

Akhil Gogoi owns a pajero?



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Encountering a much unexpected thing might turn our head around any moment and make us ponder over a matter at the cost losing a good sleep and even temporarily losing appetite. It happened to me when I had heard from some one that Akhil Gogoi, the general secretary of Krishak Mukti Sangram Samity, owns a pajero. I know its not true yet the whole episode which included the reference of Akhil Gogoi having a pajero has more to do with the emotionally blind people of Assam.

It took me three long hours of a risk taking journey in a TATA “Winger”, from Goalpara to Mirza on my way to Guwahati after a news coverage to learn about the PAJERO episode. I boarded a Tata Winger vehicle after one of my friend forced me into the Winger vehicle guaranteeing that it would take less time to reach Guwahati. Something started disturbing me as the vehicle took momentum; I was just wandering what if something goes wrong on the way. Every time the young pilot overtakes a vehicle my body would push myself back to the seat and I would hold tight. No doubt the pilot was an expert, but it could not stop the tyre from bursting. A new tube was replaced but it again bursted after 40 minutes of Journey before reaching Chaigaon. All the passengers who were already red faced after exchanging fiery words with the conductor about technical fault in vehicle and the fare, shifted to another vehicle. It was a Tata Magic vehicle arranged by the conductor of the Tata Winger. Somehow we adjusted to our seats as if in a straightjacket.

Once again very uncomfortably our journey began, and little did I knew what was awaiting us would be more uncomfortable than the Journey I had covered. As the vehicle stopped in Chaigaon, an elderly passenger got into our vehicle which was already packed, he was literally sitting on one of the passengers lap just opposite to me. As the vehicle took off again the new member timidly looked at us all through his spectacles and suddenly his mood changed and he became charged with full of energy. Without any rhyme and reason he started talking about politics and development and accusing Himanta Biswa Sharma, the state health minister for doing nothing in the Chaigaon area and in greater Assam except focusing things limited to his constituency.

He was verbally accusing the minister of his corruptions and his news Channel. For quite some time he kept on speaking above his tone But none of us knew as to whom the man was addressing to. For one moment of time I thought he was high on spirit, but I was proven wrong. Then the gentle man started praising Akhil Gogoi. At this juncture I could draw a thin line of difference and was able to penetrate his state mind and perhaps my co-passengers was well aware too. The new gentle man had even asked not to mind for speaking odd things about the health Minister provided some one was from Jalukbari constituency. There was no response from any of the passengers and the man kept speaking about Akhil Gogoi and the Health Minister. I could hold myself and just nodded to him just for curtsey. Finally I started exchanging a few political things after he told that he was also from the health department. The man kept complaining about the minister and how Akhil Gogoi's voice is the only weapon against the powerful minister. All of a sudden like a thunderstorm three passengers countered his allegations one after another with much anger in their faces. I was taken aback; then they told that they were all from the Jalukbari constituency. I knew the new man will have to face the music now. Had they all been of young ages a physical fight was due inside the vehicle. But all being matured people and specially being passengers there was physical restrain, however verbally the ambience got politically charged.

The temperature gradually roused with much emotion than anything logical and that is the character of the people of our the state, which is good and at times can be very bad too in the long run.. Our emotions have had negative impacts on our decisions which have resulted in paralyzing our own system, specially during choosing candidates while voting and supporting or rejecting greater issues. The new gentle man was all praising the leadership of Akhil Gogoi, and thus how can some one from Jalukbari constituency can hear and keep mum. The other three passengers by no means were accepting that Akhil Gogoi is a leader. They were of the view that had there been six more leaders like Himanta Biswa Sharma, the face of Assam could have changed. And that Akhil Gogoi,s motive is all political and his allegations are baseless. The reference of health scheme, the allegation of the 40 Lakhs Rs.Car the minister, and the AGP, are some to be noted in the allegation and counter allegation war.

I thought it to be wise to keep silent as the conversation grew hotter. The new gentle man was alone and he was literally looking for my support, I kept avoiding his eye contact and started yawning to saw my lack of interest in the subject, I only wish this was a public platform and I could have jumped into the fray. Suddenly one of among three passengers said how Akhil Gogoi can buy a “PAJERO” that costs Rs. 28 Lakhs? He said, “I saw Akhil Gogoi getting into a PAJERO”. Till some time back I had no idea about the Mitsubishi Vehicle, because it’s not to be seen in Guwahati very often, but some how I remember seeing one PAJERO in Guwahati and thus I could visualize Akhil Gogoi getting in to the vehicle. I can’t explain how I felt to visualize that scene. Hope some imaginations never come alive.

The man was confident about his claim. He was sure that the minister can do no wrong and till date all he has done is very exceptional. Everything was normal but at one point of time the status of the minister was raised to the level of demi-god. The passenger narrated how he helped the local people like God and so on. At times we tend to lose our reason and on many times it has happened and we had to pay for it. It's better if human beings and specially leaders are not viewed as Gods and Demi-Gods. For the passenger the health Minister was a God and Akhil Gogoi a demon. Are our sense and logic getting so blind that we have started visualize things illogically. Why should one be hurt to hear criticism of a loved person or a leader, can human being do no wrong? How can Himanta Biswa Sharma do no wrong things and Akhil Gogoi can do no right thing and vise versa. If we learn to live with reasons we can create more awareness and guide the leaders to do more good for the society. After all leaders are not made overnight. Leaders are the assets for a society and good leaders comes as blessings for the society but not to be mistaken for "God".

I gave a final look at all the passengers once the vehicle had stopped at a stoppage, one neutral passenger got off to make others feel comfortable and we started again.

And the reshuffling the conversation stopped and there was full silence .I knew the new gentle man was still looking at me in the dark hoping for some support and he even pinched my finger twice. I did not want to encourage the gentleman just to make rest of the journey smooth. I kept on looking outside till the man got off saying a friendly goodbye to all of us. He left with a heavy head not because of the conversation but feeling betrayed by me.

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BY PETER ALEX TODD

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