



Editorial

Friday, June 7, 2019

Of our identity

One would not need to struggle to find appropriate adjectives to describe the state-except for descriptions like "Dull" or "Normal".

The slew of activities keeping the public on tenterhooks, albeit for reasons seemingly unrelated for the last couple of days is not something out of the ordinary in this place. It might even be called the eternal spring of delusion- for all the expectations, hopes and opportunities that has been dashed and wasted. It would not be an exaggeration to state that the present social developments, as had always been in the past, present a dual aspect, depending on one's perspective.

One is the unfortunate yet necessary reorientation of social priorities and order, as would the authorities and administrators put it. The other would be the festering law and order situation which is slowly yet surely morphing into a collective attitude of suspicion and mistrust made worse by a sense of alienation and demarcation between the influential and the powerful on one end with the commoners on the other.

Perfection is often said to be an impossible ideology- proven more often with glaring shortcomings by even the most well-meaning and more resourceful states and leaders. Yet it is not the failure to achieve perfection that is picking at the conscience of the public and stirring undesirable emotions, but the failure of those who have been entrusted with the power and the authority to make a sincere and determined attempt at making the best out of whatever is being received or offered, or is endowed as the case may be. While the law and order situation in the state, or more precisely, the cause of it is very much debatable, it is beyond the comprehension of one's rationale when a government fails to even sit up and take notice, much less act on it, when its existence is threatened.

The succession of incursions and intrusions into the territories of Manipur either by Myanmar or neighbouring Indian state on various instances is but a manifestation of the persistent effort of a greedy entity taking undue advantage of a lethargic and reluctant authority which is still not able to make up its garbled mind on the sequence of actions to be taken up, if it is to be taken up at all.

The acute indecisiveness of the state government has become rather viral, seeping down to every ancillaries of its machinery.

Then again, the uncomfortable dependency is the recent threats to the existence of the identity of the state and its people due to various policy who are in power at the center. The identity of the indigenous people is at stake with the government planning to introduce certain legislation in their effort to make sure that India of today will be a Hindu nation tomorrow. No doubt many or say majority of the Meitei follow Hindu religion but it should be noted that being Hindu does not say that we are part of their culture. Manipur adopted Hindu in late 17 century but then it had its own history and religion.

Manipur at a Glance : AN ETHNIC DILEMMA



Khulakfam Altab Ali Imphal, Manipur

It's time to Solve It's time to Unite For a New Manipur For a Peaceful Civilization

ABSTRACT

By Ethnic conflicts we mean those domestic, inter-state or transnational political conflicts in which the actors involved focus on issues relating to Ethnicity. Ethnic conflicts are the main forms of political instability in the multi ethnic societies like Manipur during second half of twenty century and beginning of new century. The goal of this study determinates social context of ethnic conflict in multi ethnic societies with the rise of nationalism based organisation. Balancing ethno cultural diversity and dignity with national integration and cohesion has been a constant challenge for the state policy-maker. Also, This study is to predict the future direction of Ethnic policy in the political system as opaque as the state fight with difficulties.

MANIPUR

Manipur, a sovereign Kingdom came under British rule as a princely state in 1891 and existed until 1947 as an Independent Princely Country. However, in 1949, Maharaja Bodhchandra was summoned to Shillong, the capital of the then Indian province of Assam, and on 21 September 1949 signed a Treaty of Accession under which Manipur was to be formally merged to India on October 15, 1949. Under terms of this agreement, the government of India announced the formal annexation of Manipur on 15 October 1949. Manipur was a union territory from 1956, becoming a full-fledged state in 1972. The state Assembly and the council of Minister which elected by the people of Manipur under the provisions of Manipur Constitution Act 1947 by practicing the Universal Adult Franchise were forcibly abolished on the same day by an executive order of the Indian government.

It consist of 9 districts viz. Bishnupur, Churachandpur, Chandel, Imphal East, Imphal West, Senapati, Tamenglong, Thoubal and Ukhrul. And later on divided into 16 districts on 8th December, 2016 which 7 new districts are Tengnoupal, bifurcated from Chandel district, Kamjong from Ukhrul, Pherzawl from Churachandpur, Kangpokpi from Senapati, Kakching from Thoubal, Noney from Tamenglong and Jiribam from Imphal East districts. The creation of the new district comes after a long struggle and at the cost of 7 lives lost during the agitation for the same.

ETHNICIS GROUP

Manipur is a state inhabited by several ethnic groups, which have their unique culture & tradition. Some of the major communities are Meitei, Panggal, Naga and Kuki in which Naga and Kuki belongs to Schedule Tribe whereas Meitei and Panggal live in Valley in which these two ethnic groups are classified as Majority & Minority based on demography and social status. It can be mention that some of the Meitei belongs to schedule caste and majority population of the Meitei schedule caste constitutes at Kakching, Pheiyang, Sekmai, Andro. Some Ethnic group of Naga community are Tangkhul, Kabui, Kacha Naga while Thadou, Paite, Hmar, Vaiphei, Maring, Anal, Zou, Lushai, Kom, Simte and belongs to Kuki Family. However, the Maring and Anal tribes have been assimilated into the Naga fold. Manipur is a collage of a diverse ethnic and multicultural society. Based on the 2001 Census, Meiteis and Manipuri

Muslims account for approximately 1.1 lakh population (58.9 percent), whereas 9.8 lakh population (41.1 percent) belongs to different tribes such as the Naga, Kuki.

FAULTLINES

Some fault lines to ignite tense among the Ethnic groups are :

1. Historical Prejudices
 2. Autonomy or Local Self-Governance
 3. Non-Inclusive Development
 4. Biased Political Structure
 5. Property Rights
 6. Individual Interests and Personal Ambitions of Leaders
 7. Insurgent Groups on Ethnic Lines
 8. Socio Political Organizations in Manipur
 9. Extortion or Illegal Taxation
 10. Areas of Convergence
 11. Origin
 12. Linguistic Affinity
 13. Socio-economic and Cultural Relations
- Among the various factor, the rise of Nationalism on Ethnic lines is the main factor that work for their own, to gain the power of Administration with the help of Politico of their own, which result to the Biased Political structure. Once it gain the political power, then there's somehow fallen the image of biasness on individual interest that other ethnic groups are suffer with hue and cry.

RISE OF NAGA & KUKI NATIONALISM AND ITS DYNAMIC CONFLICTS

The growth of nationalism among the Nagas of Manipur can be traced back to the first half of 20th century. Jadonang and Gaidinliu rose in revolt against the British in 1930, which may be termed as revivalist movement of the Zeliangrons. The movement took a semi-military, semi-religious and semi-political character. In the second half of the 20th century, Naga dream and demand for "Unified Nagalim"

The demand for unification was brought into the sharp focus following the establishment, and ascendance to hegemony, of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) to engage the Government of India through peace overtures and effecting the merger of Naga inhabited hills of Manipur. The main goal of the organisation is to establish a sovereign Naga state, "Nagalim" which would consist of Nagaland and "all contiguous Naga-inhabited areas" of Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and, across the international border, Myanmar.

On 30 April 1988, the NSCN split into two factions; the NSCN-K led by Khaplang, and the NSCN-IM, led by Isak Chishi Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah. The split was accompanied by a spate of violence and clashes between the factions.

Kuki Nationalism Nationalism can be describe as a desire for political independence; the desire to achieve political independence or a separate entity. With the British raj coming to an end, the Kukis formed the Kuki National Assembly (KNA), in October, 1946. The failure of the state to protect the Kukis from the onslaught of the Nagas, especially NSCN (I-M), during the conflict, gave birth to Kuki Liberation Army (KLA), Kuki Revolutionary Army (KRA), Zomi Revolutionary Organization (ZRO) and United Kuki Liberation Front (UKLF). The failure of the KNA* and KNF to stand up to the expectation, to protect the interests of the community and to resist the onslaught of the NSCN (I-M) has sent strong signals to every Kuki sub-tribe to look for a self-defence mechanism.

There was a formal cessation of hostilities between Nagas and Kukis in 1997. But these two communities escalated into violence during the 1990s, more precisely 1992- 1997 which resulting in the lost of 100s lives on both side. On September 13, 1993, Naga militants allegedly belonging to the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak Muivah) massacred around 115 Kuki civilians in the hills of Manipur. The Kukis refer to the killings as the Joupi massacre after the village

which saw the highest number of casualties. Ever since, the community has been assembling every September to remember their dead. The congregation this year was bigger than usual, and was marked by the erection of three monoliths inscribed with the names of 1,157 people who had allegedly been killed by Naga mercenaries during the '90s. "25th anniversary of the Kuki genocide by Tangkhul-led NSCN (IM)," read the plaque on the monoliths. There are different opinions about the root cause of the tense between these two ethnic group. The physical violence formally ended in 1997.

The government of India is sitting around a table and doing peace talks with the Nagas. But there is an assurance from Kuki as "But the Centre should know that until the Kukis get justice, the Naga issue cannot be solved. They have to do justice according to the law of the land." The Kukis' bitterness with the Indian state is all pervasive. The ignorance of the Kuki by Indian Government ignite to Kuki youth to fuel Kuki Nationalism more over the past as well as the demand of Kuki Homeland too. The demand for Kukiland (and for the Kukis) is a direct challenge to the demand for Greater or southern Nagaland by the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM).

RISE OF MEITEI NATIONALISM At the far end of the monarchy in Manipur, the kings lost much of their authority and independence to the British. In spite of losing their authority to the British, the Kings continued to oppress the commoners by levying prohibitive taxes on the commoners for all socio-economic activities thus inciting political consolidation of the Meiteis against the Monarchy. The political awakening among the Meiteis began against the monarchy.

In the post-independence context, the revolutionary movements in Manipur are an outcome of several deep rooted factors, namely, perceived forced merger of princely state by India, the threat posed by the Naga movement, poor governance, neglect from central government and the crisis of identity which are the motivating factor in the revival of Meitei nationalism. These several deep rooted factors pave the way to the emergence of Meitei revolutionary groups in Manipur.

Some of the active revolutionary groups are; United National Liberation Front (UNLF), Peoples' Liberation Army (PLA), Peoples' Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK), Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP) and Kanglei Yawol Kanba Lup (KYKL) among which UNLF was the first resistance group which was founded on 24 November, 1964, which stated as its aim not only an independent, socialist republic in Manipur but also that it had a "historic mission" to liberate Manipur 'from colonial occupation in the larger context of liberating the entire Indo-Burma region, for a common future'.

RISE OF PANGAL OUTFITS

Between the valley based ethnic groups, there is a chaos in 1993. On May 3rd, 1993, more than 100 lives, including women and children, were lost their life, which may be or may not be pre planned massacre. The rise of ideologically backed ethno groups of Meitei might be the cause of the massacre. The exact factor of the massacre is still unclear. Pangals observed the day as "Black day" every year. Student bodies still remember the day as "Sahidee Memorial Day". As a result of the massacre of Pangal by Meitei in 1993, the Pangals

(Muslims of Manipur) raised militant outfits such as the Northeast Minority Front (NEMF), Islamic National Front (INF), Islamic Revolutionary Front (IRF), United Islamic Liberation Army (UILA), Islamic Liberation Front (ILF) and People's United Liberation Front (PULF) to counter the challenge on Pangal and to run a parallel economy and control of turf by being visible in the society. The most prominent and long lasted among, was PULF that acted against any anti-social elements among Pangal which operate upto the early period of 21st century. All the Pangal outfits based in Manipur were extinct from the soil. The Pangal's massacre also showers the emergence of Civil Society Organisation and student organisation.

HUE AND CRY IN THE VALLEY Apart from the many internal issue of time to time inside their respective ethnic lines, there's an occurrence of many issues between the hill and the valley. Divisive tendencies in a society are often caused by uneven distribution of opportunities. The Peace talk of Naga becomes a defensive tool for the Nagas but it severely hit the sentiment of the Valley based people as a question of state integrity. In 2001, 18th June, 2001, 18 (Eighteen) lives were lost and many wounded while protest against the Ceasefire agreement. The Bangkok declaration, a ceasefire agreement "without territorial limits" signed between government of India and NSCN (IM) made the 2001 June, a horrendous month. Assembly Hall was set to fire, Chief Minister's Secretariat was completely razed, four MLAs and the speaker of the time were injured. 15 Official residences of Legislators, Political party office, government vehicles were destroyed. Peoples of Manipur pay tributes to the 18 soul every year, observing the day as "The Great June Uprising Day". The political figure was also totally break down in the state.

Manipur Assembly hall in Flames which was burnt down by the protestors

After the Pangal's Massacre, Direct violence has slowly been replaced by "structural and cultural violence". As per Paul Farmer, "structural violence" includes any violence or suffering caused by the structures and institutions of a society. People who suffer from structural violence cannot control the conditions that have caused their suffering. That is exactly what is happening in Manipur. Sometimes, Polarization of wrong propaganda makes the Pangal to feel like a treat upon them.

In these few decades, after the Pangal's massacre, numbers of Pangal has been lynched to death in series at several Meitei constituency area which the Pangal confused the situation weather the situation is a threat to Pangal or any other reason behind. Though this ethnic group has its own 400 years long history, the Ethnicity electoral system makes the Pangal helpless while entering the political arena which results in the failure of making a rational structure of the society. Pangal remains the most backward section in the society in all fields.

Besides the Internal issues, some national policies which triggered the ethnicity lines of Manipur also disturbed the environment. Citizenship Amendment bill 2016, that passed in Lok Sabha in 2018 is one of the recent issue. As the bill clearly mentions to provide citizenship of 6 (Six) migrants' sections from 3 (Three) neighboring countries of India based on the religion which totally threatens the Ethnic identity of Manipur.

Search operations intensified to locate missing AN-32 aircraft

Agency New Delhi June 7,

Indian Air Force has further intensified and expanded search for the AN-32 aircraft which went missing on Monday. The Fighter aircraft, C130, Helicopters, aircraft carrying specialised sensors, satellites and all possible civil, police and local administrative agencies have further expanded search based on human and sensor inputs. Indian Navy aircraft P8i will again fly a sortie today morning as the weather

is likely to improve slightly. Search parties have set out on foot in likely directions to locate the aircraft and its occupants. These parties have been encountering thick forests as they tirelessly search every part of a very difficult terrain. The search by parties on foot and night capable aircraft continued through the night and satellites data is being analysed regularly. The aircraft, with 13 people on board, last contact with ground agencies after taking off from Jorhat airbase in Assam on Monday.

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.

Slno.	Ethnic Group	Numbers of Elected MLA from the Group		
		In 2007	In 2012	In 2017
1	ST (Naga & Kuki)	20	20	20
2	Meitei	38	37	37
3	Pangal	2	3	3

(Contd on page 4)