

Editorial

Thursday, February 21, 2019

Everyone shows concerns on plastic pollution but none act to safe from it

Plastic bags are a ubiquitous contamination of our landscape, urban and rural.

Many social organizations, Ngo, students bodies had launched campaigned against the use of Plastic polythene bag in the state. But as none including the government fails to extend supports plastic polythene pollution is killing the environment of our states. Infamous fresh water lake - Loktak has been the dumping site and most water of the lake has been contaminated with the plastic waste.

Much has been promised to keep the Imphal clean and some of the officers in the state government are trying all it can to make the city clean. Off late Imphalites saw the IMC engaging large number of workers to clean the city. The kind of initiative is also worth appreciation, not because it will keep the city clean but also this initiative provides jobs to many people particularly those people who have been looking for jobs of any kind.

But then when it comes for keeping the city clean or ban of the use of plastic polythene bag, it is always the government first that should be in the forefront to materialize the kind of initiative. However, a mere promise or announcement without converting those in action will certainly lead the good works of the students' body or some sincere employees in the government department into under frustration.

This is being brought up as the people sees no sustainable measures on the side of the government on either for ban of plastic use or for dumping site of the garbage collected from the urban area.

Earlier this newspaper has highlighted on how the Lamphelpat, the site where the Chief Minister of Manipur had promise to protect as wet land area to keep the environment clean, has been converted into a dumping site of garbage collected from the Imphal city.

Cores and crores of rupees has been spent at Lamdeng in establishing the solid waste management plant at Landeng and last year the government had already announced that it is working. When the Landeng solid waste management plant is working it is surprising to see why the garbage are being dump at Lamphel area and that too by exposing in open air. The way that the IMC dump the garbage at Lamphelpat shows that something is wrong in the multi crore worth Solid Waste Management plant at Lamdeng in Imphal West.

The garbage being dump at Lamphelpat will have serious environmental effect. We all know that Environmental pollutants have various adverse health effects from early life some of the most important harmful effects are perinatal disorders, infant mortality, respiratory disorders, allergy, malignancies, cardiovascular disorders, increase in stress oxidative, endothelial dysfunction, mental disorders, and various other harmful effects.

The government, particularly the MAHUD department should clarify on why the garbage from the Imphal are being dump at Lamphelpat instead of taking it to Lamdeng Solid waste management plant.

Name changed

I, the undersigned, Konthoujam Reena Devi, a residence of Wangkhei Ningthem Pukhri Mapal, Imphal East district, Manipur do hereby declare that I have wholly renounced, relinquished and abandoned the use of my old name Telem Ongbi Reena Devi as I have assumed my new name as Konthoujam Reena Devi.

Sd/-
Konthoujam Reena Devi
Wangkhei Ningthem Pukhri Mapal,
Imphal East district,
Manipur

Letters, Feedback and Suggestions to 'Imphal Times' can be sent to our e-mail : 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.

“Tracing the State through two indie films: Loktak Lairembee and Soni”

By:—Rajkumar Panthoiren
pursuing MA Sociology in the University of Hyderabad

Haobam Paban's "Loktak Lairembee (Lady of the Lake)" and Ivan Ayr's "Soni" are two polar opposite narratives in that the former deals with the lower rungs of society who are practically social immobiles on account of their subservient relationship with the State which has in Weberian sense the ultimate monopoly of the "legitimated" exercise of power, while the latter deals with the narrative of two agents of the State who are caught up in the functional disruptions that are part and parcel of their work of law enforcement, worsened by their character disposition of harbouring an intact conscience. The first is based in the soil of Manipur, or rather on the floating *phumdis* of Loktak while the second one is based in the rugged streets and tense police stations of New Delhi—both products of feature film medium debuts. Both the films serve as a case study through which the Marxian framework of the State existing as a necessary means to facilitate and sustain the politico-economic interests of the few 'haves', resulting in the absolute denigration and alienation of the majority 'have-nots', can be utilised. Both reveal the pathological malaise of the normalised ascendance of psychopathic elements in the ultimate echelon of power games and power consolidation, which is manifested in the excesses done by the elite political class. Their actions are in tandem with their sole aim of maintaining the capitalist power engine that sustains not only the direct monopolisers of power but also the subsidiary and other support structures in the form of vested corporate elites. Now, who does the State use to further the aforementioned excesses? The optimally fed, paid-for agents of the repressive state apparatus, Louis Althusser would say. In both the films, the concrete, accessible figure we see is the police while the overlordship of their political masters casts a long, dark yet invisible shadow throughout the story lines. In psychoanalytical terms, both the films chart the characters' internal conflict between the executive ego and the moral superego and also, the

suspended cognitive dissonance they undergo. The executive ego of the State is very much active as seen in the special importance it gives to maintaining the "sanctity" of its formal, rational institutions, while its moral superego has been appropriated by the dominant elite using self-serving rationalisation mechanism.

ACTE:
"Loktak Lairembee" has its basic plotline based on the controversial Loktak lake *phumdi* (floating biomass) clearance operations by the Manipur Government in cahoots with a dubious corporate body in 2011, which resulted in displacement of several indigenous fisher-folks whose lives depend solely on fishing activities done in the lake. Tomba and his wife Tharoshang are as deprived, if not more, as any of the rest of the *phumdi*-dwellers. Tomba suffers from some sort of a psychotic depression and there are visible strands of schizophrenic hallucination and paranoia, which is indicated by his occasional sighting of the mysterious lady who travels alone in her own boat. His present condition is a result of a previous burning of their hut for which they had to relocate, and as the Government continues to burn down huts and dredge *phumdis*, he is still anxious of another repetition of his previous fate. A conversation between him and his wife reveal that they have a daughter studying in Imphal and arranging for her education fees is a damning task for them, which is worsened by Tomba's inability to contribute anything economically on account of his psychological condition. Although Tharoshang rebukes him for not standing up again as any responsible man should for his family, he is *indifferent but not unconscious*. A psychoanalytical understanding would point to the decimation of his masculine ego which was in a way irreparably damaged by the ultimate, supposedly invincible outlet of power-consolidation—the State. This is why he needed a push for reclamation of his protective and assertive male authority image. Yes, he is a practicing patriarch but he cannot be simplistically reduced to an oppressive character as a careless feminist

misreading might do. In his mind, he failed to "protect" and "safeguard" the interest of his family; for a man like him who has nothing more than his simple *sanctum sanctorum* called home where a semblance of his projected importance finds a vent, the sanctity of his living space (the *phumdi* hut) to be trampled upon is akin to him being reduced to impotence.

The incident of discovering the gun (the pivotal metaphoric tool) excites him as well as shakes him even though he does not have the tools to explicitly articulate so. The gun serves as a redemptive tool for him to reclaim his lost ground, in his own eyes as well as in his wife's. It's another matter that his hopes would later turn out to be nothing more than a delusion—an act of a defeated fighter who has been pinned down and drained of any energy or will but attempts desperately to throw back a resurrector punch, only to be punched down by the dominant fighter in decisive terms.

Thus, Tomba, the defeated fighter, is a non-entity to the State, the dominant fighter, with no potential for threat either physically or ideologically. In Marxian terms, Tomba is partly out of the false consciousness loop but doesn't have the requisite resources and environs to attain/induce any semblance of class consciousness. His repressed anger only cripples him psychosocially. This is representative of his equally subdued *phumdi* dweller compatriots. The gun that he planned to use to "defend" (*hawai kanba*) his family ultimately pricks his superego and unsettles his executive ego, which shows that even though helpless, his conscience is very much alive. Or, to restate as a question, is his conscience alive because he is helplessly subdued by the State? Contrast this with the mechanical, oppressive nature of the State which is driven by few vested individuals and which has no remorse in destroying the *phumdi* dwellers' lifestyle and also falsely pinning the blame on them for the lake's pollution.

To contextualise, it is pertinent to remember that a company which existed only on paper, K-Pro Infra

Works Limited, was selected for the Rs 224 crore-worth *phumdi* clearance work, flouting the norms of CPWD requiring at least three bidders for the award of work. The company was the lone bidder and came into existence only (on 22 June 2009) after the tender notice was given (on 4 June 2009) by the Loktak Development Authority (LDA). The proliferation of *phumdis* has several artificial causes such as construction of the Ithai Barrage dam, rapid urbanisation of Imphal, unchecked sewerage discharge from nearby satellite towns, etc. In earlier times, the excessive *phumdis* were discharged through the Manipur River which is not possible now as the river has been perennially blocked by the Ithai Barrage. The Loktak Multipurpose Hydroelectric project is also another factor hugely impacting the ecosystem of the lake. So, instead of tracing the root causes borne out of careless planning, absence of impact assessment and furtherance of corporate interests, rather the government had the audacity to blame the *phumdi* dwellers, who share a symbiotic relationship with the lake, for pollution and thus exonerating itself of its grave missteps which caused the problem in the first place.

Coming back to the plot narrative, the last scenes show that Tomba finally gets to use his gun on that mysterious lady one late night (most probably in a psychotic hallucination episode). Just after the lady was done in, she miraculously comes back knocking on Tomba's door to give him the two used bullet casings from the two "fatal" shots fired by Tomba. The closing shot shows the camera manoeuvring underwater in the lake to finally fixate on the gun lying enmeshed in organic matter. The gun's fate can be interpreted as Tomba coming to terms (assuming he, not his wife, threw the gun in the lake) with the fact that his helplessness and "impotence" cannot be redeemed by confronting the infinitely more powerful State by violence (his lingering, not acted upon fantasy). The State thrives on the proliferation of such helplessness and mental bondage.

(To be Contd.....)

“Solid waste to Energy”

By:Sanjenbam Jugeshwor Singh.

Energy recovery from waste is the conversion of non-recyclable waste materials into usable heat, electricity or fuel through a variety of processes, including combustion, gasification, pyrolysis, anaerobic digestion and land fill gas recovery. This process is often called Waste to Energy. Infact, Waste-to-Energy (WtE) or Energy-from-Waste (EfW) is the process of generating energy in the form of Electricity and/or heat from primary treatment of waste or the process of waste into a fuel source. WtE is a form of energy recovery. Most WtE process generate Electricity and/or heat directly through combustion or produce a combustible fuel commodity such as Methane, Methanol or Synthetic fuel. During the 2001 to 2007 period, the Waste-to-Energy capacity increased by about four million metric tons per year. Japan and China each built several plants based on direct smelting or on fluidized bed combustion of solid waste. In China, there are about 434 Waste-to-Energy plants in early 2016. Japan is the largest user in thermal treatment of municipal solid waste in the World with 40 million tonnes. Some of the newest plants use Stoker technology and others used the advanced oxygen enrichment technology.

Several treatment plants exist Worldwide, relatively novel process such as direct smelting, the Ebara fluidization process and Thermoselect JFE gasification and melting technology process. In India its first Energy bio-science Center was developed to reduce the country's greenhouse gases and its dependency on fossil fuel. As of June 2014, Indonesia had a total of 93.5MW installed capacity of Waste-to-Energy with a pipeline preparation phases together amounting to another 373MW of capacity. Waste-to-Energy technology also includes fermentation which can take biomass and create Ethanol, using waste cellulosic or organic materials. In the fermentation process, the sugar in the waste is changed to carbon dioxide and alcohol. The most common source for WtE is Incineration, which means to burn organic waste to get energy. Incineration is not just conducted to recover energy rather it is most of time conducted to get rid off waste. The solid waste management plant at LamdengKhunou established by Govt. of Manipur, after successful conversion of solid waste into manure / fertilizer in the first phase, now started generating 1MW of Electricity per shift per day on trial basis successfully. Infact, solid waste treatment plant was initially

lunched to produce manure/fertilizer only from the solid waste. But now WtE project to produce Energy from Waste is being taken up in Public private partnership (PPP) model. The installation work to generate Electricity from waste at this plant is completed now. The project was taken up in association with INOVATIVE ECO-CARE Pvt.Ltd and THERMOTEC SYSTEM Ltd of Ahmedabad. Now the plant started producing 1MW of electricity.

To generate 1MW of electricity at WtE plant at LamdengKhunou, needs about 100 metric tons of solid waste. It is reported by the concern authority that about 120 metric tons of solid waste can be collected from local Urban bodies of Imphal area which is classified as Cluster-A. To generate electricity round the clock in a day, the plant needs to work in three different shifts. Therefore about 300metric tons of solid waste is required. As the solid waste from the Imphal area is not sufficient to run the plant 24 hours, therefore collection of solid waste from other urban local bodies beyond Cluster-A area is required. It is highly appreciable to learn that the Government of Manipur has handed over vehicle to transport the solid waste from other urban local bodies under NLCPR project. 31 vehicles

have been handed over to collect solid waste from seven (07) local urban bodies under cluster-B of Thoubalarea. The report also mentioned that, there will be a secondary collection Center at Thoubal, which after compaction will be taken to LamdengKhunou to use in WtE plant. As this even will not be able to meet the requirement of the plant, Government is trying to collect the solid waste by opening four (04) more secondary collection centers at Bishnupur, Kakching and Mayailambi, so that the required quantity of 300MT of solid waste can be collected to meet the need of the plant. Infact, this step taken up by the Government of Manipur is very good and right step to keep the environment of our City and towns clean which in turn will help to save our LoktakLake from all kinds of threat posed on it also. At the same time, we will get additional electricity though it may be little. If this project/ Mission is successful, it's not hard to say that our dream of Imphal to be a clean Smart City will be achieved. However, to get all these objectives lies in the hand of our general public. So let's all join in hand to make Imphal in particular and Manipur in general, environmentally very clean city and state.

Writer can be reached at: jugeshwor7@gmail.com/ [WhatsApp No:9612891339](https://api.whatsapp.com/send?phone=9612891339)