

Editorial

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He calls the state Government as unrecognized association - and there is no word from the state authority

The legitimacy of appointing Prof. Yugindro as Pro-VC by VC Professor AP Pandey on September 20, when the 2 members inquiry committee is in full swing and when the Memorandum of Agreement signed between the MHRD representative, Manipur Government representative and Manipur University community on August 16 is being complied is not the reason for intensification of the ongoing agitation at Manipur University.

There seems to be some hidden agenda, as the move to hand over the charge of the VC by the newly appointed VC is proceeded in a hasty move. The way that the so called Pro VC entered the Manipur University Complex with former in-charge Registrar along with a huge number of security force on the afternoon of September 20, talks volumes about some hidden agenda.

The conspiracy behind the game being played is slowly unfolding as the version of alleged Pro-VC Yugindro differs from the clarification made by the Chief Minister N. Biren Singh in the wake of the 48 hours bandh called by 6 different student's organizations of the state. Moreover, students and teachers gathered on the day protesting the taking charge of the in-charge VC by Yugindro don't seem like to be criminals as none of them were notice holding deadly weapons and as per photo available with many the Pro-VC was seen serving tea by the students inside the room.

The version of Prof. Yugindro who allegedly filed complaint to the Police and that of the Chief Minister does not match at all. That is why desperation of the Chief Minister to take some action was notice and the midnight crack down inside the Manipur University Campus of Sept 20 seem to be something which he felt the only way to defend his position from the central leadership. This is notice from the statement forecasted by the Chief Minister using all means of media at the aftermath of the bandh called.

Each and everybody including those who are favouring the VC AP Pandey knew that the Memorandum of Agreement signed on August 16 after three days of hectic discussion in the presence of Chief Minister and his colleagues knew that the VC AP Pandey have no respect for it and have been challenge to the court of law. At one of his submission to the Enquiry Committee dated September 9, 2018, AP Pandey term Manipur government as unrecognized association and the MU community as illegal.

It is his right to challenge anything which he felt that he has been framed in violation of the rule of law to the law court and he had done that. Pandey had already filed a writ petition to the Manipur High Court challenging the MoA and also the enquiry committee.

As of now the case is pending in the law court and no verdict regarding the MoA is being announced. Until Court says anything there is no such provision that Mr. AP Pandey can simply denied co-operation to the enquiry committee and also his terming the government of Manipur as unrecognized association need to be seriously handled.

And another thing that need to be pondered is that why the MHRD had accepted the Pro VC appointed by Prof. AP Pandey at the capacity of when the MHRD had agreed that during the period of inquiry and until follow up action taken on the inquiry report by the competent authority, preferably within a period of 15 days, Prof. AP Pandey will be on leave, how could they recognized the Pro VC appointed by him on Sept 10 this year.

And more over the University Act 2005 regarding the appointment of Pro VC has not been followed.

As per the statute of the Manipur University - pro Vice Chancellor shall be appointed by the Executive Council on the recommendation of the VC. Prof. Pandey who joined the Manipur University on October 26, 2010 neither issued any order about the abolition of the Court, the Executive Council, the Academic Council, the College Development Council etc. nor had been issued order for replacement of the member. What he did was that he never called sitting of any of the statutory bodies which is mandatory in any university. This means the Executive Council does exist and the name of Prof. Yugindro was not placed in the executive council for appointment of Pro VC. The first line of the order for appointment of Pro VC reads - "In the anticipation of approval of the executive Council". Which executive council was Prof. AP Pandey referring too.

Prof. AP Pandey's blatant lie about not receiving any summons from the Enquiry Committee and terming the government of Manipur as unrecognized association need to be deal with extreme seriousness or else people will start asking - if AP Pandey is above the government of Manipur?

Playing blame game to save one person is not the people expects from those in the government.

Now, Imphal Times felt that, people who read our newspaper have the right to know why MU community wanted action against AP Pandey. And this news paper will start publishing the irregularities committed by him one after another as peoples' judgment seems to be need of the hour.

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A Road Trip to Myanmar – the Land of Golden Pagodas-1

By- Maheshwar Gurumayum



As with every new journey, the trip to Myanmar was preceded by the excited preparations and anticipations of new discoveries of places, people and the opportunity to experience a glimpse of the life of a different culture, customs and region- a different country in this case. Often called the Land of Golden Pagodas or The Golden Land, this part of South East Asia has been a reclusive state for almost half a century ruled by Military Junta. After its transition to Democracy, there has been an increase in footfall of tourists many are willing to visit and explore this once reclusive state. Myanmar is much more than a neighbour country and has been an integral part of our history since time immemorial. Stories of numerous wars between the Avas (Awas) and Manipur before the British era still lingers on in our minds.

Predictably, I did not hesitate even for a moment when a golden chance came up for me along with few other fellow journalists to visit this Golden Land by road organized by Department of Information and Public Relations, Government of Manipur.

The first-hand experience of trans-border formalities at the Integrated Check Post located at the Indian side of the border at Moreh leaves a lot to be desired and is evidently at a very nascent stage at least in terms of efficiency. The paperwork, immigration process and the whole lot was a mess and could have been managed in a more systematic manner. We were directed to run all over the place for getting our paperwork done. After stamping on our Passport, we crossed to border on Myanmar side and were made to enter our details at the Immigration office. As compared to our side's handling of Visas and all, I found theirs to be a lot more systematic and efficient. After finishing with our paperwork, we got the green signal to move ahead. We were equally excited to travel through the roads leading from Tamu towards Kalemyo which is about 133 Kms from Tamu. This stretch of Tamu-Kalemyo-Kalewa section is a part of the Trilateral Highway (India-Myanmar-Thailand) built by Border Roads Organisation. The road was noticeably smoother than the Imphal-Moreh stretch. The thought that if

bridges on this road stretch. We stopped at some local eateries on our way and were greeted with "mingalaraba" with a friendly smile. We had a hard time trying to communicate and had to talk in sign language with the people out there as they had little or no knowledge of English. The menu was all written in Burmese and one cannot figure out what to order. All we had to do was talk in sign language or point to the items laid on other people's table. I noticed that most of the food items are similar to ours although the cooking style is different.

After dinner, we resumed our journey towards Mandalay along the same Tamu-Kalemyo-Kalewa road. All night we were on the vehicle, could not sleep a wink. After a hectic ride for almost 14hrs we finally reached Mandalay the next morning. The landscape has changed to a completely new one and the weather was comparably hot and humid. After driving a couple of hours we came upon the mighty Irrawaddy River. This river which flows from North to South through Myanmar is the country's largest river and one of the most important Commercial waterways. One can witness the various cargo ships, ferries and other small ships right from the road. Also, in the west bank backdrop one can view the various Pagodas of Mingun.

Mingun is a town in Sagaing Township of Sagaing Region, north-west Myanmar with the ruins of the incomplete Mingun Pahtodaggyi which was started by King Bodawpaya in 1790. Legend claims that the temple was not completed as an astrologer claim that the King would die once the construction of the temple is complete. If completed,

childbirth in 1812, the White Pagoda is also called as Hsinbume Pagoda.

While in Mingun, one cannot miss the World's second Largest Bell, put up by King Bodawpaya also known as the Mingun Bell, weighing a total of 90 tons.

Our next stop is the Kaunghmudaw Pagoda which was modeled after Ruwanwelisaya pagoda of Sri Lanka. It is an important pilgrimage and tourist hotspot in the region. Construction started during the reign of King Thalun on 25 April 1636 and was completed 12 years later. One cannot forget the story of Maharaj Garibniwaz aka Pamheiba entering the Pagoda and marking the eastern door with his sword as a mark of victory. The door is nowhere to be seen now and it is said to be kept away in some storeroom away from Public view. It would have been great if we were able to witness the door and the sword mark, maybe the Burmese Government didn't want the world to witness it for reasons known best to them.

The Pagoda is different from other traditional Burmese style. Some local lore has it that the relic chamber of the pagoda contains the lower left tooth relic of the Lord Buddha, 11 hair relics, an alms bowl, statues, pagodas and other relics. After strolling through the various shop stalls selling worship materials like incense sticks, sandalwood, flowers and numerous photo sessions, we bid adieu to Kaunghmudaw Pagoda.

While sitting on the bus during our journey, I saw something on the road which captured my attention. A vivid picture of our Traffic system flashed into my mind when I saw the way Traffic rules are being followed out there. In my entire journey, I did not see a single commuter breaking Traffic rules. We Manipuris have a long way to go and can learn a lot from the Burmese at least when it comes to matters of civic sense. They don't have any road dividers/medians but they never cross other lanes or overtake like we do out here. Also, roads are narrow or not so big as compared to ours. Our Government expanding roads in the name of Traffic management seems like a big joke to me after seeing all these. What we need is Proper Traffic management and proper awareness of traffic rules among Commuters.

Now it is time for us to start our journey to Yangon, which is an overnight drive from Mandalay via Yangon-Mandalay Expressway. After seeing the Bus we are going to travel, a faint hope came into mind- a hope that I will be able to sleep, as the Bus is quite spacious and comfortable as compared to the one we travelled in from Tamu to Mandalay.

After an overnight drive, we finally reached Yangon Bus Terminus early in the morning. After checking in at Hotel 63 and having brief rest (for me it was 2hrs sleep), we started out for National Races Village which is located near Thanlyin Bridge, Thaketa Township. In National Races Village, one can have a sneak peek of the lifestyle of the various races of Myanmar namely Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Rakhine, Shan

and Bamar. Oh yes, another thought came into my mind and this time it is about our Heritage Park at Hattat Kanjeibung. Ours is in a very pitiful condition and I would say the structures at Hattat are just for namesake after seeing the National Races Village.

1. Kachin: Traditional house of Kachin nationals are mostly made of Bamboo, thatch and wood. At the rear of the house, mortar, pestle and firewood are kept. One can see many paintings and pictures depicting Traditional utensils on the wall. Also Horn of Mython, Ceremonial Spear, Guar's Horn, Quiver, Tumees Guns and Deer's Horn are displayed on the wall. Very similar to a traditional Meitei house.

2. Kayah: A traditional house of Kaya Nationals does not have any windows and roofing goes past the floor and almost touches the ground. Processing of Cotton textile materials are shown step by step. One cannot miss the Bamboo mugs for serving brew.

3. Kayin: The first thing to be noticed about a Kayin traditional house is the Bronze Frog drum and Buffalo horn, the former is said to be a symbol of Kayin National races. A total of four rooms comprise a traditional Kayin house.

4. Chin: The most significant symbol of a Chin house is the Hornbill. Hornbill Bird, Bear Skull, Barking Deer Skull, Guar Skull, Mython Skull are put up above the main door. The Blacksmith's workplace is one of the attractive aspects of a traditional Chin house.

5. Mon: In the Mon traditional house, one can witness the Mon traditional Crocodile Musical Instrument, Mon Crescent Moon-Shaped Gong and Mon traditional utensils. Also, a traditional Mon Cart and Mon Boat are placed on the yard.

6. Shan: Two ladders are kept at a Shan traditional, one is said to be for use by Guest and the other for the owner/family members of the house. Fishing equipments, traditional musical instruments are displayed. There is also a replica of Inle Lake outside the house.

7. Rakhine: One can observe the customs and the way the houses are built in accordance with the tradition of Rakhine. A Weaving model and a traditional boat are displayed on the ground of the house and on the house yards respectively. The traditional longyi worn by many is said to be woven by the Rakhine women using the Rakhine Weaving Model.

8. Bamar: The traditional house of Bamar nationals are said to be designed from an ancient form of a rich man's house from Shwe Bo City. Also traditional musical instruments are displayed on a Bamar national house. One can observe the customary ways of living, handicrafts and style of dress.

I definitely recommend visiting this place, if you want to learn more about the lifestyles and custom of the various races of Burma from this National Races village.

(More writing coming up)



India can do so much for its neighbouring counterpart, why can't it do the same for our two National Highways which are the lifelines of our landlocked state.

Many of the lifestyles and the landscapes as well are quite similar to ours. Although the Landscapes were beautiful, they were nothing new to me, for one raised in Manipur get to see such beautiful landscapes, if one wander away a little away from Imphal. So, no excitement till this point for me. One cannot forget the number of small bridges, that too one-way and I was told we will encounter a total of 52

it would have been the largest in the world at 150 meters. Now many cracks are visible on the structure from the earthquake of 23rd March 1839. A couple of steps from the unfinished stupa, one can view the beautiful white Myatheindan Pagoda with a unique style said to be modeled after the mythical Mount Meru. The story behind this White Pagoda is reminiscent of the Taj Mahal of India. Built in 1816 by Bodawpaya's grandson and successor Bagyidaw dedicating it in fond memory of his first spouse Princess Hsinbume or Lady of the White Elephant who died during