

Editorial

Thursday, November 29, 2018

Detention of TV journalist not fair

The detention of a local TV journalist at the behest of the Imphal West district administration for uploading a video regarding the celebration of Jhansi Rani on occasion of Quami Ekta Diwas day by BJP at which the Court says that the speech that the journalist made in the video does not attract Section 124-A, reflects the mindset of the government. It showed that even the law of the land can be overridden of the government desires. The TV journalist already face the music for using slang words, which might perhaps hurt the sentiment of some few, but what is not fair is the re-arrest even after the court released him on bail.

As for his offence under section 294 and 500 of the Indian Penal Code the Chief Judicial Magistrate of Imphal West, Lamkhanpau Tonsing already ruled that they are bailable offences.

Well Section 294 of the Indian Penal Code lays down the punishment for obscene acts or words in public. The other sections of Indian Penal code which deal with obscenity are 292 and 293. The law does not clearly define what would constitute an obscene act, but it would enter the domain of the state only when it takes place in a public place to the annoyance of others. Temple art or nakedness of sadhus are traditionally outside the purview of this section.

And that Section 500 of the IPC, is punishable for defamation. It reads, "Whoever defames another shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both." In India, defamation is both civil and criminal offence.

Well, the question arises now is whether the TV journalist is a threat to the nation's integrity or is he a real threat to the existing political party which is leading the government. Why the government felt it so important to detain a young blood who showed his love for his own motherland and culture?

Regarding the comment, by the TV journalist presently detained under NSA (Probably) this newspaper also opined the similar voice.

At one of our writing in this column while playing all my respect to Jhansi Rani for her role in fighting the British Raj this newspaper had pointed out the BJP on why they failed to remember Leima Linthoingambi, wife of King Ningthoukhomba, who fearlessly defeated the enemy to protect the Kingdom of Kangleipak. Besides, among the thousand Manipuri ladies, role of Leiphon Chanu who was the right hand of King Herachandra in fighting the Awa during the 7 years devastation should why be left out.

India need to observed Quami Ekta Divas to strengthen the unity of the nation.

The day is being observed in remembrance to mark the Birth day of Indira Gandhi, the first lady PM of India and may be Indira Gandhi being a leader of the Congress Party the BJP would have reason to bring all lady freedom fighters which laid down their life.

Indian polity being a multi-party system with countless number of political party, paying respect to the one who belong to a specific political party felt uneasiness to many hard core politicians and political workers who belong to different political party. May be, it was the rationale behind the reason to pay respect and organize observance of Rani of Jhansi as she had also equally played her role in protecting her Kingdom.

The new ideology needs appreciation, the purpose of celebrating the Quami Ekta Divas is to spread the message that India is still united and will continue to unite in the coming days.

70 years after India regained freedom from British Raj, the Quami Ekta Week is being celebrated cutting across differences of all political parties. These days programs like meetings, seminars, symposia, particular legendary functions, cultural activities are held to highlight the themes (national integration, secularism, non-violence, linguistic harmony, anti-communalism, cultural unity, development of weaker sections, well being of minorities, issues of woman and conservation) of Quami Ekta Week. The celebration of the week starts with the National Integration Pledge.

Here comes the argument. If Quami Ekta Week is all about integrity and also about bringing back the memories of all those ladies who had led, fought and sacrificed for the integrity of the nation called India, why not the brave queens who Leima Linthoingambi among others were equally paid respect. Besides, everybody knows how Maipakpi played her role in fighting the British soldier during the last Anglo Manipuri war.

The simple point was what the TV journalist had put up and his detention seems nothing but a threat intimidation to all who speaks anything against the BJP or its government.

Point needs to be noted is that the voice of dissent should be respected by all in a ruling by the supreme court of India.

This newspaper opines immediate release of the TV journalist before the truth behind all the happenings comes out in the public spare.

TROUBLED HOMELAND: "ANGST FOR HOMELAND" IN TATTOOED WITH TABOOS

By- Dr. Ph. Jayalaxmi

Manipur has witnessed the rise of violence that remained unresolved for many years. Generally when we discuss the writings emerging during this era we cannot overlook the lurking violence that shapes the mental frame of the writers. Poetry has become one of the popular genres through which the writers from the violence-affected areas have taken recourse to as a purgative consolation. This present paper discusses the yearning for the lost homeland due to the violence, the loss of innocent childhood, the nostalgia for the memorable past, and the fractured identity in the section "Angst for Homeland" in "Tattooed with Taboos: An Anthology of Poetry (2011) by Three Women from North-East India namely - Chaoba Phurishabam, Shreema Ningombam, and Soibum Haripriya. These young poets belong to the group of writers who write in English or are bilingual. They are educated outside Manipur and most of their writings reflect their vexations regarding the deteriorating condition of their homeland called Manipur due to conflict. "Angst for Homeland", the second sub-section in this collection of poetry, generally evinces the disenchantment owing to the violence prevalent in the region which disrupts the political, economic, and social system. In the introduction, they have written:

'Angst for Homeland' looks at the dying landscape of a land of belongingness and seeks truth that seems like a mirage of oasis in wilderness. The predicament is of an emotional flux of our inability to love or hate; embrace or reject this land that we call home. [Chaoba and inter alia, 2011: ii]

The shifting perception of home, from a place of protection which provides shelter, care, safety, and security to the place of hostility, aggression, and death which disorient the tranquil existence, is being described here.

In the contemporary Manipuri poetry, we could discern the imageries suggesting to the

menace of gun owing to the escalating armed struggle and its repercussion on the ordinary people who are trapped in-between the two potent forces. In the words of Robin S. Ngangom, the aftermath of the Second World War has transformed the medium of Manipuri poetry. The poets shift from the theme of romanticism in the pre-independence era to the realistic depiction of society where there is "a loss of traditional values in human affairs, the tyranny of those who wield economic and political power, rootlessness, dispossession, fragmentation of home, and family," and so forth. These are some of the shared experiences which many writers from this part of region have in common. While talking about the predominance of motifs in the contemporary poetry, Robin Ngangom states the Manipuri poetry is replete with the images of 'bullets, blood, mother, the colour red and paradoxically flowers too' [Robin, 2011: 297-299].

The Northeast India is understood by the mainstream India as the 'other' culture with its history of armed conflict. The incorporation into India has led to the emergence of various separatist crusades and often 'the presence of a common enemy - India - often generated a degree of cohesiveness and a sense of shared destiny within these generic identities' [Bhaumik, 2009: 2]. Manipur that forms a part of these diversified eight states is considered one of the most conflict-ridden regions. The recurrent motifs of Manipuri contemporary poetry are interwoven with violence, bloodshed, atrocities, and other numerous issues related to the imposition of Armed Forces Special Powers Act (1958). It may not be wrong to say that this draconian law is accredited as the root cause for many quandaries which persistently provoke violence. This inhuman law that resorts to fake encounters and inhuman activities results in the mass protest and the famous fast

unto death of Irom Sharmila. Due to these factors, Manipur has become an insignia of the anti-AFSPA movement. As Shrutti Pandalai has rightly enunciated: One cannot also shake off the memory of the Meira Pabi movement in 2004, where 12 Manipuri women stripped in front of the Kangla Fort, the then headquarters of the Assam Rifles, shouting: 'India army come and rape us all'—a dramatic protest to draw the attention of India and the world to the alleged abuse of AFSPA in the Northeast. As one recalls these episodes - the emotions that arise are contempt, distrust, helplessness and anger against the security forces. These emotions colour perceptions and with story after story these perceptions become belief systems. [Pandalai, 2013: 90] Now AFSPA has become one of the belief systems of Manipur and it has ingrained profoundly in the consciousness of every Manipuri. The perpetual confrontation between the state forces and the non-state forces has become the essence of literature from the war zone. The ceaseless violence has made the home, the troubled home where people run for safe haven.

The troubled homeland suggests the tumultuous situation prevalent in the conflict-ridden region that has swallowed the subsistence of common people in the place called home which brings only restlessness and pandemonium of dead souls. The homeland mythology includes the cultural narrative of the magnificent past but for the children stemming from the violent area the mythology of homeland embraces the uncertainty, callous laws, fake encounters, rapes, violation of human rights, and many other apocalyptic movements. These three poems emphasize the sinking feelings which are ensnared in the labyrinth of conflict, violence, bloodshed, and rising crimes against women and men in the armed struggle.

Another significant aspect of their poetry is the intertwining of the nostalgic home with the excruciating past that affects the semblance of their present circumstances. Why is memory so

important? While talking of the memory, Temsula Ao, in her preface to 'These Hills called Home: Stories from the War Zone', has encapsulated the importance of memory of the past and its remembrance to the people who are living in the conflict precinct. She says, 'Memory is a tricky thing; it picks and chooses what to preserve and what to discard... memories are often sifted (filtered) through an invisible sieve and selections are made, of both the good and the bad, either to be preserved or discarded'. She further questions what about the memories of people whose experience is of pain and pain alone. With the intention of compensating the lost lives or to learn about the pain of a fellow human being it seems pertinent to "re-visit the live of those people whose pain has so far gone unmentioned and unacknowledged" [Temsula Ao, 2006: ix]. Many people may disown the painful history but it reverberates in the terror lore. Ao has rightly pointed out that "in such conflicts, there are no winners, only victims and the results can be measured only in human terms" [ibid. x].

The conflict has created a nihilistic feeling in which people have lost the valid sense of existence. When the homeland is created out of broken and fractured images of the thing of the past, it disorients the subject position of the individual. In that situation, they entangle between the past and the present thereby leading to anxiety and in order to overcome that anxiety they have started re-imagining or recreating their homeland by means of 'memory but also memory's stepchild, nostalgia' [Walder 2011: 49]. Dennis Walder has given the relationship with nostalgia (past) and future (present). He comments that:

The dynamic of memory is that its existence is always in the present, even as it struggles to reclaim the past: this means that it constantly acts as a drain on the future, which cannot be imagined without reference to the past. [ibid., 139]

(To be continued)

Contd. from yesterday

SORARENGI MACHANUPI AND KANGLA DIARY.....

By - Dr. Sarangthem Sobharani Devi

However, they failed to translate it into actions since the President Rule came into impose during its progress as the government was broken. This had made a huge chasm during the progress of uniting the leaders of different groups. In the meantime, Mr Ito lost his life in the hand of army and many activists were got arrested. Moreover, BK Chingshu and Thoiba Luwang also fell in the custody of armies and were put into the jail. However, still they could not think about to leave their mission incomplete. After making a hard decision towards transforming the KPR as a powerful insurgent group they escaped from the jail with the help of two guards. Henceforth, BK Chingshu had to live as an underground militant. Whenever, performing his duty in the public places he used to wear police uniform and made painting on the face so as to escape from recognizing him by the people. Moreover, adopting a new name called Kanglei Piba he had successfully established the KPR as an insurgent group.

In this novel, the aspect of setting apart from the group because of having conflicts among the leaders is also highlighted. Mentioned may be made here that the incident of separation taken place among the

RJM leaders due to their conflicts as an instance. As a result of their incompatible attitude in the organization some were fell in the hand of police and got jail and many had been in a very indecisive position in the society. Meanwhile, BK Chingshu and Thoiba Luwang mobilized those people to work with them for the KRP party. Using the rickshaw of Thoiba Luwang BK Chingshu had been in active on seeking confidential information from Kangla City and initiating different confidential works. He says, thus:

I too, have established a power, wandering every night! Witnessing the city of Kangla! Making strategies! To build a new Kangla one day! (1991:223)

In the novel the writer has drawn a clear picture of BK Chingshu and Thoiba Luwang, whose works have entrusted in the protection and the preservation of sacred places of the Meiteis. They wish to make the Kangla Fort free from the Assam Rifles and in subsequent of it, the name of Imphal Sahar be changed to Kangla Sahar. On the historic visit of the former Indian Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi at Imphal, a strong agitation was made with the demand for procuring Manipur its statehood and for

understanding/recognizing the historical facts that Manipur was an independent kingdom under the monarchy system. It was a common demand for all the people and in which BK Chingshu took a serious leader's role. Apart from these it was their demand to handover the Kangla Fort to the people of Manipur. In order to keep the situation under control the armed forces used over power even by opening fire against the agitators. During the course of it many were shot and splattered with blood. Several people lost their lives and many got injured. Moreover, many individuals were unable to be located. As a result of such sudden movement, one daily bread earner named Meleirang, lost her life as shot by a bullet. Further, another girl who claimed to be mis-located was found being thrown out after torturing with heavy physical harassment. In the novel, the wishes of the people about to improve the strength of the state which has declined are also clearly depicted. In this novel Mainsamba boldly attempts to unfold the deteriorating life of contemporary Manipuri society which has been caused by different factors including armed conflicts and other factors. Arresting innocent people,

tortured and misconstrued the grievances of the people by the armed forces are also drawn in Kangla Diary.

From the above discussion, it has been seen that the reason behind the inclination of Mr. Birmani of Sorarengi Machanupi towards insurgency is grounded upon the challenges of the social, political and cultural identities which have come up after Manipur got merged to the Indian Union while BK Chingshu's movement is against the immoderate behaviour of the leaders, corruption and atrocious acts of the armies. By interrogating the historical facts BM Mainsamba discusses the issues of insurgency from his own perspective in these two novels and attempts to give the relevance for contemporary Manipuri society. In fact, Mainsamba shows his sheer interest in understanding the tensions of the common people strata and the situation faced by the youths after Manipur became a part of India. Moreover, his urge to find a peaceful solution for the grievance situations faced by the people is also reflected in his writing. From the study, this has come to know the deeper understanding of BM Mainsamba about the issues of insurgency in Manipur.

Letters, Feedback and Suggestions to 'Imphal Times' can be sent to our e-mail : imphaltimes@gmail.com. For advertisement kindly contact: - 0385-2452159 (O). For time being readers can reach the office at Cell Phone No. 9862860745 for any purpose.