

# Editorial

Friday, August 16, 2019

## Bharat Mata has no place on August 13 celebration

August 13 marks the struggle of Manipur for its sovereignty against British. It is about the battles that the people fought against the columns of British forces that entered the Imphal Valley to colonize Manipur. On August 13, Tikendrajit Singh and Thangal General were hanged by the British for waging war against the British Empire. The day marks the struggle of the people of Manipur in Anglo-Manipur war.

It has been very clear that the struggle was to defend the sovereignty of Manipur, and when Anglo-Manipur war took place in 1891, Manipur was not a part of India. Manipur became a part of India only after the merger agreement of 1949. It will be a historical blunder if we start seeing Anglo-Manipur war in relation to India and start arguing that the war was to defend Bharat Mata from invading British forces.

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, which is a hindutva right wing cultural organization, which stands behind BJP, has also celebrated August 13. However, sticking to their political ideology, they attempted to paint Anglo-Manipur war as a war to defend the body of Bharat Mata, which is India. Even if we leave aside the fact that there was no Bharat Mata before British left India, we should still acknowledge that Manipur became part of India much later and Manipur was an independent sovereign country before and after the British.

RSS, in their recent August 13 function, placed the photo of Bharat Mata along with the photos of Tikendrajit and Thangal General. Student organizations have banned RSS from ever celebrating the event given that it has defiled the history of Manipur. RSS is not new to changing history of Manipur. It sees the events in history from the lenses of its hindutva or hindu supremacist ideology. When these events do not fit their narrative, they change the event, color the event saffron and present it to the people, twisting history.

What CM Biren of BJP did in Madhavpur fair in Jaipur, where he tried relating the history of Manipur with India based on harmful myths, is what RSS has always been doing. BJP, being the political wing, have made attempts to paint the history of the oppressed communities, who are now living in this country, according to their line of thinking. Or they will try to downplay the historical significance of the cultural events. We can understand what BJP did on Khongjom day in this context.

RSS neither has an understanding of struggles that people fought against British nor benefits from remembering them unless they twist them. It does not have any understanding because it never was a part of it. Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar, who is one of the icons of RSS, said "Hindus, don't waste your energy fighting the British, save your energy to fight our internal enemies that are Muslims, Christians and Communists." We should also remember what RSS leader Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, the author of the book Hindu Rashttra, offered to be a witness for the British against others who have fought against British. Even Atal Bihari Bajpayee, who is taken as a person with a softer version of Hindutva, offered to be a British spy.

RSS in India has never struggled for India against the British and now they want to paint the struggle of Manipur against British as a part of Indian freedom struggle. The people of Manipur should never allow such distortion of history for Hindutva Ideology.

Letters, Feedback and Suggestions to 'Imphal Times' can be sent to our e-mail : [imphaltimes@gmail.com](mailto: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.

## 73 rd Independence Day "One Nation One Constitution"

By - Raju Vernekar

As we celebrate 73 rd Independence Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had highlighted the achievements of NDA government and announced new measures of development, from the ramparts of Red Fort, New Delhi, after paying tribute to the freedom fighters and leaders of the Indian independence movement.

A grand march past by the Indian armed forces and paramilitary forces was organised. The independence day celebration takes place in different states of diverse cultural traditions where Chief Ministers of that state hoist followed by cultural activities. With scrapping of article 370 according status of union territories to J&K and Ladakh, for the first time in history, J& K hoisted tricolour (without separate flag of Kashmir), with national anthem. This time the tricolour fly high with the slogan of "One nation, One Constitution" from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, Assam to Gujarat celebrating the largest democracy.

All schools under North Delhi Municipal Corporation displayed photos of the President Ramnath Kovind and the Prime Minister. North Delhi Municipal Corporation is taking such a step in schools. Besides 300 meters of the pedestrian-friendly walkway was opened for shoppers in Chandni Chowk area of New Delhi. Also Banaras Hindu University in Uttar Pradesh had pledged to go completely paperless from the Independence Day.

New York's India Day parade will be organized based on the theme "Support our Troops, Salute our Troops", on 18<sup>th</sup> August, by Federation of Indian Association (FIA), in which the American-Indian community will commemorate the sacrifice and valour of Indian soldiers.

On this occasion, it is equally important to take stock of different aspects of economy and social conditions prevailing in the country. Slow down view of the reverse economic slowdown, the central Government is working on measures including tax cuts and sops for specific sectors. The idea is to roll out a host of countercyclical measures, including sectoral incentives and confidence-building steps for the private sector, to stimulate the economy that is grinding through losses, layoffs and an investment freeze.

**GDP** - The country's goal to become a USD 5 trillion economy in the next few years from USD 2.7 trillion is "achievable" and its GDP requires to grow at 7-8 per cent per annum to meet the target. However recently tabled national annual budget, projects a nominal GDP growth of 12% for financial year 2020, at Rs.211 lakh crore. Whereas the "medium term fiscal policy strategy statement", also presented with the budget, pegs the nominal GDP growth at 11 per cent.

**Inflation** - The retail inflation, calculated on the basis of Consumer Price Index (CPI), continues to go up and it reached an eight-month high of 3.18 per cent in June 2019. The CPI data released by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) showed that the food inflation was 2.17 per cent in June 2019, up from

1.83 per cent in the preceding month.

**FDI** - Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her budget speech claimed that despite global headwinds, India's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows rose by 6% (\$64.37 billion) in 2018-19. As per Census and Economic Information Centre (CEIC) data, India's FDI increased by 9.8 USD bn in Mar 2019 and India's direct investment abroad expanded by 3.4 USD bn in Mar 2019. Indian Rupee Indian rupee which is in the region of Rs 70 is expected to slide down further in view of the heavy expenditure incurred for 2019 general elections. The fall in Indian currency can be attributed to global and domestic cues. When the external value of the domestic currency depreciates and the internal value remains the same, such situation is known as the devaluation of the domestic currency. The basic difference between the devaluation and depreciation is that, the devaluation is done by the government of the country deliberately, while the depreciation take place because of market forces i.e. demand and supply.

**Per capita income** - The country's per-capita income rose by 10% to Rs. 10,534 a month during the financial year ended March 2019, as per government data on national income. If India grows at 12 per cent nominal growth (that is 8 per cent real gross domestic product (GDP) growth and 4 per cent inflation), the country could reach the 5.33 trillion mark. The per-capita income is a crude indicator of the prosperity of a country. India's GDP slowed to a five-year low of 5.8 per cent in the last quarter of fiscal ended March 2018-19, mainly due to poor show in the farm and manufacturing sectors.

**Jan Dhan** - Five years after its launch, the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) scheme has stated to have achieved a balance of Rs. 1-lakh crore and the total balance in basic bank accounts stand at Rs.99,752 crore with 35.50 crore beneficiaries. Public sector banks have the lion's share with balance at Rs.79,177 crore, followed by regional rural and private sector banks maintaining Rs.17,648 crore and Rs.2,926 crore, respectively. The scheme focuses on rural areas with primacy given to women. Of the 35.50-crore account holders, 21 crore are from rural and semi-urban regions and 18.88 crore women beneficiaries.

**Petro-1** The petrol prices continue to vary. The excise duty and road and infrastructure cess on the auto fuels has already been raised by Rs 2 per litre, and customs duty per Re 1 per tonne is being levied on crude oil. Oil refinery companies in India face problem to meet the demands of the market due to the high cost of input price of crude oil thus resulting in less supply and more demand for petrol in the country. The petrol prices have been shot up by Rs 2.5/litre and diesel prices by Rs 2.30/litre. These fluctuating fuel prices are having cascading effect on prices of essential commodities. Oil refining and marketing companies maintain crude oil inventory up to six weeks, which also influences the price of the petrol and petroleum products. On an average the petrol is priced at

Rs 77.65 per litre in Mumbai and Rs 71.99 per litre in Delhi.

**Population** - The population of India is estimated at 1,368,938,792 which is equivalent to 17.74 per cent of the total world population and India ranks second in the list of countries by population. 33.6 per cent population is urban (460,249,853) and remaining population is settled in rural areas. The population comprises 70,71,26,717 (51.6 per cent) male and 66,24,07,581 (48.4 per cent) women population.

**Health** - Despite various public health schemes, health care sector has been ailing. Every year, around 60 million people become impoverished by paying health-care bills. Worse, more than a fifth of people do not seek health care, despite being unwell, because of their inability to pay for it. Sixty per cent of primary health centres (PHC) in India have only one doctor, while five per cent PHCs have none. Only 20 per cent of the PHCs fulfil Indian public health standard norms.

The country faces shortage of doctors and one allopathic government doctor attends to a population of 11082, which is 10 times more than the WHO recommended a doctor-population ratio of 1:1000. The situation is worst in Bihar where one doctor serves a population of 28391 people. Uttar Pradesh is ranked second with 19962 patients per day, followed by Jharkhand (18518), Madhya Pradesh (16996), Chhattisgarh (15916) and Karnataka (13556). Delhi is better in terms of doctor-population ratio amongst other states, where the ratio stands at 1:2203 which is still twice the recommended ratio by WHO.

**Food grains** - The government has set an ambitious food grains target of 291.1 million tonnes (MT) for 2019-20, nearly 2.6 per cent more than the previous year's 283.7 MT. The rice output is projected to be 115.6 MT, while that of wheat is 99.12 MT. Besides, the government, is hoping to have a 10 per cent increase in pulses production at 26.3 MT, as against the target of 24 MT in the previous year. The target set for coarse cereals is 48.3 MT as against 46.7 MT last year. Literacy Country's literacy rate has grown to 74 percent, from 12 per cent at the end of British rule in 1947. The male literacy rate is 81.3 per cent, while the female literacy rate is at 60.6 per cent. But this level is below the world average literacy rate of 84 per cent. Kerala with 93.91 per cent literacy rate is at the top, Lakshadweep and Mizoram are at second and third position with 92.28 per cent and 91.58 per cent literacy rate respectively. Bihar with 63.08 per cent literacy rate is the last. Rajasthan has the lowest female literacy rate.

Basically the school education system in India is facing a shortage of trained teachers and a lack of proper infrastructure. 92,275 government schools at both elementary and secondary level have only one teacher to teach all the subjects. One in every 4 schools in rural India, does not have an electricity connection, as per Annual Status of Educational Report (ASER) and almost the same number of schools lack a library. Housing The Government has proposed tax incentives to achieve the 'Housing for All'

target by 2022 and is expected to introduce a new model tenancy law to boost the fragmented rental housing market. Country's rental market is estimated to be around \$20 billion. While urban areas account \$13.5 billion, around \$0.8 billion comes from rural areas.

However even after 4 years after its launch, the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U), just 20 per cent houses have been completed, while another 52 per cent are grounded for construction. Out of Rs.1 lakh crore Central assistance sanctioned for the scheme, the government has released just Rs.34,000 crore. PMAY-U is being implemented by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs since June 2015 to provide houses to the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS), Lower Income Group (LIG) and Middle Income Group (MIG) category people.

Electrification Prime Minister Narendra Modi on April 29, 2018, had declared that 6 lakh villages were electrified by 100 percent. However official data, reveals that only 7.3 % of the total Indian villages, are having 100% household connectivity, and about 31 million homes are still in the dark. The government deems a village "electrified" if power cables from the grid reach a transformer in each village and to 10% of its households.

However homes without electricity are spread across Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan, with each having nearly 6 million unconnected households. Uttar Pradesh, the giant north Indian state, accounts for 14.6 million households without electricity access, followed by Odisha and Bihar. By and large the is required to electrify about 5 million households every month—about four times the current rate of 1.3 million households to meet its target. Space Technology

The successful launch of "Chandrayaan-2" is another shot in arm. It is the nation's first lunar landing mission. The payloads aboard Chandrayaan-2 will help in understanding the origin of moon and how it is related to the earth. It consists of an orbiter, a lander and a rover together referred to as "composite body". It will be injected into an Earth parking orbit.

Besides the Government has put its best foot forward with the launch of New Space India Limited (NSIL), to look after launch vehicles, to focus on transfer of technology (TOT) and to help the Indian space agency-Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), to commercialise its launch vehicle and other state of the art technologies in the global space market. NSIL will act in coordination with ANTRIX, ISRO's another commercial arm. ISRO is also planning to put up its very own 30 ton space station in the orbit by the end of 2030. "Ganganyaan", is ISRO's another ambitious indigenous human spaceflight programme, to send astronauts to space is already underway. It envisages two unmanned and one manned flight, with three member crew space craft. Three Indian astronauts will be sent to space for up to seven days by 2022.

India is expected to become one of the most powerful countries in the time to come. Let us hope that we become super power by 2030.