

A ban on Bandhs



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Rituparna Goswami Pande 14 September 2007 16284 views

A bandh is the choicest means of protest for all political parties or organizations. We have seen umpteenth number of bandhs for hundreds of reasons such as killings, price rise, atrocities etc. But have these bandhs ever benefited the cause they are called for? Instead these bandhs reverse the wheel of an already slow progress that Assam is involved in. School children and college going youngsters are unable to complete their syllabi on time which later has a bad effect on their future results, ailing people suffer immensely for non availability of medical attention, daily wage earners are the worst sufferers who are unable to feed the hungry mouths at home. In such a predicament do these people gain anything by the bandhs. Assam has the most number of bandhs in a year added with the other calendar holidays and Sundays the Assamese hardly get time to work. In fact a trend has developed among us to expect some kind of a bandh frequently so much so that it seems that the bandh givers have realized the pulse of the people and slate the bandhs on weekends or nearing holidays so that the bandh becomes total. Again in such a condition the people are hardly bothered regarding the cause behind such bandhs.

In fact Assam is known for its tea, rhino, ULFA and bandh culture which perhaps has also earned it the epithet of a lahe-lahe city. Surprisingly the grapevine works its best during such bandhs and people come to

know of a bandh in a matter of minutes! Perhaps deep down we like those bandhs which gives us a respite from the daily grind.

Protests should be such that the common public gets an active part to play. Public discussions, suggestions, door to door campaigns, candle light marches, sit in demonstrations, slogans fasts etc are better ways of making a point then calling for bandhs.

Bandhs not only put a brake in the economic progress but it also means huge losses to the country at large and the state in particular. Moreover, such bandhs send a wrong message to the outside world and most importantly to our future generations who are going to get this bandh culture as a legacy. But will anybody's conscience be stirred by the above observations? I think not. May be we should call for a bandh to put an end to bandhs!

Rituparna Goswami Pande

Journalist, writer

BY RITUPARNA GOSWAMI PANDE

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