



Citizens of Manipur come out voluntarily and stage peaceful protest against CAA

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A group of concerned citizens of Manipur came together at Iroishemba and staged a peaceful protest against amended Citizenship Act (CAA) and to show solidarity to the people of Assam, Tripura and other northeast states. The protest had artists, film makers, and people from different walks of life. People protested with songs and placards. Singer Akhu Chingakham's song "Lainingthou lairenbi gi manairensa, kumsi di army yam lakkani hairiye," inspired the protesters at Iroishemba. Later, the crowd moved to Khwairamband Ema Keithel and marched, holding the placards and chanting slogans. Police stopped them



on the way and made them stay on the roadside. The protesters continued to sing protest songs.

Some of the protesters expressed their views on why the protest and what made them take this step. One protestor said, "We are here to protest against CAA with no affiliation to any organization. Everyone has come out on their individual capacity."

She said, "As a Manipuri, we are with the people of the north eastern states. At the end of the day CAA is going to affect us all, we should be aware of this."

Another protestor, also an artist said, "The need for this protest is due to the silence of government and agreeing to whatever the central government said. Not only

this, the government has celebrated the implementation of ILP with 'thalab chongba' and CM threatening people to arrest anyone that try to protest, trying to gag the voice of people." He added, "The state is also creating fear psychosis by threatening people to not protest, even to not say anything on social media. Even R.K. Echanthoibi has been arrested. A friend of mine has been threatened by a local BJP worker."

One of the protestors said, "this is a peaceful protest to show solidarity with the people of our neighbouring states and show respect to the lives lost. It is to send out the message that people of Manipur oppose CAA. There is also a sense of fear, but I want to ask what to be scared of. No one can put you in jail

for participating in such protest. The state's instruction to arrest any protestor has instilled fear amongst the people, but we do not need to be fearful of this." He shared his opinion on the impact of ILP, "ILP is not going to protect us. The settlers might get citizenship from other states where CAB is applicable and they will further come to northeast with the ILP. We need to foresee that them settling on our land can have a huge impact on our economy." "The reason people have come out voluntarily is to protect our indigeneity and show solidarity with other northeast states. It will be shameful if we are silent in this crucial time."

A Manipuri Rongmei lady, who joined the protestors said, "I

am here to protest CAA because I was concerned with whatever is happening in the country and was pissed that no organization in Manipur is doing anything about it." When asked about the need for this voluntary action, she said, "Personally, I feel individuals should actually come out because the CSOs and student organizations have been biased towards certain communities in most of the protests, but this time, it is personal."

Regarding the slow momentum of the protest, she believed, "Because a lot of people voted for this government, so, I think, they believe the government and are unaware of the whole situation. Another huge factor is the state violence. We also care about our jobs, career, and family, so, we cannot blame the people also completely." While covering the protest in Khwairamband Keithel, one Imphal Times' journalist was physically obstructed from filming the event by a police personnel.

The police tried to arrest Sarangthem Manjit former student leader who joined the protest at Khwairamband Keithel, Imphal. As he was pulled up by two armed police personnel, social activist Kh. Monica dared the bayonet of the security personnel and snatched him from the claws of the security personnels.

CAA- difference in perspectives

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Assam has been constantly burning in spite of every attempt by the government to shut the protest down. The news has somehow travelled all the way to Delhi and then to the rest of India. The protest to scrap CAA, which has been confined only to the northeast, has now reached various university campuses and streets of India. People flooding the streets in a number of cities have painted a picture of united India against the contentious Citizenship Amendment Act. Though the protests are to scrap CAA, there is a stark difference between the narratives pushed forward by northeast and the rest of India.

The rest of India has just come out on the streets after the bill became an Act, with the objection that the Act is unconstitutional in its nature with its exclusionary politics that is discriminatory against the Muslims. On the other hand, the northeast has been protesting ever since the bill was introduced, tabled, scrapped, reintroduced, and passed with the same narrative that the bill, now Act, is anti-indigenous and poses a threat to their identity, culture, and socio-economic and political status in their own land.

The movement that started from northeast by the indigenous people as protection of indigenous people from the immigrant-settlers, has turned into a religion-based movement as soon as it reached Delhi. While the rest of India feel for the Muslim immigrants and call the Act anti-Muslim, the indigenous people of northeast are not contesting on the idea of religion but solely on the basis of protecting their indigeneity from the immigrant-settlers. The inclusion or exclusion of Muslims from the Act does not make a difference to the indigenous people of northeast. To them, both cases are only about speeding up the naturalization of settlers. They have witnessed the impact of immigrant-settlers flooding into Tripura where the indigenous people have been outnumbered and marginalized, a classic case of settler colonialism- the same which the whole of northeast is scared of, and CAA is only going to make it worse.

Another issue that the rest of India is worried about is the BJP government's announcement for a pan India NRC. The fear is that CAA will legalize the non-muslim illegal immigrants before NRC and, therefore, NRC will forcefully send the illegal Muslims immigrants away from India. On the top of that, NRC can make thousands of poor immigrants at risk of losing their citizenship due to the lack of proper documents. On the contrary, the concern for NRC in the northeast, especially Assam, has always been completely different. It has always been about protecting the indigenous people, their lands, their rights, culture, economy, polity.

The continuous influx of these settlers in massive scale over the years has pushed the poor indigenous people to the margins in their own land. Similarly, the Manipur Peoples (Protection) Bill, 2018, which was presented as an option to protect the indigenous people and to prevent the influx of settlers (both from neighbouring countries and other Indian states), which has created a threat to employment opportunities for the indigenous people and availability of other limited resources. The Bill has a base year of 1951 for the identification process with a month's time for the non-Manipuris to register, but is still yet to get the president's assent. It has a provision to extend upto six months, and five years for trade licenses. Similarly, the agreement between AMSU and AMSCOC and the then government clearly mentioned the base year as 1951. The rest of India view NRC and CAA only as an anti-Muslim agenda of the current BJP government while the northeast is concerned about the continuity and development of the indigenous people. Another stark difference is in the immediacy of the reactions.

Indian citizen staying in rent, if certified by land lord can enroll in voter list of that constituency

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Chief Minister N. Biren Singh today said that any citizen of India who stayed at rent house at any constituency, if certified by the landlord can be enrolled in the voter list of that constituency. The Chief Minister was replying to a questioned asked by congress MLA Khumukham Joykishan during question hour today.

"Any genuine Adhaar card holder, who is also a citizen of India, if stay in a rented room can be enrolled in the voter list if he is certified by the land owner of his rented room", the Chief Minister said. However no person from another constituency can enroll in the voter list of another constituency, he added. In a statement tabled by the Chief Minister in connection with the question, the Chief Minister stated that, inmates of the jail other legal custody, hospitalism beggar homes asylum etc. should not be included in the electoral rolls of the constituencies in which such institutions are located.

The Chief Minister assures to give instruction to the district authority for checking of the valid voters enrolled in the electoral roll. He also said that instructions will be given to cooperate with the MLAs and others who are putting up matters of wrongful enrolment at voter list

MLA AK Mirabai urges for extension of the session for adopting resolution in connection with the Indo Naga peace talk

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Congress MLA AK Mirabai today urged the speaker of the Manipur Legislative to extend the 9th session of the 11th Manipur Legislative Assembly for at least a day to discuss and take a resolution on the issue of the Indo-Naga peace talk. Bringing up the issue as public importance during zero hour in the last day of the session, Ak Mirabai said that people of the state under the aegis of Co-ordinating Committee on

the Manipur Integrity (COCOMI) has been demanding full assurance for the protection of the territorial and administrative boundary of the state of Manipur while settling the issue of the NSCN-IM and the Government of India.

"We have heard from media report that the government may grant an autonomous council for the Naga inhabited in the state of Manipur and if it is true the house need to adopt a resolution for protection of the state", the Congress MLA said during

zero hour.

Earlier during question hour another Congress MLA RK Imo had sought information regarding the status of the Indo Naga Peace talk from the leader of the house.

Leader of the Manipur Legislative Assembly, who is also the chief minister of Manipur in his reply said that central government has not disclosed or communicated anything about the status of the Indo Naga Peace Talk to the State government. The Chief Minister further said that the Union Home

Minister has made no official communication to the state government regarding the meeting between the representatives of the Civil Society bodies of Manipur and political parties.

Regarding the stand of the Manipur government for protection of the state of Manipur, the Chief Minister said that Resolution adopted by the State Assembly adopted on December, 22, 2017 and July 23, 2018 had been submitted to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Private hospitals threaten to suspend CGHS cashless services

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, Dec 20

Over 9,000 private empanelled hospitals across the country, providing cashless service to patients under Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) and other healthcare schemes like Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS), have threatened to suspend the cashless services if pending dues of over Rs 3000 crore are not released by the Central Government.

The Association of Healthcare Providers (India) (AHPHI) held a special meeting

in New Delhi on Thursday and decided to give a final call to the Government to clear the dues immediately to enable them to continue the services. AHPHI Director General Dr. Girdhar J. Gyani, told 'Imphal Times' that the scheme has become unsustainable as the dues are piling up. If a small hospital spends Rs 50 crore, after a long time, the Government releases Rs 50 crore. By the time the payment is received, the amount spent by the hospital is doubled. Even the Delhi based major hospitals like Max, Medanta, Fortis, Apollo and Gangaram

find it difficult to meet the expenses. Besides the CGHS rates have not been revised since 2014, although it was agreed to revise the rates every two years, he added. "We have tried to bring the plight of our members (private hospitals) to the attention of the Prime Minister too, but no avail. We wrote to him again today seeking his intervention in the matter Gyani said. "Considering that 70 per cent of OPD and 60 per cent of IPD patients are being taken care of by private healthcare providers, the likely disruption of health services due to

financial crunch is going to impact the national healthcare scenario more so in tertiary care where private sector provides more than 85 per cent of such services," AHPHI President Dr Alexander Thomas, said. CGHS promises comprehensive medical care to approximately 35 lakh Central government employees and pensioners. Ex- and sitting MPs, pensioners, freedom fighters and employees serving at CGHS, Directorate General of Health Services and the Health Ministry are entitled to cashless services at

empanelled providers. Pensioners and their dependents account for around 11 lakh of registered beneficiaries. However Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Joint Secretary Alok Saxena, said that "This year so far, around Rs 1,400 crore have been released to service providers for cashless services and more payments are under process."

Meanwhile the Indian Medical Association (IMA) has also endorsed the stand taken by the private empanelled hospitals, saying that the

healthcare industry is passing through a crisis and crores of rupees remain unpaid to private hospitals under CGHS) and ECHS. "If the situation is allowed to persist, lakhs of hospital employees may lose jobs. Despite repeated attempts made by hospitals and associations, the situation has not improved," IMA Secretary General Dr R V Asokan said and added that studies carried out by various institutes show that rates of many procedures under CGHS do not cover even the operating cost incurred by hospitals.