

# Editorial

Wednesday, July 24, 2019

## Babysana's case, the safety of our children in hostels and Manipur Commission for Protection Child Rights

Babysana's case has again brought Manipur to its usual self. Joint Action Committee formed on this issue has called a bandh. Chief Minister has said that it is a case of suicide but does not want to show the post mortem report to prove that it is a case of suicide. The argument is that the government and the concerned departments working on the matter must be trusted. But, why? If they had taken the matter of child safety seriously then things would have been different. Whether it is a premeditated murder of the girl, as JAC claims or suicide, according to CM, the case brings to light the problems that marred these residential schools and hostels which are cropping up everyday in this state. In this case, Pheirojiam Landhoni, the principal of the school has accepted that there are lapses in the management of the hostel. The question remains on the gravity of those lapses. If there are lapses, then the responsibility is not just of the school, Manipur Commission for Protection Child Rights (MCPCR) must also say something on this matter.

Manipur Commission for Protection Child Rights (MCPCR) in 2018 said that taking "a serious view on the recent incidents of deaths, suicides and sexual assault on minors, who are the inmates of different Boarding and Hostels being run by school authorities and private individuals," there will be regularity guidelines for hostels of educational institutions for children specific to Manipur. The commission also reported in the media that it had conducted a fact finding in 2018 on this matter and it revealed "several incompetency and unfavourable settings in the management and infrastructures" in hostels for children in this state and it said that the conditions of the residential spaces are "largely detrimental to the security of children." It has even submitted the draft of the state specific guidelines based on National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPDR) 2018 "Regulatory Guidelines for Hostels of Educational Institutions for Children." The question remains what MCPCR did to those residential institutes for children where lapses and serious compromise to the security of the children were found. NCPDR's 2018 regulatory guidelines entail that all the hostels whether private or government must be registered. There are regulations on the infrastructure of the hostels. Whether these hostels cropping up everyday in Manipur meet these infrastructural regulations or not, MCPCR must answer. If MCPCR and concerned authorities had taken seriously the matter of security of our children, we would not see the turmoil that has befallen the state now.

How many of these hostels have proper health care for children living there? It is the responsibility of the superintendent to "ensure the safety, security and psychological well-being of the children residing in the hostel," according to the guideline. Whether the owners of these hostels show concern for the physical and psychological well being of the children in their hostels, MCPCR should know about this matter. Are the children in these hostels undergoing regular health check-ups at least thrice by a registered medical practitioner as entailed by NCPDR's guidelines? MCPCR and owners of these hostels must answer. When it comes to the mental health of the children, the guidelines consider it as an important and dedicates an entire section. If the mental health of a child deteriorates in the hostel and the hostel authority does not do anything, then it is a serious matter as the regulation makes it mandatory that mental health of the children must be looked after in the institute employing trained counselors and doctors. The regulation clearly states that "all persons involved in taking care of the children in a hostel shall participate in facilitating an enabling environment and work in collaboration with the counselor as needed" and must provide "critical mental health intervention, whenever required." Are there such facilities in all the hostels and residential schools in Manipur, especially in Standard Rorbarth Higher Secondary School? MCPCR must say something about this too.

There are allegations that school authority was late in calling the parents and the police. Instead, an organisation who works for the interest of private schools reached there first. If this is true, it is clear violation of NCPDR guidelines. The guidelines entail that hostel superintendent should "immediately report the matter to concerned officials of the district administration" if there is a case of violation of the rights of children. Most importantly, are there children committees being set up which should be solely run by children living in hostels? The committee should be asked about their lives in the residential spaces of Standard Rorbarth Higher Secondary School? MCPCR must take this matter up. These questions about the safety of our children should haunt all of us and most importantly, the state machinery entrusted with the protection of the rights of our children. This case should make us think about the safety of the children in this society and things we must do.



By: Sanjenbam Jugeshwor Singh  
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It is very sad and painful to see and testify the standard as well as quality of majority of our students these days. Being in the profession of teaching I started asking myself, what went wrong with our young people in the field of quality Education, in spite of tireless toil of parents, students organizations to bring quality Education? It's widely known that parents runs here and there for their children's tuition from dawn to dusk in addition to what school teachers taught in their respective schools in the hope that the quality and standard of their wards might be enhanced but majority of parents if I am not mistaken disheartened so badly that some of them even started taking BP controlling tablets. The pass percentage of HSLC Examination conducted by BOSEM is soaring up as per record with many of our students passed with letter marks in Mathematics. Seeing this I am so happy that our youths are very good in Mathematics. But when the

## Who is responsible?

result of HSSLC Examination result conducted by COHSEM is declared the result is just reversed. The pass percentage in Mathematics subject is below 50% in most year but improved a little in 2019 result, still then majority of students passed in Mathematics just obtained 33%. A big question is why? How these boys and girls who scored good marks in Mathematics in HSLC are getting very low marks and even fail in Mathematics in HSSLC Examination? Is it due to the deficiency of Mathematics teachers in teaching Mathematics? Is it due to parent's desire (not by the students) opting their children to go for Medical line, resulting their aptitude in Mathematics have been nipped in the bud? Due to this mass failure or declining the aptitude in Mathematics at this stage of Education might cause a big vacuum in the field of Mathematics studies in Manipur, I presume rather sufficient number of Mathematics teachers may not be available in Manipur in the time to come.

Besides this, it is also generally observed that the aptitude of learning or study among our people of young age has declined drastically. Is it due to globalization in this era of ITes? Is it due to unemployment problem after tooth and nail efforts for a better career and future? Is it due to the malpractices or irregularities in Board examination and State service commission's Examination? In last year HSSLC examination, one student who stood fourth position in the said examination conducted by BOSEM was given eight (08)

marks less, if she were given that eight (08) marks she would have been First Position as her total of 569 +08=577, but the First position holders scored 573 marks in total. Not only this, one student who could have been in first twenty-five rank was given ten (10) marks less. Before impasses of last year's HSLC Exam gets over, another problem has come out again in the result of this year's (2019) HSLC Examination conducted by BOSEM. *It is reported that a student who declared 24<sup>th</sup> rank by getting 543 marks, after rechecking got 546 marks which makes 21<sup>st</sup> rank. Similarly another student who stood 24<sup>th</sup> rank become 16<sup>th</sup> rank, 15<sup>th</sup> rank become 13<sup>th</sup> rank and two students who were simply declared pass in first division become 22<sup>nd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> rank respectively after re-evaluation.*

Where has the enquiry committee formed to look into the last year case landed? In another case of Manipur University, a girl student of WAIKHOM MANI GIRLS COLLEGE (Arina Begum) who appeared 6<sup>th</sup> semester B.Sc. Geology (Hons, bearing Roll No.6106615) exam of 2019 (May) declared failed in the exam result declared on 01/07/2019 as per No. MU/9/1-6/17 EXAM(C) of controller of Exam office. However in the Corrigendum of dated the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2019, No. MU/9/1-6/19 EXAM(C) the said girl student has been declared passed in first Division and placed 3<sup>rd</sup> position in merit list. What is this? It won't be exaggerated to say that many

such irregularities could have been in Manipur University also, which again caused many unwanted & unnecessary problems to our students. Again one of the leading local news Paper's headline on 20th July 2018 also reported many malpractices and irregularities in the MCSCCE 2016, conducted by MPSC in which the mark of one candidate who scored 129 in Geography paper-II was entered as 32. Not only this many answer scripts (523 out of 5764) were not signed by the examiners as well as by the superintendent. This impasses is also going on unending even High Court of Manipur intervene the problem Similarly in HSSLC Examination conducted by COHSEM also, many students increased their total marks after rechecking. Does such malpractices and irregularities in such important examinations responsible in losing the hopes and aspirations of lakhs of our youths? Is it due to such favoritisms, nepotisms that the hopes of lakhs of our youths may become in vain which in turn makes our youths, assets of no use? Students Organization like DESAM, trying at its best for "EDUCATION FREE ZONE" and MSF is campaigning "EIKHOI LAIRIK NINGTHINA TAMSII". Who is listening the voices of our students' leader who suffered a lot in many occasions fighting for the rights of our students? Who is the right person to answer these countless questions of our youths? And who is responsible for this?

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## A Pan-India NRC; Congress in 'Disintegration Mode'

Courtesy The Wire  
By: Aleesha Matharu

Indian politics lost a stalwart this week with the death of three-time Delhi chief minister Sheila Dikshit even as it went for a complete spin in Karnataka, replete with clouds of constitutional conundrums.

Speculation over whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi has decided to go 'secular' also made the rounds. One article looks into the supposed origins of the theory of 'minority appeaser BJP' and whether "there elements who are now actively playing on this negativity, trying to actually break Modi's strongest support base by playing up half truths".

"I will finish with a request to Hindu right wing online. It is absolutely right to accuse the BJP of not doing enough to roll back decades of minority appeasement. But do you think that Modi 2.0 would deliberately opt for minority appeasement? You and I know that BJP will not gain a single vote from minority appeasement. So please. Please don't tell me that the two sharpest political minds in India cannot see that much.

We Hindus have been treated so badly in history that we have a hard time keeping the faith. This time will be different. Let's not be misled so easily."

US president Donald Trump's statement that Modi asked for his help as a mediator with regard to the Kashmir issue with Pakistan and the foreign policy mess that followed it was painted by some on the right as a victory for India - marking the "finality of de-hyphenation between India and Pakistan that the mandarins of South Block have so wished and assiduously worked for since independence".

Here's quick look at some of the columns that were published this week on right-leaning media websites.

**Celebrating the NRC**

In a week that the National Investigation Agency was



strengthened and Union home minister Amit Shah made it clear that the government would not soften its stance on illegal immigrants in India and that the National Register of Citizens (NRC) would be implemented in other states as well, RSS mouthpiece *Organiser* ran an article aimed at dissecting the issue.

"Currently, the NRC is a part of Assam Accord. The Centre - as per its election manifesto - is dedicated to weaning out illegal immigrants from every inch of this country. We will make sure that all such immigrants are deported as per international law," Shah had said in the Rajya Sabha.

The writer, Pranjit Agarwala, a freelancer based in Guwahati, lauds the NRC update, calling it "one of independent India's most extensive and intensive census exercises".

"The NRC will finally lay bare the scale of illegal influx from Bangladesh and end the decades of speculation, controversy and vote-bank politics on the issue. In the future, the digitised database will become a vital document to detect illegal immigrants.

A nation must first protect the rights of its own citizens before securing the citizenship rights of illegal immigrants who have allegedly fled their own countries because of religious persecution."

Hitting out at a "flourishing racket of forged government documents that help illegal immigrants claim

citizenship", he says that many errors have been made "given the magnitude of the task".

"Indians... have never felt the need for a document to prove that they are Indians. Ironically, it is only the illegal immigrant who has felt the need to prove his citizenship and hence possesses all the required documents."

**Political glue and the Congress**

"The arrival of Priyanka Vadra to wipe the tears of the victims of Sonbhadra's tribal killings will, once again, reinforce the idea that the Congress party needs a Gandhi family leader at the helm to rejuvenate itself," writes R. Jagannathan, the editorial director of *Swarajya* magazine.

According to Jagannathan, the Congress party "does not need any glue to hold it together. It needs victories. Unfortunately, the Gandhi family is unable to deliver that."

Pointing out how the party is in "disintegration mode" as can be seen by the recent political upheaval in Goa and Karnataka, Jagannathan says that Priyanka Gandhi is only rushing in to "fill the vacuum" left by Rahul Gandhi, whose leadership "got a sound thrashing in the 2019 general elections".

"Does the Congress really need the Gandhi family? The idea that even if the Gandhis are no longer big vote-winners in any state, they are still needed to hold the party together is widely accepted.

Even in states where the Congress party remains a contender for power... it is the regional satraps who bring in the vote, not the Gandhis. Amarinder Singh would have won Punjab even without the Gandhis, and Siddaramaiah is the politician to reckon with in Karnataka, not Rahul Gandhi." Jagannathan says that there are three real glues that "hold politicians together in any party":

"One, ideology. No matter how the BJP fares, whether it wins or loses, ideology holds its members together in the long term. The same is true for the Left, and even the caste-based parties.

Two, power. Power is a better glue to holding disparate party elements together than a family past its sell-by date. This is true not only of the Gandhis, but also the Yadavs in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Three, charisma. Party members will stick by a family if it is a real vote-winner, and not only because they are family. Right now, dispirited members of the Congress are hoping that Priyanka Vadra will be a vote-winner for them, but this is far from proven."

Finally, Jagannathan says that the Gandhis are a "crutch the party does not need".

"But the latter has been used to using the crutch for so long, that sheer inertia prevents it from realising this truth and throwing it away."

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