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The Hand that Rocks

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Ting-Ting Chaoro, Ting-Ting Chaoro” “Numitna wangingei wanhourou””Epana leiringei wagnu, Emana leiringei kignu”Patted, stretching his hands onto his back; Carrying him with those “nawong-phi”So flattered and so dried up heavy;”His” Manners damn odd, bewildering now and again;”Alash! His mother’s still returning home; Mocking himself, I ain’t man? I ain’t doing this? He ain’t my child? Where the hell are you? Come back soon; Shouting and yelling; calling and crying; Beating and slapping; frustrating and fusing; Make me heaven! Make him cool down! Make him stop; maketh me awesome; Shaking his hands nervously, patted and be patted.

Thought of a worldly pleasure, conquering all; Imagining it all drawn up, where to where;” Humm hummm, Humm and humm” Shaking and Rocking; jiggling and shaking” Walking now and again, his hands folding patted; No beds so tidy; No pillows so labeled; His steps onto shits; no ideas so useful; Shouting and crying; Beating and patting; Stop! You mother a bitch, no love a concern; Throwing and picking; murmuring and angrying; He blames all; He insults to ‘her’ with no security; Rocking and patting; ‘humm humm and hummm’.

All to blame, all to responsibility his father a mismanager;” Kari pammi echadi”? No mobile phone a toy; No sweets a candy; No plastic pistol so Lovely; No plastic cars a Maneuver; No flowers so scented; Feeling ain’t that hungry, no milk to full empty stomach; Come on baby; come on boy; Shaking and rocking; his ‘nawong-phi’ so dried up; He behold onto ‘his’ back so scratchy; Ah! His pissing so heavy wet, cold; His hands so dirty full, father with no option; Down he lay, let lose ‘you go’ run and away; Misery that brings, no threads link bounded; Letting go emptied those ‘hands that rocks’.

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High alert in Nagaland, Manipur ahead of Naga talks

Manipur Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order), L. Kailun has instructed the police superintendents of all the 16 districts of the state to ensure maximum manpower to meet any eventuality. Security forces and commandants of Manipur Rifles and Indian Reserve Battalion have been directed to maintain adequate manpower at their respective battalion headquarters “to move in short notice in connection with prevailing law and order situation in the state.” A district-level security coordination meeting of the district magistrates, top-ranking state police officials along with those from Assam Rifles, CRPF and BSF was held to discuss the prevailing law and order situation in Manipur. The state, particularly the six valley districts, had witnessed large scale protest rallies against the peace talks between the Centre and the NSCN(IM). The order issued by Inspector General of Police E Priyokumar Singh said that commandants of 6 Battalion of Manipur Rifles and 11 Battalion of Indian Reserve Battalion have been directed to submit a compliance report without fail. District magistrates of Imphal East, Churachandpur and Ukhrul, from where NSCN(IM) general secretary Th Muivah is from, have issued orders to the district supply officers to ensure that fair and legal price rise is maintained and there is “equitable distribution” of essential commodities. Officers concerned have also been directed to maintain stock and godown proprietors have been asked not to hoard essential commodities. Fuel outlets have been ordered to sell fuel as per vehicle requirements and not to do so in barrel/transport containers. Sunil Karam, coordinator of the Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI) who led a massive rally in Imphal, told reporters that “Naga talks should not affect Manipur territorial integrity and administrative set-up.”

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Will the Prime Minister allow the Naga talks to go beyond the 31st of October? Won’t he like to see a solution that will be the harbinger of peace in the region?

After one week of his appointment as the Governor of Nagaland, RN Ravi, who is also Interlocutor for the Naga talks, met the NSCN (IM) collective leadership on July 26, 2019, and told them about Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s desire to conclude the Naga talks in three months. Ravi took Oath as the Governor of Nagaland on the 1st of August, 2019.

In the meantime, the NSCN (IM) collective leadership had written a letter to Modi expressing their displeasure on reducing the “Indo-Naga talks” to a “mere Governor’s level.” They reminded him of commitments given by successive Prime Ministers of India on the “Indo-Naga” problem that “talks shall be at the highest level; venue of the talks shall be outside India (in a third country) and without any pre-condition.” They also said issues such as a “separate flag and a separate Constitution” as part of their political negotiations to settle the Naga issue are yet to be finalized and expressed the surprise as to how he wanted to conclude the issue in three months without finalizing them.

At a civic reception organized in his honor at the Nagaland Baptist Churches Council (NBCC) Convention Hall, Kohima on August 16, 2019, Governor Ravi also said there was a sincere attempt but lamented that inclusivity was missing. “By inclusive, I mean all the Naga armed groups, Naga tribal bodies, civil societies, senior citizens, elders, and of course, the

Naga legislators, because the Naga political issue belongs to the Naga people. No organization has franchise over it,” he explained.

Admitting that “all substantive issues have been resolved and nothing is left,” Ravi said the parties in talks had agreed that with the Government of India recognizing the unique history of Nagas, the “settlement is on the basis of power-sharing and peaceful co-existence.”

He has also denied that the talk has been reduced to the Governor’s level saying that it has always been with the blessings of the Prime Minister. He has explained that there is no conflict between his dual roles. As an Interlocutor, his duty is to carry forward the peace process not only to the Nagas of Nagaland but also to the Nagas of other states, and his coming to Nagaland as the Governor of Nagaland is Prime Minister Modi’s wish to see that the Naga issue finds a solution at the earliest. Besides he, as Governor of Nagaland, will give his time to see that the people of the state enjoy what they deserve from the Government.

However, the Interlocutor and the NSCN (IM) have been on the confrontational mode over the issue of the Naga flag and the constitution. He has accused them of adopting a procrastinating attitude to delay the settlement of the issue by raising the “contentious symbolic issues of separate Naga national flag and constitution on which they are fully aware of the Government of India’s position.” Yet, the NSCN (IM) has been sticking that they cannot

compromise on the issue of the Naga flag and the constitution. And a statement issued on Tuesday, they explained that “political decency and Naga sentiment” could not be simply discarded “in the name of going along with contemporary reality.”

The talk they held on Thursday at New Delhi again failed to break the deadlock over the same issue. They were reported to have, however, agreed to have one more round of talks before the 31st of October this month and it is largely considered as “positive.”

However, there is a widespread fear that the talk may collapse as both sides are not changing their positions. The state governments of Manipur and Nagaland have already taken security measures to thwart any possible outbreak of clashes if the talks collapse.

For the WC of NNPGs, they made it clear that “The solution is not confined to Nagaland state. It is equally for the Naga people across our ancestral land.” It further informed that the “agreed position” signed between the committee and the Government of India declares that “GoI recognizes the right of the Nagas to self-determine their future in consonance with their distinct identity.”

Many organizations have already urged the Government of India and the NSCN (IM) for an honorable solution to the Naga issue while pleading for unity among the Naga groups for the sake of peace and lasting solution. They also appealed to the



By - Oken Jeet Sandham

Government of India to ensure that the final solution should be inclusive of all parties.

The JDU Nagaland has on Friday appealed the Chief Minister of Nagaland for immediately convening an “all-party meeting” to organize meetings with various Naga political groups negotiating with the Government of India, to set up a delegation to meet the Prime Minister of India and Leaders of various Opposition Parties in the country, and to stage an all-political-party Dharna in Delhi to draw the attention of the people of India with a message of appeal.

Meanwhile, many organizations are wondering whether the Prime Minister will allow the talks to continue beyond the 31st of this month. Many, however, believe that the talks may go beyond the 31st of this month as the Prime Minister was only expressing his desire to conclude the Naga talks in three months. Won’t he like to see a solution that will be the harbinger of peace in the region?

The NRC Poses a Two-Fold Predicament for Assam’s Transgender Community

Courtesy The Wire
By : Gaurav Das

For Assam’s transgender persons who are mostly poor, destitute and hapless, the National Register of Citizens (NRC) has proven to be a double-edged sword. While one section of the community has been excluded owing to a ‘lack’ of documents – which is not odd considering most of them have been disowned by their families – another section’s inclusion only pertains to the gender they no longer identify with. While any legal or financial aid from the state for fighting their NRC exclusion seems far fetched, their only hope of now remains a much-awaited direction from the Supreme Court, which – if favourable towards the community – could provide them with some succour in fighting their exclusion status in the NRC. The much-awaited direction is related to an Intervention Application (IA), which was filed in 2018 at the apex court to highlight the issues affecting the state’s transgender community in the context of NRC, and as of now is pending before the apex court. Exclusion from the NRC, according to the All Assam Transgender Association (AATA), a registered body which had filed the IA, has created paranoia within the community. They no longer venture out into the streets for fear of getting caught by authorities and being marked as ‘foreigners’. Places where members of the community gather – the overpasses, underpasses, highways, bus spots etc. – are no more preferable for them. Livelihood which mostly means begging for them, according to the AATA is now only limited to trains or ceremonies like marriages or Hindu baby shower rituals where they are asked to sing and dance. The founder of AATA, Swati Bidhan Banaah, who filed the IA and also recently filed a petition at the apex court seeking its direction over the issue of those members from the transgender community who had been excluded from the NRC told *The Wire* that the NRC was published on August 31 there was

reluctance among the transgender populace to speak to journalists for fear of reprisal from authorities, who may identify and label them as ‘foreigners’. Baruah made headlines in 2017 when she filed a PIL at the Gauhati high court over the proper implementation of the 2014 National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) judgement in Assam. Baruah claimed that of the state’s transgender population of close to twenty thousand, around two thousand members had been excluded from the state’s 33 districts due to a lack of documents. Those whose names had been included were mostly men. *The Wire* spoke to transgender persons in Lumding in the Hajo district, Diphu at Karbi Anglong district and at Silchar in Cachar district who had been excluded from the NRC due to lack of documents and those who had been included in the NRC as males. They spoke about their experience of being excluded, their fears about what the government might do to them next, the seemingly impossible task of getting papers and the lack of resources for pursuing a legal course. Baruah said around 1,500 transgender persons from Lumding alone have been excluded from the NRC. She said this was the highest number of members excluded from one particular place. One such person who shared her experience was Pinky, who at one point of time was identified as Shaful Islam. Originally from Bongaigaon district, the 27-year-old was thrown out of her home and now lives in Lumding with four other transgender persons. Pinky said that her story was similar to that of many from her community. “I left home on account of my identity and joined the community. Then I went to Lumding and stayed with fellow members of the community. I have not been excluded from the NRC, but my old identity has been included,” she said and added that to challenge her old identity as a male, she would have to go back home to get the relevant documents. “But I cannot go back home. I am caught up now and have no idea

what to do next. I am afraid that the government may find me and declare me as a foreigner. I will discuss with AATA and fellow community members on what to do next,” she said. With begging as the only source of livelihood for the community, the members are hoping for some form of financial or legal aid from the government to address their present situation. But the community claims, the government has yet to hear them out. Anjali Thapa, originally from Diphu, was sent to the transgender community by her own parents at the age of seven. She told *The Wire* that the reason which was shown as excluded from the NRC was the ‘non-submission of documents’ and maintained that Prime Minister Modi should provide the community with adequate facilities. According to Baruah, Her parents’ whereabouts are unknown since they left Diphu and settled elsewhere. “I have no documents prior to 1971. I have no other papers to show. Modi sarkar should provide us with a facility through which our names can be included. I do not even have a ration card. What madam [Baruah] says that the court’s direction will determine our citizenship is what I hope for. There is nothing,” said she. More or else is the same situation for Khushi aka Tina originally from Silchar now based in Lumding. This 44-year-old transgender was forcibly married to a woman before she could disclose her identity. When she finally did disclose her identity, ironically, the woman Tina was married to supported her but was she disowned by her own biological parents. Now mostly into

begging, Tina saves a portion from it for the wife. “I have no documents and hence have been excluded from the NRC. I cannot say what will be my fate,” she said. Several other members including Kajali aka Kaji Rahman, who hails from Mangaldoi in Darrang district and now lives in Guwahati, share a common thread of being excluded from the NRC and have no other alternatives other than the much-awaited Supreme Court verdict. “The direction from SC is our last hope. Most of the people are poor and have no other ways to challenge their exclusion from the NRC. We are hopeful that it will consider our petition on how the transgender community can be included. We have already mentioned it in the apex court and the court had already filed a notice in August of 2018. But even after that our petition has not been taken up for hearing. So, we believe the main petition has been disposed of and the IA will be taken up and a suitable order is given. We are in touch with our counsel,” said Baruah. “Just because the transgender persons do not have proper documentation and have been disowned or abandoned by their families, in that case, the only support they lack is from the government which in the first place should have taken steps so that they are not excluded. Even after the 2014 National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) judgment which had recognised the fundamental and civil rights of the nation’s transgender people, the state government was sleeping.” Baruah added.

Gaurav Das is a Guwahati-based freelance journalist.

Gas Pass Book lost

I, the undersigned, have lost my Gas pass book issued by Imphal LPG Consumer No 70000000 (Cx27179433) on the way between Konjong Hajari Leikai to Wahengbam Leikai on October 24, 2019. Finders are requested to hand over it to the undersigned.

Sd/-
Y. Bidyapati Devi
Konjong Hajari Leikai