

Editorial

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Maintaining traffic regulation is also as important as beautification of Imphal city

State government is busy in beautification works to host the Sangai festival. It is well and good but the murky scene will be the mismanage traffic. The standard of Imphal which is preparing to host hundreds of foreign tourist if not Thousands will be shown by the way that traffic movement is being managed in a systematic ways.

Each time when the issue about traffic regulation came in the limelight, some traffic police will be seen on roadside of crowded Imphal city stopping vehicles to check their documents, license etc. But the fact is that while doing so public face more inconveniences with the road more crowded.

Everybody knows it is illegal to drive vehicle without license or proper registration certificate of the vehicle. But sometimes people use to forget things that were supposed to be with them. But it is not necessary that all the vehicle driver were halted and checked as long as they follows the traffic rules. Saying so checking can be done at somewhere where people will not be disturbed and not at the middle of the city like the one seen near GM Hall. Traffic police should be more focus on smooth flow of vehicles and should find who do not understand the meaning of stoppage line drawn a feet away from the zebra crossing. Thanks to the government, Imphal today sees electronic traffic signal at the traffic island at the western gate of Historic Kangla ford. Some of the difficulties faced by traffic policemen were somehow relieve. But are the people following the electronic traffic signal? Had the traffic police on duty fined any violators at that point?

The fact remains that the concerned authorities have failed or perhaps lacks proper understanding on how to manage the traffic regulations.

The short term policies and systems being implemented from time to time in an attempt to ease the congestions and traffic jams have not been able to alleviate the problem in any way, on the contrary these ad-hoc measures have managed to confuse the public and compound the problem the authorities have been trying to solve.

The meeting of the Traffic regulation and parking committee convened by Chief Minister is not of much help, and one can only wonder if words of the Chief Minister are being converted into realities by the authority of the concern department.

Queries put up to the concerned departments have only resulted in more bewildering responses- a classic example of the effectiveness of passing the buck around that has been at work in all government set ups.

While formulation of policies and systems to control and regulate traffic may be a beginning in the right direction, the fact remains that the increasing number of vehicles need additional space to accommodate them and juggling acts of the traffic system by the experts, however efficient and experienced they may be, will not bear fruit. Construction of additional parking spaces at strategic locations, bypasses and flyovers, and most importantly providing subways at important and crowded junctions will go a long way in reducing these problems. Construction of public utilities does not automatically guarantee improvement- their proper usage is as important- an obvious example being the use of footpaths by the vendors and shopkeepers to stock and ply their goods forcing the pedestrians to walk on the road. The need to streamline and re-orient the traffic police personnels is also being felt by the public. Turning a blind eye to the irregularities being committed by the drivers of various public and commercial transport vehicles in consideration for a "quick handshake" has been well documented- despite the dangers and inconveniences such greedy causes. The present government ministers and high ranking officials may not be feeling the burden such traffic jams causes as they seem to have a prerogative of the right of use of the road over the common public but unless some concrete steps are taken up very soon, the only option that would be available to them would be to use their feet with their retinue of escorts and assistants wading through the impossible traffic- surely a distracting relief for the stranded common public on the road. ■

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Aquatic edible insects of Loktak Lake of Manipur, North East, India

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ABSTRACT

The edible insects viz., *Lethocerus indicus*, *Diplonychus rusticus*, *Gerris* spp., *Aquarius* spp., *Limnogonus* spp., *Enithare* spp., *Paranisops* spp., *Cercomatus* spp., *Libulla* spp., *Sympatrum* spp., *Leucorrhinus* spp., *Ischnura* spp., *Pseudagrion* spp., were present in the natural habitat of Loktak lake. Survey revealed a total of 31 aquatic insect species belonging to 4 orders, 12 families and 27 genera with food value. The order Hemiptera has the maximum numbers of edible species (14) and least number (1) in Ephemeroptera.

INTRODUCTION

The aquatic edible insects constitute a very important food source in many countries and Manipur also. They are good source of high content of proteins, fat, carbohydrates, mineral and vitamins (Ene 1963, ASHURU, 1988, Defoliart 1988-1991). Aquatic edible insects are a natural renewable resource that provides food to many ethnic groups of many countries. In the North Eastern India particularly Manipur, Assam and Nagaland, aquatic insects like Giant water bugs and water beetles have a high market demand. The inhabitants of the Loktak Lake market demand. The inhabitants of the Loktak Lake have a natural source of earning money through the use of 17 species of aquatic insects as food and also used for fishery. Gope and Prasad (1983) reported that insects

represent the cheapest source of animal protein in Manipur. Most of the tribal people of Manipur and Assam are also habituated with the consumption of giant water bug. Hazarika (2008) reported the high market demand of giant water bug in some lower Assam. In Manipur the market price of giant water bugs is more than Rs 30 per one bug. Nowadays this bug is not found abundantly. Around 10-20 bugs were found sold at the Khairamband Bazar in a particular area of the market by an old woman according to the market survey of present study. The population of this bug is now in danger due to the application of pesticides in the paddy fields as well as in the loktak lake by fishermen while catching fish. Therefore, it is highly needed to study the bio-ecology of these bugs particularly in Manipur. Regarding to this fact the present study was undertaken for the conservation and management of these giant water bugs.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was carried out during April, 2012 to December 2012 as a part of the MOEF funded project. Intensive survey was conducted in the different 12 sites of Loktak Lake. The aquatic insects were colonized on the littoral and limnetic zones of the lake. These were collected by sweeping into an insect net. Different markets were also visited for collection of different aquatic insects and collected information. The Loktak lake lies between 24° 25'N to 24° 40'N latitude and 93° 45'N to 93° 40'N Longitudes. The survey work

was conducted in 12 collection sites. It covers a total geographical area of 286 km². The Loktak lake was inhabited by Meitei community.

Survey and historical review of the aquatic edible insects revealed that the insects were collected day by day by the inhabitant of the Loktak lake for food and sold in the market for their needs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The extensive survey and the information data revealed the occurrence of 17 species belonging to 12 families and 27 genera consumed by the ethnic groups of Manipur. The Hemipteran order shared with the maximum number of 14 species followed by Odonata by 9 species, Coleoptera by 6 species respectively. Details about their specific name, local name, modes of consumption, stage of consumption etc. were provided in Table 1. The larvae (nymphs) and adults of Cordulidae sp., Libulla sp., Sympatrum sp., Leucorrhinus sp., Ischnura sp., Pseudagrion sp., consumed by almost all the ethnic communities in their region in various forms. Nymphs/grubs and adult stages are mainly eaten in order Hemiptera and Coleoptera. Majority of ethnic groups consumed the insect in roasted, boiled and dry fry or fry in oil. Preparation of dry and wet chutney using giant water bugs, *Lethocerus indicus* and water beetles such as *Cybister* sp. and *Hydrophilus olivaceus*, etc. were known in Manipur.

In the present investigation, the survey of the selling of the insects

in the local market of Manipur has been observed especially in the Imphal East, West, Bishnupur and Thoubal districts. Giant water bug was sold @ 10-50 per live individual. The market value of this said item varies from district to district and again season. Consuming of the aquatic insects in an age old tradition and well accepted socio-cultural attribute for the ethnic groups of Manipur. The use of insect as human food especially by indigenous people in the other part of the world was well documented. But such investigation pertaining to the Loktak lake of Manipur is far lacking. The documentation and scientific publication in the recent part such as Meyer Rochow (2004), Singh, et al. (2007), Singh and Chakravorty, (2007 and 2008), Kato and Gopi (2009), Ronghang and Ahmed (2010), Singh, et al. (2012), Shantibala et al. (2012), etc. are worth mentioning. People of Thailand have been eating insects for centuries. In particular, a traditional well known delicacy is the giant water bug, *Lethocerus indicus* which is used to make nam prik maeng daa, a common Thai (Hanboosong, 2010). A collective approach on scientific documentation of the traditional knowledge and technique used by different ethnic groups of Manipur is the need of the hour especially to conserve the dwindling entomofauna of aquatic edible insects and also to introduce such products commercially to enhance economy of the ethnic communities in a sustainable way.

Contd from yesterday's issue

OF MALE AGGRESSION AND SUPPRESSED VOICES.....

By- Linthoingambi Thangiam

The scent at the edges of your cloth
Of children and husband
Carrying them to every destination
of life.

Y. Indira, in her poem 'Ei Khutlai Pairage', 'I Take Up Arms' (translated by A. Birendra), speaks as a mother who had lost her son to the grips of violence in the state, the hands of 'those harbingers of Death' [Indira, Y., ed., 2007: 22]. The personified Death represents the army forces, which according to draconian act of AFSPA, have every right to arrest and kill anybody even on grounds of slight suspect of involvement with insurgency. There is a tone of anger as the speaker sarcastically criticizes the 'law' and 'governance' over how petty human life is to them. The helpless mother could not do anything while her son was dragged away by the army. She laments her pain and anguish, never again going to hear the word 'Imma' from her son. Many years have passed since his death, and the pain and anguish of her loss has now turned into rage as her questions are unanswered as the government authorities maintain a deaf ear and a blind eye to the situation. The mother decides to 'take up arms', because she sees no other way to win justice for her son. This shows the courage of a mother, the courage of a Manipuri woman, who will not cower down and give in, but come out and fight for their own rights, the rights of their husbands, their daughters, and their sons.

Bereft of all joys, and desperate with sorrow -
As I am, I too am a daughter of the soil.
My weary limbs now feel the rush of valour:

I take up arms. (sic)
After having been pushed to limits and one can no longer tolerate this treatment, the desire to revenge is a voice that echoes in many poems

written by the Manipuri women authors.

Sanjenbam Bhanumati, in her poem 'The Old To The New' / 'Who is so Gallant' (translated by Ng. Ibotoon Singh), is an address from the Old Year to the New Year. Old Year states that she had been longing for New Year to come, as her end is here [Indira, ed., 2007: 55].
Laugh and enjoy for all the world is yours now,
While I moun and weep
For all those lapses,
For the tall trees that cracked and fell in fearsome gales,
For those precious lives that sank in despair.

A new year is suggestive of the idea of new beginnings, of a change for something better. People look forward in hope for a change when they are not completely content with the old state. Old Year laments over everything that has happened throughout the year- the condition of life in the state of Manipur amidst strikes, protests, bandhs, blockades, disputes and untold deaths every day. And after each year, that continues just the same with no significant change, but still as a New Year sets in, Old Year wishes for 'new hopes and fruition.'

In 'Androgi Mei' / 'The Fire of Andro', Arambam Ongbi Memchoubi remembers the historical episode of the hanging of the two freedom fighters of Manipur, Thangal General and Yuvraj Tikendrajit, after Manipur lost her independence to the British at the Anglo Manipuri War of 1891 [Memchoubi and Chanu, ed. 2003: 150]. But their mourners are a crowd of Meitei women standing all clad in white. And although they stand in silence, they are filled with rage which the poet compares to as a 'volcano inside'. This leads us to the episode of the two Women's Wars of 1904 and 1939, when the Meitei women came

out to fight against the British forces. The poet/ speaker call out to the Meitei women, who have been holding in their rage and discontent in their 'wombs' to come out and fight. Here, Memchoubi uses the myth of the undying 'fire of Andro' which she compares to the rage and discontent of the Meitei women that have been kept repressed for so long.
Erupt now oh, you
That's been holed up for many years
In the wombs of the Meitei women
The sleeping volcano within.
The sleeping volcano within.

Longjam Chanu Kunjaripier poem, 'Hugi Tenjei' / 'Poison Tipped Arrow', lends a strong message to 'release' women so that they can come out of their domestic space to fight for justice [Ibid., 170]. Manipuri women have been for long confined to the household, imprisoned by the strong traditional conventions set by the Manipuri society. Seeing their men standing weak and passive to 'the hunters right in front of you' / With the poison tipped arrows in their hands', referring to the state actors and the insurgents, the Meitei women calls out to their men to debar all their restrictions, and set them free. As in Memchoubi's poem, 'The Fire of Andro', The bottled-up rage and discontent that wants to be set free, is echoed in this poem as well.
Release me, let me go to the house of justice
To determine the right from the wrong.
What? why do you say I can't step out
Beyond your coloured curtains?

From Sharmila, civil rights activist and poet, who went on a hunger strike for 16 years straight (from 2nd November 2000 till 9th August 2016), against the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958, In the foreword to her poem

'Birth' [Vaid, 2013: 91], translated into the English by Tayenjam Bijoykumar Singh, Deepthi Mehrotra writes of Sharmila: 'She is trapped in a web of deceit and hypocrisy, her fate sealed by violence and militarism.' [Ibid., 88] Sharmila's menstrual cycles have also stopped, which signifies that she has stopped being a woman. She stands for all-men and women, equally affected by violence. In her long poem that runs in 1000 words, Sharmila touches on various subjects of power, greed, revenge, remorse, vanity, the indolent man and the diligent man, etc. The poem basically portrays the social and political scenario in the state.

'... Of the lost son, of the killed husbands,
The hard earned money of the widows is tainted with remorse
Because of the urge to take revenge for the unwarranted sufferings...' [Ibid., 98]

As David Brion Davis, in his article 'Violence in American Literature' had observed that, 'literary treatments of violence have reflected certain historical conditions and circumstances' [Davis, March 1966: 28-36]. The condition of Manipuri society and women is also reflected in Manipuri literature. In the selected poems of some of the Manipuri women authors that we have discussed, we can see how they have responded to violence of various forms prevalent in the state. While the pioneer poets like Anandini wrote in a less commanding voice, the poets of the later generation that followed like Borkanya, Angom Sarita, Bhanumati, Y. Indira, Memchoubi, etc. starting voicing on immediate issues of violence, human rights issues, causes and effects of the freedom struggle, militarisation of Manipur, AFSPA, etc. apart from their protest against the subjugation of women. (Concluded)