

Editorial

Saturday, February 2, 2019

Non presentation of CAB at RS is an insult to the President

Technique after technique seem to be utilized to calm down the people of the North East states using propaganda by misinforming matters related to contentious Citizenship Amendment Bill , 2016, which the BJP is putting all its energy to pass it at the Rajya Sabha.

When the entire people of the North East states (except the BJP bhaks) opposed the Bill and uproar against its passing on January 8 at Lok Sabha, and when the state of Assam were nearly burnt, a spokesperson of the Ministry of Home Affairs in an announcement made on January 22 said that consent of the state will be taken before the granting of citizenship to the illegal non-Muslim immigrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan. The statement of MHA was term as an attempt to fool the people by a veteran politician Okram Joy Singh. The veteran Politician had stated that CAB, 2019 comes under Union list and saying that consent of the state government will be taken while granting citizenship is unacceptable until a clause on what the spokesperson had assured is added on the Bill.

Later, the Union Home Minister told that the Bill will not affect the people of the North East states. Memorandums after memorandum have been submitted from almost all people of the region except the BJP, urging the central government to withdraw the Bill. Reasons for the apprehension have been elaborated and violation of the constitution to the passing of the Bill has also been pin pointed time and again. But the Union Minister still tame those who meet him - sometime giving assurance that the states of NE will be protected and sometimes justifying the need of the Bill.

Here in Imphal, illogical explanation on the better side of the Bill is being used as a tool to fool the people by some Ministers and the spokespersons of the state BJP saying that - selection of specific communities base on religion and granting them citizen is a real face of secularism. This was stated by the Education Minister Th Radheshyam while speaking to a discussion programme at local cable TV. The oratory skill of Radheshyam got applauses from many and even the Chief Minister of Manipur had in a public speech appealed to listen his speech. While saying so, the Chief Minister seem to have forgotten that he had already announced the people that his government will urged the Central Government for insertion of a clause that would protect the NE States particularly the state of Manipur.

With the speculation that the BJP will use all means to pass the Bill in the Rajya Sabha , civil society bodies from Manipur are stationing at Delhi to stage protest against the passing of the Bill. Congress Party and other political party are also stationing at Delhi to lobby the MPs of political parties to oppose the Bill from passing in the Rajya Sabha.

When people across the reason are spending sleepless night it was only yesterday that an audio record of a telephonic conversation had spread at Social networking site. The conversation seem to be spread to let the people that the Chief Minister N. Biren Singh had agreed to oppose the Bill which was a total baseless . What the Chief Minister had stated was that he would urged the government to insert a clause in the Bill for exempting the state of Manipur from CAB. He never did signed any memorandum which say no to the Bill.

Now, another news is spreading around through social networking site by a media channel stating that the Contentious CAB 2016 will not be table in Rajya Sabha. The report also even quoted the vice Chairman of the Rajya Sabha saying it.

Well, the CAB 2016, was openly back by the President of India Ram Nath Kovind during his speech on the opening day of the interim Budget session.

President's speech on the opening day of the session is most important that whatever he said is the voice of the government and the parliament cannot make a mockery of the presidential speech.

The report about the Bill, saying that it will not be presented in the ongoing session at Rajya Sabha is nothing but another trick to fool the people of the North East states.

The report also seems rather a strategy to calm down and put the people of the state under their full control so that any uprising against the passing of the Bill could be prevented.

Name Change

I, Naorem Nirupama Devi, wife of Likmabam Manibabu Singh, Khongman Zone 2, Imphal East hereby clarified that I was known as Likmabam ongbi Naorem Nirupama Devi. However, from today i.e. 02/02/2019, I would be known as Naorem Nirupama Devi as it is my certificate name.

Sd/-
Naorem Nirupama Devi

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"Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB)" An Adhesive for Integrity of Manipur.

By:Sanjenbam Jugeswor Singh.

Mass protest against the Citizenship Amendment Bill 2016 in North East states of India turned deaf to the Government of India as President Ram Nath Kovind in his speech at the joint parliamentary session of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha at Central Hall of Parliament on 31st January 2019 assured passage of the Bill in the Indian Parliament. President Ram Nath Kovind addressed the legislators from both Houses on the first day of Budget Session and he backed the Center's Citizenship Amendment Bill which met stiff opposition from all section of people in North East, political Parties, student bodies and Civil Societies Organizations. In his speech, President mentioned that "The citizenship Amendment Bill" will make it easier to provide Indian Citizenship to those who had to take refuge in India after facing oppression somewhere else. The Bill seeks to amend Citizenship Act of 1955 in order to grant citizenship to Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan, if they have lived in India for six years even if they don't

possesses the necessary documents .He further said, the Bill will seek to address "Injustice and deprivation" in society.

One of the ethical consideration embodied in the Bill is: why foreigners or the migrants want to stay in India? The answer to this question is very simple. The basic reason that the illegal migrants from the above mentioned countries are subjected to various forms of harassment or persecution on the ground of religion or caste. There is also report that they are forced to convert into other religion. Naturally, life is risky for them in these countries. That's why they want to stay in India, which they claimed as their ancestral land (Country) or the land in which their ancestors lived/ settled. Thus the ethical value in the Bill is that the life of the people of Indian origin from the above mentioned countries and communities will be protected and saved. Therefore there is the need for passing the Bill in both Houses of Parliament. But, the demography of the North East particularly Manipur has been imbalanced due to illegal migrants. That's why AMSU has been demanding detection and deportation of illegal migrants

since 1970s. After long agitations, accords have been reached between AMSU and State Government in two instances. One in 1980 and another in 1994, in presence of the Governor of Manipur. However in this context of Manipur and North East states the Government of India has again tabled the Bill and consequently passed the CAB-2016 by Lok Sabha on 8th January 2019 which threatens the survival and very existence of the indigenous peoples of Manipur and North East. The Bill seeks to make immigrants from the above mentioned countries if they are Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis or Christians and entered India on or before 31st December 2014, who may have been considered illegal till now, eligible to apply for Indian Citizenship. The Bill, if enacted into Law, would also abate all proceedings that may be pending against such victims of religious persecution to determine if he is an illegal migrant and reduce the qualifying period to apply citizenship, on the ground of naturalization from 11 years to 6 years. Government of India also issued notification on 7th September 2015 and 18th July 2016, making amendments to the passport (Entry into India) Rules 1950, allowing

illegal migrants communities mentioned above from the said countries who entered & sheltered in India on or before 31st December 2014 to apply Indian citizenship without valid documents or with expired valid documents. With these, the Bill further makes the base year of 1951 for detection and deportation of illegal migrants ,agreed in 1980 & 1994 between AMSU & GOM also base year mention in Manipur People Bill passed by Manipur Assembly in 2018 (now in the President's office for assent) meaningless. Taking these plights and possible dangerous consequences in the demographic imbalances due to CAB, all the Civil Society Organizations and Student bodies of Manipur from both Hill & valley, irrespective of caste and community have come out together and formed a united body or core Committee (consisting of more than 72 Organizations) which is now known as MANIPUR PEOPLE AGAINST CAB (MANPAC) on 28th December 2019. This day will be a red letter day in the history of Manipur. Thus Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) has become an adhesive to establish the solid integrity of Manipur which appeared fragile for quite some time.

Contd. From yesterday Issue

WHY MEITEIS SHOULD NOT BE SCHEDULED AS TRIBE

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By swallowing up the professional opportunities of the highlanders, the Committee is engineering a situation where the highlanders do not even get the 'outward' respect they enjoy. What about the political division? The demand committee has not rolled out any such operational plans till now. Probably they do not have, or maybe they also know that by ST status there cannot be any democratic radical political restructuring apart form a coercive 'unison'. Political division need not be removed by 'unification' but it can be addressed by distribution of power. The highlanders have been governing themselves within their own organic polity parallelly with the 'glorious' two thousand years old Meitei 'civilisation'. (Mind you having a 2000 written history does not mean that these highlanders are people without history. It is just a matter of how knowledge of the past is stored). And the then pre-colonial relation between them and the Meiteis is of truce and alliances and sometimes of subjugation. Now the anarchic arrangement of the geo-political region Manipur was dismantled by modern nation-state leading to a situation where even arrangement of a just federation is doubtful. I am more doubtful about the arrangement which can be made under a scheduled state looking into the demographic context of Manipur and the larger political framework of India. If Administration is 'unified' the division will go away is the thesis the Demand Committee subscribes to of which the highlanders will fight tooth and nail. As mentioned in the beginning the political framework India has given to us breeds majoritarianism (they regret Manipur having two members of parliaments but is blind to the same representation system in Manipur) without addressing these core issues there cannot be a cohesive Manipur 'state'. The

issues in Manipur are of unequal power sharing among the nationalities. When the hills are demanding more autonomy is committee is talking of 'unified administration'? Land has been central to hill valley conflict, particularly with the Chin-Kuki groups and Meiteis mainly because of the demographic arrangements between these two communities (what adjoins to the Meitei areas are the Chin-Kuki groups, which has its history of such demographic arrangements). The most contentious of all is the MLR and LR 1960 which has gone through many amendments, the latest being the seventh amendment bill in 2015 as part of ILPS which is pending and which has become the bone of contention among the highlanders especially the Chin-Kuki groups. The intentions of the state to bring a uniformity in distribution of land throughout the State has been vehemently opposed by the highlanders from the beginning owing to the differences in the traditional land ownership pattern. What will be the arrangement of land relations under the proposed Tribal State? The arguments of geographically small but having the maximum population ratio valley, is accommodating the highlanders and is the opposite in highlands has been central to the ongoing debate. And Meiteis will be able to settle in highlands has been another 'catchy' promise if they are scheduled as tribe. A slight coercive move to have a 'uniform' land law will have a serious catastrophe. Uniformity in a heterogeneous society will be hegemonic and undemocratic. It is not the uniformity which is required but accepting and appreciating differences to build a harmonious and cohesive society. Remember Rome was not built on a day. Nation building is a process. It takes time, and

has to build democratically not by coercion. One of the best ways to bring harmony and cohesiveness is establishing a kinship relationship of which I have a doubt that among the feudal chauvinist members of the Demand Committee there will be no one who will agree to inter community marriages, especially allowing their meritorious 'daughters' to marry a highlander (in a patrilineal setup incoming of women of different caste/tribe/race is comparatively accepted, which is also very minimal among the Meiteis). As in the case of Indian caste system as inter caste marriage has been suggested to end caste system in India, and no affirmative actions has till now radically challenged the caste practice also. Inter community marriage is one good way as compared to 'ST status' to bring the so called 'emotional integrity'. Coming to the point of 'protecting' Meitei Land, from whom the Meitei land is going to be protected? From the highlanders? Or from the 'encroachment' by the Mayangs? Protection of land by the constitution of India is a deceit. There is enough constitutional 'leeway' to grab land and resources. Unfortunately, the most plundered areas have been the scheduled tribe areas of India. Both in scheduled tribe status and Protection of Manipur People's Bill 2015 the land and resources cannot be protected from plundering in the name of 'larger national interest' (at least in PMP 2015 you have the provision of regulating migrants). Land and resource plundering is guided by the current political economy of India and rules/laws are set accordingly. Even looking into Manipur, the state is 'borrowing' to develop 'infrastructure' by displacing population (even in the hills). You borrow money to displace people is the new 'development'. Who and how

one will pay the debt? From whom again the fund is going to be collected to repay? Of course by downsizing of government sectors, and again who will suffer? The only thing left one can seek is equitable share from exploitation of resources (never think this is going to happen in current political economy of India). You might get rid of the 'shabby' mayangs from Manipur but you cannot get rid of the suited and booted mayangs controlling the economy for whose the Union of India operates by becoming Scheduled Tribe or by just having a mere regulation like PMP 2015. It is being said that The ILPS is rejected by the highlanders, yes it is true, but the prime question is when and where has the Highlanders endorsed the Meitei demand for ST? Let me forcefully reiterate again that the 'promises' made by the Demand Committee has no possibilities of institutionalising it in Manipur by Meiteis becoming ST or announcing Manipur as tribal state apart from the educational and professional opportunities to the few Meitei elite sections. The Demand Committee has not dealt properly with certain nuances and intricacies of their 'promises' nor rolled out a proper operational schemas and viability of their 'promises' which is mutually acceptable and agreeable to 'everyone' (which I am sure the committee does not have). Let us not fool our self by the rhetoric of these chauvinist. Our state, our society is being put into a colosseum by a few elite section of Meiteis for their greed, where Delhi will enjoy the scene, a spectre no one wants. The Pan-Manipur movement for democracy is beyond the 'piecemeal solutions'. (Concluded)

