

Editorial

Saturday, November 16, 2019

Divided Manipur: Resistance to CAB may fail

They have completed dividing the entire people of the state into two groups. One -a group that support the demand put up by NSCN-IM and another that opposed any demand that might segregate the state into two administrative bodies, no matter the territorial boundary of the state remain undisturbed. Before the NSCN-IM started engaging in the cease fire agreement with the government of India and started political dialogue, there were many issue that these groups jointly fight against many issues like rampant violation of Human Rights by security forces under the shadow of the draconian Act AFSPA 1958, racial attacked to the people of this land in the mainland metropolitan cities, any attempt to extract the mineral resource from the state etc. . These groups always stand together and fight with the establishment when the government of India moved any action that might endanger the existence of the various ethnic community of Manipur. One recent example is the common stand against the introduction of the contentious Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) without any differences before the parliamentary election.

The prevailing situation today seems that there will be no joint struggle against the passing of the contentious CAB in the Parliament which will start session on November 18. It is loud and clear that the Narendra Modi Government is all set to table the CAB during this parliament session and in view of the number of BJP MPs it is going to pass. A clique of MP who will oppose it can't save them from passing the Bill. Last time too the Bill was passed but didn't table it at the Rajya Sabha - May be because Parliamentary election was knocking at the door and the BJP having understand the politics of CAB or they have no adequate numbers in the upper house. Except in the North Eastern part of this country and some intellectuals who want to maintain the sanctity of the Indian constitution and of course the opposition political part, there will not show any kind of large scale protest. The maximum resistance will be from the North Eastern States including Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Mizoram. The Central Government had already seen the protest in their attempt to pass the CAB, and obviously they would have planned to suppress the voice of the people against the passing of the contentious CAB Bill. Interestingly, almost all the states in the North East India are either BJP led government or Coalition government with the BJP. At a time when people in Manipur are raising strong agitation against the passing of the CAB, the BJP which promised to bring CAB in an amended form to grant citizenship to some particular community which follows religion like Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian coming from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan in their party election manifesto won 7 seats of the 14 seats from Assam. In Manipur's of the 2 MP seats BJP get the win the Inner Parliamentary Constituency. Still than it would be wrong to assume that passing of the CAB gets people mandate in the state of Assam or Manipur. The parliamentary election is not referendum on CAB. And this is well known to the Central leadership of the BJP.

Now, tension runs high in the three state of North East India due to the hasty move for bringing a final solution of the issues of the NSCN-IM and the NNPGs. Almost all civil bodies which are now engaging in democratic protest to resist any move that might disintegrate the Manipur in the wake of the final settlement of the Naga issue. And the supporters of the NSCN-IM is now celebrating on the presumption that the decade long insurgency problem will come to an end without knowing what are the agreed points between the two.

The content of the agreement is still not disclosed to anyone. Even the NNPGs and the NSCN-IM do not know what will the government of India agreed to the list of demands that they put. The Manipuri people are signaling possible outbreak if the solution affect the interest of the state. This means that a virtual but distinct line has been drawn and for sure the two groups may not jointly struggle to resist the passing of the CAB Bill.

Already the BJP members and representatives of the state of Manipur have been brain washed and are now openly supporting the CAB, even as they could do it to the entire people of the state.

Now as the people are now focusing the Naga issue, it is not sure to imagine a strong resistance to the passing of the CAB. After shrewdly plan to suppress the energy of the people, the CAB will be introduced. On the other hand the strong presence of security in Ukhrul district shows that the final settlement may not satisfy even to many cadres or hard core of the NSCN-IM. Similar presence of para military force in valley area and almost all districts of Manipur is a clear indication the government of India will use similar tactics which the government of India had successfully used in Jammu and Kashmir at the time of Abrogating the Article 370 of the Indian Constitution.

Manipur today is already divided, but it is not possible that the people unites if both the divided group realized that unity will be the only means to protect and safeguard the people of this region.

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.

History – from Obscurity to Visibility?

This write up is an excerpt from the article – “Reflections on the Conflicts of our Times :Attempt at Common Sense reading of the Manipur Experience” written by Lokendra Arambam

The relationship between Manipur and Indian state through history need some understanding, though the relationship was never a harmonious one. (The term Manipur and India are themselves subjects of relative interpretation). From very ancient times, Manipur's cultural and social orientation was towards the eastern direction, towards Myanmar and Southeast Asia. The pre-colonial Manipur state was an endogenous development, impelled by the nature of its geographic and ecological features, initiated by clan warriors who descended from up the mountains into the fertile valley below. The indigenous populations had origins from racial categories of Southern Mongoloid, with certain complicated admixtures between Proto-Austroloids and incoming layers of Tibeto-Burman speech communities. All these human groups shared habitat, geography, climate, faunal and floral environments, food habits, and ancient technological traits like loom and fly shuttle technologies in the plains. While the highlander demizens continued to bear the vagaries of the forest and mountain environments, those who came down in the plains were ushered into challenging the extensive flow of the river waters whose currents had to be controlled and utilized for developing livelihood systems. Wet rice agriculture, with the system of transplantation provided early impetus to change into peasant lifestyle and invention of better tools for food production technologies. The openness of the alluvial flood-plains helped encephalization of religious beliefs, with a deep ecological consciousness of the notion of fertility of nature and veneration of ancestors. The initial tribal lifestyles of close clan formation and in-group consciousness were transformed into the need for greater integration on supra-village principality formations and the idea of a ritual theatre state, a designed architecture of governance and authority relationship through ritual was organized under a monarchial

system, with war and matrimonial alliances binding the clan politics. An urge for civilization propelled the lowlanders into producing a philosophy of life, numerous literatures and texts thereby reflecting the literate status of the communities in the plains. Openness to outside influences and miscegenation with incoming migrants with various human groups resulted to a detribalized life-world of hydraulic civilization based on systematic networks of irrigation and flood control. Early possession of the plough, the horse and iron paved the path for rapid development in the ontology of the plains dwellers into a martial race. Citizen volunteers swift in horsemanship, swift in physical movements in the arts of swordsmanship, rapid in aggression or retreat, with tremendous spirit of sacrifice for the collective, emerged in the medieval period of expansion and conquest. A ranked society helped in smoothening of the governing bureaucracy indigenous in values and beliefs. The clan Piba (male elder of the clan) had been raised to the status of Kingship, and a system of circulation of royal princesses circulated amidst the rising international communities for peace and harmony. The territorial frontiers of the state was recognized in the international community first by the Upper Shan principalities and later by Burmans, the Ahoms, the Dimasas and the Bodos of Tripura.

With the international recognition of prestige, liberality and hospitality of the monarchial regime in the 15th century, the first migration of Brahmin populations, escaping from the violence of western Islamic invasions, was noticed, bringing along with them fresh notions of astrological and cosmological wisdom, along with pragmatic theories of kingship and elevation of the power and authority of the monarch to the status of divinity. The need for the integration of the clans, tribes and other communities into a well-structured poly-plot of cultures and demographics needed a higher religious system emphasizing the power and

exhibitory faculties of the state represented by the monarch and his associates necessitating the conversion of the Meitei into Hinduism in the 18th century.

While Southeast Asian polities had easily assimilated themselves into the Indic cultural influences since the 4th to 14th centuries in the Common era, Manipur felt these influences while its social and political systems had already been well-established with a definite identity and status of its own. The conversion into Hinduism faced shift opposition from the proponents of the Meitei indigenous religion. But through the exercise of force and violence, subtle intimidation as well as public oppression, the king Garibniwaj (1709-1748) was able to effect a compromise with the clan elders, a sort of contract to accept the conversion into the Ramandi religion. Other indigenous religious systems of tribes and peripheral communities like the Chakpas retained their traditional systems. Christianity entered Manipur during the colonial era in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The pre-colonial orientation of the Manipur state towards Indic connections, side by side with the conversion of the ruling kraton class into Hinduism was therefore an 18th century phenomenon. It also coincided with the political orientation towards British India since 1762 C.E., because of the expansion of the imperial Burmese ambitions directly affecting the geo-political awareness of the rulers, necessitating support from the Ahom dynasties as well as the East India Company. Total economic integration was unthinkable at that period of history for more than a hundred years. Manipur's agricultural economy was based on subsistence with incipient trade relations with the proximate neighbouring countries. However the British defeat of Manipur in 1891 CE introduced forcible changes in the indigenous economic structures. The British introduced the Indian rupee as a

medium of exchange replacing indigenous systems in 1892, and the Manipur resources were used to feed the imperial military establishments in Assam and the Northeastern region through the export of rice and cattle. Imports of British manufactured goods reached Imphal and the colonial economy altered the indigenous social structure by introducing a new imperial racial class of Marwaris and Bengalis for economic management and organization of the new revenue structures. The earlier migrant population of Brahmins and Muslims had earlier been assimilated into the indigenous social structure, but the new demographic inputs through the colonial economy introduced a sort of contested pluralism, as different from the organic pluralism of the past. A lot of conflictual social relationship was noticed similar to the system introduced in Burma by the colonial authorities.

The British also introduced a new system of administration totally rupturing the organic plurality of hill and plains relations. The Meitei ruler-ship was divested of administrative jurisdiction over the Hill people, and the administration of the Hill was given to the British political authority craftily institutionalized in the colonised polity. A system of dyarchy, separation of powers between the Maharajah and the British political agent was structured into the system. When the Hill citizens rebelled against the colonial authority in the first two or three decades of the 20th century, its character and form was later misinterpreted through the prism of awakened ethnicities, which became murky and unclear leading to serious conflicts in the era of ethnic identification movements. When the British left in 1947, leading to a precarious in-equilibrium from the convulsions of the Second World War all the efforts to restore traditional equilibrium of the polity was in vain. Manipur became a district of the vast territories of India through the integration in 1949. One can imagine the consequences.

Malaysia: A land of educational opportunities

Reeturaj Goswami
PRODUCT HEAD
International Education Desk,
PRATHAM EDUCATION

Malaysia is truly Asia, situated by the South China Sea and with a colorful array of ethnicity, diverse culture and natural beauty; Malaysia is a futuristic city with many colorful feathers in its crown. Malaysia has emerged as a great tourist destination and has jumped leaps and bounds to be reckoned as a top destination for higher education in Asia.

Choose to study in Malaysia and you'll discover that the country's natural beauty extends way beyond its ancient rainforests, national parks and glorious beaches. In the cities too, there's plenty to keep all the senses occupied, from colorful and varied markets to the mosques, Buddhist temples and Hindu shrines that are often found side by side, and the profusion of annual festivals celebrating both traditional and modern aspects of Malaysian culture.

One of the world's most politically stable countries, Malaysia may be second to Singapore in terms of regional economic clout, but it offers a much more organic lifestyle than its city-state rival. One half of the country, situated on the southern tip



of the peninsula below Thailand, is known as Peninsular Malaysia. This is where the highest ranked universities in Malaysia can be found, along with the most diverse and vibrant urban areas. The other half, Malaysian Borneo, shares an island with Indonesia and remains the quieter of the two halves, offering solitude, authenticity and jungle life.

Universities in Malaysia
Malaysia is home to several international branch campuses of universities from other countries, a plan aimed at expanding and improving the country's range of higher education options. Existing

branch campuses include those operated by the UK's University of Nottingham and Australia's Monash University.

Malaysia's investment in branch campuses has resulted in the new EduCity development in Johor, at the southernmost tip of Peninsular Malaysia, just 5km north of Singapore. This 350-acre campus will be shared by eight international branches run by leading universities from around the world. These include the UK's University of Reading, the University of Southampton and Newcastle University Medicine, as well as the Netherlands' Maritime Institute of

Technology, Singapore's private Raffles University and the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts from the US.

While the growing presence of overseas universities in Malaysia is broadening the country's higher education offering, its home-grown universities shouldn't be overlooked. Malaysia's higher education system was ranked 25th in the QS Higher Education System Strength Rankings in 2018, reflecting the strength of its flagship universities. Here are some of the most notable.

University Malaysia (UM)

The highest-ranked and oldest university in Malaysia, University Malaysia (UM) is ranked joint 70th in the QS World University Rankings and is based in central Kuala Lumpur. With a student population of around 21,050, including over 2,900 international postgraduate students, UM has been steadily growing its multidisciplinary reputation, appearing in the global top 400 for 35 out of a possible 48 subjects covered by the QS World University Rankings by Subject, including positions among the world's top 50 for development studies, every branch of engineering, and library and information management.