

Editorial

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Sangai stops dancing; but state continues to glorify the dancing animals

Among the many, one reason that makes Manipur pride is the floating Keibul Lamjao National park, which is the dancing platform of rare animals 'Sangai'. Nature's gift makes the state potential in every aspect. The rich cultural heritage, arts and culture are all the reflection of the nature's elegant looks.

Culture, traditions and life style is being inherited from the surrounding and the beauty of Manipuri culture is also a reflection of the surrounding.

Ongoing Sangai festival, can be assumed as the gift of the dancing Brow Alter deer locally called Sangai which live only on the floating park at the fresh water lake Loktak called Keibul Lamjao. Perhaps it is because of this understanding that the state government officially opened the Sangai Festival here at Keibul Lamjao.

Everybody praise the nature's gift and everybody talk about the rarest animals Sangai. Not only Sangai, but the state is also blessed with rare flower Siroy Lily which is only found in Sirui Hill of Ukhrul district. The government also organised Sirui Lily festival.

But the fact is that nobody seems to realize that the reason for organizing festival to attract tourist is the outcome of the nature's special gift Sangai and Sirui Lily to this reason.

Sirui Lily seems to have stopped blooming slowly and the Sangai now stop dancing as the thickness bushes (biomass) of the floating park now is decreasing day after day. Experts blame the climate change, people blame the government for not taking measures to protect the rare gift, and the government people blame the people for cutting trees and for hunting the animals. But none seem to act and had work out any policy to protect the rare animals and flowers.

Much has been discussed, much had been debated over the issue, but except giving good lectures and findings nobody act, the following day. Thing seen today in this tiny state is more like a scientist talk about finding a way to reach planet Mars and film makers makes movie to earn money.

The construction of Ithai barrage and later the commissioning of the National Hydro Electric Power Project at Loktak is the beginning of the present day condition of the Keibul Lamjao Floating lake which is the dancing platform of the Sangai. This newspaper did not said it, it was said by experts from the University and from the authority of the Environment and forest department. Which means that the government knows the NHPC is the main reason of why the Sangai stop dancing. During election time promises were heard about decommissioning of the NHPC to protect the one and the only fresh water lake in the reason. But as of now no action is notice taken up from the side of the government.

Instead the state now witnesses more constructions of dam by displacing villagers and more such are likely to be taken up. The government is preparing for commissioning of the Mapithel Dam by driving out villagers. The indigenous beauty of Villages is now a history. The next generation people may hardly know that once upon a time there was beautiful village called Chadong in Ukhrul district.

The same is with the Tipaimukh Dam. Many natural habitants which were exceptional gift of the nature will be no where seen.

Coming back to the Sangai Festival, people now started fighting over allotment of stalls constructed at Keibul. Even elected representatives were reported exchanging heated words on the inaugural day. The way things are happening clearly indicates that people have now forgotten the dancing deer which brings pride to the state.

For sure the Sangai will not dance anymore.

Under Modi's Crop Insurance Scheme, Companies Owe Farmers a Whopping Rs 2,800 Crore

By: Kabir Agarwal and Dheeraj Mishra
Courtesy: The Wire

In January 2016, when the Narendra Modi led government announced the new crop insurance scheme - Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) - it had said that one of the key improvements over previous schemes would be that claims would be settled on time.

However, RTI data received and reviewed by *The Wire* has revealed that farmers' claims worth Rs 2,829 crore remain unpaid for the two seasons that the PMFBY has been implemented. The RTI response of the ministry of agriculture and farmers' welfare is dated October 10.

"A majority of claims for rabi 2017-18 are yet to be estimated/approved by company," the ministry noted in its response. Thus, for the 2017-18 season, a majority of the data pertains to Kharif 2017 and the data reflects only 1% of the claims paid for the rabi 2017-18 season.

For the 2016-17 season, claims of Rs 546 crore remain pending. Claims need to be settled within two months of harvest, according to the PMFBY guidelines. Harvest for the 2016-17 season would have ended in May 2017, at the very latest.

For the 2017-18 season, claims worth Rs 2,282 crore remain pending. The data essentially pertains to Kharif 2017-18, as pointed out by the ministry. The harvest for which would have ended in December 2017, at the very latest.

Thus, on the date the RTI was

responded to, Rs 2,282 crore remained unpaid more than nine months after the harvest period ended, while the PMFBY guidelines require that claims be settled within two months of harvest.

For the 2016-17 and 2017-18 seasons, the estimated claims of farmers amounted to Rs 34,441 crore. Insurance companies have paid Rs 31,612 crore, and Rs 2,829 crore remains unpaid.

Major insurance companies including Reliance General Insurance, ICICI Lombard, SBI General Insurance, Agriculture Insurance Company (AIC) of India, New India Assurance company are key players in the crop insurance business.

State-owned AIC accounts for a major chunk of the unpaid claims. It is yet to clear farmers' claims worth Rs 1,061 crore. Rs 154 crore of these claims pertain to 2016-17 and Rs 907 crores pertain to 2017-18, effectively only for Kharif 2017-18.

For the year ended March 2018, AIC's operating profit from the crop insurance business was Rs 703 crore.

HDFC continues to owe farmers Rs 300 crore, while ICICI owes Rs 260 crore.

A large proportion of the claims that remain unpaid pertain to Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Himachal Pradesh.

In fact, of the Rs 546 crore that remain unpaid for the 2016-17 season, Rs 257 crore pertain to Karnataka. The state saw a severe drought that year, with 160 of the 176 taluks in the state being declared drought hit.

For the 2017-18 season, 91% of the

estimated claims in Himachal Pradesh remain unpaid as on October 10, 2018. The corresponding figure for Tamil Nadu is 86% with Rs 124 crore of the Rs 144 crore estimated claims remaining unpaid.

Delayed rabi claims for 2017-18

The chief complaint of farmers vis-a-vis PMFBY has been that their claims are not settled on time. They argue that they will benefit from crop insurance only if the claims for crop loss for one particular season are settled before sowing for the next season begins. For instance, if the kharif crop is damaged, the claims should be paid before sowing for the rabi season begins.

The response to our RTI query is dated October 10, 2018, over four months after rabi harvest ended in May. But, the ministry was not even aware of the estimated claims for the rabi season.

To reiterate, PMFBY guidelines require that the claims be settled within two months of harvest.

Reasons for delays

A working paper for the think tank ICRIER authored by Ashok Gulati, Prerna Terwar and Siraj Hussain identified some of the key reasons for delays in settlement of claims.

They pointed out frequent extension of cut off dates; delayed submission of yield data of crop cutting experiments; delayed payment of premium subsidy to insurance companies, as some of the key reasons why claims settlement is delayed.

"The scheme with a noble intention to protect farmers can succeed only if operational guidelines are strictly followed," they noted in the paper.

Siraj Hussain adds that the crop cutting experiments are also disputed. "The results are disputed by companies. So, that is another reason for delays," he told *The Wire*.

The Centre has also admitted to delays in settlement of claims. Responding to a question in the Lok Sabha in July 2018, it revealed that more than 40% of claims for the 2017 kharif were yet to be paid even when more than seven months had passed since the kharif harvest ended.

In September, the Centre attempted to address the issue. It issued fresh guidelines for the PMFBY. The key change was that insurance companies would have to pay 12% interest to farmers if the claims were delayed more than two months over the prescribed cut off dates.

The Centre also said that states will have to pay 12% interest to insurance companies if they delayed in releasing their share of the subsidised premium.

Kuldeep Tyagi, president of the Bhartiya Kisan Andolan, a farmer organisation that works in western UP, argues that the new guidelines have had little impact. "It has made no difference. Companies are continuing to work as they did before," he said.

He points to the heavy rainfall that most of north western India saw in late September. "There was massive crop loss. Even sugarcane, which is a sturdy crop, was damaged."

"But, no process has even been initiated to compensate farmers for that loss. We have approached district offices but nothing has happened," Tyagi said.

Contd. from yesterday

Literary aesthetics' representation of political violence.....

Dr. P. Milan Khangamcha

It is an internally vibrant existential pathos and indomitable power of aesthetics as its socio-cultural upsurge as a symbolically representational democratic discourse or a kind of de-centering of power of discourse from the mainstream core to the India's regional periphery. Art also may turn out to be a socio-cultural form of self-reflexive protest through the medium of the generalised symbolic aesthetic representation. It may also serve as an expression of collective unconscious which releases the long repressed and suppressed negative collective emotions being released via the art works. In the work cited here, speaks about the special value of works of art in terms of its progressions in the stream of history which as 'A tradition is impersonal'. The character of generalisation and symbolic aesthetic representation may agree with the tradition of the intrinsic worth of art works as being impersonal. For a subsequent treatment of aesthetic aspect of works of art that have the generalised emotive content of political violence and its built in message of sublime and subjectively universal tragedies in its progression 'in an entirely new element' it is necessary to analyse as to how an artist '...stands in the stream of history and he is duty bound much less with the (customer) audience than with art. It is also true that, due to the communicative nature of art works and the very structure of intersubjectivity of the human life world, in the light of the view of 'art-as-an-end-in-itself' or as having its own intrinsic worth and the larger contexts of the artists' situatedness in his particular dynamic socio-temporal set up, somehow its form/meaning/message being suggestively conveyed by its aesthetico-symbolic representation as significant forms to the spectators. The success or failure of art works consists in their capability to evoke the same emotive content to the aesthetically cultivated spectators with the accompanying newer and newer hermeneutically unconcealing relish of art unalloyed experience. Once again whether, this ends up as a protest, propaganda or as a pure act of aesthetic joy depends upon the depth, dexterity, skills of the creative talents of the artists. This author had elsewhere

brought this case out in the relation between art and morality that, without being directly didactic innovative art works can smoothly take the members of the audience to the level of catharsis where art releases negative human tendencies and indirectly reveals via its power of suggestivity in a non-discursive way an order of existential truth. Even if great art works have failed to take mankind from their state of nature towards an ideal order of existence, great works of art may remain as a standing call to mankind to a common good of mankind. There seems to be a timelessness in its significant form with its revelation of the futility, mindlessness and self-destructive actions of mankind in their acts which are symptomatic of being polarised and fragmented in their expressions which will ultimately get boomeranged to the eventual self-destructions of those very human agents who enjoy basking in their temporary gains and glitters born out of their violent actions perpetrated towards the helpless and marginalised fellow beings. Now, this ideal demand is not something which an artist of substance discursively does from his position of dichotomised subjectivity which stands in opposition to other selves, society and reality at large as objects to be overcome. This evident from the sciences' relentless search for the attainment of objective truths that are mostly turning out to be instrumental in nature for serving as the ends of the inalienable derivative rights of the possessive tendencies of highly fragmented and polarised human individuality and its accompanying sense of liberty. But the ingenious work of art of artist of creative genius is a response of his whole being (this may be explained with reference to Heidegger and Jiddu Krishnamurti) as an expression of the given ontological structure of the larger world of which he/she is existentially structured. His work is not that of a subject who causally produces his work as a product. In Heidegger's language it is 'earth' which has become unhidden as 'world' of equipotential totality with its underlying structure of unitary system of assignments through a form which it has taken as 'matter'. And this aesthetically constituted (significant

'form' is not a mere 'form', but 'formed matter' that shows something other than itself, that in some way has an intellectual content or meaning [Carrier, 2008: 38]. His concept of 'worldhood-of-the-world' as being revealed to the interpretative understanding of an ontologically situated Dasein as a 'being-in-the-world', is not something causally produced as a 'product' by an 'efficient causality'. This model of Heidegger may be adapted to a work of art as something that is not a product but as a revelation or the appearing of the appearance which is a meeting point of showing nature of non-Dasein beings in general and the seeing capability of Dasein. That is, a new order of non-propositional truth is being cleared or unconcealed to the artist-Dasein to whom only the question of being is an issue, and who only can understand meanings of existence. The aforesaid idea of the stream of history is echoed in the contention of Heidegger [Heidegger, 2006: 168] that, '...in emphasizing the strangeness and thickness of art, regarded a meaningful work less as an object (and thereby subject to stable conceptual aesthetic categories) than an event in the world. A work of art has '...extraordinary address to its viewers and their ability to put it 'to work,' transforming mere material into meaningful form ('earth' becoming 'world,' a place of unveiling, unconcealing, lighting up). Such a philosophical position is possible only when an artist is not a subject working on a product in the form of art work as an object. As a being-in-the-world his work of art is a response by him/her as a whole being where praxis and theoria are equi-primal and it is therefore not that, just as it was misinterpreted by Sartre, that, praxis or concrete existence precedes essence.

A more articulate discussion may be done by revisiting the two answers to the question 'what is literature' [Claire & Zwijsenber, 2003, eds.: 165] and Edmund Burke's The Sublime and Beautiful [Ibid.]. The first deals with the distinction between a textual feature and an aesthetic feature. The two types of answers, however, differ sharply in that one (the former) is reductive and the other non-reductive (the latter). This may help in discerning as to how aesthetic structure of literatures

assumes the kind of aesthetic functions in portraying the emotive contents of literatures even if they are taken to be having a self-referring character (as in the reductive model of textual feature) or more indirectly or suggestively they point to a reality outside (aesthetic feature as non-reductive model). It is necessary to see as to how these two differences of interpretations will have a bearing on the theme of this paper when one takes the relationship that is understandable between art and life or society and the reality at large. That is, if one speaks about literary aesthetics with reference to textual feature, one cannot goggle up its aesthetic structure purely within the domain of textual feature. While they can be distinguished, their synthetic structure can only by spoken in terms of textual feature as the embodiment as well as expression through the significant form of aesthetic feature which is suggestive of its emotive content as then generalised aesthetic representation via media its non-discursive or symbolic language. While, such an emotive representation especially those existential pathos as its emotive content, if seen in terms of the autonomy of art and literature cannot be treated as propaganda tool. The least which may be said in the light of the intimate art-life-society-relation is that, the power of aesthetics to suspend disbelief becomes a symbolic or non-discursive language of expression. In being communicative in the aesthetic way, it hints at the futility of violence as the communicated truth without being educational instruction or an idiosyncratic propaganda mood piece. If life imitates art just as it is also true that art imitates life, then, without being treated as a means to an end, the portrayal of the existential pathos of aesthetic representation (symbolically emotive or non-discursive language) of political violence and conflicts in their extreme forms as the emotive contents of works of art and literature, they may indirectly hint at their intrinsic worth. Their power of catharsis would not go wasted. If the characters of sublime and beauty are applicable to every extreme forms of the portrayal of tragic violence, the aesthetically empathic spectators may not be merely indulging in their pathological joy of sadism. (Concluded)

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