

Editorial

Wednesday, April 17, 2019

Election euphoria: dirty game sometimes is a threat to Democracy

With just a day to go on poll, campaign for the 2nd phase Lok Sabha Election has been ended yesterday. But informal campaigns are going on using all means of communication devices as well as by talking with voters directly.

Perhaps for the first time, voters in the state seem to realize the importance of the Lok Sabha Election, this time. Earlier, people are not very much interested in the Lok Sabha election as people are not much aware about the significance of the Lok Sabha election. However, with the advancement of information technology the importance of parliamentary election has been felt, and the 17th Lok Sabha election this time is not going to throwing stone at the wall for the ruling regime.

This Lok Sabha election is going to be one of the toughest election ever witness in Manipur.

Matured people of the state are now busy campaigning for election for their favourite candidate leaving aside the peoples' movement. Issues of the state like the CAB which the state witnessed mass uprising and others including Freedom of speech etc. seems to be forgotten and many ladies and gentlemen are seen going from door to door begging for votes for their respective candidates in Inner Manipur Parliamentary Constituency.

With the polling day just a day left, picture of the political gambling emerges clearer showing who are with whom. It is also notice that some political party are laying with fire taking advantage of the first-past-the-post electoral system where India is following. A division among the supporters gains some specific candidate. And this has been noticed easily as it is wrong to assume that 60 to 70% of the people of the state are not aware of the issues being faced by the people. If the voters of the state blindly accepted the game played to the people than democracy f today will be a different one tomorrow. Let us think and vote for the future.

Woman allegedly stabbed, head cut off by husband

Agency
Tamil Nadu, April 17,

In a gruesome incident in Tamil Nadu, a man chopped off his wife's head after killing her, stuffed it into a bag and tried to dump it in a canal, the police said.

They said that Muniappan (28) and Nivetha (19) natives of Karnataka were staying in Mettukaddai, 10 km from Erode. They had been married eight months ago. Police said the man suspected his wife was being unfaithful and had frequent fights

with her over this.

On Monday night after one such argument, the man stabbed her on the neck and later severed the head from the body. He stuffed the head in a bag and the body into a gunny sack, tied it to his motorbike and went to dump the body. However some people noticed the woman's legs sticking out of the bag, raised an alarm and chased him. They caught hold of him and informed the police. A case of murder was registered against him and he is questioned, police said.

"Smart City-Imphal"

(A dream that we need to make true)

By: Sanjenbam Jugeshwor Singh.

There is a great buzz in India recently on smart cities. The Government has embarked on "smart Cities Mission" "one of the Prime Minister's pet project and has identified in the first phase, a list of 98 current cities to be developed into smart city including our Imphal. Economic growth and improving the quality of life of its citizens are the prime drivers of the mission. To achieve this, Government plans to enable local area development by using Digital Technology and Information Communication Technologies (ICT). Greenfield areas are to be developed in the periphery of the cities to provide accommodation to the anticipated growth of the population as a result of these developments.

Smart city provides the citizens, high quality cost effective service seamlessly and with a minimum use of resources. Smart cities will use technology, gather and collate information and data using smart solution with the aim of improving the services and infrastructures. The information gathered will be in real time thereby providing quicker solutions to problems on hands. Digital technology offers most services at the click of the mouse which otherwise involved a physical presence of the resident to receive

many of the services such as banking, shopping, Government services (payment of taxes, bills, accessing information's etc.). Smart cities are high on the social indices, good and transparent governance. As a result the quality of life improves creating feel-good factors in the individual. This would also lead to higher productivity, employment opportunities and income generation and consequently inclusive growth.

A normal city is defined as area with boundary limits including both urban and sub-urban areas. Land area, population, civic facilities, administration with structured portfolios, well defined transport system, medical and Educational facilities and a faster pace of life, all define a city. It contrast with town or village, in that the above stated facilities are less or non-existent in them. It is also true that many a time town grows into cities. There seems to be no universal definition of what is a smart city. Many parameters define a smart city and these may not be applicable universally, it would vary from country to country and city to city. The level of development planned, resources required or available, a commitment to change and introduce reforms taking the aspirations of its citizens are all necessary requirement in a smart

city. So, smart city is the normal city with much more.

The Manipur government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IL & FS Township and Urban Assets Limited and Price water house coopers private limited for implementing the Imphal smart City project on 6th November 2018. The projects covers key infrastructures development like upgrading sewerage system, Nambul and Imphal river rejuvenation, development of Kangla Fort, better transport services, pollution control and beautification activities in the capital. As a part of it Honorable Chief Minister launched the "Rejuvenation and Conservation of Nambul River, Imphal Manipur" Project on 9th March 2019. The project would be executed in phase manner under the National River conservation Plan of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate change. The first phase of the project would be taken up along the polluted stretch of Nambul River from Iroisemba to Heirangoithong area. As a part of the project encouraging local clubs and Organizations to construct concrete garbage bins in the respective localities and assurance of Government to provide loans or grants for constructing the garbage disposal structures is a good step forward.

The project aims to control pollution of River water by intercepting and treating all the urban waste water outfalls by using latest technology for treatment plant known as MBBR (Moving Bed Bio Reactor) at Mongsangei (16MLD) and Samusang (1MLD). It is also reported that under this project, a total of 56 eco-friendly crematoria and 20 units of community toilets complex would also be constructed at various areas along Nambul River. It's heartening to learn that Water Resource Department, PHED, MAHUD, State Pollution Control Board will be working together in this project. Prevention of pollution in Nambul River will greatly help to save Loktak Lake also. In fact this is a great step taken by our government for our betterment. But a big question crop up at the moment, after seeing the mind set of our people in regard to disobedience of traffic rules (because of many factors), disposal of garbage and solid waste, and many more; whether Imphal City project will be successful or not? Unless we change our mind set (including common people, public leaders, and bureaucrat officers) toward a progressive orientation with a commitment, the dream of Imphal Smart city may find hard to translate into reality. So, we all need to cooperate to the government for a progressive Manipur.

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Continued from Yesterday Issued

Youth and Contemporary Issues

(Depoliticisation of youths and its impact in the social change)

My first problem is to identify their roles whether it is positive or negative. Most of the outsiders conceived the ideas that our youths and students are anti Indian and even use the term anti social groups. But still I recalled some vivid events in which our youths had revealed more loyalty to nation rather than other Indians. What was happening in the Sino-Indian War in 1962? During that time more than one thousand youngsters were coming out to the polo ground and shouted - please recruit us as Indian army; we want to protect our motherland India. Then another notable practice, usually, of the youngsters was to respect national anthem which was sang at the backdrop of the screen in all the time at the end of any movie. That was very strange to me in the film of "Sangam", the longest film in the world, having two intervals. They stood erectly and respect the national anthem in spite of having privacy for sitting long hours. But now the question is that where are they? Why they boycott Independence Day and Republic day of India. Who produce them? During the early days of our education the political society was heading in the process of nation building and national security instead of moulding national character and providing of social security because teachers are not motivated and they could not understand the objective of their mission. So a good numbers of student are at stake for their careers only and completely isolated from the social concerns. Now the positive role is being played by the drop out school children (after growing up), who are working in the fields and in the working places, generally, in small and scale industries have been protecting our society from degeneration. The brilliant youths are working in the Muly National Corporation for the better profit of billionaires not for the nation. Some are in the high ranking officers but he does not

know who are paid for the service of people. He collects more and more money by claiming that Manipur is Money poor state, so Delhi should make money pour state. But still it could not fill the void of many pores of masses. These are the crux of the discourse to study our youths whether they could play vital role for the nation building and national security. That means some of them are challenging for radical society. It is compelled to them to do so otherwise how we can talk about the brighter future of the youths in this neo-liberal economic policy.

Neoliberalism and Society

People of India marked 2012 as more two decades of the initiation of neo-liberal economic reforms in India. During this period more than 2,56,913 (as per the National Crime Record Bureau) farmers were killed by starvation and committing suicide because of unable to repay loan amount. High cost monocropping of cash crops has become the most risky venture for Indian farmers in general NE in particular. On contrary, in the NE nearly 10 thousand people were killed as part of counter insurgency measures and suppose to be contradiction between reconlisation and decolonisation. Ails and accumulated discontents of people of NE is different from other mainland India. Besides, there are violations of historical and democratic rights of the masses; they are also suffering a lot by the impact of neoliberal economic policy. Mention should be made such as - inflation and price rise, food insecurity, deteriorated agricultural workers, corruption and economic slowdown. The thrust of the neo-liberal agenda is to undermine the role of the public sector and facilitate the unfettered exploitation of resources and profiteering by domestic and foreign big corporate. With the privatization of oil and gas resources, the private sector has already surpassed the

public sector in domestic natural gas production. The largest private sector deals today are being struck over India's oil and gas resources. Mining is also being opened up in a big way for the foreign and domestic corporate through changes in mining policy. The private sector already accounted for 63 percent of the 218.6 million tons of iron ore produced in 2009-10, over 45 percent of which was exported. Moves are also on to privatized coal mining. Looting of mineral resources through illegal mining and reckless exports has become rampant as a result of the opening up of the mines and minerals sector. In this trend who can safe mineral resource of NE like oil and gas in Manipur and Nagaland and uranium in Meghalaya.

The Government of India (GoI) is pushing legislations to increase the FDI limit in the insurance sector, deregulate the banking sector and allow pension funds to be invested in the stock market. These moves will make India's financial sector vulnerable to speculative finance capital. Even a bill to allow foreign universities to open shop in India is also pending. FDI cap in defense is also at stake.

The cabinet of present government took a decision to allow 51 percent FDI in multi-branded retail during the winter session of parliament in 2011. This will affect the livelihoods of the 4 crore-odd (40 million) small retailers and squeeze the farmers and small producers. Though, people reaction on large scale to announce a suspension of the decision, Prime Minister has declared that the decision will be implemented after the current round of assembly elections.

Another problem which is being confronted by the people regarding the FDI is concerned that is 100 percent FDI allowed in the pharma sector, MNC are buying out the domestic pharmaceutical companies and establishing their strong hold over the Indian drug

market. Three of the top five drug sellers in India today are MNCs. The increasing concentration of the drug market is leading to phenomenal increase in the price of medicines. The government is unwilling to curb FDI in the pharma sector or extend effective drug price control.

Thirdly, the neo-liberal food policies of the government are responsible for high food inflation. Hoarding of food items, speculative futures trading, faulty export policy and the penetration of big corporate in the food chain combined with stagnant productivity and low growth in agriculture have contributed to spiraling food prices. Over and above maximum state of NE are hilly region. All these edible items including vegetable are brought by trucks on the roads, which are also not to repair well. That means how the people of this region got every food items in reasonable price. Among them, a state like Manipur got economy blockade on the highway for a continuous 120 days. Throughout this period of the blockade, the Central Government remained inactive and refused to intervene to get the blockade lifted because they wanted to see is there cocktails of Manipuri nationalism and Indian nationalism. But notable thing is that the people of this state remain silent even one liter of petrol was at the cost of Rs 200 and Rs 1500 per cooking gas. It is the indication of streamlining own nationalism of the Manipuris.

Here the important reason to see deregulation of petrol prices, successive hikes, is important factor to contribute inflation. What was happening in some months ago, the Central Government continues to levy a high level of taxes on petroleum products. There were hikes in prices by Rs.3 per liter for diesel, Rs. 2 per liter for kerosene and Rs. 50 per cylinder for LPG in 2011.

(To be Continued)

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