

Protest against CAB intensified; 100s staged at New Delhi; rally staged in Imphal

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As the BJP led government is preparing for passing of the contentious Citizenship Amendment Bill 2016 at Rajya Sabha civil bodies and non BJP political parties of the entire North Eastern states have intensified the protest against the passing of the Bill. While sit-in-protest and mass rally were staged at various places here in Imphal under the aegis of the Manipur Peoples' Against CAB, different students' bodies including AMSU, MSF, DESAM, KSA, SUK, AIMS and MSAD along with civil society representatives from Manipur today staged a

mass sit-in-protest at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi. Political parties of the state had already left for New Delhi to give pressure to the center for exemption of Manipur if in case the CAB 2016 is passed. Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh also left today to join the Political parties which agreed to go with them. Source reaching here said that a meeting of all Chief Ministers of the North Eastern state is likely to hold either today or tomorrow to discuss over the issue. While the Manipur government is all set to give pressure for inclusion of a clause that would exempt Manipur and NE from the purview of CAB, the

students' bodies and civil society representatives are protesting against the passing of the Bill at any cost. Over 100s of students and civil representatives with placards and banner opposing the Bill today staged protest. Speaking to media persons Chetan Ningthoujam, President of Kangleipak Students Association (KSA) said that the student bodies strongly condemned the passing of the contentious CAB 2016 in the Lok Sabha and said that they will continue protest until the Bill is withdrawn by the BJP. Chetan also appealed the government of Manipur to take the matter seriously and cautions of unwanted agitation if fail to do so.

Katju, Colin Gonsalves condemn N. Biren Singh Govt. over the detention of Kishorechand; demand immediate release

By a correspondent
New Delhi, Jan 30,

Human Rights Law Network (HRLN) in association with Manipur Students' Association Delhi (MSAD) organized a press conference on Tuesday demanding immediate release of journalist Keshorechandra Wangkhem. Wangkhem was detained under the National Security Act (NSA) by Manipur government for criticising the government. Human Rights Law Network (HRLN) founder and senior Advocate Colin Gonsalves condemned the attack on freedom of speech and expression. "Sedition law is not understood properly- in the old English law, thinking or saying a few words in privacy against the crown was punishable. Things may be offensive and abhorrent but it has nothing to do with sedition law unless torts and words are supported by actions. Classic cases in Punjab and Kashmir where people who hadn't actually acted against the State were said to be seditious, and the Supreme Court acquitted them both. We have initiated the Legal Defence of Defenders, where across India, a network of lawyers and a journalist is made so that any journalist who can't find a lawyer or can't say for one, can get one," said Gonsalves.

Justice Markandey Katju, former Judge of Supreme Court of India, former



chairman of Press Council of India said, "Undemocratic politicians have lost their minds, people are allowed to dissent to the govt. in a democracy. In a democracy people have the right to criticize the govt. and democracy means people are supreme. There have been many cases where artists, cartoonist and journalists have been attacked. This is my appeal to Manipur's people to become the leader and guide the way and start the movement." Keshorechandra Wangkhem, a journalist in Manipur, was arrested under National Security Act (NSA) on November 27, 2018, for a video he uploaded on social media. In the video, Keshorechandra is seen criticizing the N. Biren Singh's government for comparing the fight of Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi against the British with that of Manipur's freedom movement against the colonial rule. The government's decision to detain the journalist under NSA came as a shock to the journalist and human rights community. On November 26, a day before his detention

under NSA, a lower court hearing a charge of sedition brought against Wangkhem for the same video, had released him on bail stating that what was said in the video was not seditious in nature. Less than 24 hours after he was released on court's order, Keshorechandra was picked up by local police and later charged under the NSA. Ranjita Elangbam, wife of Keshorechandra narrated how their lives were turned upside down only because her husband and journalist decided to criticize the government. "Police forces were in our house searching for him, in all places, shocking, it might be there duty or under pressure to look for that guy, but they were searching for my daughter, how much money you have. They searched my phone, took it away and we couldn't communicate with anyone. The police kept him under judicial custody for 5 days. On 26th November they got bail and the next day he was detained under NSA. We were left helpless and

stranded alone and we didn't know how to sort things out. This is an appeal to everyone to support us and demand immediate release of Keshorechandra Wangkhem," said Ranjita. HRLN has been fighting the case of journalist Keshorechandra and February 1 is the next hearing. "In modern India, the 'state' is not free to act in any manner it likes, it is inconceivable that a civilized country would use preventive detention as a substitute for the criminal law. National Security Act has been misused and abused far too often as a political weapon of those in power against their political or ideological enemies and to curtail the dissent voice. NSA is dangerous to a secular democracy like India as it is extremely prejudicial to personal liberty and violates fundamental rights of freedom of speech and expression. We strongly condemn the use of draconian law like NSA against Journalist, political and human rights activist working in the interest of people and demand immediate release of Journalist Kishorechandra and to repeal NSA," said Shreeji Bhavsar,

Manipur Maoist alleged massive corruption in MSPDCL

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Armed rebel group Maoist Communist Party Manipur today alleged massive corruption going on in Manipur State Power Distribution Company Limited (MSPDCL). A statement by Kyonghan Mangang, Coordinator, Standing Committee of the outfit said that the party had established the modus operandi of the corruption being underway in the department and said that name of those involved including some top officials of the MSPDCL have been identified after the members of the outfit investigated the matter on receiving complaints. The Manipur Maoist statement said that on Ibecha from Heingang Mayai Leikai and another Krishna from Heirok are collecting money from the master roll employees for regularization. The statement said that the money collected by the two were again handed over to two Managing Directors of MSPDCL. The Press release further said that the centre of corruption of the state has been shifting from Thoubal and Khangabok

to Heingang and Thongju. The Manipur Maoist said that taking advantage of the court orders, the Managing director of MSPDCL and Union leaders of Master roll has join hands in collecting money from 835 master roll workers of the department. The outfit further claimed that around 1.5 Crores of rupees were confirmed to have given to the related minister for the purpose. The statement also said that the collection of huge amount of money from the master rolls

employees for regularising them illegally is a corruption done by the present BJP led government. "The government is corrupted; they can even sell their motherland for their personal benefits", the statement said. During Congress rule it was 10% and now it has increased to 15%, the statement added. The party finally warned strong actions if those responsible in the modus operandi of the corruption fail to accept their crime and clarify their wrong in public.

Ongoing work of Northeastern Frontier Railway and the fate of four Villages in Imphal West, Manipur and various other villages in Manipur.

Name changed

I, the undersigned, Acharjamayum Reena Devi, a residence of Mayang Imphal Konchak Maning Leikai, Imphal West district, do hereby declare that I have wholly renounced, relinquished and abandoned the use of my old name Khumujam Ongbi Reena Devi as I have assumed my new name as Khumujam Tenjing Singh.

Sd/-
Acharjamayum Reena
Devi

The ongoing work of the Northeastern Frontier Railway (NF Railway) in Manipur which is now part of India was started way back in 2008 which aim to bring development in the state of Manipur and also to make connect with other Indian states. The government of India also aimed to connect with other ASEAN countries in terms of trades and other economic developments, however, it indeed failed to cover social development of the Indigenous People of the state of Manipur. Failure to cover the social development could be observed in four villages like Tairenpokpi, Atongkhuman, Sairemkhul, Phayeng Chingaba which is just 19 km away from Imphal City. Since the work of the NF Railway reaches the area of the mentioned villages, NF Railway aggressively move ahead which resulted in destroying the natural water stream namely Ningthourok and Yembunglok which use to be the only water sources for these four villages. Earlier the water was brought from these two streams through pipelines which passes through Sheibung Village and filtered at

a reservoir which was initiated under A.R.W.S. Scheme at Tairenpokpi by the Public Health and Engineering Department, Government of Manipur which is now lying defunct without any care. The reason for nonfunctioning of this water reservoir which use to be the only water source of these four villages is due to the blocking of water by the NF Railway for their Tunnel Construction which need large amount of water for mixing cement and other construction to complete their project without respecting the rights of the people of the area. Almost a year have crossed and no water supply for domestic use and others since the water was diverted by the NF Railway for their utilization for the construction work. Only two ponds could be seen lying with very low quantity of water which is also not fit enough for consumption at Tairenpokpi Village. Though there are two to three Wells in the village, all are found dried up. With regard to the issue of women and children is concern, women are facing hardship due to lack of water sources as they have to wake



Ningthourok Stream in dried up condition which never used to dried up

up early in the morning by 3 am and have to go around more than 3-4 KM to fetch the water for domestic use and others. The most unfortunate area is that children have denied to go to schools due to dusty and horrible road condition which are frequently passed by the 10 tires loaded trucks carrying materials for the NF Railway construction. The frequent movement of the trucks breaks the sleep of the people in the area, especially the children may have negative health impact in the near future. Another serious concern is the water outlet from the Tunnel Construction which is highly

scale pollution by the NF Railway Project which is of serious concern and need to response for the sustainable survival of these Indigenous Peoples of the area before making them internally displaced in the name of development. On the other hand, Tairenpokpi is also well known for its production of Heritage Wine but due to lack of water resources the production has declined tremendously and hampers their livelihood. Similarly, there are hundreds of villages which was crossed by this NF Railway as "111-km-long Jiribam-Imphal railway line passed through steep rolling hills of the Patkai region and had to traverse through a number of deep gorges and over several rivers flowing at low ground levels. It aimed to construct 52 tunnels and now in its completion stage and 149 bridges, crossing 10 stations to sustain a suitable gradient for efficient operation of railway services to bolster trade relations with the ASEAN countries and also come handy in military operations and help tourism

development" as mentioned by the Chief Engineer of the Project. Then how much destruction would have been made to these villages in Manipur by the NF Railway Project in the name of development with regard to the construction of 52 tunnels are concern. As only a Tunnel No. TT 12 which is located in between Tairenpokpi and Sheibung have caused mass destruction of more than 200 hectares of paddy field, shortage of water supply and impacting the population of few thousands, then what would have caused by the other 51 Tunnels which have already been constructed in different areas by the NF Railways and can it only be compensated for the destruction caused. Who should be liable for such destructive activities in the name of development? Is it a game by using the NF Railway to stop the water supply so as to make the people suffer and migrate to other areas in search of water? Is it as step to suppress the people by snatching their right to food? Can we call this a development for the people?

- By: YFPHR