

Editorial

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Beating the odds

Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown - and none in the state would feel the uncomfortable truth more acutely than the present Chief Minister. Contrary to what he set out to accomplish as the elected head of the state, and despite the show of bravado, the fact that the trust factor in the present government is at its lowest has not escaped anybody. To be fair, it is not an easy task looking after the affairs of the state even at the best of times, and right now, the times are bad, to put it mildly. With a bevy of ministers making news for all the wrong reasons, it would not have helped him none in his efforts to make things right. And the present issue of contention regarding the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) putting him and his government in a fix, the boat is definitely rocking right now.

Beyond the perceived failure of the Chief Minister to effectively show solidarity with the more vocal and proactive counterparts of the other states in the country decrying the CAA, due share of the credit must be given to the CM for persuading the centre to implement Inner Line Permit in the state which, even if a temporary relief from the looming shadows of the threat of CAA, should be viewed as a breather and an opportunity to draw up a better and more comprehensive defence against the approaching danger. Having said so, as the elected head of the state on whose shoulder the aspirations of the people rests, there is an urgent need for the state government to pull up its sleeve and get down to the task of finding ways to allay the fear and concerns which the CAA has created in its wake. As someone who have promised a better life and future for the state, the trust and studied suggestions should be taken into consideration and discussions with CSOs and legal as well as political experts should be sought without further delay to ensure that the threat to the lives and subsequent existence of the indigenous communities of the state is effectively thwarted.

The concerns of the people in these states rising against the CAA go deeper beyond religion. It is a legitimate fear of the possibility of one's own roots being uprooted and displaced, and reducing to a minority in their own land. Politics is a game of numbers, and understandably, these numbers suits the present government at the centre just fine. This controversial Act is also a ploy to ensure the continuity of their sway over the nation, but there comes a time when one has to draw the line, and that time for us might very well be now. It is time for the Chief Minister to transform from an elected head of the state to a leader who stands tall and lead from the front. Political maneuvers and games are all well and good, but when it comes to the question of the very survival of the indigenous people of whom he is very much a part, there should not be any ambiguity of his thoughts and action.

Right now, the state is in search of a leader who can rise above the nitty-gritty of politics and deliver what is needed without any consideration to his personal welfare or safety. Recent developments have shown few individuals from other neighbouring states standing up to those in power and speaking their minds without mincing any words, obviously without giving a damn to the consequences because they need to. Those are the traits of a true leader - if anybody is asking. And with a true and fearless leader who can steer the enthusiasms and fervor of the people, together we can definitely beat all odds.

Original certificate Lost

I, the undersigned, Huiem Prakash Singh have lost my original certificate for my class X examination bearing Roll no 1419 of 1994 conducted by BOSEM on the way between Keishamthong to Paona Bazar on December 15, 2019.

Finders are requested to hand it over to the undersigned.

Sd/-
Huiem Prakash Singh
Keishamthong Elangbam Leikai, Imphal West
Contact no 9740845182

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An open letter to the people
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The (CAB) that have been passed is not a matter that should be taken lightly it is a very serious issue that will clearly destroy us in the days to come. Citizenship Amendment Bill which is now an Act will reshape the whole of India but not in a good way. This Act is not only a direct threat to the fabric of Secularism but also the rights of indigenous people. No promise, No assurance and No legal/administrative measures from government can save us from the "irreversible change" that this unconstitutional, scary, communal Act will bring. This Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 is going to create following troubles:

1. It will grant citizenship to already existing Illegal Bangladeshi Hindu Immigrants who are millions in number. Every Naga knows this fact. When I wake up and go to College I witness this reality.
2. It will gradually create irreparable, irreversible damage to the demography of a region.
3. Inner Line Permit System, 6th Schedule, Autonomous District Councils and special provisions like Art. 371 (A) will be useless, helpless, meaningless to tackle the menace that would soon be created by Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019.
4. As it is by bringing ILP in entire tribal region of the northeast this cunning Act created new class of people which is against the spirit of the Constitution. This is a clear cut attempt of 'APARTHEID'.
5. Finally, this Citizenship Amendment Act 2019 is highly

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discriminatory. This 'specific', 'hidden' feature of Act becomes visible when its provisions are read with the provisions/rules of N.R.C. The Illegal Immigrants (numbered 19,06,657 according to 'The Hindu' newspaper) could not make it to NRC/excluded from N.R.C. now will be 'legalized' and 'naturalized' through Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019. Moreover it is learned that maximum illegal immigrants who are out of NRC are Hindus (Reference: <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/nrc-final-list-bjp-worried-over-exclusion-of-hindus-inclusion-of-illegal-bangladeshi-muslims-1593966-2019-08-31>). 19 Lakh is not a small number. In Nagaland we have millions of Illegal Bangladeshi Immigrants, other states in the northeast too face more or less similar situation. Total number of Illegal Bangladeshi Immigrants will be much more than what we can ever imagine. Therefore, this matter of CAA is not that simple to understand. As we all know that India is known for its diverse culture but this 'Citizenship Amendment Act', 2019 will clearly destroy the diversity of India. We all should know the critical condition that we are in right now and should take a stand if not now; then the Citizenship Amendment Act will become the root of all the problems that we will face in the later days to come. If we do not wake up and stand against and oppose it strongly in Constitutional way, then later it will become a Cancer and bring darker days not only to our generation but for our future generations also. Remember; peace and justice cannot be achieved just by sitting at our home and asking for it but instead it is fought. We the people

(in general) have the bad habit of waiting for others to take a stand first then we follow. Why? ("The question remain"). This monstrous piece of legislation called as Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 might not show its symptoms right now in Nagaland but mark my words, and I am bringing my words on record; that later it will surely do and when that does we will stand to lose our right to complain because it was us who did not take a stand at the first place. When entire India was exercising its constitutional right to protest we were waiting in line to stock up petrol. Why? Have WE forgotten our fighting spirit due to easy prosperity, money and little power? Where are our Civil Society Groups, Where are our Students organizations? With UNITY our ancestors fought good battles in the past. We were undefeated. Our forefathers fought against every injustice with bravery. Now, the battlefields have been shifted, "Thoughts and Pen" has taken place of "Dao and Spear" and the "Constitution of India" has become our shield. If we are to keep quite now and see others suffering then later the problems will face toward us and when that happen imagine suffering without any comfort from other (it will be hell). If there is any hope for those who are suffering then be that hope be that ray of light in the life of those who are suffering and are already in the darkness. I beseech all of you to kindly exercise your Constitutional Rights under Article. 19, Article. 21, Article. 32, Article. 226/27 of the Constitution of India and save Nagaland from the upcoming dark shadow of Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019.

We now know very well that every protected area including ours and all those areas under their own special constitutional provisions as well as 6th Schedule, and Autonomous Districts are going to take the first blow of the Act. How are we going to protect ourselves? Politically speaking, it is a fact that, the state Government is not in a position at all to oppose the Law, or take position against it. Inner Line Permit is an Illusion. Assurance from Central Government is not going to work. Therefore, the time has come that every citizen of Nagaland must invoke his Fundamental Rights under Constitution of India. Article 19 of the Constitution gives us right to dissent and protest in peaceful manner. When are we going to use this right? Art. 32 which in itself is a Fundamental Right give us a right to approach to Supreme Court to challenge violation of our Fundamental Rights. Introduction of Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 is direct, total, absolute, complete, systematic violation of our Fundamental Rights as individual, as well as people. We cannot afford to be selfish and be happy in our own world. I am a college going student, but I want to tell my people to educate themselves about the evils of Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019. We must oppose it not just because it is unconstitutional, but because it is like a chronic incurable disease that once caught is bound to deliver 'patient' in the arms of death. Entire northeast including Nagaland is infested with Illegal Bangladeshi Immigrants. This is not a question of just a survival of the Secular spirit of India, but also a social, cultural, political and economic survival of you and me-us as people!

Citizenship Amendment: Executing the Unfinished Colonial Agenda

Courtesy The Wire
By : Arun Kumar

The Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) is now a law. Even if the courts overturn it or stay its implementation, it has raised some serious questions about the kind of nation India is becoming. No one disagrees with the idea that those facing persecution in other lands should be granted relief/ asylum/citizenship in India. The issue is, in a liberal democracy like India, should religion decide who must be included or excluded? There are three strands of thought running through the country at present.

First, those who voted in favour of the Bill did so on the grounds that Hindus and a few other religious minorities have faced persecution in the neighbouring Islamic countries and needed protection. They believe that Muslims cannot be persecuted in these Islamic countries, hence their exclusion from the CAB is justified.

Further, the exclusion of the other minorities from other neighbouring countries, like Hindus and Muslims in Sri Lanka was justified on the grounds that there already existed a provision for them under the 1964 pact signed between Sirimavo Bhandaranaike and Lal Bahadur Shastri according to which a few lakh Tamils would be granted Indian citizenship. So, it was argued, there was no need for another provision at this time.

It was further argued that while India abided by the Nehru-Liaquat pact of 1950, Pakistan did not. India protected its minorities while large numbers of Hindus had to migrate from Pakistan. The sharp decline in the share of population of Hindus in Pakistan and Bangladesh and a rise in the share of population of Muslims in India

is given as evidence of this asymmetry. The implication is that while Muslims have other Islamic countries to seek refuge in, persecuted Hindus can only come to India and the nation has an obligation towards them.

The second line of reasoning has emerged from those protesting vehemently in the Northeastern states of India. They are opposed to any migration of any religious community to India. They fear that a flood of migrants will swamp the region and marginalise their culture and language. Bengalis from Bangladesh have had an impact on the demography of these states. The fear is that the CAB would lead to further migration and the indigenous people would lose their identity. Perhaps this fear in the states of the Northeast could have been assuaged if migrants had been settled in other parts of the country.

Given the poor state of governance in the country and the chaos that was created during the implementation of the NRC, people of the Northeast do not have faith that the promises made to them will be kept. Neither the indigenous people nor the Hindus or the Muslims have faith that there would be fair play in the years to come. Further, given the poor economic situation in these states, there is a fear that migrants would take away the scarce jobs and reduce economic opportunities for the local people.

The third line of argument is from those who oppose the CAB on grounds of religious discrimination. They do not want Muslims to be excluded from the Bill and see it as an attack on the secular fabric of the country. They agree that people have migrated to India due to persecution in the neighbouring countries which has not only been along religious

lines but also ethnic and linguistic.

Economic factors like poverty are also an important cause behind migration. The opposition also argues that the move is aimed at diverting attention away from a weakening economy. The CAB would also further deepen the communal divide in the country and alienate the Muslim community.

There is fear that in the prevailing charged communal environment in the country, minorities will face persecution and be treated as second class citizens. Any Muslim can be accused of being a foreigner and the onus will be on them to prove otherwise. A lot of people do not have proper documentation - as in the North East during the NRC process. Since the neighbouring countries will not accept these people, the question arises whether they would be permanently put in detention camps since their numbers are also quite large. Apart from the human costs, the economic burden of setting up detention camps and holding people there will be large and given the present state of the economy, should this additional burden be incurred? Given the uncertainties that are likely to follow, investment - especially foreign investment - will be set back. This could lead to further slowdown of an economy that is already tanking.

The BJP argues that it is fulfilling a promise in its manifesto. Does a promise in a party's manifesto mean that the once the party comes to power, it has to implement it? Mostly, a large number of promises remain unfulfilled. Further, people do not necessarily vote for one particular issue out of the hundreds of promises made in the manifestos. Did the BJP win the 2019 Lok

Sabha elections on this issue? Not clear, because the issue after Pulwama and Balakot became the need for a strong leader. All other issues, including the economic distress of many, were marginalised. So, why is the ruling dispensation raking up a divisive agenda by making people take a stand as pro-Hindu or pro-Muslim?

India is celebrating Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary and in the Hind Swaraj in Chapter X on 'The Hindus and Mahomedans', he says:

"India cannot cease to be one nation because people belonging to different religions live in it. The introduction of foreigners does not necessarily destroy the nation; they merge in it." "... those who are conscious of the spirit of nationality do not interfere with one another's religion. If they do, they are not fit to be considered a nation. If the Hindus believe that India should be peopled only by Hindus, they are living in a dreamland."

He argues that it is the "English advent (that) quarrels recommenced" between the Hindus and the Moslems.

So, the issue is that by raising a communally divisive agenda, are we now carrying forward the unfinished agenda initiated by the British colonisers who used divide and rule? One can understand why a foreign power did what it did, but why would a party claiming to be nationalist do so? Perhaps, to consolidate its hold over the majority community so as to remain in power in spite of its inability to solve the real problems confronting the country.

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