

Editorial

Thursday, November 21, 2019

The unresolved crisis

The one thing that the people of the state would perhaps be pining for at present is "if only..." If only-the state government would have heeded the protests of the people and the opposition at the outset before the bill was passed. If only- the state government have read the signs of things to come in the rising dissent of the public. If only- the state government have been more transparent in its dealings, especially when it concerns the interest of the public. If only- the state government have listened more and talked less.

The present situation is a result of the failure of the state government to perform its most basic function- that of ensuring the welfare of its people- economically and politically. The perennial effort to appease the central government and to be in its good books, and worse still, to maintain and increase their coterie of unscrupulous racketeers and swindlers to do their dirty deeds and biddings have distanced the so called peoples' representatives from the public.

Distrust, suspicion and lack of communication increases as a result. The declaration by the COCOMI and MANPAC stating that the present steps being taken up by the state government cannot be trusted exactly conveys the manner in which the public have come to view those at the helm of affairs. It would not be an exaggeration to state that the present set of ministers and MLAs has shifted their focus from governance towards profiteering. Every single activity is being carried out on consideration of money and personal benefits and nothing else. The practice had thus been institutionalized leading to a trickle-down effect.

The result- one now has to grease the palms right from the gatekeepers of any government department right up to the highest authority to get anything done, without any exception. The state is at a standstill as of today, and the hardest hit lot would have to be the students who have lost invaluable time and opportunities. Yet inexplicably, the government is mooted resumption of normal classes for private schools. Could it kindly enlighten the public as to the rationale behind such a consideration? Or has it lost the plot and is trying to distract and drag the issue further? Does it still believe that it can somehow wriggle itself out of its present quandary? After the dust had settled on the present issue, the next general election will be an interesting study in human behavior.

The present government has shown itself incapable of standing its ground or protecting the interests of its people. The alternative isn't much comforting either, with most of the leaders being outcasts of the present government or ones who have been discarded by the people- a classic case of old wine in new bottle. The ultimate responsibility of protecting the interests of the public will therefore come down to us, the general public through our judicious choice of representatives who can dig deep and fight our fight, not someone who can shell out the highest bid for our mandate.

Last take - will the Sangai festival be successful?

For A Young Girl Who Fled Home in December 1992, Ayodhya Verdict Brings No 'Closure'

Courtesy The Wire
By : Arfa Khanum Sherwani

I was travelling abroad when the Supreme Court registry announced that the Ayodhya verdict would be pronounced on Saturday morning. My immediate instinct as a journalist was to cut short my trip and take the first available flight back to Delhi.

I was driven, of course, by the professional impulse of covering this momentous day first hand, but also because the issue had a lot of personal meaning for me and I wanted to be back with my family and friends and colleagues – my own people, so to speak – when the judgment was delivered.

The Supreme Court decided in favour of the Hindu plaintiff – arguing that Muslims could not sufficiently substantiate their claim over the disputed land – and now a Ram temple will be built at the place where a mosque, which stood for close to five centuries, was illegally brought down on December 6, 1992. Many newspaper editorials have hailed the judgment for finally bringing 'closure' to an issue that for decades polarised the Indian polity and resulted in violence and the loss of lives. But has this judgment really brought closure for India's Muslims? Does it give them the chance to move on?

Sitting in *The Wire's* studio on Saturday, I tried my best to fulfil my professional duties of dispassionately analysing the judgment but memories from 27 years ago constantly interfered with my train of thought. Memories of how, as a 12-year-old girl, I held my younger brother – who was barely a few weeks old – and ran for my life through the pitch-black darkness of the night on December 6, 1992.

All this while, I thought that I had buried that little girl from western Uttar Pradesh in the graveyard of my memory, never to return and haunt me with her vulnerability and insecurity again. I believed I had left behind the desperate sounds of our Muslim neighbours banging at our door to tell us that a riot had broken out, shouting, 'Us taraf se chadhai aarahi hai' (People from the other side will be here any moment), and asking us to leave our house to save our lives.

I remember my stubborn father not paying any heed to the pleas of his neighbours, insisting there was no need to run because his 'Hindu neighbours could never harm him or his children'. I remember his tearful eyes when the realisation

dawned that we were indeed in danger. That look on his face while locking our house and looking at it one last time with love and pain before fleeing for a 'safer' place. I had thought those scary hours of getting separated from my family after the riots broke out, or those long, cold nights of living in a refugee camp set up by fellow Muslims for families displaced by riots, those restless days that turned into unending weeks before I could finally go back to school and be reunited with my best friend Vandana, were a distant memory.

But I was wrong. For when I heard TV anchors and even their liberal studio guests insisting the Ayodhya judgment had brought "closure", those memories came cascading back. Besides other aspects of the judgment that several jurists are finding problematic, there is a fundamental contradiction that simply does not allow for 'closure'. The Supreme Court itself noted that the forced placing of idols inside the mosque that took place one night in December 1949 was illegal and the mosque was thus "desecrated". It also unequivocally acknowledged that the demolition of the Babri Masjid was unlawful.

But the tragic irony is that it still ends up handing the disputed land to none other than the perpetrators who demolished the mosque and unleashed violence across India, including in my little *qasba*. The judgment is not just self-contradictory but tilts unmistakably towards one side. The Hindu plaintiffs were held to a lower burden of proof of possession than the Muslim plaintiffs. The court recognised that both parties had claims and worshipped at the disputed site but chose a majoritarian conception of 'social peace' to give the land to one side rather than doing what was right or just.

The reaction to the Ayodhya judgment from the main opposition parties – both national and those which operate from Uttar Pradesh, including the ones that call themselves 'secular' and claim first right over Muslim votes – has been disappointing. They too believe the judgment is the best solution to this age-old dispute. Barring the few honourable exceptions among political commentators and jurists who have expressed their reservations or even criticism about the judgement, the country at large seems to have welcomed it.

The Muslim community has also largely been quiet and non-reactive. A few religious/social leaders maintain that they respect the Supreme Court's verdict although they disagree with it. But should the lack of reaction from the Muslim community at large be seen as acceptance of the verdict? Has the court been successful in its ultimate objective of delivering a verdict not leading to disturbance of social peace? Or is this silence emanating from the fear Muslims at large have of a backlash against them from not just the majority community but from a system that has so openly worked against them and their interests since the Narendra Modi government first came to power in 2014? Has the humiliation and helplessness resulting from brazen anti-Muslim politics – including *gau raksha* and 'love jihad' – made them lose hope for justice and parity in their own country?

What can be worse for a democracy when its largest minority group does not hope for justice but fearfully settles for a verdict that they know is no less than injustice to them? It was the Muslims who suffered the razing of their place of worship; they were also the victims of the violence which followed. The community sought redressal and placed its faith in the institutions for justice.

From patiently waiting for the criminals who demolished the Babri Masjid to be punished to the expectation that the title suit outcome would put an end to the Hindutva agenda of converting mosques into temples, the majority of the Muslims of India accepted the supremacy of the law. But today, they have returned empty handed from the Supreme Court.

From the government to opposition, from civil society, the media and the courts, Muslims of India today find themselves standing alone in the fight for their existence with no hope for equality or dignified citizenry. And that scared and vulnerable young girl who had to flee her home because of the actions of violent majoritarian goons 27 years ago has the right to say she feels disappointed and betrayed by what the highest court of the country has done.

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.

Not only the elderly, younger Indian population is becoming quite vulnerable to stroke

By a Correspondent
Gurugram, Nov. 21

With sudden rise seen in incidence of stroke among the younger population, there is an urgent need to create awareness to curb down the instances. With an aim to make people understand the importance of early recognition of symptoms of stroke and ways to prevent it, stroke and neurovascular intervention Foundation organized an interactive session today. Due to the dearth of stroke units and neurointerventionist in our country, awareness about advanced treatment methods is not high and needs to be discussed to all, in order to prevent stroke from becoming an epidemic. Stroke and neurovascular intervention foundation has been conducting

various training programs, National and International conferences, providing a platform for the doctors to discuss the latest advancements for stroke management. Very few such detailed training programs are organized in India, which emphasizes exclusively for latest interventions in stroke management. Several researches and studies have documented a troubling rise in stroke among young adults starting at an age of as young as 25 years. Apparently, it is also estimated that the average age of patients having a stroke attack in developed countries like India is 15 years lesser than that in the developed countries. As per the recent data provided by Stroke India 2018, of

all the patients having a stroke attack last year, 20% of them were under the age of 40 years. It is clearly evident that stroke among young adults is the third common cause of global mortality rate and 4th leading cause of morbidity. "Stroke was once considered to be a disease of the elderly population and this myth is gradually falling apart with sharp rise in number of stroke cases in patients aged less than 40 years of age. Apart from inherited and genetic causes, poor diet and lifestyle practices are the major reasons attributing to this burden. While creating awareness about the identification of symptoms for timely diagnosis and treatment can have favourable outcomes and save many lives, it is also necessary for the public to know the ways to prevent stroke. A healthy and balanced diet alone can reduce the chances of stroke by upto 80%." Said Dr Vipul Gupta, Director-

Neurointervention, stroke and neurovascular intervention Foundation
Adapting to healthy lifestyle and eating habits are a few basic changes assisting in the prevention of stroke.

Youngsters should focus on a healthy diet along with regular exercise regime, smoking cessation and limiting alcohol intake.

"Awareness about the symptoms of stroke and importance of timely intervention should be made more prominent among the masses. The first six to twenty four hours are important for the treatment of stroke and its reversal. Treatment for stroke has changed widely in the past five years. With the advancements in the treatment of Brain Stroke, the modern

devices are not only able to remove the clots but also reverse stroke. It is feasible to prevent disability and casualties due to stroke with timely diagnosis and raising awareness about latest and safest intervention techniques. Delay in treatment leaves more than one-third of the victims permanently disabled and over 25% die within 1 year." Added Dr Gupta
Administration of appropriate medical management in the early hours of stroke is most critical.

Name changed

I, the undersigned, Khangembam Opendro Singh, S/O Khangembam Shyamkanhai Singh (Father) and Khangembam Ithemal Devi (Mother) of Phougakchao Ikhai Mamang Leikai, Bishnupur district, Manipur do hereby declare that my original name has been wrongly recorded as Maibam Opendro Singh and my father's name has also been wrongly recorded as Maibam Iboiyama Singh and my mother's name as Chaobihani Devi. I do hereby declare to use my original name and also the original name of my father and mother to avoid any complicity in my future career.

Sd/-
Khangembam Opendro Singh,
S/O Khangembam Shyamkanhai Singh (Father)
and Khangembam Ithemal Devi (Mother)
Phougakchao Ikhai Mamang Leikai,
Bishnupur district, Manipur