatisfaction to the appointment of Prof Adiya Prasad Pandey as the Vice Chancellor as the people have full faith in the Prime Minister Narendra Modi government.

It is not about sending VC from outside the state. A competent and efficiency VC which could bring up the Manipur University at the highest level is what every people expected. Be him from abroad or any Indian state - people always expect a sincere, efficient VC. While saying so it would be wrong to say that Manipur does not have qualified professors who deserve for the post. Our state has one of the best economists, best sociologists, Anthropologists in the country. Among the 8 selected economist at which were selected to discuss with the then president of India Dr. Abdul Kalam was from the University. Many qualified teachers have been consultant at international level.

No body from the state complains in sending someone from outside the state but the present impasse is ignited from the immature, doctoral contract and supply oriented VC, who stayed out of station for around 20 days a month since his appointment.

If Prime Minister Narendra Modi care about Manipur, thinking it as an integral part of the country which need to provide best education for a better India, then he should certainly interfere and replace the present VC.

Legal Clinic

Section 342 in The Indian Penal Code
342. Punishment for wrongful confinement.—Whoever wrongfully confines any person shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees, or with both.

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Jammu and Kashmir digest

'Modi will never abrogate Article 370'

Courtesy: Rediff.com

A couple of days after the Bharatiya Janata Party withdrew support to the People's Democratic Party-BJP coalition government, citing the "increasing law and order problem" in Jammu and Kashmir, the PDP MLA from Baramulla, **Javed Hassan Baig**, tells **Rediff.com's Prasanna D Zore**. "It is not just in my state that radicalisation is emerging as a challenge. I am afraid that these levels of radicalisation — be it Muslim radicalisation or Hindu radicalisation — are intensifying across India and might one day gobble up the entire nation."

Were you expecting the BJP's withdrawal from the government? How is the PDP grappling with the situation?

Historically, 95 per cent of coalition governments have failed in Jammu and Kashmir except for the last Congress-National Conference coalition that lasted the full term because of their internal compulsions.

It was expected (by the PDP) that this government too will not last its full term.

We are only surprised by its timing, but then it was a given that the PDP-BJP government will not last its entire term.

Why did you expect the BJP's withdrawal?

One of our biggest misfortunes is that any firm national policy for Jammu and Kashmir becomes hostage to national politicking.

Let me illustrate this to you.

When the Congress was ruling the state they always feared that the BJP will benefit at the national level if they try to do something concrete to fulfil the aspirations and wishes of the people of the state.

Today, the BJP fears that if it takes any material decision for the people of the state it will benefit the Congress at the national level.

The BJP fears doing this because it fears being painted as soft on terrorism and separatism.

Unless the BJP and Congress do not reach any unanimity about the mechanism to mainstream the Kashmiris and address their genuine concerns, Pakistan will keep milking this issue for their own nefarious benefit.

A national political unanimity on resolving the genuine concerns of the Kashmiris will go a long way in resolving the problem of the people of the state.

Kashmir will always remain on the boil because of this national politicking between the two main parties of India.

Until both Parties agree to a national roadmap, confusion and resentment will reign in Kashmir.

How did Mehbooba Mufti react to the timing of the BJP's move? What was her first reaction when she heard that news?

When you are in politics you expect a lot of things to happen and it was expected that the BJP can withdraw support anytime.

The timing can be questioned, but the decision itself was not a shocking one.

The decision to announce a ceasefire happened at the request of Mehbooba, but ultimately the final decision-making body was in Delhi.

Delhi too agreed to the ceasefire decision.

If it were successful, both sides would have got the credit. Now that it has failed, the discredit should also belong to both parties.

Unfortunately, only the PDP has received the flak for its (the ceasefire's) failure.

When the news (of the BJP withdrawing support) broke, I was with the chief minister. She was absolutely calm.

She gathered her feet *aur kaha ki 4 baje baat karte hai (and said let us meet the governor at 4 pm to tender my resignation)*.

There was no shock or

displeasure; the only feeling was this could have been done in a better way.

The BJP president (Amit A Shah) could have directly called her and told her about the decision instead of going to the press. That would have been better.

But then in politics, such events do take place and politicians do what they think is best for their party. I don't have any grudge against the BJP for that.

In politics such things are normal: fathers fights elections against their sons.

BJP General Secretary Ram Madhav has blamed your party for the worsening law and order situation in the state.

Look, you cannot compare the (law and order situation in) Kashmir with other states of India.

An external factor plays out in Kashmir which you cannot ignore.

Did the Government of India not work on this external factor, to talk with them to normalise the situation in the state?

So, it is a fallacy to aver that the law and order situation in Kashmir is in the hands of the state government.

Now that governor's rule has been imposed in the state, they too will face similar challenges as we faced during our rule.

If and when the next elected government is sworn in, it will also face similar challenges that Mehbooba faced during her tenure.

If you look at Jammu and Kashmir through the governance lens, you will only end up finding fault with the ruling dispensation.

What were the main challenges you faced during the three-year PDP-BJP rule?

The most important one, and the one that is increasing in intensity, is how to control the growing radicalisation of Kashmiri youth.

In that sense, are you accepting the BJP's charge that the law and order situation was alarming, and there is rising radicalisation among the youth in the state?

It is not just in my state that radicalisation is emerging as a challenge.

I am afraid that these levels of radicalisation — be it Muslim radicalisation or Hindu radicalisation — are intensifying across India and might one day gobble up the entire nation.

Ultimately, it might engulf the entire subcontinent and that is the reason we should find ways to defuse it.

What is the main reason behind the radicalisation of Kashmiri youth?

Unfortunately, there are certain issues that you inherit from your forefathers. The Kashmir problem has been imposed upon the Kashmiris.

When India and Pakistan became independent and a situation so emerged for Kashmir's division — Pakistan did it by force and India did it by making it an inseparable and integral part of India, by making laws for the entry of the army into the state and the state into the Indian Union.

Our forefathers had no idea of what a plebiscite is. Who taught us about plebiscite? (India's first prime minister Jawaharlal) Nehruji taught us about it.

My father didn't ask for it; my grandfather didn't ask for it. Nehruji told us that the people of Jammu and Kashmir will have the right to determine their own fate.

Since then, this matter has only worsened. And now it has reached your education system, it has become a part of your culture.

The simultaneous rise of radicalisation and fundamentalism in Pakistan has now reached our homes. That is a fact we cannot run away from.

I am telling you honestly that people here are getting influenced by radicalisation; there is no doubt about it.

Do you fear the law and order situation will worsen under governor's rule, that there will be more terrorist attacks?

Based on my information and inputs I can tell you that governor's rule will see a fall in terrorist attacks and stone pelting incidents.

Those who foment trouble in the valley have been told to lie low till a new elected government takes shape in the state.

Whatever happened in the streets and the terrorist attacks were done with an eye to isolate the people of the state from the mainstream.

The Hurriyat (the all-parties Hurriyat Conference, a collection of separatist organisations) and the separatists have a two-fold agenda: To take the people of Jammu and Kashmir into a desperate situation and not to allow democracy and democratic institutions to take root in the minds of the people and the state.

They will not work towards achieving these goals under governor's rule which they do when an elected government establishes itself in the state.

Governor's rule works to their advantage as they can then tom-tom internationally that there is President's rule in the state, there is army rule in the state and this suppresses our democratic and fundamental rights.

They will use governor's rule as a stick to beat India with in international fora.

They will also spin it, saying governor's rule is better than the one administered by elected representatives.

The Hurriyat has asked its cadres to go into hibernation and not indulge in any acts that will allow democracy and normalcy to return to the valley.

They will create disturbances only after a new elected government is formed.

While the BJP has blamed the PDP for giving it reasons to withdraw support, the PDP has remained silent. Why?

Why should we criticise the BJP? Whatever the BJP is blaming us for doing or not doing in the state, the PDP also wants to make the same point.

The PDP is going to the people and telling them our government fell because we are your well-wishers and refused to take any action that would have hurt your interests or sentiments. That is the reason the BJP withdrew from the coalition.

We can't go and tell the people that we handled the law and order situation with an iron hand, but we always remained as the buffer between the people and the high-handedness of the security establishment.

I would only like to request the BJP to change their narrative for the national interest and desist from blaming us for their withdrawal.

We should all introspect honestly about the situation and lift the state from the quagmire that it has got into.

I can only say that they (the BJP) are only helping the PDP by making the people of the state realise that we stood for their welfare and betterment.

The PDP always wanted minimal use of force.

We are telling the people that our government could not complete its full tenure because we stood as a buffer between them and those who wanted to use force against them.

Having said that, personally I feel that both the BJP and PDP did their best, cooperated quite well, keeping in mind the welfare of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

As an honest politician, I will not blame the BJP for what is happening in the state and neither should the BJP blame the PDP for it.

We must understand that on the road to achieve our goals as politicians we do reach a stage where separation is seen to be better than being together.

Now that governor's rule is in place, what would be the PDP's

strategy?

Would you demand holding of assembly elections soon so that popular elected rule can be restored?

This is for the Government of India to decide as to when they want to hold the elections. How long would they want to proceed with governor's rule?

Let them decide if they want simultaneous Lok Sabha and state elections or if they want to test the waters first with panchayat elections and then go for assembly elections.

I am not in a position to comment on the PDP's strategy at this time, but I am saying this in my personal capacity.

My party may have a different position on this issue.

Is the PDP of the view that governor's rule suits the state better at this moment?

How can the PDP say that? At any given time, democratic rule is better than governor's rule.

Governor's rule has sent a direct message that the army will deal with the situation in the state now.

The peace that sets itself upon under the shadow of terror and distrust exacts its own price.

How are the people on the ground reacting to governor's rule?

Please understand this. The voting percentage in Jammu and Kashmir is always near or under 40 per cent.

60 per cent of the voting population never votes in an election here.

Of this 40 per cent, the winning party gets 18 per cent and the rest goes to the Opposition parties.

The National Conference and Congress are celebrating governor's rule like Eid because they are happy with the fall of the PDP-BJP government.

They even burst firecrackers. They believe that they will form the next government.

And if they form the next government, and if that also fails consequently, then the BJP and PDP will burst firecrackers.

This is the nature of our democracy: we see each other as enemies and elections as a war.

The elected government in a democracy always represents the minority.

Even if you look at the BJP's (2014 national) mandate, not more than 31 per cent people voted for it.

The rest were in favour of other parties. **BJP MP Dr Subramanian Swamy has once again demanded abrogation of Article 370 now that the PDP-BJP has parted ways and governor's rule has been imposed in the state.**

Do you think this kind of politics will become normal in the run-up to the Lok Sabha election?

People who are the most dangerous for our country (India's national and territorial integrity) speak this language.

I don't think the honourable prime minister, who is a man of great stature and wisdom, will abrogate or allow anybody else to abrogate Article 370 in Kashmir.

Do you think in the interest of Jammu and Kashmir the PDP and National Conference should form an alliance?

This is not possible. It should not be done at all. This would lead to an impression that Jammu is against Kashmir and vice versa.

Then holding the state together will be very difficult.

But when the PDP-BJP formed the coalition the Jammu and Kashmir division existed.

If the PDP and National Conference were to come together today, then there will be nobody from Jammu in the government.

It will be an all-Muslim elected MLAs who will rule the state. So, such a coalition is not desirable in the national interest.

We will have to then split the state into two.