

Editorial

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

The taste of Indian democracy: Will sincerity work?

After over 70 years of Independence, India gets a state that is governed by a group of highly civilized and politically literate class that converted pre poll promises into action. What is more impressive is the way that this group of likeminded people who form a political party called Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) after completion of its term don't beg for vote to return to power but left it to the people to decide among themselves either to vote for them or not by judging on what their government had done for the people of Delhi.

This political party was born in the aftermath of Anna Hazare fast-unto-death protest against corruption (2013). Even as there were differences between Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Anna Hazare when the former decided to go for election, the party is still a brain child of the anti-corruption protest by Anna Hazare. When Kejriwal and his team started to fight the election with hope to change the system under the banner of the newly formed political party, many critics are of the opinion that the party and its member including the mastermind Kejriwal will be diluted to the corrupt and grotesque political culture and they will make no difference from other political party already existed in the country. But Kejriwal proves wrong to his critics and he finally showed that the system can be changed.

Almost all members and key leaders of AAP are mostly intellectuals turn politicians and do acted with reasons. Their pre-election manifesto contain no Mandir or Mosque creation but rather on issues education, jobs, health, electricity and water etc.

New Delhi under the AAP government today have the best government schools, even better than the private run schools. And the best government schools are converted in five years of his government. This is perhaps an activities where no state government in the entire country had ever performed. The budget for the sector of education is three times more than what it was when AAP came to power. The revolutionary work that has been done by the government is being spoken about across the world. As per the report card the AAP government added 20,000 new classrooms across Delhi during their ruled. The education budget has gone up every year, hitting the figure of Rs 13,997 crore in 2018-19 — 26 per cent of Delhi's entire budget, as per report by media.

One interesting changes that AAP government has brought is that the government of Delhi is the first state in the country to have surplus revenue as per the report by CAG. The audit report by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) for the year ended March 2018, noted that tax revenue and non-tax revenue also registered an increase of 14.70 per cent and 101.05 per cent respectively over the previous year, according to New India Express report.

What is interesting is the answer by Chief Minister Kejriwal when asked about how his government was able to provide free travel to public transport for women at which he said that instead of buying a Jet Plane as done by Gujarat government for VVIP ride, his government spent the kind of money for free ride to women at public transport.

The way the Delhi government did is what the common people always desire. But it is still skeptical on to judge whether his government will return or not as Indian voters' mindset is not so politically literate and incline more on blind fate. Many felt that Mandir or Mosque is more important than Roti, Kapara Makan. And after all the electoral system in India which is fast post the past always give those in power to play every means to win the election. People have to wait and watch on whether sincerity works in politics or not, after Delhi election.

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Countrywide protests against JNU violence

The agitation spilled over the campuses across the country. In New Delhi over 500 students and alumni from universities in Delhi protested outside the old Delhi Police headquarters at ITO. The students of AMU took out a candlelight march. A protest took place in Chhattisgarh's capital Raipur at around midnight where about 300 people, including students and activists, protested against the violence. In Patna (Bihar), students' union president Manish Kumar led the protest. Students associated with the All India Students Federation (AISF) also staged a protest outside Patna University office. The students of the National Law University in Bengaluru (Karnataka) staged candle light protest.

In Goa, the Goa Forward Party, an ally of NDA, condemned the violence and said the "heinous masked attack" on professors and students was "shocking and appalling". Violence is the first resort of cowards

and intellectually bankrupt. In Manipur, students of the Manipur University staged a solidarity protest inside the campus at around noon on Monday. 100 of students gathered at the Traffic Island inside the University campus and staged the protest with placards showing solidarity to JNU. Later at evening a candle light vigil was also organised by the Student body.

The chronology of developments on Monday: 08:10 AM: Delhi Police: "We have received multiple complaints in connection with Sunday's violence at JNU. We will soon register FIR". 07:40 AM: The Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) called the Registrar, Proctor and Rector of JNU to his office. 07:27 AM: Students from different colleges gathered outside Gateway of India in Mumbai to protest against the JNU violence. 10:30 AM an FIR was lodged by Delhi police.

Statement released by NESO leaders Samuel B. Jyrwa and Sinam Prakash Singh on CAA

The North East Students' Organisation (NESO), which comprises of the Khasi Students' Union (KSU), All Assam Students' Union (AASU), Naga Students' Federation (NSF), Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP), Twipra Students' Federation (TSF), All Manipur Students' Union (AMSU), Garo Students' Union (GSU) and All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU) representing eight major students' movements of the seven North Eastern States, is opposing strongly the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill (CAB) since 2016 which has now become an Act also known as Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019, is reiterating its strong opposition to this draconian Act on the very basic principle that this CAA is a grave threat to the identity and survival of the microscopic indigenous communities of the different states of North East. Historically the North East which shares a long and porous border of nearly 1,750 km with Bangladesh has been facing the problem of illegal infiltration since the time India attained its Independence in 1947 in which large scale migration took place from the then East Pakistan now Bangladesh especially to Tripura and Assam, again, in 1971, due to the Liberation War of Bangladesh, large scale migration of people from Bangladesh again took place and they cross over to the different states of NE especially Tripura and Assam. The consequences of these large scale migration resulted in the

indigenous people of Tripura being reduced to a minority in their own land and they accounted at present only 30% of the total population, 11 (eleven) districts of Assam where the indigenous people of Assam are reduced to a minority. This CAA has nullified the provision of the Assam Accord signed in 1985 whereby the cut-off date of 1971 is squashed with the new provision inserted in the Act, this is total disrespect and utter disregard of the Accord which the GOI itself is a signatory in which the people of Assam and North East can never accept. This CAA is only adding to the already burgeoning problem of illegal infiltration from Bangladesh which is continuing unabatedly thereby changing the demographic structure of the whole region. The then Home Minister in the United Front government, the late, Mr Indrajit Gupta, on 6th May 1997 made a startling revelation and stated in the floor of the Lok Sabha that the number of illegal migrants stood at nearly 1 (one) Crore, the Intelligence Bureau in 1998 reported that the estimated number of illegal migrants to be 1.1 Crore with the greatest concentration in Assam and West Bengal, the Group of Ministers (GOM), in its report on reforming the national security system made public on 23 May, 2001, while mentioning about the law and order situation in North East, also stated that the situation has staggered from bad to worse with the influx of an estimated 1.2 Crore

or 12 Million illegal Bangladeshis since 1971. The then Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri Prakash Jaiswal, in 14th July, 2004, has stated that more than 1.2 Crores of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants are present in India, out of which, 50 Lakhs in Assam, 3,25,400 in Tripura, 59,000 in Nagaland, 30,000 in Meghalaya. The then Minister of State for Home Affairs, Mr Kiren Rijiju, in 2016, has stated in the Rajya Sabha that the estimated number of illegal Bangladeshi migrants to be 2(two) Crores. If this is not a threat to the microscopic indigenous communities, then what?

This Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019 is also unconstitutional and communal as it defines citizenship on the basis of religion. NESO does not differentiate a person on the basis of religion, as according to us 'a foreigner is a foreigner irrespective of his or her religion'.

The indigenous people of the North East are deadly against this Act as its implementation will grant citizenship to illegal infiltrators who were illegally entering and settling here in North East and the Government instead of taking action and deporting them to Bangladesh is awarding them with citizenship. The people of NE have all along been demanding that all the illegal migrants be deported back to their country of origin, but the Government of India, through the promulgation of this Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, is legitimizing the presence of illegal

infiltrators in North East and will also encourage more infiltration from Bangladesh to NE thereby threatening the language, culture and the very identity of the microscopic indigenous communities of the NE. This is a treacherous act of the GOI towards the indigenous peoples of the NE, whereby instead of making laws to protect its own citizens, it is bringing in a law to facilitate the illegal migration of foreigners and putting at risk its own citizens from external aggression. So the pertinent question is "This Government is for whom?" Is the Government of India for its own citizens or for the illegal foreigners from Bangladesh?

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Minister Biswajit releases theme based MEETAC

The Minister also lauded the CEO and the officials working under MEETAC for their efforts. The calendar release function was also attended by Director (Admin) MEETAC K. Bantee Singh and Director (Finance and Asset Management) MEETAC Shri Th. Gunindro Singh, MES.

The wall calendar 2020 contains some new prototype designs developed by craftsmen of Manipur during the current financial year under the guidance of National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad. The designs depict the new trends including souvenirs and utility items made from Wood Craft, Metal Craft, Bamboo and Cane, doll making under paper mache craft, dry flower craft among others. The new designs developed by the craftsmen may develop a better market within and outside the State.

The Desk Calendar 2020 is a "Theme Based Calendar" depicting Traditional Dolls of Manipur developed under Paper Mache Craft. The Manipuri dolls are made for both religious and cultural purposes and are realistic representations of Gods, Goddesses, and people from all walks of life.

The inspiration behind the dolls has changed but the Manipuri impression and flavour in the style of making remains intact. MEETAC through the Calendar, intends to promote and market Manipuri Dolls as Russian, Japanese and Mexican traditional dolls.

Mission for Economic Empowerment of Traditional Artisans & Craftsmen (MEETAC) is the new Mission of the Government of Manipur, established on 29th December, 2017 as an autonomous Society under the Department of Textiles, Commerce & Industries.

MEETAC was formally launched on 1st September, 2018 to promote inclusive growth by developing the Traditional crafts/arts sector of Manipur as per global standards and making it an important spoke in the wheel of economic activities. MEETAC aims to provide unified access to the Traditional Craftsman/Artisans of Hills and Valley of Manipur for design

Farmers to organise "Chakka Jam" for Bharat Bandh in Maharashtra

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, Jan. 7

Maharashtra farmers' organisations have decided to support the "Bharat Bandh" being organised by CITU, INTUC and other organisations, as a protest against the "anti-worker, anti-people and anti-national policies" of the Modi-II Government and stage "Rasta Rokos" (blockading roads) throughout Maharashtra on 8 January, Wednesday.

This was decided in a meeting of representatives of farmers' organisations held here on Sunday evening. The meeting took note of the fact that countrywide nearly 208 farmers' unions have come together and as such the bandh should be totally successful. The Maharashtra Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghata, Kisan Sabha, Lok Sangharsh Morcha, Narmada Bachav Andolan and other organisations are joining the bandh. The meeting was attended by Dr Ashok Dhavale, J P Gavit, Kisan Gurjar, Arjun Ade, Dr Ajit Navale and other leaders.

The farmers' organisations took note of the fact that despite announcement of several schemes the woes of farmers continue to remain unresolved. The meeting decided to demand: implementation of recommendations of the Swaminathan Commission on farmers, one and half times support price to farm produce so that the farmers do not get entangled in debt trap, total loan waiver, make cultivators the owners of their farms, to devise methods of alternate farming, provision of crop insurance and permanent mechanism to deal with natural calamities affecting agriculture sector.

The National Commission on Farmers (NFC), chaired by Prof. M. S. Swaminathan, had submitted five reports through the period December 2004 - October 2006. NFC



has made several suggestions like : to expand the outreach of the formal credit system to reach the really poor, reduce rate of interest for crop loans up to 4 per cent simple interest with government support, moratorium on debt recovery, including loans from non-institutional sources, and waiver of interest on loans in distress hotspots and during calamities till capability is restored, set up an Agriculture Risk Fund to provide relief to farmers in the aftermath of successive natural calamities, issue Kisan Credit Cards to women farmers and with joint "Pattas" as collateral etc.

The Commission has noted that apart from the size of holding, the productivity levels primarily determine the income of the farmers. However, the per unit area productivity of Indian agriculture is much lower than other major crop producing countries. To achieve higher growth in productivity in agriculture, the NFC has recommended: substantial increase in public investment in agriculture related infrastructure particularly in irrigation, drainage, land development, water conservation, research development and road connectivity etc, a national network of advanced soil testing laboratories with facilities for detection of micronutrient deficiencies, promotion of

conservation farming and improve soil health, water quantity and quality and biodiversity and develop an integrated credit-cum-crop-livestock-human health insurance package.

NFC has also recommended: the creation of Rural Insurance Development Fund to take up development work, to promote sustainable livelihoods for the poor by improving (i) Financial services (ii) Infrastructure (iii) Investments in human development, agriculture and business development services and alternate market linkages and (iv) Institutional development services (forming and strengthening producers' organisations such as self-help groups and water user associations).

The Commission has also recommended: distribution of ceiling-surplus and waste lands, prevent diversion of prime agricultural land and forest to corporate sector for non-agricultural purposes, ensure grazing rights and seasonal access to forests to tribals and pastoralists, and access to common property resources and establishment of a National Land Use Advisory Service, which would have the capacity to link land use decisions with ecological meteorological and marketing factors on a location and season specific basis.

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Imphal Times have no edition yesterday due to the 45th Foundation Day of AMWJU