

# Editorial

Saturday, September 8, 2018

## Political pandemonium

If the politics of ethnicity that has for long been practiced in the state as were everywhere else where pluralistic societies exist begs the impression of one characterized by deep rooted suspicions, protracted conflicts and extremisms, it is the inherent undercurrent of instability and unpredictability marked by acute passions and excessive emotions amongst the public. The feeling, although understandable runs the endemic risk of uprooting social systems and creating political and social pandemonium from which none emerge the winner, if let off unchecked. The public of Manipur does not need to look far to experience the feeling. It is these feelings, when compelled to act upon, would spell disaster for everyone without any exception.

There is however a glimmer of positivity with the obverse of such passions and feelings. It is these very heightened emotions that is essential for creating solidarity amongst the different ethnic groups as well as compel higher participation in politics- a paradox that has played out to be true. And like a double edged sword, it ultimately rests on those at the helm of affairs of the state as well as to either resolve such conflict situation and steer the emotions towards solidarity and stability or to further push the state into chaos and spiraling violence. The role of Civil Society Organisations in forming and fueling ethnic passions cannot be ignored, especially in a state like Manipur where the state government is perceived to be despotic, nepotistic and self-seeking by many cutting across ethnic and communal lines while these CSOs function as pressure groups thereby maintaining checks and balances.

Therefore, the present political impasse which has gained an ugly communal undertone needs to be relooked from a different perspective by the public without reservations and preconceived notions to try and understand the genesis of such a situation which will hopefully help in bring about an enduring solution. While it would be impossible to shed personal feelings or distance our ethnic passions, it would augur well to keep them in check and seek out the rational and plausible explanation free from prejudice if we all are as eager to participate and chip in towards bringing a solution as everybody make out to be.

Admitting the failure of the state to accommodate the pluralistic and ethnic diversity within the framework of the state and society can be a starting point, however, the instrumental roles performed by the ethnic elites in ethnic mobilization and portraying issues should also be questioned and analyzed from an impersonal point of view to try and understand the political, economical and social implications of such assertions. In other words, the present social development should be taken as an opportunity to get at the root of the problem and subsequently to draw up a pragmatic and enduring solution which will enhance solidarity, peaceful and participatory coexistence which will draw strength and inspiration from the cultural diversity rather than making futile attempts at ethnic exclusivity which reflects a regressive mindset out of synch with the developing world.

## Letter to the editor

Sir,

I came across your evening daily recently and I was greatly impressed with the quality of the paper and its valuable information. I like the article on the impact of cartoon and caricatures in our society as written by Dr. Aribam Ibmocha Sharma, IIS, New Editor and Head, Regional News Unit, AIR, Imphal.

Such a beautiful and informative piece of article. I only wished the article should have accompanied by caricatures and cartoons.

Thanking You

Shyleyn chothe

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## Nation Needs Small Farmers

By: *Sagolsen Kulachandra Singh*

Nation needs small farmers. They are no waste contrary to the popular view that they are wasting their life on small farmers. Thus we may recall to facts about Indian agriculture.

(i) The share of agriculture in the nations GDP has come down from 56% in 1950 to 14% in 2011-12, but still lot more than half of the nations' population lives on agriculture.

(ii) In the last 15 years more than a quarter million farmers have committed suicide which the policy makers are unable to face these two facts.

But the third fact-less know one that even by 2051 less half of India will live in Urban areas (Twenty-first century India, Oxford University Press) make a laughing stock of the current policies that assume rural India to be a passing phase India will then be a strange nation- an emerging global super power with majority rural population.

Thus, agriculture will continue to sustain more than half India even after four decades from now. These facts are a more trailer. If we look minutely at the anatomy of the Indian agricultural economy will show how the policy making, budgeting and national economic discourse are disconnected from reality.

### Shortage of Labour:

Indian farming is fundamental for the food security of 120 crore peoples (Indian) projected to rise to 170 crore by

2061. No. country in the world has the land or labour to supply even a fraction of the food that India will need if it falls short in food production.

If we study minutely the discussion paper No. 2 of National Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (December 2012) it stated that the cost of production of rice and wheat has gone up by 45% for three years to 2012-13 average of 15% every year. The main reason is raising of labour and energy costs sharply. Further it stated that shortage of labour has cropped up in the last three years.

The discussion paper stated that labour costs have gone up 100% in the last three years and margin of farmers have been declining for wheat and rice. This has led to average annual rise in procurement cost by 11% for paddy and 8.6% for wheat for five years from 2007-08 to 2012-13.

The rural employment guarantee scheme of the UPA Govt. has contributed to labour shortage and high labour costs in agriculture according to the reports.

Let us see how this scheme hits govt. finances twice over (i) employment guarantee handout costs the govt. over Rs. 40,000/- crore a year and it creates shortage of agriculture labour and pushes up cost and leads to higher procurement costs which pushes up food subsidies.

But according to the report of the Ministry of Rural Development (March 2012) gloats over the labour shortage saying that it will lead to technology advances is agriculture like it happened all over the world. If the look at the report of the working group on Agriculture to the Planning Commission (January 2007) would demonstrate hold absurd is such a comparison of Indian agriculture with the world's.

### Small is indispensable:

About 60 million small and marginal farming households (with over 33 crore dependents) cultivate 34% of the land and produce 49% of rice and 40% of wheat and over half of fruits and vegetables. Their productivity is 44% more in rice, 18% more in wheat and 47% more in fruits and vegetables.

Their incremental contribution to national food production during the period 1971 to 1991 was 68% for rice, 48% for wheat - the incremental production of the rest medium and large farms, being just 32% for rice and 52% for wheat.

According to Global Studies (Dietrich Vollrath) May 4, 2004 it confirms that economies of scale do not operate in farming- small farms being more efficient than large ones. The Working Group also says that the small and marginal famers are certainly going to stay for a longtime in India-though they are going to face a number of

challenges. Thus what happens to them larger implication for the entire economy and people's livelihood? It is this small farmer who is hit by labour shortage and higher labour costs caused by employment guarantee. He cannot go far mechanization. He can only give up farming.

Let us imagine that all small farmers are replaced by large ones, theoretically, rice production will instantly fall by 15% wheat by 6% and fruits and vegetables by 16%. Where will the nation go for food? Thus nation needs small farmers. They are no waste-contrary to the popular view that they are wasting their life on small farms.

According to Parliament's 19<sup>th</sup> Standing Committee Report (April 2007), and NSSO Surve has revealed that some 71% of the farmers were unaware of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) which the Govt. announce with great fanfare and 81% of those who have heard of MSP do not know how to use it. It is on the basis of these facts the Standing Committee recommended a ban on futures trading in food grains, on the farmers who are unaware of MSP could hardly benefit from the price determination by futures market.

### Conclusion:

Under the changed economic environment rural and tribal market can be financially supporting units and source of income to finance further development activities.

## (Short Story)

### Who killed the looter?

By - *Ashinikumar Mutum*

Once a 70 years old man - Bonbihari Meisnamba was very worried as his only son Radheshyam left him all alone after becoming a victim of dreaded AIDS. The day he left for heavenly abode was the first death anniversary (Phiroi) of his mother, Bonbihari's lovely wife Memtombi.

Money was never a problem to Bonbihari but God is not so kind to him that he had to live a life desperately all alone.

A relative so concern arranged a 25 years old girl Memthoi to once more begin a new life. The girl happily agreed as she knows that she will be one among the richest lady after her husband leaves for heavenly abode.

Days passed so well that Bonbihari started feeling a life worth living with his new wife. The only thing he kept on worrying was that he could never make his wife conceived; he knew that because doctor had once told him about his health condition.

That was Monday morning, as usual Bonbihari dressed up to visit his work place. He was supposed to say something to his beloved wife, but before he could say a word Memthoi rushed to him happily and told him that he will soon become a father. Bonbihari was very excited and did not have a single word to express. Until he remembered that doctor Punshiba, who had

told him about the impossible of having a child due to infertility and aged factor, Bonbihari have no words to express how happy he was at the moment.

But still he was worried about something. "How could my wife get pregnant when doctor had already told I would never had one", Bonbihari thought but again he thought the child might have been a gift by the almighty as he desperately need one.

Since the day his wife had told him about her pregnancy Bonbihari started taking extra care for his young wife but with some doubt on how he could give her a child.

One day, in order to give a befitting reply to the doctor he went to his clinic and met him. Mockingly he asked the doctor that sometimes it is wrong to tell other about their fate.

"See my wife is pregnant now, I wonder what makes you a doctor", Bonbihari boasted.

The doctor, a specialize in Gynae, and also a brother of a close friend of Bonbihari think for a while and then said, "Tamo (Brother) can I tell you a story". "Yes of course, its celebration time, carry on", Bonbihari added. Just as the doctor was supposed to begin the story his daughter came out and treated them tea. "Uncle have tea, this is for you papa", Memcha, the doctor's daughter served them and went inside.

The doctor then continue - Well there was a Police officer called Rajen, whose name spreads far and wide because of his excellent



specialization in encounter. He was conferred may medal in recognition to his service. Most of the people including those criminal were very afraid that sometimes criminals never enter to the place where he was posted.

Well that morning he was having lunch at his home with his wife. When he was having lunch his son Abisek took his service revolver and in place put his toy gun.

The moment he was supposed to finish his lunch, an emergency phone called said Imphal Industry Bank has been looted and a fierce encounter is being taken place at the heart of Imphal city.

Without finishing his lunch he went directly along with his team and rushed to the spot. At Paona Keithel he moved toward the encounter site. On his way, a looter was seen running towards his direction. Making no delay he shouted "HALT". The looter even

though was equipped with AK rifle after knowing that he was Encounter specialist Rajen was so terrified that he stand for a while and tried to attack. But Rajen was quick enough to act. He quickly pulled out his gun and shot. But was shock to learn that the gun he fired was only his son's toy gun.

What more surprises and relieved him was that the looter died on the spot as he shot with the toy gun.

The doctor then turned towards Bonbihari and asked him - Well Tada (Brother) how do you think the looter was killed.

Bonbihari said - It is easy everyone will know, even a 10 years old kid will know. "It was not the bullet from the toy gun but bullet which was fired by some other police personnel which cause the death", what is it there to think on?

The doctor then said with a smile - Well in that case consider yourself as Rajen with the Toygun.