

Editorial

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Usurped Domain

The most basic and important expectation of every rational citizen of a country is for the government to focus on the importance of good governance, transparency, and accountability to economic growth and democracy. The people of the state are no exception, and while states like Manipur where armed conflict situations still present a major challenge to smooth and efficient governance and effective administration, it does not in any manner imply that the rest of the country has it easy as every state or region has its own share of peculiar challenges, drawbacks and dilemmas. It however looks as if the state has been having more than its fair share of the unwanted hindrances and social disruptions thanks in large part to the indecisive nature of the state administrators who have institutionalized the practice of putting off almost every activity related to public development until some form of agitation is staged to set the ball in motion. And the irony in the whole sordid drama is that it is unmistakably clear as to why such a practice is being kept up despite the unceasing protests and agitations against such practices, even though those in the thick of it might have liked to keep things under wraps.

While a substantial part of the euphoria and high expectations generated with the change of guard in the state just over a year ago have evaporated, there is still a lingering hope that the present government will make a difference to the unfulfilled expectations of the people of the state. There have been a spurt of developmental activities across all sectors at the outset, and while the people are set to celebrate the changes, it now looks clearer with each passing day that the public is in for another long haul till the next election. Instead of the holistic approach towards development and inclusive progress assured and even initiated upto a certain degree, it now has come down to the age-old practice of comparative administration. The gradual turnaround is understandable, even expected, as the crux of the detriment has visibly remained unchanged and unchallenged. No matter the political will or the intent of the government, it has been proven that until the system is being targeted and changes made, every effort in development and progress will remain an exercise in futility, which brings us back to the most basic yet all important question- what should be the one most important step the government should take to ensure that initiatives towards a positive and radical change have been made?

One possible answer is the laying of greater emphasis on the responsibilities of the bureaucrats and elected representatives rather than the perks and rights such public positions could present, the key word being responsibility in its broadest sense encompassing the responsibility to ensure all development activities are being carried out without undue delay or deviations, responsibility to ensure social justice and fairness in engagement with the public, responsibility to ensure the law is being upheld and that the aspirations of the people are respected and provided to the best level, and among others, responsibility to ensure the authorities and powers bestowed on the officers, bureaucrats and elected representatives are utilized to make things happen for the common people in time without undue delay. So far, the responsibility part has been the biggest disappointment for the public and has continued to be the cause of most, if not all, unrest, agitations and disruptions in the society. Law-making and its efficient disbursement should remain the domain of the elected representatives. Failure to dispense adequate and timely justice and administration would always invite the facilitators of democracy to try and usurp that domain.

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After Water Woes: Designing A Residential Settlement

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

The woe of recent flood triggered me an idea of possible alternatives to avoid or mitigate the recurrent of the same difficulties in future. As we know, there are multifold factors and causes of such frequent water worries in Manipur. They are unattended deforestation in the catchments, anarchical drainage system, chaotic residential occupation, mindless garbage dumping into the rivers, discriminatory Ithai barrage and Loktak Project. On top of this the tragic burial of Pats/lakes and wetlands in and around Imphal is crucial.

Therefore, logical response to the situation towards transforming the flood bottleneck is to attack all the factors and causes. In the meantime, one project idea floating in my mind that connects to the solution not only to the flood but also to other current issues of sustainable development is - build model villages along the foothills of Manipur. By doing this, finally flood will not be able to touch us.

This could be postulated on the two grounds. First, decades ago Manipur valley was dwelled by many wetlands and we may give back them some. Second, we desire to leave our frayed and unrectifiable dens of Imphal and the Leikais of the other towns. Although restoring the Pats to their former form, appears kind of difficulty at the moment, still there will be better side of trade off. Because it will help to resurface natural flora and fauna, and can lower the global warming effect in Manipur. The aesthetic landscape of Manipur will be elevated in some ways, economic beneficial will also come along.

Many of us living in and around Imphal and other towns feel stuffy, smelly which repels us to settle away somewhere afresh. Also ours is such a haywire unplanned town, the renovation and rebuilding may be possibly costly and ungraceful.

New Residential Shift: In the earlier years of mine, whenever I was travelling along the Tiddim Road from Imphal to my village, I was always lost in the thought, looking

from the bus window at western side of valley I saw something new and different. There are really beautiful spaces in the green and fresh air foothills of Manipur. The location is not only lovely in scenic landscape but much ideal for residential settlements. In a nutshell, this will be a better endeavor for socioeconomic political alternative. The provincial Government of Manipur is always in the principal position to extend a committing help to the new minds in transforming the foothills to a sustainable and environment friendly residential settlements. All around the valley, there are plenty of such sites which can also be reconciled by streams for water supply and fertile soil for kitchen garden.

Sovereign Livelihood: For this project philosophy, the Government is crucially desired to allocate land to group or community. One of the foremost beautiful segment of this design is to restore the sovereignty of self-sustained livelihood and make it operational in the world of 21st century. A different and meaningful live in a community setting where social harmony prevails, organic healthy food are not bought from the outside and maximum clean energy generates within independently. The sewage will be managed in low scale volume as it will be converted into the source of biogas for electricity and other useful purposes. A gas plant will be installed for each household or groupwise towards producing electricity and cooking gas. Solar energy installation and micro hydel power plants can be very functional for the village. It will be independent at the maximum in terms food, water and power.

Family and Community: The families and individuals who are taking into account the prevailing difficulties and very much willing to avoid the existing inconvenience, can be part of this new idea and be members of this new model village.

Their understanding and volunteerism will be of great help in shifting to a new environment. The community in this village may be at

the average of thirty families and can include some single individuals. Should be a village of multi ethnic community. Therefore, mandatory to include Meetei, Naga, Kuki, Pangal and others. Any religious family or individual can be in the community. They can entertain liberty to go to and join the religious ceremonies and occasions outside the village anytime anywhere. There will be no public shrine, church, mosque and temple in the village. However a community centre will be to provide space for occasional social events. The family rituals and prayers should be restricted to their respective houses without undesirable effect to their neighbors.

Housing and Farming: The shape of the village can be a linear cluster of the houses with about one kilometer in width. It may be so for administrative and other functional convenience. Each family can build their own house with a minimum and convenient budget yet scientific, hygienic and lovely one. They can accomplish it with a fair share and the support from the Government's schemes. The assistant can be in the form of either housing materials or monetary kind. Each family is going to commit to kitchen garden farming for maximum food sovereignty. Therefore they have to own an ideal land space. The farming will include seasonal vegetables, corns, cereals, fruits, other life stock of fowls, dairy especially indigenous breed. There can be as big as medium size farming towards extensive purposes for individuals and groups' economic activities. The vegetables and other plants will be grown nearby, in and around the family houses. For animal husbandry, it may be set out at a reasonable distance, at the fringe of the village in order to avoid smelly disturbances and unhygienic contacts.

Education: The families of the village will be in need of a good education input for their young hearts and minds in such fresh village lifestyle. The Government

has to extend infrastructural supports at least for elementary and middle schools, equip them with productive teachers. Interested individuals but qualified ones from the community can volunteer in teaching the children as well. The community members can also extend voluntary in designing learning curriculum for children.

Transport and communication: An unbumpy approach road free from dust and pot-holes, and flanked with cycle way and footpath is required to stretch from the main roads to the village. Also there will be one inter village road to connect the model villages one another. A public transport set up at least with a bus in tuning with timely frequency will be playing up and down. Since the Government has got reasonable fund and budget for such purposes they must take the responsibility. The community also will use the private cars at the least and optimize the cycling and walking.

Security: A small number of 5-7 selected, active security persons either from police or VDF will be deployed to take care of the day to day crimes and violence of theft, robbery and other nuisances tend to occur in around the village. In case of the requirement of reinforcement in certain situation, they will coordinate with the police station and Superintendent of Police concerned.

In the beginning for trial experience, about five villages can be set up. Once the villages are in places and run accordingly then hundreds will be followed in no time. Because such is Manipur to copy new things. This could also be an ideal aspect for meaningful tourism in Manipur. This model village will yield home-stay facility for tourists from within and outside. Again, in order to make a meaningful accomplishment a good few supports and assistance from the Government and relevant experts are prerequisite. Best and healthiest farming methodologies, effective maintenance of sewage and drainage technology are much beneficial.

Present Human Rights Issues and Challenges in India

By: Jyoti Sharma

All throughout the ages people have been governed by rulers who followed different system and forms of government and used their power and authority to suppress the common people. It was only in 1947 when India got its independence from the British rule and adopted democratic form of government which encouraged India to get its new face. Now even after 70 years of Independence, India still continues to suffer from significant human rights violations, despite framing many laws and policies and promising and making commitments to tackle the problems.

Human Rights in simple sense refers to the certain basic or fundamental rights which are universal for humanity and is entitled to each person of our society irrespective of Caste, creed, color, race, origin, sex, religion etc. The Principle Objective of human rights for protection of human life and liberty, to preserve the dignity of people, promoting healthy development, maintaining equality etc. In India the violations of human rights is equal to the violations of the democratic principles which is enshrined in the constitution of India. Human rights are no longer the concerned of any particular country and became an international issue. The United Nations has adopted a charter of Human Rights for the respect of people and on 10th December 1948, the UN adopted the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights for the protection of Human Rights. India was a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but the violations and atrocities are still prevalent. Due to this wide scale violation of human rights like extra-judicial killings, custodial deaths and atrocities by the security force particularly in Kashmir, the Indian Government set up the NHRC (National Human Rights Commission) in 1993. People basic and fundamental rights are denied due to the economic and political interest of politicians, big industrialist and power-drunk people. There are numerous incidents of the violations of human rights and some of them are described below.

Issue1: With the rising crimes, violations, scams and scandals human rights are being violated and taken for granted and in the recent years conditions have become worst and deteriorated in India. Violence against women is increasing at an alarming rate and they are at a high risk of sexual harassment, trafficking, and forced labour including violations of equal participation in political, economic and social life. In fact the recent molestation case in Bengaluru was shocking and condemned by all sections of our society. Such horrifying incident took place on the night of 31 December 2016 where many people gathered on the streets and started molesting the women's. And just after the New Year incident another molestation case

occurred in Bangalore which was triggered by two hooligans nearby East Bengaluru. The circumstances for women rights and their freedom seems to have deteriorated, with not only people committing women rights violations but also powerful politician and police who are easily compromising with the security of women. This unfortunate incident reminds about the Nirbhaya Case, one of the most heinous crime of gang rape of a young woman which took place on 16th December 2012. Despite the various strong laws and acts framed by the government, women across India still continue to suffer from domestic violence, acid attacks, rape and murder etc.

Issue2: Another incident which violated the right to security of people was Indore-Patna deadliest train accident which took place on 20 November 2016. This accident took the life of more than 150 people and over 200 people got injured. This accident was one of the deadly derailment of the year. It was one of the worst rail accident in 6 years. The Main reason of this deadliest accident was because of the casual behavior of the politician of our country who are accountable to the people security. Because of their casual behaviour and lenience towards their work, the outcome was that the innocent people who have voted for such politician to be their representative had to sacrifice with their life. Although the Union Rail Minister Suresh Prabhu presented a fancy rail

budget for the year 2016 but the bitter truth lies in the fact that Indian Railway which carries more than 13 million passengers daily still has a very poor safety record, with thousands of people dying in accidents every year.

Issue3: Then widespread protests erupted in the month of July 2016 after the killing of Burhan Wani, a militant leader of Kashmir in an encounter with the Indian Security forces. In this incident more than 85 people lost their lives and over 13,000 civilians and 4,000 security personnel got injured. This incident created high turmoil and continuous unrest in the state. Another major attack took place on 18 September 2016 at an army base in Jammu and Kashmir's Uri near the Line of Control, killing at least seventeen soldiers. It was one of the deadliest terrorist strikes on security forces.

Issue4: In June, Security forces who were operating against Maoist insurgents were accused of serious human rights violations like sexual harassment and killing of innocent tribal villagers. According to a report given by National Commission of Scheduled Tribe, security forces in Odisha killed five tribal villagers including children and claimed that they were killed during anti-Maoist operations. A tribal woman of Chhattisgarh's Sukma district was forcefully abducted by security personnel and was gang raped and ultimately killed and it was alleged that she was killed in gunfight with armed Maoists.

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