

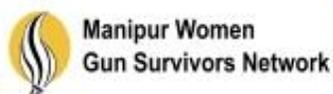
Seeking Our Collective Peace

1st NORTHEAST INDIA WOMEN PEACE CONGREGATION



25th March 2015

Imphal, Manipur, Northeast India



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Introduction:

Northeast India is a region of India that borders five countries and comprises the eight states—Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. The total population of Northeastern Region of India is 38,857,769, of which 19.1% are living below the poverty line. Northeast India deals with complex social political issues such as struggle over natural resources, ethnic conflicts, illegal migration, displacement and social exclusion.

Status of Violence against Women in Northeast India:

The incidences of crimes against women, particularly domestic violence, are on the rise in Northeast India. Reported instances of crimes against women in Assam jumped to 17,449 in 2013 as against 13,544 the previous year. In Tripura, between 2013 and the previous year, it had risen to 1,628 from 1,559 while Meghalaya saw a jump to 343 from 255. In Arunachal Pradesh, it was up from 201 to 288, in Sikkim to 93 from 68 and in Nagaland to 67 from 51. Manipur and Mizoram, however, recorded a slide in crimes against women with the incident rate in the former falling to 285 from 304 while the latter saw it drop from 199 to 177. (Source: National Crime Records Bureau, 2014). The main gender impact of the armed conflict taking place in Manipur and other states of Northeast India is the use of sexual violence as an arm of war. Cases of sexual violence against women have been documented, especially against those accused of being members of or giving support to insurgent organizations.

More than a decade after United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) was unanimously adopted, the striking absence of women from formal peace negotiations reveals a troubling gap between the aspirations of countless global and regional commitments and the reality of peace processes. It has been 33 years since the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 30 years since the UN General Assembly's declaration on the participation of women in promoting international peace and cooperation, 17 years since the UN convened the fourth world conference on women and participating governments issued the Beijing Declaration and Platform for action, and 12 years since resolution 1325 (2000) made women's participation in all aspects of peacekeeping, peacemaking and peace building part of the remit of the security council. The average numbers of women participating in peace negotiations in official roles—as negotiators, mediators, signatories or witnesses—remain notably low. Data on the numbers of women in peace talks are scarce, as this information is not consistently tracked by any authority. a study undertaken in 2008, which scanned 33 peace negotiations, found that only 4 per cent of participants—11 out of 280—were women, and that the average participation of women on government negotiating delegations was, at 7 per cent, higher than on the delegations of non-state armed groups. A reasonably representative sample of 31 major peace processes between 1992 and 2011 reveals that only 4 per cent of signatories, 2.4 per cent of chief mediators, 3.7 per cent of witnesses and 9 per cent of negotiators are women. (Source: UN Women).

Where are Women in Decision making forums and Peace Process in Northeast India? Women groups in Northeast India have developed many a powerful programme of direct non-violent, action designed to confront the armed violence of both insurgents and the security forces. Women in the region are excluded of decision making structures and are discriminated due to cultural, ethnical

reasons, patriarchal structure and customary laws. Late Smt. Indira Goswami from Assam was the only woman from Northeast India who had participated at the formal peace negotiation between the armed militant group United Liberation Front of Asom and the Government of India.

There is a need to make women in India's northeast understand the issue of war, conflict, peace. Also equally needed to understand the political economy of violence, the militarization of Northeast societies that has come about and issues of arms and drug trafficking, HIV AIDS, displacement etc that have emerged in the region and the larger questions of patriarchy in the whole process. The issue of violence against women, lack of women in decision making bodies, reasons to why women are underrepresented in many of the North-eastern states legislative assemblies and in the Lok and RajyaSabhass will also fall under this attempt to understanding and finding ways of building peace. Besides, many of the internationally renowned United Nations Resolutions on women and peace building remains just on paper such as United Nations Resolution 1325 and 1820. Hence time is ripe for us to look at empower women in India's Northeast in a concrete and constructive way.

India and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325:

On 2nd July 2014, the Government of India finally declared that wherever possible, women were consulted in peace negotiations. However in 2007, it was stated that UNSCR 1325 would not be applicable in India because there exists no situation of 'armed conflict'. CEDAW committee insisted that more number of women should be a part of peace negotiations as because they constitute half the population of conflict affected people and they would help bring a better gender perspective when peace is being negotiated.

Work Done on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in Northeast India till now:

Our organizations and our partners have been working since 2010 on this issue. We have started the Northeast India Women Initiative for Peace to address the problem of women being left out of peace processes. From 2014, Women's network meetings have been organized on making UNSCR 1325 work in Northeast India with meetings in Manipur, 4th June, 2014; Sikkim, 28th June, 2014; Arunachal Pradesh, 11th August, 2014; Meghalaya, 7th October, 2014; Tripura 6th December, 2014; Nagaland, 19th January, 2015 and Assam, 16th February, 2015 till date. On 25th March 2015, the 1st Northeast Women Peace Congregation is to be held to bring together women from all across the region to take a resolution on UNSCR 1325 and to call upon the Government of India to develop a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325.

On 25 March 2015, we are organizing the First North East India Women's Peace Congregation.

The event will be held from **9 am to 4 pm at the Sangai Conference Hall, Imphal Hotel, Imphal, Manipur, India.** The aim of this congregation is for Women Leaders across Northeast India to meet and strategise to develop a Regional Action Plan on Women Peace and Security with reference to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 which will be taken up with relevant stakeholders of Government of India. This important **Peace Congregation** is the culmination of the Women's Network Meetings held across all the 8 states of Northeast India and to strategise for absolute participation of women in decision making forums and space, socio economic empowerment of women of the region, gender sensitization of State Security Forces and Need for inclusion of Peace Education in Educational Curriculum.

Target Group:

Women leaders, women victims of violence of various communities/ethnicities and civil society of Northeast India and relevant stakeholders

As a follow up of the meeting women representatives will prevail on the present government for the formation of a National Action Plan with reference United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and to facilitate women's participation in different national and regional forums for peace, development, empowerment of women and security issues. This will strengthen the advocacy initiatives at the national and regional level relating to the women, peace and security agenda in conflict and post conflict areas, putting women at centre-stage for the much conflict affected Northeast India for bringing collective peace and development in the region.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

First Northeast India Women Peace Congregation

Date: 25 March 2015 Time: 9 am to 4 pm

Venue: The Sangai Conference Hall, Imphal Hotel, Imphal, Manipur

Organized by:

Control Arms Foundation of India (CAFI), Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network (MWGSN) in collaboration with Northeast India Women Initiative for Peace (NEIWIP)

Supported by:

European Union (EU) and Welthungerhilfe (WHH)

Timing	Programme
9.00 am	Registration
Timing	Session I : Inaugural Session
	<i>Chair: Dr L Ibetombi, Chairperson, State Commission for Women, Manipur</i>
9. 30 am	Introduction to the meeting by Ms. Binalakshmi Nepram , Founder, Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network and Secretary General, Control Arms Foundation of India.
9. 35 am	Welcome statement by Ms Neha Naqvi , Project Coordinator, Welthungerhilfe
9. 40 am	Presentation on ongoing work on Empowering Women for Peace and Development in Northeast India
10.00 am	Arrival of Chief Guest and inauguration of the event by Chief Guest Shri Okram Ibobi Singh , Honourable Chief Minister of Manipur and lighting of Lamp
10.20 am	Statement from Guest of Honour, Shri Irengbam Hemochandra , Honourable Minister, PHED, Labour and Employment, Government of Manipur
10.30 am	Address by Special Guest Mr Pradyot Debbarman , Maharaja of Tripura and Editor, The Northeast Today
10. 40 am	Statement from Special Invitee Mr Thoralf Stenvold , Counsellor, Head of Political Affairs, Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi, India
10.50 am	Tea Break
Timing	Session II: Women Peace and Security Perspectives from Women Leaders: Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura
11.15 am	<i>Chair: Prof Ksh Bimola, Former Professor, Political Science Department, Manipur University</i>
11.20 am	Presentation on the event theme by Ms Jubita Hazarimayum , Convenor, Peace Core Team, Manipur and Ms RK Sujata , Project Coordinator, Control Arms Foundation of India
11.30 pm	Violence Against Women and Children in Bodoland and Efforts for Making UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security Work by Ms Pratibha Brahma , Member of North East Research & Social Work Networking (NERSWN), Bodoland, Assam
	Indo Naga Conflict and Role of Women in Peace Process by Ms Khesili Chisi ,

11.40 pm	Convenor, Indigenous Women's Forum of North East India (IWFNEI)
11.50 pm	Meira Paibis of Manipur and Socio Political Involvement for Peace and Conflict Resolution by Ms S Momon , Meira Paibi Leader, Meira Paibi Leader, Imphal West (Tami Chingmi) Ms Lourebam Nganbi , President, Apunba Nupi Lup (ANUL), Meira and Paibi Leader, Bishnupur District, Manipur
12.00 pm	The Importance and Role of Muslim Women in Decision Making and Peace Process Forums in Manipur by Sitara Begum , Muslim Women Leader
12.10 pm	Importance of Women's Participation in Peace Process of Manipur: Case of Tangkhul Women's Union by Ms Valley Rose , Editor Aza Daily
12.20 pm	The Importance and Role of Women in Decision Making Forums and Space in Arunachal Pradesh by Ms Kenter Riba , Consulting Editor, Eastern Sentinel
12.30 pm	Status of Women & Importance of Role of Women in Decision Making Forums in Tripura by Ms. Kanchan Sinha , Drugs Control Organization, Government of Tripura
12.40 pm	Micro Finance for Economic Empowerment for Women in Conflict: Case Study from Ukhrul District by Ms Rinyui Chon , Credit Manager, Ukhrul District Women's Institute of Microfinance, Manipur
12.47 pm	Economic Empowerment of Vulnerable and Marginalised Women Case of Meira Foods by Ms Subhra Hanjabam Devi , Proprietor, Meira Foods
12. 52 pm	Open Discussions and Interactions
1.10 pm	Lunch
1.25 pm	Presentation of Classical Dance of Manipur to be anchored by Ms Subhra Hanjabam Devi , Proprietor, Meira Foods
Timing 2.10 pm	Session III: Women Peace and Security Perspectives from Women Leaders across Northeast India: Meghalaya, Mizoram, Sikkim, Manipur, Nagaland <i>Chair: Mr Tamo Pradip Phanjaobam, Senior journalist based in Manipur</i>
02. 10 pm	Rising Violent Conflict in Meghalaya; its Impact on Women and response by Women of the State by Ms Satrupa Bhattacharjee , Advocate, Legal Rights Forum, Shillong, Meghalaya
02.20 pm	Importance of Women of Different Ethnic Groups and Community for Peace and Development in India by Ms Rose Mangsi , President of Kuki Women Union, Manipur
02.30 pm	Importance of Gender Sensitization for State Security Forces in Northeast India for Peace and Security for Women by Ms RK Tutusana , IPS, Additional Director, Manipur Police Training College
02.40 pm	The Importance and Role of Women in Decision Making Forums and Space in Sikkim by Mr. Peter Lauenstein , Principal, Taktse International School, Sikkim
02.50 pm	The Importance and Role of Women in Decision making forums & space in Nagaland and need for participation of women in formal peace process by Ms Zheviholi Swu , Advocate, Nagaland
3.00 pm	The Importance and Role of Women in Decision Making Forums and Space in Mizoram; Mizoram Peace Accord and the participation of Women in Peace Process by Professor Lalneihzovi , Head of Department, Public Administration, Mizoram University, Mizoram

3.10 pm	Statement from Mr Rupachandra, Editor Impact TV , Imphal, Manipur
3.18 pm	A Play on Plight of Women in Conflict Affected State Manipur by Chanura Group, Women Survivors of Manipur
3.30 pm – 4 pm	Strategies, recommendation and way forward on Regional Action Plan on Women Peace and Security in Northeast India
4.00 pm	<p>General Discussions, Strategies, Recommendation and Way Forward for Developing National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 and Women’s Empowerment in Northeast India to be facilitated by Ms. Binalakshmi Nepram, Founder, Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network and Secretary General, Control Arms Foundation of India and Ms Jubita Hazarimayum, Convenor, Peace Core Team, Manipur</p> <p>Closing Statement from Duccio Bandini, Programme Manager, EU India Delegation</p> <p>Vote of Thanks by Ms Reena Mutum, Coordinator, Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network</p>

PROFILE OF SPEAKERS

Shri Okram Ibobi Singh

Okram Ibobi Singh is the 19th Chief Minister of the state of Manipur, India. He has held that position since 7 March 2002 and is currently serving his consecutive third term in the office. Started his political career in 1984 as an Independent candidate and subsequently joined the Congress after winning the election. He has also held the position of Chairman, Khadi and Village Industries Board from October, 1985 till January, 1988. In 1990 general elections, re-elected from his constituency and became Minister in Charge of Municipal Administration, Housing and Urban Development. Also, Minister in Charge of Industries for the period of 1994-95. In 1995-96, appointed as Vice-President of Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee. In 1999, he became the President of MPCC. He was re-elected to the post which he holds till now.

Shri Irengbam Hemochandra

Shri Irengbam Hemochandra is currently serving as Minister, Public Health Engineering Department, Labour and Employment, Government of Manipur. He has been a Youth Congress President, Manipur. Also, he has worked for educational and economic development of the people of Manipur as student and elected Secretary-cum-spokesman of the Federal Legislative Party. He is a former student of History from St. Stephens, Delhi University.

Mr. Duccio Bandini

Mr. Duccio Bandini is currently working as the Programme Manager for the Indian Delegation of the European Union.

Ms. Neha Naqvi

Human Rights Activist interested in Gender Justice, Conflict Resolution, Arts for Development. Is also a lawyer, by profession and has worked in organizations like TARSHI (Talking About Reproductive and Sexual Health Issues), PRAVAH, ICRC in partnership with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, New Delhi, as a Research Associate, etc. She is currently working with Welthungerhilfe as a Project Coordinator.

Mr Thoralf Stenvold

Mr Thoralf Stenvold is a Counsellor for Head of Political Affairs of Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi and has been posted in India since 2012.

Shri RK Anand

Shri RK Anand is a member of the Manipur Legislative Assembly. Also, Former Gen. Secretary (Chandigarh Students' Welfare Association & Poona Manipur Students' Association), Former Gen. Secretary, Young Lawyers' Forum, Manipur, Former Jt. Secretary, All Manipur Bar Association, Former Special Secretary & Advisor AMUCO & UCM and Former Vice President, DRPP & NPP etc.

Dr L Ibetombi

Dr L Ibetombi is the Chairperson, State Commission for Women, Manipur. She is graduated from Lady Hardinge Medical College New Delhi & Post graduated from G.S. Medical College & K.E.M. Hospital, Bombay. As training consultant, associated with various Women's Children's training and service programmer in Manipur and various parts of India. She has participated in the welfare work of women, children and community project work since childhood. An active peace campaigner in hills and plain of Manipur, Vice-President of "Manipur Peace Committee" and President of "All India Rural Women's Upliftment Association, Manipur Branch.

Ms. Pratibha Brahma

Ms. Pratibha Brahma is a Member of North East Research & Social Work Networking (NERSWN), Mwidokoro, Kokrajhar, Bodoland. She is an Entrepreneur and a committed social worker. She is also known as for her involvement with charitable and developmental work in the region.

Ms Rose Mangsi

Ms Rose Mangsi is a retired professor of Social Science and strong women leader of the Kuki Community of Manipur. Ms. Rose Mangsi had also contested elections earlier.

Ms Ruth Singson

Ms Ruth Singson is the Founder and President of Widows Welfare Association, Churachandpur, Manipur.

Prof. KSH Bimola Devi

Professor KSH Bimola Devi is a professor of Political Science in Manipur University specializing in Indian Political System, North East India Study and Gandhian Thought. She has written extensively on the society, politics and development in North East India, social movements of northeast, women's movement in Manipur, education in the northeast, constraints of development in northeast India, etc.

Ms. S. Momon

President Tami Chingmi ApunbaNupiLup, Vice President Sarmila Kanba ApunbaLup.

Ms. Lourebam Nganbi

Ms Lourebam Nganbi, President, ApunbaNupiLup (ANUL), Vice President Apunba Manipur KanbaImaLup (AMKIL), Secretary, External Affairs, United Committee Manipur and is a Meira Paibi leader from Bishnupur. She had worked for the welfare of women folk of Manipur since 1974 both in the valleys and hilly areas of the state. She has also been jailed during the agitations and has been a part of the historic nude women protest done in front of the Kangla Gate against the rape and killing of Late Thangjam Manorama by Assam Rifle in Manipur in 2004.

Ms Sitara Begum

President, All Manipur Muslim Organisation and Muslim Women Leader

Ms Valley Rose

Valley Rose is the editor of Tangkhul daily Aza. Besides being a gritty woman editor, Valley Rose is also a noted social activist. Valley Rose is no more a novice in the field of electoral politics. She had contested parliamentary elections in the past.

Ms Sano Vamuzo

Former Chairperson, Nagaland Women Commission. Founding Member of the Naga Mothers' Association (NMA) in 1983 to fight social evils and uplift the status of women, with the motto "Humanity Integrity". Founder Member of Nature Serve Board, Nagaland, NGO with a view to preserve nature and protect the environment and served as Treasurer, 1982.

Ms. Kheseli Chisi

Convenor of Indigenous Women's Forum of North East India (IWFNEI) which consists of All Deori Women Association, Tiwa Women Association, Karbi Nimso Chingtur Asong, Zemi Mothers Association, Dimasa Women Society, R.K. Mosang Society Arunachal Pradesh, Naga Women Union Manipur, Zomi Mothers Association, Lai Women Association Mizoram, Naga Mothers Association, Eastern Naga Women Union, and Borok Women Forum Tripura..

Ms. Sinam Ongbi Chandrajini

Sinam Ongbi Chandrajini lost two of her sons, 17-year-old Sinam Chandramani and 27-year-old Sinam Robinson, in the Malom massacre that took place on 2 November 2000 at Malom, Manipur. Manipur Women Gun survivors Network has been supporting her from 2008 by opening her bank account and by giving too interest free capital to help start her handloom production based at home at Malom village. She now proudly runs handloom and handicraft business providing herself and several other women in her village for employment and income generation.

Ms. Lata Devi

Lata Devi lost her husband Nongmaithem Tomba (Chinglen, 37 years) in an extra- judicial killing by Assam Rifles (Para-military) on 27th April 2007. Lata Devi has been supported by Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network by giving too interest free capital to help start her handloom production based at home.

Professor Lalneihzovi

Head of Department, Public Administration, Mizoram University, Mizoram and her areas of interest are District Administration in India, Administrative Theory, Development Administration, Comparative Public Administration and Women's Development and Empowerment etc.

Mr. Peter Lauenstein

Principal of Taktse International School, Sikkim. He is a former graduate from Harvard University Graduate School of Education.

Mr. Yumnam Rupachandra Singh

Editor-in-Chief, IMPACT TV, Manipur. Studied at Scottish Church College, Calcutta. He was a former correspondent of Seven Sisters Post.

Ms. Zheviholi Swu

Advocate working currently with Human Rights Law Network, Nagaland Office.

Ms. Kanchan Sinha

She has graduated in Pharmacy in First Class from Department of Pharmacy, Jadavpur University, Kolkata in 1986. She has completed a course on Material Management from National Institute of Health & Family Welfare, New Delhi in 1989. She has been serving the Government of Tripura in various capacities such as Officer Incharge of Central Medical Store, Inspecting Officer (Drugs) under Health & Family Welfare Department etc.

Mr. Pradip Phanjaobam

Mr Phanjoubam did his graduation with Honours and then MA in English Literature from Hans Raj College of Delhi University. Was a former editor of widely circulated English daily, Imphal Free Press. Now a senior journalist based in Manipur.

Ms. Kenter Riba

Executive Editor of Arunachal daily, Eastern Sentinel. Riba is a post graduate Diploma in Journalism and Mass Communication and post-graduate in Sociology from University of Pune.

Ms. Satrupa Bhattacharjee

She is a lawyer based in Shillong, Meghalaya and works as an Advocate for Legal Rights Forum, Shillong.

Ms. Rinyui Chon

Credit Manager, Ukhrul District Women's Institute of Micro-Credit, Manipur which provides micro credit to poor and vulnerable women through various self-help groups in the district.

Ms. RK Tutusana

She is currently serving as the Additional Director of Manipur Police Training College and the Public Relations Officer of Manipur Police.

Ms Jubita Hazarimayum

Executive Director, Gender development Initiative, Convenor, Peace Core Team, Manipur.

Ms. Binalakshmi Nepram

Writer-activist who in 2004 co-founded India's first civil society organization which is working on conventional disarmament issues, namely the Control Arms Foundation of India. And in 2007, she launched the Manipuri Women Gun Survivor Network. She is also author of two books, "South Asia's Fractured Frontier: Armed Conflict, Narcotics and Small Arms Proliferation in India's Northeast" and "Meckley", a historical fiction based on the conflict in Manipur. A new edited book titled "India and the Arms Trade Treaty" was also launched in April 2009. Ms Nepram is the recipient of the Sean MacBride Peace Prize for 2010 and the CNN-Indian Broadcasting Network's Real Heroes Award for her work advancing women's welfare.

BACKGROUND PAPER ON WOMEN PEACE & SECURITY

Introduction

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to take part in the Government of his/her country. Achieving the goal of equal participation of women and men in decision-making will provide a balance that more accurately reflects the composition of society and

is needed in order to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning. Equality in political decision-making performs a leverage function without which it is highly unlikely that a real integration of the equality dimension in government policy-making is feasible. Women's equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account. Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspective at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved.

Global Status of Women

Women do more than 67% of the hours of work done in the world but earn only 10% of the world's income and own only 1% of the world's property. The value of unremunerated work was estimated at about \$16 billion, from which \$11 billion represents the invisible contribution of women. Women are paid 30-40% less than men for comparable work are. On an average 60-80% of the food in most developing countries is produced by women. Women hold between 10-20% managerial and administrative jobs. Women make up less than 5% of the world's heads of state. 70% of the 1.2 billion people living in poverty are female. 60 % of the 130 million children in the age group of 6-11 years, who do not go to school, are girls. Approximately 67% of the world's 875 million illiterate adults are women. 3 out of 5 women in Southern Asia and an estimated 50% of all women in Africa and in the Arab region are still illiterate. Women account for 50% of all people living with HIV/AIDS globally. In the year 2000, there were 80 million unwanted pregnancies, 20 million unsafe abortions, 5 lakhs maternal deaths, 99% of these cases were reported in developing countries.¹

Status of Women in India

The Constitution of India guarantees equality of sexes and in fact grants special favours to women. These can be found in three articles of the Constitution.

- Article 14 says that the government shall not deny to any person equality before law or the equal protection of the laws.
- Article 15 declares that government shall not discriminate against any citizen on the ground of sex. A special provision is made under Article 15 (3) which enables the State to make affirmative discriminations in favour of women.
- Article 16 guarantees that no citizen shall be discriminated against in matters of public employment on the grounds of sex.

Above all, all these are fundamental rights. Therefore, a woman can go to the court if one is subjected to any discrimination.

However, the following data paints a different picture altogether of women and equality in the Indian sphere.

Child Sex Ratio (0 - 6 years): The child sex ratio has dropped from 945 females per 1000 males in 1991 to 927 females per 1000 males in 2001.

¹Source: *HUMAN RIGHTS AND WOMEN IN INDIA: A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE*, Kamalaxi G. Tadasad, *Research Direction Journal*, ISSN No.2321-5488)

The United Nations Children's Fund, estimated that upto 50 million girls and women are 'missing' from India's population because of termination of the female fetus or high mortality of the girl child due to lack of proper care

Women as Workers: Female share of non-agricultural wage employment is only 17%. Participation of women in the workforce is only 13.9% in the urban sector and 29.9% in the rural sector.² Women's wage rates are, on an average only 75 % of men's wage rates and constitute only 25% of the family income. In no Indian State do women and men earn equal wages in agriculture.

Women occupy only 9% of parliamentary seats, less than 4% seats in High Courts and Supreme Court, less than 3% administrators and managers are women.

Women and Education: Close to 245 million Indian women lack the basic capability to read and write. Adult literacy rates for ages 15 and above for the year 2000 were female 46.4% against the male rate of 69%.

Women and Health: The average nutritional intake of women is 1400 calories daily. The necessary requirement is approximately 2200 calories. 38% of all HIV positive people in India are women yet only 25% of beds in AIDS care centers in India are occupied by them. 92% of women in India suffer from gynecological problems. 300 women die every day due to childbirth and pregnancy related causes.³

a. **Status of Women in Northeast India**

In northeast region, women enjoy greater mobility and visibility than women of other parts of the country. In Northeast India, there exists both patriarchal and matrilineal system. Even in the context of matrilineal society, example, Khasi-Jaintia and Garo societies, whose matrilineal practice is still very strong but yet practically it is the patriarchy that dominates. In the socio-economic spheres, a large majority of female workers are engaged in agriculture. They are seldom employed in industries and other business activities.

Status of Violence against Women

Violence in Armed Conflict Situation: In Manipur alone, 2014 recorded a total of 20,000 registered widows, with a majority attaining widowhood due to armed conflict situation. National Crime Records Bureau noted more than 17000 cases of violence against women in Northeast area alone for the year 2013-14. In January 2013, the Supreme Court appointed a three-member commission headed by Santosh Hegde, a retired Supreme Court judge, in response to a public interest litigation seeking investigation into 1,528 cases of alleged extrajudicial executions committed in the state of Manipur in northeast India between 1978 and 2010. But the report of the Committee, as well as the Justice Verma Committee of 2014, was not expressly mandated. Sexual violence also becomes a weapon of war in such circumstances. Rape in armed conflict situations most often happen during crackdowns, cordon-and-search operations. The rape and death of Thangjam Manorama in 2004 by the Armed Forces laid a glaring spotlight on the aspect of Sexual Violence in armed conflict going on in the region for decades. Tripura has the highest reported cases of violence against women in the country.

² http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/cty/cty_f_IND.html

³ Gender and women's health, publication by CHETNA, NGO

Trafficking of Women: According to sources, more than 300 women and children are trafficked cross-border in the state of Meghalaya alone. Over the past five years there has been a rise in reports of missing girls from the remote region of the eight states, an increase which authorities believe is due to trafficking. Police say at least 700 girls from the region have been reported missing over the last five years, 300 of whom disappeared in 2005 alone. But activists estimate that thousands of northeastern girls disappear every year—most of whom are not reported by families due to the stigma associated with being part of the sex trade. Police estimate that around 20 per cent of the girls in India's big city brothels come from the Northeast. At least a million Indian girls and women work in India's sex industry, which is estimated to be worth around Rs 400 billion annually, according to the UNODC. The rise in the number of girls disappearing from states like Assam, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh is partly due to tighter surveillance on India's northeastern border with Nepal, where most girls were being trafficked from before.

Women & HIV/AIDS: Although much of India has a low rate of infection, certain places have been more affected than others. HIV epidemics are more severe in far north-east than in the rest of the country. The highest estimated adult HIV prevalence is found in Manipur (0.78%), with Nagaland (0.66%) following close by.⁴ As of 2014, there have been 40,855 cases of HIV/AIDS in Manipur alone.⁵

Domestic Violence: About one-fifth of ever-married women in India are beaten or physically mistreated by their husbands and there are interstate variations too in the same. Manipur has the 3rd highest recorded cases of domestic violence in India while Sikkim has the highest suicide rate amongst women. Assam also leads in the cases pertaining to witch hunting of women and other discriminatory practices. In Meghalaya, a majority (29 percent) have been victims of domestic violence. Beating by persons other than the husband or in-laws constitutes a substantial proportion in most of the northeastern states with more than 15 percent recorded in Nagaland and other northeastern states⁶.

b. Inclusion of Women in Formal Peace Process

The Beijing Declaration of the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 was a special marker for the women's movement to awaken international community. After thousands of women lobbying for discussions and special resolutions on women and war, the international community as well as the UN has shown concern for the special needs of women during armed conflict and the multiple roles of women during and after armed conflict. Thereafter, the UN Security Council passed a special resolution to address women's roles in war and peace on 31st October, 2000 called Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1325⁷.

The average numbers of women participating in peace negotiations in official roles—as negotiators, mediators, signatories or witnesses—remain notably low. Data on the numbers of women in peace talks are scarce, as this information is not consistently tracked by any authority. a study undertaken in

⁴ <http://www.avert.org/india-hiv-aids-statistics.htm#sthash.JwR9Bonx.dpuf>

⁵ <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/40855-hiv-positive-cases-in-manipur/>

⁶ Domestic Violence in India: An Empirical Analysis, Harihar Sahoo and Manas Ranjan Pradhan

⁷Source: *Women War & Peace: Security Council Resolution*; Anuradha M. Chenoy, Sangat South Asia Publications

2008, which scanned 33 peace negotiations, found that only 4 per cent of participants—11 out of 280—were women, and that the average participation of women on government negotiating delegations was, at 7 per cent, higher than on the delegations of non-state armed groups. A reasonably representative sample of 31 major peace processes between 1992 and 2011 reveals that only 4 per cent of signatories, 2.4 per cent of chief mediators, 3.7 per cent of witnesses and 9 per cent of negotiators are women. Last year's negotiations in Oslo regarding the Philippines, with 33% of female signatories and 35% of women on delegations to reach the 2011 agreement, represent a stand-out high point without which the average number of women in the cases we have tracked drops to 3% of signatories and 7.5% of negotiators. (Source: UN Women).

Few of the reasons to this are ascribed to the following factors

- The number of women participants in formal peace process remains very low
- Even when women participate or include in formal peace negotiations, their role is limited to a formal presence without having the capacity, or mandate to contribute to setting or shaping the agenda of such negotiations
- Male negotiators may simply be unwilling to consider gender issues and women's concerns due to custom and traditions, as well as stereotypes that limit or narrowly define the role of women in public life and decision-making

Need of women in Peace building process:

- Women peace negotiators understand and articulate the implications of peace processes for women better than male negotiators
- Women are largely known to be responsible for nurturing positive cultural practices and offer non-violence to violence and strife
- Women, although less visible than men, have to be integrally involved in seeking solutions to issues intrinsic to building peace, and sustainable economic, environmental and political development
- Women's fullest potential can be realized and it is primarily the women who can usher in an era of peace in 21st century

c. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and other Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security

The blueprint for gender and peacekeeping work is rooted in Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) which was the first Resolution to address the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women. Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) stresses the importance of women's equal and full participation as active agents in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace-building and peacekeeping. It calls on member states to ensure women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and urges all actors to increase the participation of women and incorporate gender perspective in all areas of peace building. As a follow up to 1325, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1889 PDF Document which calls for further strengthening of women's participation in peace processes and the development of indicators to measure progress on Resolution 1325.

SCR 1325 affirms the important role women play in the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts and peace building. It asks that women be engaged in all peace building efforts. It also asks for the implementation of women's rights as human rights and to protect women and girls during and after conflicts. This calls on women to take their rightful place as peace builders and community leaders.

What does Resolution 1325 say?

- Increase representation & inclusion of women in decision-making bodies, peace processes, field operations, electoral systems, police and judiciary. For example, Nagaland is yet to have a woman as a Member of the Legislative Assembly.
- Mandatory prosecution and no impunity for offenders of sexual violence; special protection measures for women in conflict, like no use of force even when considered necessary for military objective, etc.
- Gender Sensitivity Training for security personnel engaged in conflicts.
- Respecting International Laws & needs of conflict affected women.
- Gender and rights of women be part of all consultations.

Recognizing the impact that sexual violence in conflict has on the maintenance of peace and security, the Security Council adopted **Resolution 1820** which explicitly links sexual violence as a tactic of war with women peace and security issues. Security Council Resolution 1820 reinforces Resolution 1325 and highlights that sexual violence in conflict constitutes a war crime and demands parties to armed conflict to immediately take appropriate measures to protect civilians from sexual violence, including training troops and enforcing disciplinary measures.

Resolution 1888, as a follow up to Resolution 1820, mandates that peacekeeping missions protect women and children from sexual violence during armed conflict, and requests that the Secretary-General appoint a special representative on sexual violence during armed conflict (Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict). Most recently Resolution 1960 was adopted which builds on and deepens the women, peace and security agenda on sexual violence.

Resolution 1889 was unanimously approved on October 5, 2009, and is a follow-up to UNSCR 1325. UNSCR 1889 emphasizes the participation of women in all phases of the peace process. Most important, it calls for monitoring and introduces accountability mechanisms UNSCR 1325 lacks. The resolution strongly encourages cooperation with civil society, particularly women's organizations.

Speeches of Speakers at the Women Peace Congregation

Binalakshmi Nepram, Founder, Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network

This meeting is indeed a historic event. A meeting of this kind has never been arranged in the past. For the first time women from across eight states of North East India from Sikkim to Tripura are congregating here today to discuss a common concern- to bring sustainable peace in this area which has seen more than sixty years of armed conflicts. This is an area which is yet to see peace although efforts are being made.



In our own home state, Manipur, alone around 20,000 people have died in the violence which has been happening for the last few decades. But we are here as women groups, Honorable Chief Minister and Honorable Minister and members on the dice, to seek solutions for peace because we are tired of the war, we are tired of this violence and we feel that women and men of the state, of the region and the country must work together. What we have also realized that in all conflicts, 90% casualties are always women and children and that is why women from all regions are gathered today to find solutions for this peace. We have worked for more than 10 years in Manipur. There are about 20,000 registered widows in our region. How do we give a livelihood after their husbands are killed? What hardships they would have faced after their children are killed? These are the reasons which made us set-up the Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network in 2004.

I was just a research scholar in JNU. I wanted to be a physicist but life took me where I am now, working for peace in Manipur now. So right now my main concern is how we collectively work with our government, with different friends around the world and with women leaders to achieve peace. Till today, in the Nagaland Legislative Assembly, not a single woman representative is there. In Manipur, we have three. The inception was due to United Nation's resolution passed in the year 2000 – United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. The resolution says women play an important role in prevention and resolution of conflicts. It asked women to be included as peace builders and community leaders play an important role in the implementation of women's rights in conflict situation. Till date, 17 peace talks have been conducted in North East and only one woman has participated in those peace talks.

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 not only points out on conflict resolution and peace in war prone regions but also emphasizes on increasing women representation and inclusion of women in decision making bodies, involvement of women in peace process, field operation, electoral system, police judiciary etc. In regions like ours any kind of violence by state, non-state or security forces, punishment should be given. We also asked for gender sensitive training for security personnel engaged in conflict and gender in rights of women to be a part of all government and political consultations. From last year we have started this work all across North East India to ensure how woman can be an important agent of change in bringing peace and development in our region.

In this NE region where with 45 million people, 272 beautiful ethnic tribes and communities, 50 thousand lives have been lost in sixty years of violence. We have 72 armed insurgent groups in this

region and we have more than 3 lakh armed forces personnel deployed in entire NE. The draconian AFSPA is still legally enforced in this region. In this situation women bear the brunt of escalating sexual violence, economic hurdles and stigmatization resulting in widowhood. Women from this region have been trafficked to other regions of the country as well where they face physical and psychological abuse.

For livelihood people from NE seek jobs in Delhi, Bangalore etc. working in shopping malls, spa & saloons where they are again discriminated owing to their racial differences, compounding the violence further. So these are the layers of violence we are seeing. As I said, what are the solutions? How do we work together to overcome such situations, this is what we are looking for. Last year, our team together with many other supportive organizations, we went to the 8 states, different states of NE India. We went to Sikkim, we went to Arunachal Pradesh, we went to Meghalaya, we went to Assam, and we went to Mizoram. All the states we covered and we did consultations with woman leaders from each of the NE states. And today we are deeply honored that the top women leaders, media personalities and women are here among us and a warm welcome to each one of them who are here.

We have got once again, I would call upon Ms. Pratibha Brahma from Assam from the Bodo land areas, please stand up. She is from Bodoland. We visited their camp last month and we were shocked to see the number of displaced people because of the violence.

We have Ms. Kenter Riba from Arunachal Pradesh, who is a consultant editor with Eastern Sentinel; we also have Satrupa from Meghalaya.

And we have four amazing women from Nagaland sent by the Naga Mothers' Association, can you please stand up?

And we are not counting woman leaders from Manipur, we have from Ukhrul, Eche Chon, we have from Bisnupur woman leaders Ima Momon is here and we have got Ima Rose Mangshi from Kuki woman community, we have Ima Sitara Begum. So we have different women community. Aunty Ruth Singson from Churachandpur is also here. But of the audience today is filled with women survivors. So we also extend a warm welcome to the women of this state who have endured through this violence to bring about a change.

So what are our demands? We have demands since the CM and Honorable Minister Hemochandra is here. We are very clear what we want.

Number 1, we are here because we believe women are agents of change, working with our men in our state, in our region, in our country and the world. Without women Manipur cannot develop, without women NE India cannot develop. This is very strong message which we will like to tell to everyone today in this gathering. So first, please include women in decision making process. If you have any consultations in the government look and try to incorporate a woman, who can be agents of change.

Number 2, more women candidates should be encouraged to be a part of the electoral processes in this state. Please include woman in any peace talk or peace processes because this is a deeply conflict area, you must include woman in the peace process. Woman should take part in economic decisions.

Our Ima Keithel is famous in the world. We have the world's famous women's market in Manipur. Many Imas' work very hard here. But what I learnt is that decisions are not taken here in this market, they are only selling things. So who are taking decisions in the Ima market?

Even in the economic processes women are increasing the economic growth of Manipur. Woman should be more proactive in social and council processes. Example, In Lai Harouba, there is not a single woman in the Lai Harouba Committee. Is this true? It is. Why? I think in Kuki Committee there is only one woman in Kuki decision making process. I think Tangkhul Naga, the Naga community can tell us more on this and of the Manipuri Muslim community too. So please include woman in any decision making forum. It is an important part.

Number 3: Even though it is true that gender sensitization of security personal is important, however those who are standing here, are they gender sensitive? Are they understanding the concerns when operating, when they go to arrest woman are there woman police or woman security personnel. And most importantly, in today's meeting we are going to formulate a NE regional plan on the lines of United Nation Security Council 1325 on all these we are speaking. According to me, we have our parents who gave birth to us, and then we have the government whom I consider our second parent and grandparents are the UN. We all have the same moon and sun, be it America or Manipur. We have only one moon for each one of us. So UN is not outside the premise of the structures of our community. Everything, the local, the regional, the national and the international, when we link these, we can bring the change that we want. So with these few words, we call upon the Honorable CM. We will ask the members of CAFI to honor our CM with mementos and after this we request the Honorable CM together with the women leaders and Honorable Minister also to light the lamp as a symbol of change that we will be starting from today's journey.

Ms Neha Naqvi, Project Coordinator, Welthungerhilfe



I will keep things in brief because the treasured space truly belongs to the incredible women many of you survivors and peacemakers who journeyed from all 8 NE states to be here today. I have the honor to address this historic and significant congregation through my involvement with empowering women for peace and development in South Asia. This is the project that speaks to WHH commitment to gender justice, autonomy and agency and to the European Union's generosity of support. Our project works towards generating a pool of community leaders and survivors of violence and conflict who actively build value for this. We seek to positively impact the lives of approximately 5,00,000 people from the NE of India, the Chittagong hill tracks of Bangladesh and Shan state of Myanmar. Our implementing partners give the action momentum and breathe life into the underlying principle that peace and development can be optimally achieved through active participation of women and youth.

CAFI, one of our three gifted partners is known for their commitment to galvanizing discussions on women, peace and security. Binalakshmi Nepram's resolve and single minded dedication coupled with the passion and tenacity and the members of CAFI has resulted in a presence that actively straddles local, national and international arenas of conflict transformation.

Because gender equality is a vital and cross cutting theme that strengthens credibility and deliver sustainability results anchoring the idea of equality at all levels is necessary and requires both courage and imagination. This is a room full of diverse and prominent people, grass root individuals and organized groups, youth, community leaders, academicians, researchers, journalist, policy makers and state authorities who have all come together to arrive at an inclusive understanding of the role of women in peace and development.

To borrow from Michael Rhode, hope is vital school of theater for community conflict and dialogue. We have the opportunity here to create a safe space from within which to explore the choices and abundance that dialogue can bring; to critically and viscerally analyze life situations and one's responses; to utilize different perspectives every individual brings as a tool of problem solving. The fact that we all are here today sitting at the same table seeking discussion, listening to one another with open minds and new found kinship and trust is a step forward in our ability to look at ourselves with collective compassion.

In collaboration, we pioneer new ways to address the dilemmas of intervention. We decode the structures of difficult conversations; we see wisdom in recognizing the critical role that ordinary citizen can play in helping resolve conflicts. Emotional intelligence applied to life's toughest moments can and does make difference in women in breaking a cyclical pattern of violence, marginalization and subordination is critical from a right space perspective. It is also a measure of the levels of ownership we collectively take for making gender justice an inherent part of peace building processes. Your presence here is evidence of the fact that we are decidedly on the path of constructive collaboration. With this I welcome warmly and I thank you for making this powerful and inclusive gathering everything it is. Thanks

Sri Okram Ibobi Singh, Honorable Chief Minister of Manipur



Miss Neha Naqvi, Project Coordinator, Welthungerhilfe. Binalakshmi Nepam, Founder Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network. Mr. Thoralf Stenvold, Counselor, Head of Political Affairs, Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi, India, ladies and gentlemen present here, I am extremely happy to be present in the first NE India Women Peace Congregation organized by CAFI in collaboration with MWGSN and NE India Women Initiative for Peace.

As you are all aware that Manipur is a small state located in the NE part of the country and full of rich natural beauty,cultural richness and ethnic diversity of different communities. Women serve as a backbone of the family as well as the society. It is also true that any violence or conflicts in the society, the first target, the first person section of the people who are affected by the violence are women and children.

Our state has experienced prolonged insurgency counter, insurgency which affected more particularly the woman folk, most in terms of losing their husband, father, son as well as economic activities. It may lead to physical assault and injury, humiliation, rape and murder to the woman themselves. It

disturbs their normal way of life. They are also the victim of domestic violence. The effort of the MWGSN and NE India Women Initiative for Peace are indeed praise worthy. I really appreciate the efforts put up by the renowned personalities to sensitize the government as well as all stakeholders in this issue while the government is taking all the possible measures to protect the rights and privilege of woman folk. This is not only in Manipur but in other part of the country as well, more particularly in the NE region. It is a welcome step that this organization is also taking measures and supporting the victims in terms of psychological and economical way to uphold the dignity in the society with the consultant effort of woman folks of our brave woman in influencing the families and public opinion to shut violence.

I am sure Manipur will regain the long lost trust, love, peace and harmony once again and enjoy the bountiful natural gifts bestowed to us by nature. I congratulate the organizers, the woman leaders and thinkers from all NE states and other part of the country. I assure that the state government will take the necessary steps to protect the woman and as well as extend assistance to the victims for their livelihood. I wish the first NE India Woman Peace Congregation all success.

Before I conclude whatever our daughter in his welcome speech even she has mentioned Binalakshmi Nepram --in the police and other paramilitary forces though it is not exactly reservation for women like in recruitment process a little higher level class 1 grade post in the Manipur Public Service commission. It is not like there is not concrete reservation for SC/ST/OBC/Woman. But the other lower level we are trying our level best for equal representation from the women candidates as what she suggested the proportionate in the judicial as well as electoral system but we are all aware that in the electoral process, at the lower level in the autonomous district level, Zila Parishad and Panchayat and even in the Municipal Corporation including small town there is reservation which is already provided by the constitution of India. There is reservation, not only equal representation but at the level of chairperson and in the Zila Parishad also.

We are always maintaining whatever the constitution provide us. Not only that, the state government will definitely take up measures to ensure representation of all the mothers and sisters in the system of administration so that whatever violence activities which happen in the state not in Manipur but in entire NE will definitely have to bring in peace and development. So I would like to appeal such an important rare and historical event. So I should mention this is a rare privilege and from state government also.

The government of India time and again we are always pressurizing the ASPFA as a constitutional law the excesses committed may be paramilitary forces or state forces. But the problem is you know better than us. But they say there already peace talk between government of India and NCSIM. Peace talk already continued there is cease agreement. No need for further extension of disturbed area act i.e. AFSPA. But government of India never agreed because there is conflict between may be NSCIM or NSCKM until complete normalcy is there. This is one example to say her in man and also they are not agreed, with great difficulty we have withdrawn the AFSPA in the 7 Assembly segment of Imphal Municipal area. But whatever there is one unfortunate incident, which is killed by Assam rifle our daughter Manorama Devi. In that the sentiments of people of Manipur are so high so we said to the government of India it is too much that should be given exemplary punishment which is harassing

to the women by using this instrument of AFSPA. Whatever come we may face the consequence. That's why we know the sentiments of Manipur that's why we have withdrawn AFSPA with great difficulty.

Let us work together how to bring peace. Many organizations always raise this issue, even in Delhi or in parliament. Other part of the country too has similar problem why is it not implemented or imposed, why is it imposed in NE specifically including J&K. The gun battling region and the demands made are against the integrity of Indian nation. This is what they replied. So NSCIM, 50% are from Manipur though there is agreement and peace talk the act is still present in Nagaland. The hidden motive or agenda is unknown of not allowing removal of AFSPA from NE region because Government of India never agrees to remove. Difference in culture or political is different matter but the specific concern is our regional issue. With all our concerned sister states we will work together to bring peace and this is my firm believe as I again appeal if peace is there AFSPA will definitely go. Therefore, in this prestigious forum I would appeal to let us work together and let us try to bring peace which will lead towards development.

Shri Irengbam Hemochandra, Honorable Minister, PHED, Labour and Employment, Government of Manipur



As somebody has already said that I came into the public domain very early. It was due to under some tragic circumstances (my own mother is with me). I lost my father at a plane crash. This is for the benefit of my friends who have come here for the first time. (You are looking absolutely dashing in your Sikkimise dress) I will sort of mix my speech with English and my own language because we have friends from across the states. The best thing of this meet is the participation of all Imas. And for Bina, we have known her as an active activist and

I am actually little scared of her and always wonder what will be her next step or what will she say. She has mentioned earlier that she avoids politicians; we politicians to avoid her because we are scared of her. But this should not happen; we should not avoid each other. There has to be some duck tailing down the line. If that happens, then things will go in a good direction.

Going back to time, I was barely a boy at that time. I had just finished my M.A; I was doing my Law and probably thought I would become an IAS officer. At that point of time, everybody had something in their mind of what they wanted to be in their life. I can see many of my friends in the hall today, Kavita is here and many other whom I have known for a long time. Bina wanted to be probably a physicist, someday who talks about long distance telescope and landing on Mars but ended as gun controller so that is what happens in life. But what is important I guess is to do things passionately and does it well, do it with sincerity whether it is the thankless job of being a politician and being harassed by everybody. It's grueling to be a politician.

You will not believe how a politician's life is. Our day starts very early (I get up very early, that has been a habit with me for a long time). We sometimes meet people at 5 in the morning. There is no timing for us; we meet anybody at any point of time. I am not European Counselor, you know, you have your program schedule for a year that you will decide a day at Manipur and then the next day at

Tripura. In the west, you decide a year ahead, we don't even have that luxury. Anything can happen here. I was very happy with the amount of time Honorable CM spent today and he spoke from his heart.

As I said, this meeting started very well. I started carrying this gadget with me. It regulates my time. I keep this gadget so that I can stop in time and at the same time not miss the point. CM spoke about 16 minutes. Neha was very brief yet very nicely put her thoughts. So probably I will not also speak for too long because I want to listen to all of you. I tell you, the theme of today's outreach or whatever you may say, this meeting is very important. It's about women. Let's discuss on this, right from the time of civilization or Dharmashastra, we can even point out from Mahabharata (Eche Bimola is also here, she is my mentor), the role of Draupadi, Kunti or Gandhari and from the modern times John of Arc's Helen Keller or Mother Theresa and from Manipur Ngankhailou, Linthoigambi or Maharani Kumodini. Even in political field women has their presence such as Israel's Golda Meir, Indian's Indira Gandhi, UK's Margaret Thatcher. Women has shaped in every walk of life right from the kingship era till today but if I give even the smallest example when a child's success is acknowledged it is always the father who is credited. Everyone forgets a mother's effort. Often women are always the unsung heroes' or heroines. They are not heard. Becoming a politician is a destiny but I remember when I got 3rd position in merit scholarship examination, it was my father who was praised by everyone. But it was my mother who had sat with me and taught the mathematics sums for the examination. So, in my own experience as well, for every success in my career graph, my father was credited and congratulated.

As I mentioned earlier, it's been always the women who suffer and they continue to suffer, let it be at the time of war or natural calamity. But I will comment on good things as well as things which are not happening in right way. Sometimes, women are enemies of woman. They should be united. We should stop blaming on one another. Listen to your inner voice and let's begin the process of change. Thank you very much.

But most importantly, it's not the first one but the next event which is most important and therefore there is a long way to go hopefully together with their company and EU and hopefully with the commitment that you put in this, enthusiasm and always keep in mind that the way is the correct one. This the same way that many processes have started and been completed successfully or at least have made a breakthrough. So, once again thank you and all the best wishes and our support to continue forward. The importance is to build a momentum in order to ensure that in long term women's inputs are included in the different societal processes that you have mentioned.

Mr. Thoralf Stenvold, Counselor, Head of Political Affairs, Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi, India

Honorable women from Manipur and entire NE. Congratulations on this historic moment, Honorable Ministers fellow participants thank you for being here, doing the right thing to lend support to this incredible endeavor for peace and last but not least my friend Binalakshmi. Words cannot begin to express and explain my gratitude. I come from a country, as Bina was explaining, that has for better



part of last century put gender equality and woman empowerment at the top of political agenda at home, and increasingly for the past two decades also internationally.

As Bina pointed out we are actively involved in negotiating Security Council resolution 1325 and late 90's and 2000 it was adopted. I was fortunate enough to work at our mission in New York at United Nations for 2008-2012, immediately before I arrived in India. That was during the 10 year anniversary celebration of Security Council Resolution 1325. I wrote the speech to Ministry of Defense Education and in that speech highlighted that there cannot be ever sustainable peace without the full and equal participation of woman in peace processes. In fact sustainable development, social justice and growth are impossible without giving women the full and fair share of all relevant forum and situations. This is not only a statement of a vision or an ambition this is an empirical fact.

No country has achieved this in forth but some countries have achieved a conclusive to this goal than the – I have to refer to a very interesting loach conversation I had in New York when I was appointed to this job in Delhi. The Deputy Executive Director of United Nation Agency for Woman Survivor and Gender Equality, Lakshmi Puri of India, invited me for lunch to explain to me little about India because I had never been to India in my life. So I asked her “Please Lakshmi, could you please give me some advice, give me one single piece of advice” and she said “Thoralf, please be humble because you the Norwegians, Scandinavians are seemed to be missionaries of our time”. We tend to travel around the world to lecture others on how to do things. That is never been my intention and it's absolutely not my intention. I have come here with excitement to India and particularly to Manipur, the first time ever to North East. I am here to learn. I am extremely impressed by the work of Binalakshmi and her colleagues and by all of you who have traveled so far to come here to exchange experiences and best practices and to inspire each other for a better India and a better NE.

I will close by referring to Norwegian policy dispute. We have our own national action plan. The first was adopted in 2006, the second few years later and the very last provision was made just a few months ago and I have a copy over here- The Norway's National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security 2015-2018. Fundamental to this action plan are the following three pillars:

- Full participation on equal terms of women and peace processes and peace negotiations. We should involve them in international operations.
- Women in peace building processes in which Norway are involved will increase woman's economic situation, freedom of action and influence.
- And thirdly, we will include in our humanitarian response to crisis we will safeguard the rights of both women and men and address their needs and progresses.

As important as giving woman the access and power, is the involvement of man in these endeavors because despite as much as we will like reality to be different the fact is that man still maintain and hold post, position and power both in government and business and some would say even in family,

although we all know that the backbone of the family and also the backbone to the society are women. As I said in China, by the way my first diplomatic post was in Beijing so I feel rather I am in the neighborhood right now, in China they have a saying going, “Women carry half of the sky”. Coming from Norway, I would say it is more than that. I work in a family where my mother’s generation fought hard to get access to all relevant positions in society and they have, to a great extent succeeded but more importantly, they have succeeded, I think, in implanting in their children and their children’s including men and voice that this is something that we should not take for granted. We have to work hard every single day. I grew up in a family where gender equality was given that it should not take for granted. I wish you all best of luck today and more importantly in your very important condition to promote a national action plan for women, peace and security in India and for the entire women of the North East.

Prof Ksh. Bimola, Former Professor, Political Science Department, Manipur University

Good Afternoon Respected women of different regions representing NE India and different parts of Manipur on the dice. Dr. L Ibetombi, Chairperson Manipur State Woman Commission, Ichema Ibemhan, delegates coming from different parts of Manipur and from different parts of NE India and our respectable diplomat coming from Norway, media persons, print & electronic. Before starting the session I would like to thank the organizer of this congregation of woman mainly Ms. Binalakshmi Neptram for giving me an opportunity to associate myself with this historic session of woman from all over North Eastern states. Now we are late by few minutes and there are as many as eight papers to be presented in this session so let us start without wasting time. I may not read out the names of the person along with the title of the papers, it will take time so I would like to request the first presenter, Ms Jubita Hanjarimayum.

Ms Jubita Hazarimayum, Convener, Peace Core Team, Manipur



I will talk about the UNSCR 1325 so that in the follow up discussion, we will focus on UNSCR 1325 and about the situation of Manipur and NE. I will be explaining few things on UNSCR and mainly on today’s congregation theme. I suppose some of the people present here must have already attended trainings on UNSCR 1325 but since we are going to lay down an action plan at the end of today’s discussion, on the interest of those who are unaware of UNSCR 1325, I will brief on it. The importance and role of women in decision making forums, peace and development

in NE is the theme for today’s meet. Why women peace and security is important, why we are bringing women’s issue? Women and children are disproportionately affected by armed conflict, yet they are often significantly under-represented in formal conflict prevention, resolution and peace building processes. In order to uphold and protect women’s right, encourage their participation and recognition in critical work, surrounding, conflict prevention, resolution and ensure peace sustainability.

The inclusion of women's different life experiences, perspective, priorities and participation in issues of security, peace and development. I will just brief about UNSCR 1325, it was adopted on 31st October 2000 by the UN Security Council, preceded by numerous resolutions, treaties, conventions, statements and reports. Part of larger gender equality framework including: the convention on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, Beijing declaration and platform for action. The implication of UNSCR 1325 is that it recognizes that men and women experience security differently and that to build sustainable peace, women need to be fully involved. In the previous resolutions, the implication on women equality was not highlighted as it is in UNSCR 1325. It talks about protection, peace process, conflict prevention, participation and sexual & gender based violence.

Ibetombi, Chairperson, Manipur state Women Commission

This is the first occasion we are here together and we may presume to deliver the long awaited message that when the AFSPA has to go. That is the dream and desire of all of us here. We have fought and Ma'am Binalakshmi have put the real fact on the fighting spirit today and we may presume that we have won the battle and AFSPA will go with the initiative of woman from NE and we have heard voice in the congregation our most honored CM of Manipur has even given his opinion that we are the one who is going to remove AFSPA.

We are going to peace in Manipur, peace in the NE of India and peace in so many parts of the world joining together, working together hand in hand. Our dream will come true but it depends on all of us. We just cannot wait for the armed forces and the administration only to bring our dreams true we are here together in this great combination and stand together, will work together hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder, our youngster, seniors and juniors even the children will learn the peace formula and will listen to each other work together and transform to real action. Well, there will be some people who don't want to do that because of the phobia, their fear of what may happen and fear doesn't bring all things true. When we are so must scared many better things may also come when we work together in lighter way that we achieve our dream. So let us promise that following this congregation taking lesson from that we work for peace restlessly and we will be successful in bringing peace.

I want to repeat one thing that there has been better peace in the states from where AFSPA act has been removed on trial in spite of objections from many headquarters and all sectors. We are so lucky, so many of our comrades coming from all the parts of NE and other part of states of the country and world. I may share one experience, when I was in Thailand the armed forces search houses in the night there was a line 'No search in the night'. It was preserved and there was no search in the night and dreaming is one thing and bringing into action is something which must be done. So let us promise that we will work restlessly hand in hand together following this wonderful congregation that we will try our best to bring peace to avoid violence and to remove killing all this violence against human, women, children lets us fight against torture and violence and let us bring peace and no torture let it be a success story.

Ms. Kanchan Sinha, Drugs Control Organization, Government of Tripura



Respected Chairperson of the session, Oja Bimola, distinguished guest and all the women present here. Tripura is peaceful compared to Nagaland or Manipur. Today's my topic is '**Status of women and importance of role in decision making in Tripura**'. Tripura is a small and a hilly state situation in the NE, Surrounded by Bangladesh in three sides. Tripura was formerly a princely state that had a long tribal kings stretching back to antiquity. There are legends which speak of the existence of Tripura as a political entity from the days of epic of Mahabharata. Many scholars explain---. Tripura is the third smallest state in the country. It covers 10492 square km with density of 350 populations per sq km. Assam and Mizoram are the only two states which adjoins to the mother India.

According to 2011 census, the state had 36.71 residents constituting 0.3% of the country's population. While the indigenous population amounted to 31%, the sex ratio of the state is 961 females per 1000 males higher than national average 940. The literacy rate in 2011 was 87.75%, higher than the national average 74.04% and third best among all states. Tripura is the homeland of different tribes' altogether there are 19 tribes in the state which could be divided into major groups, origins and migrants. The Tripura speaking people are the majority among the 19 tribes and many sub-tribes and the Bengali population from the ethnic linguistic in the state. Tripura being a tiny state, it has all form of migration. The cultural sphere of Tripura involves an extensive range of multi-dimensional nature. The fundamental base of the society was its tribal culture and beliefs. Cultures of Manipuri and Bengali are followed side by side. Hence, Tripura always presents a multiple cultural of her own and social structure of Tripura demonstrates a hormonal existence of many tribal and non - tribal communities.

Thus, one finds the element of culture of different states of people each unique in its own way and in the process a composite culture is impressed the different strengths of faith. Almost all the tribal society has their own customary laws, rituals, and cultures but due to long co-existence of the association between two communities means tribal and other communities became much cordial and equally receptive to each other's need. Matrimonial relatives developed between two communities along with the Bengali dowry system penetrated in the tribal society. In today's world a personal status is mostly governed by his/her income position which includes property, other asset, employment, occupation and labor. In Tripura the female work participation rate is 23.57% lagging behind in respect of national average 25.5%. It is true that most of the work done by women is excluded from the purview of economic activity. In our society, women employment issues are not paid adequate attention like men and in most cases women fail to explore their potential.

The introduction of projects like Swarnjayanti Gramin Rojgar Yojana helps to empower the women community creating small rojgar means entrepreneur and large number of women are benefitted. As this Yojana is successfully launched in Tripura and 40% reservation is made under this project. For

woman it accelerates female participation in rural areas. The women of Tripura particularly tribal woman generally habituated with group leader are doing excellent in organizing and operating SHG but more easy credit market for their product and other related assistance may act an agent to change their life to a great extent. In 1961 the female literacy rate of Tripura was 10.19% which increased rapidly and reached to 83.15% in 2011 which is quite good as compared to national average 65.46%. But unfortunately, the practice of branding women as witches and torturing them still continues in remote, rural and tribal areas in Tripura.

Very recently, a 55 year old tribal woman, a mother of three children, was killed by her neighbors for elegantly practicing witch craft. In the last three years, more than 50 women have been tortured and beaten on suspicion of witch craft or black magic in Tripura. In the composition of crime against woman, the theory is that 'cruelty at home'. Domestic violence includes dowry tortures and other tortures, dowry death and abetment to suicide. In the last six month's record in tribal state, 15.83% of total crime against women is dowry related torture and 1.8% is dowry death and 2.2% is murder in Tripura. It is also true that a large section of crime against women goes unreported due to social stigma, distrust in legal mechanism and fear of isolation. At the recorded data agent indicator saw an increased in violence against women to assist their status urgent. The National Crime Records Bodo 2013 report shows that the rate of crime committed against women in Tripura is 89.75% which is very high much higher than Indian average 50.86%. Tripura rank second to Assam in entire country. So in short, the status of Tripura at the sex ratio more than national average 961 in Tripura and in India 940, female literacy more than national average Tripura 83.19% and India 65.46%, girls enrolment in school is more than national average, work participation ranking middle group among state 20-30%, crime against woman Tripura rank second in the country, political participation of woman, representation in legislative 8.33%. We have only 8 MLAs out of 60 and in Lok Sabha that is men and in three tier Panchayati Raj System and Municipality, Nagar Palika, Corporation and in autonomous District Council 33% reservation for woman is provided. And land allotment is done only in the name of men.

Women play bigger economic social role in tribal society. Tribal women suffer most with children a rough ignore protest for this male oriented. Few tribes follow hindu rules, few are Christian and few are customary law but there is no qualified customary law exist. Few crimes against women in society under the influence of larger community are dowry, rape, bitch hunting and high drop outs, though it is comparatively peaceful now and the important point is displacement. It acts as an agent to lower the status of women by causing loss of living and earning uproot people from natural habitat that makes men less and women more active to earn living. Most crime against women like trafficking and transportation of woman as domestic labor is loss of status. So every woman of the society should realize about self-reliance, self-respect and dignity and upbringing of women. Before concluding I pray for the entire woman, for the welfare of the woman.

Presenting her paper Ms. Pratibha Brahma, member of North East Research & Social Work Networking (NERSWN), Bodoland, Assam, mentioned about insurgency problems and said we should all remember that emancipation of women should occupy an important place in the scheme for social reforms undertaken in our society. Our Indian Constitution ensures a place of dignity and honour for all women. Further she stated that the atrocities perpetrated against women are a slur on the fair name of humanity and we should all raise our voices collectively and act earnestly in eradicating these social evils and bring about radical changes in social behavior towards women in our respective societies and for achievement in this noble venture, both men and women will have to pursue the above stated goals with utmost sincerity and honesty, so that in days to come, the human progress reaches to its ultimate height.



Ms. Subhra Hanjabam Devi, Proprietor, Meira Foods on Economic Empowerment of Vulnerable and Marginalized Women Case of Meira Foods.



I won't take much time and will share in short what we are doing. When we talk about economic empowerment is one of the process tries to be incorporated. Our work is to train women on the schemes. I work in handicrafts and handloom sector. And many friends of us know how I work with NGO for the last 20 years. Now I have left everything and people know me as pickle maker. We have started a pickle unit and now this is known as Meira foods. I did not have anything in my hand and nobody was there to support me and no space was available for the work. So I started work from my kitchen

with 100 rupees. I asked women to go and buy some gooseberries. They came back with gooseberries and we sold that out. Now I have around 30 workers who are working directly/indirectly with me. There are many women groups whom I am supporting in selling their products, marketing their products. It is a collective effort of all the women because until you go together, you cannot win. Meira is a leader and I have given the name as Meira foods because of women leaders. They have led to bring peace in the state and in this process Meira will definitely bring a change. That is what I wanted to share with you all.

Anoushka, Student at Taktse international School, Sikkim; on The Importance and Role of Women in Decision Making Forums and Space in Sikkim:

Hello everybody I am Anoushka Shasta, a Newari in other words a hybrid of Nepali also a recent high school Graduate at Taktse International School. After having listened to all your soul shattering stories, it has come to our awareness that we live in a so peace full state



and we are fortunate to come from a place like. For us, arms, ammunitions means a knife in my mother's hand to cut vegetables for dinner or a hammer in my dad's to fix a nail on the wall. So Ms. Prameela is going to share a story with us for her personal life that can act as a case study.

What is a shadow? It's simple physics. When an opaque object stands in the way of light, a shadow is formed. Shadows do not have a life of their own. They depend on the existence of light and an opaque object. Shadows exist only when they do. Shadows perish in the attempt of individuality. How long we exist only as shadows? It signifies both men and men are needed equally. She quoted that "what is the Shadow it is simple in physics when an opaque object stands in the way of light a shadow is formed. A shadow does not have a light of their own they depends on the existence of the light and an opaque of the object. Shadow is exist when only they do shadow appears at the attempt of the individuality. How long will exist only a shadow." It signifies both men and men are needed equally.

Ms. Prameela Gurung, Teacher at Taktse international School, Sikkim; on the Importance and Role of Women in Decision Making Forums and Space in Sikkim



Good afternoon everyone I am Prameela Gurung, again a name meaning a hybrid in my own language. My parents belong to two different ethnic groups. As we landed in Manipur many people having assumptions about our age and our profession now she made cleared that I am a six grade teacher, I am proud to be a teacher but I would like to share like influential people with you all we surely take your bright in our states in a historical event like this.

Coming from Sikkim where people have been through so much survived but not just survive live to be the voice of changes is truly inspiring. However we all are victims and I made that I am a victim of patriarchal society. My mother, a pure Sikkimese, got married to a non Sikkimese and hence lost all the rights that she would have been, otherwise, entitled to. As a result I don't enjoy the privileges that my friends, whom I grew up with, do let's forget about the privileges. I am looked upon as an outsider although my father has been serving the Govt. of Sikkim selflessly for the past 35 years. Well, I was supposed to speak on the importance and role of women in decision making forums and space in Sikkim however I want to be recognized as a Sikkimese first. So I take this opportunity to raise a question on behalf of thousands of people like me in Sikkim. Only being born in Sikkim is not the only way to gain access to entitled rights.

Professor Lalneihzovi, Head of Department, Public Administration, Mizoram University, Mizoram on The Importance and Role of Women in Decision Making Forums and Space in Mizoram; Mizoram Peace Accord and the participation of Women in Peace Process



Good afternoon to all. It is my privilege to be in the position to present some of experiences and points in this evening. I am very happy that we are in this gathering about the women issues. So as a teacher in the University social welfare is also one the compulsory papers it has got important gender issues also. May be because of that I have maximum publication on gender issues so I have reached the status of women in Northeast states that there are fourteen paper contributors from Manipur and also from Nagaland, Sikkim. So that is the way how she got the well-known paper contributors from Northeast states.

If we do not give some information about such gender issues and status of women to the public because they cannot read and write also so there is worth for publications on such gender issues. So someone cannot read and pronounce my name they should ask two or three times to pronounce it correctly. Even though we are developed in various ways and Mizoram is one of the most literate states in India. We could not do it if we are in the third position and the reason is that women especially living in the southern part of Mizoram that is call like autonomous district council the literacy rate of women are very low because of that we could not make first position that is situation of Mizoram of course the female literacy rate is lower than the male literacy rate. Then in the social life women never take part I should say especially in the critical decision making, women do not have voice. We have young Mizo association this women never have higher position. Mizoram is 99% Christian population so in churches women don't have any higher position and they don't have a voice. So this is the position of women in our state. They don't have any participation in major that is how the status of women in our state.

When it comes to the political aspects the importance role of women in decision making and space in social life and their participation in the peace process is low I have started collecting the material. Even though women are developed in my states women are not participated in the political arena. Presently we have three autonomous district councils and in some parts of the Mizoram and there is no reservation seats. Mizoram attained union territory hood in 1970. Finally we have one women MLA out of forty members. So this the position now and we have introduced Municipality act and implemented also. Actually we all joining hands can fight for the women folk and for the people of the Northeast. Thank you.

Mr Rupachandra, Editor Impact TV, Imphal, Manipur

Good evening this is a very powerful women peace congregation. I think this whole issue of gender equality and peace though we have been talking and discussing about it, it does not get sunk it. And there is no proper discourse even in the media. So There is efforts from interested quarters to push through gender equality women's role for the equal society but these are all remain kind of leave services.



Even in the Media also there are so many things to do on gender equality. There are some major issues like Manorama's issue that could have been brought major changes in us like how we treat our women. During the case of Manorama we could

have changed the policies but unfortunately it could not happen. Gender equality is very important in shaping the role of society. We should have more such peace congregation and make them understand the gender equality.

Ms. Valley Rose, Editor Aza Daily, Manipur, Importance of Women's Participation in Peace Process of Manipur: Case of Tangkhul Women's Union



I am very grateful to the organizers of this conference. Before I go to the topic given to me I would like to mention few things about my past. First of all I am a victim of armed conflict. I have lived my life under this arm conflict and Under the AFSPA act. When I was just about 11 years old my village was attacked by the Indian security Forces from three places direction with bombs and guns.

And luckily by the grace of god I am a survivor of that attack. And Today, I am happy that I am alive though I had lived all my life as a refugee in my own land because we could not go back to our native place. So all my life I had live and grown up as a refugee in my own land. With that background what I am supposed to say is that Importance of Women's Participation in Peace Process of Manipur: Case of Tangkhul Women's Union that is what I am going to brief you. Because of the time limit I won't be able to in detail but I will try brief regarding all the cases that is taking place in Manipur. I just would like to remind you that even the Chief Minister mentioned that women are the backbone of our home, family and society. And when we are the backbone of the homes and societies and in the peace process whatever may be the problem and conflict facing women need to be there because we are the backbone.

Importance of women has been mentioned by each and every speaker today, I would like to highlights about the Tangkhul women, we have one apex body called Tangkhul Sanao Long means Tangkhul women's league or Union. This union was formed after tragic incident where a young girl her name was also Rose she was in her teen age and it happened when all the hill areas of Manipur especially hills of Naga inhabited areas where the combing operation was conducted by the Indian security Forces. During such combing operation this young girl was gang raped by two or three of Indian security officers. The next day she could not bear the brunt of incidence and she took her life by herself. After the dead of this girl the incidence spread to the other villages some intellectual ladies visited to the mourning family and they console them and came to the district head quarter Ukhul. They started discussing that we need to have a common platform for all the women where we can discuss women's issues and fight for them and this is how the Union was formed in the year 1974. Since then the each and every Tangkhul women irrespective of boundaries became the member of this Union.

Like we have started working for the rights of the women in every situation. As we know that our area because of the implementation of the AFSPA in the Naga area first before implemented here in

the valley area. The Nagas were suffering so much that is how I was also the victim of that. Because of these things Tangkhul women are coming out to fight against this injustice. We protests, held rallies and fight with Indian Forces and with Government authorities too. But despite the demand for justice we continue to suffer a lot in the hands of Indian Forces and in the hands of other perpetrators, in the hands of own customary laws. Village authority is the highest authority where all the decisions are being taken place. So women have no place in that authority.

Women also not represented in the regional level authority as well as to the apex body that is called as Tangkhul Naga Law. So we are deprived in representation of all the decision making bodies. We are used as work force in terms of representation which is officially never recognized. Though, all the men folk recognized the women's contribution here and there in the time of critical situation. Women have been taking positive role to bring down the conflicts to resolve the issue but officially we are not recognized by the customary laws. Late Ms. Hangmila Seja was the first elected women in the state of Manipur. But after that no woman has been elected yet. Just to cut my speech I would like to mention that Tangkhul women as well as most of the tribal women are bound by the customary laws till today with a great extent which is really hampering to the progress of our society. Thank you.

Ms Rose Mangshi, President of Kuki Women Union, Manipur

Peace is a something very important for the survival of Human Being in this present century. We cannot think of civilization development progress without peace, peace is one among the basic needs of the people in the society as a matter of fact peace brings happiness in the family, in the society, in the worship and every aspect of our life. To build peace at the global level, we need to bring peace right from the grass root level, the smallest social unit of the society is family and it should never be neglected; conflict may rise from one person which may even affect the world at last.



For example when Kashmir is in trouble the whole nation cannot be in peace likewise when hill area in Manipur is in trouble say among the Tribe's Manipur State cannot be in Peace therefore the principal of live and let live can bring peace in our land. If you want prosperity we must love and admire this, in the absence of perfect peace our society can never reach its goal and development of progress. In fact peace has a great room in every community and everyone should be aware of it. Every individual, every organization, every NGO, every non NGO has a great role to play in peace building.

Why women play a great role in peace building a question raise? The right answer is women can play a great role because women are soft, kind hearted by nature, women are peace loving people, they poses the art of convincing other people very skillfully, they are talented and peace loving, women have a specific weapon called tolerance and they can convince aggressive people.

Importance of women of different ethnic group of community so here I like to say that only one community cannot bring peace, one person or one community can never bring peace because we need joint hands. For example KUKI women cannot alone bring peace so the KUKI women have to join hand with the NAGA mothers. I am giving here an example and it is a concrete example. During the ethnic crisis between Naga's and Kuki's in 1993, the Kuki women union and The Naga women union came together and discussed that what to be done in order to bring peace among the two tribes in Manipur. It should always be remembered that only one community cannot do alone. Now the eight North Eastern states of India, we should all come together if we really want that there should a peace in North Easter region of India. So we women are responsible to bring peace in north east as well as whole nation of India therefore I appeal to all the women leaders who are gathering here today in this peace congregation and lets lake decision that we should all joint hands and work together.

Ms Kenter Riba, Consulting Editor, Eastern Sentinel

Since I am from Arunachal Pradesh and of course I don't have first-hand encounter of what conflict is because we live relatively in a peaceful zone. I have been given the honor to present the topic "the Importance and Role of women in Decision Making forum and Space in Arunachal Pradesh". Since I am a journalist, I am an editor of local daily out so I will try to give journalistic perspectives to the issue. Although, I am not involved in any association or forum for that matter but I would like to speak something on the Importance and the role of women in decision making in Arunachal Pradesh. Of course like a speaker of just ahead of me had just said that in traditional village council there is no space for women, same situation is in Arunachal. It is the male members who will decide a women's fate, if women are disagree then they can raise their opinion. But there is very little chance to influence a decision but having said that I think I would take a different view on that women should introspect and see why they have not been able to make any significant room for themselves or achievement. I would just like to share a small example of 2014 election. It was recorded that women outnumbered men in casting votes in Arunachal.



But you would be surprise to know that out of the 60 members in the assembly we have only 2 women representative out of the 7 who were contesting in the field and the reason behind this is, of course you will not find in this in the record but this is fact that women voters were not keen on voting for women representative. So it is not fair to blame the patriarchal society all the time. I feel that why such a scenario happens because of women voters, women have been active in politics for quite some time and Arunachal is one of the first states of the north east who has implemented the 33% reservation for women in Panchayati raj and this has been going on since 2008. And that was the first time that women were given 33% reservation and what we had been noticed as journalist that many contestants were elected just because of reservation but in actual all decisions are being taken by their husband or other male family members.

Women have become just a rubber stamp; they are not making any significant decision in the general outcome for the women as well not taking any decision. So this has led to a lot of negative short of image for women leaders. So what I am trying to say here is that women who have ever a chance to be in a forum or in a position through which they can influence, I think they should really avail that and make a mark for themselves so that women voters will have more infirmity. So this is what I am saying because when Panchayat raj reservation percentage was introduced in 2008. Many women candidates came into the field but they had less interest in this because of the male members who were there. We have seen by ourselves that they did not take any real decision because of the male member who will take decision all the time. At the same time there are women leaders who really work hard and take leadership role for the welfare of the society. Thank you.

Ms Lourembam Nganbi, President, Apunba Nupi Lup (ANUL), Meira Paibi Leader, Bishnupur District, Manipur.



group to prevent youth from the use of drugs.

“First of all I respect all the dignitaries and respected persons in this room. My point or theme is Meira Paibi of Manipur and Socio Political Involvement for Peace and Conflict Resolution. We have over two thousand years of history in Manipur and we are all working from that time till now. So Meira Paibi is the only group in the world as well as since its origin till now more than two thousand years there is a huge place for the women Meira Paibi. But due to the lack of education and globalization could not attend higher level decision making process but we are taking very important role in the status of Manipur. Initially Meira Paibi was only to prevent drugs. In 1970, Ema Chaobi and her group formed a

We women have been working really hard for the betterment of the society before 1970. In 1939 women group took a very important role to protect safe and male from British rule. In 1980, AFSPA was introduced in Manipur due to this act many people were killed and put in jail without any justice. Because of the unbearable torture of this act, around 1980's Meira Paibi group started a campaign bearing torch in our hands to protect and seek justice for our children, husband from such act. There is not a single work which is not covered by Meira Paibi, most of the issues and problems done by Meira Paibi because Manipur Government does not think and work for the betterment of the people and society. As Meira Paibi wants justice so it really fights for injustices like corruption in Manipur and also to protect people. Meira Paibi group are taking great efforts to repeal AFSPA. Meira Paibi is a collective women's movement fighting for injustice. Since 1980, Meira Paibi has been working really hard to fight against this injustice. Meira Paibi are playing very important role to protect integrity along with my given topic is Socio Political Involvement for Peace and Conflict Resolution.

If I look into the socio-political involvement of Meira Paibi, it comes into the matter of ecology and human rights. Then ecology comes into the relationship between the human beings and animals around. When it comes into the human rights we need to look into the matter of are we accessing our entitled human rights? Due to the failure of Manipur Government policies, crime against women has increased to a larger extent. Now due to the lack of water supply in JNIMS surgery for many patients is on hold. It happens due to the lack of proper irrigation facilities in which Government is not taken any initiative and waiting for Indian Government response. And the government of India does not do anything except collecting tax. I think these Meira Paibi groups who are really want to protect our rights and integrity do not involve in politics.

In Manipur there are many unreported victims of fake encounter and raped victims and all these issues I do not want to mention here. Everybody knows about Meira Paibi work both in hilly and valley areas without keeping any dividing lines between them. Recently we are demanding for Inner line Permit System in our state. But government is not making any law to protect our indigenous people. In order to challenge such issues against the government, we Meira Paibi group are trying really hard to protect indigenous people by creating their own theme. Today bill is passed in our assembly must have heard by the outsiders also and even Manipuri people through newspaper. Only five points is submitted by our Group to include in the bill but none of the points was included in the bill. So passed bill was to save non-Manipuri as well as registration system for the non-Manipuri. Many expert from Manipur called Manipuri old political party submitted points but Government does not *listen* to experts, old political parties and JCILP etc.

For socio-political involvement Meira Paibi dedicated our heart and soul as the politics is practicing under the influence of the Indian government. Meira Paibi cannot interfere at the moment. We do not take any chance by searching a really nice people to bring peace and conflict resolution but lastly I want to say is that if we think to take such chance, then women need to educate and possess knowledge as well as need to empower women. Until and unless there is equal participation in decision making process and respect each other there will not be peace and development in the state. So lets us all work hard together to include women in the higher level of decision making process by saying this I would like to shorten my speech.”

Sitara Begum, the Importance and Role of Muslim Women in Decision Making and Peace Process Forums in Manipur by Muslim Women Leader



Myself Sitara Begum, President of all Manipur Muslim organizations, I will truly speak about the role of Muslim women in solving issues and crimes happen in Manipur. Among the Muslim community, there are Meira Paibi women, whose main role is peacemaking and decision making. We are taking such role in order to bring peace in the state. Meira Paibi held rallies for peace building process but our efforts were in vain and excluded from the decision makings process. This leads to the failure of our work leading to impasse. This is why people in the

Northeast are still suffering.

Nevertheless the good thing is that today all the people from Northeast are united as brothers and sisters; I strongly believe that if we go together we definitely will bring desired changes in the right way. We all are working collectively for decision making and development. If we don't work collectively we will not get success and there will be many problems. Meira Paibis role is very important but whenever any crime happens Government does not take any initiative or any action. If today's meeting is right platform then there will be a chance to solve certain issues which are happening in the Northeast states. We need to go in a collective way to bring peace so lets us all go and work together to bring peace and development as well as to include in the decision making process with these few words I would like end my speech.

Ms. S Momon, Meira Paibi Leader, Meira Paibi Leader, Imphal West (Tami Chingmi)



“First of all I respect all the dignitaries and respected persons for this congregation. I really feel happy about the work that is being done by the organizations for the well-being of the society. Today mainly I would like to speak on the concept of courage. There are many people who have showed exemplary courage and commitment to bring about positive changes for the betterment of the society. Women always take the main role in this regard and if there is no courage then there will not be peace in the state and women should have knowledge and courage to fight for the

justice”.

Loving each other and cooperating with each other are the keys for bringing peace in the state. Without courage nothing can be done. In what we are doing today we require great courage. We need to love each other and need to develop mutual understanding to work collectively. Meira Paibi group can bring peace and fight for justice. Meira Paibi has taken a very important role in prevention of drug peddling. In our state Manipur women are taking very important role with courage to prevent drug abuse. For today by keeping such words I would like end my speech.

Ms Satrupa Bhattacharjee, Advocate, Legal Rights Forum, Shillong, Meghalaya on Rising Violent Conflict in Meghalaya; its Impact on Women and response by Women of the State

Good afternoon everyone, I am a lawyer by profession and human rights activist. Basically I advocate for the protection of child rights. I come from Meghalaya and the topic has been given to me is “Rising Violent Conflict in Meghalaya; it's Impact on Women and response by Women of the State” and I would like to add here basically what I have seen. Before the presentation I would like to mention one more important thing that is what we lack in North



Eastern areas with all women facing same problem is decision making a decision makers. In the state of Meghalaya, though it is irony that Meghalayais is a matrilineal society, but even so, the decision makers are not female. They take all responsibilities and everything when it comes to decision making it is not likely to say men take decision makers.

In the previous session we have seen that in the Northeast that women are highly proactive in voicing their opinions but when it come really making a policy change, women's opinion get neglected. When it come to the conflict area I have already heard and spoken what conflict is and how women are facing, the brunt of it be internal or external kind of or whatever the conflict. When it comes to the particular in the region of Meghalaya the Garo hills region is now a burning issue. We hear through the newspapers the atrocities happening here. In the Garo hills region we witnessed the horror of not only the militant or the pressure group but also the aftermath of which was followed up by police personal in retaliation to the outfit. It's becoming the two way traffic to say so in a very simple that its retaliation from both sides.

But in this process the women and the general public become the sufferers and also become the soft targets. The Garo militant outfits like the Ethnic National Volunteer Council (ENVC) and Garo National liberation Army (GNLA) are the most active in this region although other small self-style outfit comes into being every now and then. As they surrender once, they take up arms again due to circumstances or not getting into access to the policy. It's a cycle. I would like to share an incident of killing, once there was a brutal killing incident, killing of a Garo woman by GNLA the woman was short at point blank range when she resisted attempt them to rape her in front of her four children while her husband was outside the house. The outfit contention, after committing such a crime, was that the woman was a police informer, so in retaliation to that she was shot death at point blank but the truth was very far from it. It is just the figure given as per the sources in 2013 the police reported the total of 343 cases of crime against women, police personal or the arms forces or even the militants in retaliation like I said. You know it is the way they can show.

The women become more vulnerable when it comes to physicality of it, I am not saying in otherwise, it is easy for a man to you know in way to brutalized that and prove their point is physical assault that is the easiest way they find. The total of 343 cases of crime against women, sources from 255 crime reported in 2012 in Garo hills, of which in 2013 are 183 are rape cases and 98 molestation cases, in 2014, rape cases to at 164 and 143 molestation cases. So with the year 2015 registered or unregistered cases you can say as of guide, it has been increasing, but the thing is that how much are reported is also not clear.

In Meghalaya the role of church in bringing the ENVC over ground is also crucial because they acted as the peace broker and it's been quite successful. Other conflicts seen in the last few years were the Lapi incident, the border dispute between the Assam and Meghalaya which resulted in firing, the incidents have been going on since May 2010, when the clash broke out between Khasi and Garo communities leading to shooting by the police. In this very incident four men were killed and one of the villagers from the neighboring village Am bran plan for hunger strike in memory of this slays men in July 16. Four proactive women, women have joined this hunger strike in protest of such

killing. However the justice PC Phukan commission, which was commissioned to look after the firing and report everything, is yet to submit the report. The incident took place in 2010 and now its 2015 the report is yet to be submitted. The chairperson of Meghalaya Women's Commission has drawn attention especially to the plight of the Garo hills women. He points out that whenever the conflict takes place women suffer the most as they are mothers, wives or daughters of those who are fighting.

Meghalaya has become the supply zone for trafficking of women and girls who have trapped by promises of employment or abducted by armed group. It is the transit point of route for trafficking women this is something we really faced as a problem. Since we are short in time I would like to say with modernization 33% of reservation in some of the durbars they have included women but by just including them in the durbar doesn't make them active. So this is a kind of problem we are facing especially at decision makers doors, its miscellanea society we see that, not a matriarchal society the lineage part takes place but when it comes to giving them platform or voice to their opinions as decision makers some of take charge is not given however some of the women organization like Pase lukemei (Lukemei means mothers).

Second thing women should be given a platform or chance to voice their opinion and act as policy makers both at local and political level. This is the high time that they should be given a chance to make a difference and contribute to all kinds of policy changes. Since it is a very brief when we have open discussion we can have more questions throw to floor. Thank you.

Mr Duccio Bandini, Programme Manager, EU India Delegation



Thank you Bina and her colleagues more than a closing statement, since I was not here the whole day I apologize for that, I would be sharing few thoughts. First of all, a word of greeting from Ambassador Colinio, he is very close in his heart to this kind of processes and he will be very happy to hear this sort of re-participation of today's event. Secondly, a word of thanks from my side and my colleague Maria for organizing this event and also for inviting us to witness the uniqueness of this event. Hopefully, not the only one but the first of longer series. First of all, particular for me it's a pleasure to be here because I have witnessed processes on woman in other countries where I have been posted. Thus, I have seen the importance of woman's involvement and their collective engagement in conflict prevention, peace building and conflict reconciliation processes.

So I would like to share with you the effects and consequences resulted after the countries like Rwanda, old Colombia because of the internal conflict which is recognized by the government, internal displacement is also plaque of the country, the effect of conflict on women in Lebanon but most importantly the huge resource these resource that process or consequences of what they have

been aftermath where women in this context are weakness. Therefore, the importance of seeing yourselves is the most valuable asset to these processes but also not to underestimate the example effect on men. Women are extremely courageous and men get challenged of these. So they see the work you do and the enthusiasm you put in your work, they follow. Not all of them but a huge number of them will follow so do not underestimate the ladder you have in these kind of processes. Now probably the bad news is that the first event is always difficult to organize and I am happy that as European Union, we could contribute to this event and a spark of the work that you do for the enhancement of woman.

The event concluded with Imphal resolution about the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the region. United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 was adopted unanimously on 31 October 2000. The Council called for the adoption of a gender perspective that included the special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement, rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction. It was the first formal and legal document from the United Nations Security Council that required parties in a conflict to respect women's rights and to support their participation in peace negotiations and in post-conflict reconstruction. North-East India has been part of seventeen peace talks for the past seventeen years with few of them ever reaching a long term viable solution. A cursory glance would reveal that the number of women in all these talks and negotiations have been two, out of which one is only alive now.

Recommendations to Take Further-

1. Unite and strengthen women network of Northeast in a common platform for women, peace and security
2. Implement landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace & Security where for the first time issues relating to women in conflict and peace building was discussed;
3. Honor India's international commitment to UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR)1325, 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106 and 2122⁸ and Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and to enact legislation for the same
4. Repeal of The Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958 across all areas of deployment
5. Develop gender sensitization training of security personnel deployed in conflict zones
6. Inclusion of more women in peace talks and peace processes for a better gender perspective in peace negotiations;
7. Inclusion of more women in electoral processes, judiciary, police forces, economic decision making and other decision making processes for a more gender balanced equitable society
8. Develop area-specific strategies and plans for prevention and responding to Sexual & Gender Based Violence in conflict affected areas
9. Addressing Sexual Exploitation & Abuse by State and Non-state armed groups as per United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820.
10. Oppose the use of children as child soldiers to be recognized and preventive mechanisms for the same to be introduced and implemented
11. Survivors and victims of conflict to be provided institutional assistance, relief and rehabilitation
12. Calls for reservation of seats for local bodies in Northeast region
13. Women of Northeast will work towards disarmament, demilitarization and reintegration (DDR) to bring peace to the region
14. Women of Northeast stand vigilant against the militarization & weaponization of the region
15. Demands adequate protection for women human right defenders
16. Reformation of Customary Law for inclusion of more women in decision making process

⁸United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 recognizes the disproportionate impact that war and conflicts have on women and children, and highlights the fact that women have been historically left out of peace processes and stabilization efforts. Adopted in October 2000, UNSCR 1325 was followed by six additional Resolutions (1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106 and 2122). These Resolutions call for full and equal participation of women at all levels in issues ranging from early conflict prevention to post-conflict reconstruction, peace and security. Together, they frame the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

17. Recognition and honouring of contribution of women in cultural and social processes, institutions, etc.
18. Inclusion of Peace Education in Educational Curriculum
19. We call upon the State to formulate a National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council 1325
20. Call upon Indian civil society and international communities to support people of Northeast India in our efforts for women, peace and security.
21. Resolve to work on UNSCR 1325 & CEDAW and prepare a draft National Action Plan when we congregate again in September 2015

This is a draft recommendation/resolution on Imphal Declaration on Women Peace and Security issues on Northeast India with reference to United Nations Security Council Resolution which will be finalized in consultation with all the women leaders representing each state. Additional points are welcomed from the esteemed participants to be incorporated for the Final declaration. The declaration will be taken up with relevant stakeholders of Government of India in September 2015.

Participants at the Congregation

S.No	Name of Participant	Organization Details	State
1.	Shri Okram Ibohi Singh	Honourable Chief Minister of Manipur	Manipur
2.		Counsellor, Head of Political Affairs, Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi, India	Norway
3.	Shri Irengbam Hemochandra	Honourable Minister, PHED, Labour and Employment, Government of Manipur	Manipur
4.	Duccio Bandini	Programme Manager, EU India Delegation	EU India Delegation
5.	Neha Naqvi	Program Co-ordinator -Welthungerhilfe	New Delhi
6.	Subhankar Chatterjee	Head of Project, Welthungerhilfe	Delhi
7.	Francesca Schraffi	Communication Officer, Welthungerhilfe	Delhi
8.	Ms. Kanchan Sinha	Drugs Control Organization, Government of Tripura	Tripura
9.	Ms Pratibha Brahma	Member of North East Research & Social Work Networking (NERSWN), Bodoland, Assam	Assam
10.	Ms Satrupa Bhattacharjee	Advocate, Legal Rights Forum, Shillong	Meghalaya
11.	Ms Zheviholi Swu	Human Rights Law Network	Nagaland
12.	NenliKez	Human Rights Law Network	Nagaland
13.	Asenla Walling	Human Rights Law Network	Nagaland
14.	Dr L Ibetombi	Chairperson, State Commission for Women	Manipur
15.	Ms Rose Mangsi	President of Kuki Women Union,	Manipur

16.	Ms Jubita Hazarimayum	Convenor, Peace Core Team	Manipur
17.	Ms KenterRiba	Consulting Editor, Eastern Sentinel	Arunachal Pradesh
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19.	AnoushkaShresha	Student,Taktse International School	Sikkim
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24.	Th. Lata Devi	Chanura Group, Yerengbam	Manipur
25.	Ng. Liklaileima	Journalist, Sangai Express	Manipur
26.	H.Mema Devi	Yaipha Lamjing Apunba NupiKanglup, Yourbung	Manipur
27.	Ch.Leima	Yaipha Lamjing Apunba NupiKanglup, Yourbung	Manipur
28.	N.BilashiniLeima	Sangai prou Maning Lanchenbi Nupi Group	Manipur
29.	Rima	Sangai prou Maning Lanchenbi Nupi Group	Manipur
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38.	N.Sahadev Singh	Social Worker, Imphal East	Manipur
39.	Prof Ksh Bimola	Professor, Political Science Department, Manipur University, Manipur	Manipur
40.	Md.Shenu	Social Worker/Imphal East	Manipur
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45.	L.Inaocha	Group Member, Yaipha Lamjing Apunba Nupi Kanglup	Manipur

		, Yourbung, Imphal East	
46.	AribamBina	SangaiProuManingLanchenbiNupi Group	Manipur
47.	O.Sanatombi	SangaiProuManingLanchenbiNupi Group	Manipur
48.	SapamSanajaobi	ChanuraGroup, Yereingbam	Manipur
49.	A.Jila	ChanuraGroup, Yereingbam	Manipur
50.	Sonia Sharma	Social Worker/Imphal West	Manipur
51.	Thangmeisho Singh	Student	Manipur
52.	Gofort Anal	Peace Volunteer /President Anal Student Union	Manipur
53.	N.Anjali Devi	Women Beneficiary ,Imphal East	Manipur
54.	Ch.Memmma Devi	Women Beneficiary ,Imphal East	Manipur
55.	K.Memmma Devi	Women Beneficiary ,Imphal East	Manipur
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57.	M.Indajit	Retired Assistant Colonel	Manipur
58.	RituVaruni	Architect Designer	Delhi
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61.	M.Mema Devi	Women Beneficiary ,Imphal East	Manipur
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63.	T.Bishworjit Singh	Sub Editor/Sanaleibak Daily,	Manipur
64.	BinaSougaizam	Accountant, CAFI	Manipur
65.	Sadananda Singh	Gen.Secy, Senior Citizen for Society, Manipur	Manipur
66.	M.Manihar Singh	Manipur Rifle, Manipur	Manipur
67.	Ng.Binodini	Women Beneficiary ,Imphal East	Manipur
68.	Th.Nandarani	Women Beneficiary , Imphal East	Manipur
69.	Th.Ibehanbi	Women Beneficiary , Imphal East	Manipur
70.	W.Joykumar	Director, Human Rights Initiative (HRI)	Manipur
71.	Th.Joysana	Pastor, Heingang Baptist Fellowship	Manipur
72.	Ch.Sunil	Social Worker, Imphal East	Manipur
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81.	Kh.Sakhitombi	Ireingbam NupiLup, Manipur	Manipur
82.	Hussin Ahmed	Imphal CID office, Manipur	Manipur
83.	BhaktaTaurangbam	Reporter/Impact TV, Manipur	Manipur
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85.	Tinkoneng	Chungai Group, Chandel District	Manipur
86.	Tin nu	Chungai Group , Chandel District	Manipur

87.	Ngamneng	Chungai Group, Chandel District	Manipur
88.	Lamkhochin	Chungai Group, Chandel District	Manipur
89.	Hatlam	Chungai Group, Chandel District	Manipur
90.	Janabkhan	Retired Additional Director Education (U)	
91.	S.MomonLeima	Meira Paibi Leader/Tami Chingmi	Manipur
92.	A.Jinanbala	Meira Paibi Leader/Tami Chingmi	Manipur
93.	L.Modhuleima	Meira Paibi Leader/Tami Chingmi	Manipur
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98.	S.Maimu Devi	AnoubaAshagiMangal Group	Manipur
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112.	O.Sorojini	Irengbam Women's Group, Manipur	Manipur
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116.	Kh. Manichon	AnoubaAshagiMangal Group, Manipur	Manipur
117.	Th.Manitombi	AnoubaAshagiMangal Group, Manipur	Manipur
118.	Nganthoi	AnoubaAshagiMangal Group, Manipur	Manipur
119.	Pakpi	AnoubaAshagiMangal Group, Manipur	Manipur
120.	A. Parbati Devi	Women Beneficiary , Imphal West-I	Manipur
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126.	Nemchin	Chungai Group, Chandel District	Manipur
127.	Vahhoi	Chungai Group, Chandel District	Manipur

128.	Akhil Dhawan	Imphal Hotel Guest	
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135.	Ms. Mumtaz	Social Worker, CAFI	Manipur
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139.	A. Memcha	Chungai Group, Chandel District	Manipur
140.	Th. Lata	Chanura Group, Chandel District	Manipur
141.	M. Ibemhal	Advisor & Observer, MWGSN	Manipur

Media Coverage

- **If peace returns AFSPA will automatically be repealed says Okram Ibobi**

If peace returns to our state, the dreaded Armed Forces Special Powers Act, AFSPA 1958, will automatically be repealed from the state said Chief Minister Okram Ibobi speaking at the first Northeast India Women Peace Congregation held at Sangai Hall, Imphal Hotel today. Read More please visit: <http://ifp.co.in/page/items/25865/if-peace-returns-afspa-will-automatically-be-repealed-says-okram-ibobi>

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- **Women and Children are first victim of conflict – CM**

Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh today said that women and children are the first victim of conflict. Speaking to the inaugural function of the First Northeast India Women Peace Congregation organised by Control of Arms Foundation of India (CAFI) in collaboration with Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network and North East India Women Initiative for Peace at Hotel Imphal today said that women of the region too faced severe form of domestic violence even though they serves as the back bone of the society. Read More- Please visit- <http://imphaltimes.com/news/item/2356-women-and-children-are-first-victim-of-conflict-cm>

- **First Northeast Women Peace Congregation in Imphal**

Manipur Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh today inaugurated first North East Indian women peace congregation in Imphal today. Read More- Please visit-

<http://www.easternmirrornagaland.com/2015/03/first-northeast-women-peace-congregation-in-imphal/>

- **CM bats for peace, security for women**

Chief Minister O Ibobi has assured to provide possible assistance and security to women and children of the State affected by insurgency and counter-insurgency activities. More- Please visit- <http://www.thesangaiexpress.com/page/items/49862/cm-bats-for-peace-security-for-women>

<http://e-pao.net/GP.asp?src=2..260315.mar15>



ANNEXURES

Annexure-I United Nations

S/RES/1325 (2000)

Security Council

Distr.: General
31 October 2000

Resolution 1325 (2000)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 4213th meeting, on 31 October 2000

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999, 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 and 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, as well as relevant statements of its President, and *recalling also* the statement of its President to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace (International Women's Day) of 8 March 2000 (SC/6816),

Recalling also the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century" (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict,

Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and *recognizing* the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and *stressing* the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Reaffirming also the need to implement fully international humanitarian and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts, 00-72018 (E)

Emphasizing the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programs take into account the special needs of women and girls,

Recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard *noting* the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693),

Recognizing also the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations,

Recognizing that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,

Noting the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,

1. *Urges* Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;

2. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes;

3. *Urges* the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard *calls on* Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster;

4. *Further urges* the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations, and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel;

5. *Expresses* its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and *urges* the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide to Member States training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peace-building measures, *invites* Member States to incorporate these elements as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment, and *further requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training;

7. *Urges* Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies;

8. *Calls on* all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia:

(a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction;

(b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements;

(c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary;

9. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to respectfully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, especially as civilians, in particular the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;

10. *Calls on* all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict;

11. *Emphasizes* the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls, and in this regard *stresses* the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions;

12. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolutions 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998 and 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000;

13. *Encourages* all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants;

14. *Reaffirms* its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to give consideration to their potential impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the special needs of women and girls, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions;

15. *Expresses* its willingness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women's groups;

16. *Invites* the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution, and *further invites* him to submit a

Report to the Security Council on the results of this study and to make this available to all Member States of the United Nations;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General, where appropriate, to include in his reporting to the Security Council progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls;

18. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

THE ARMED FORCES (SPECIAL POWERS) ACT, 1958

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

An ordinance entitled the Armed forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Ordinance, 1958, was promulgated by the President on the 22nd May, 1958. Section 3 of the Ordinance powers the Governor of Assam and the Chief Commissioner of Manipur to declare the whole or any part of Assam or the Union territory of Manipur, as the case may be, to be a disturbed area. On such a declaration being made in the Official Gazette, any Commissioned Officer, Warrant Officer, non-commissioned officer or any other person of equivalent rank in the armed forces may exercise, in the disturbed area, the powers conferred by section 4 and 5 of the Ordinance. The Bill seeks to replace the Ordinance –See Gazette of India, 11-8-1958, Pt. II-Sec. 2, Ext. p.714 (No.26).

ACT 28 OF 1958

The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Bill was passed by both the Houses of Parliament and it received the assent of the President on 11th September, 1958. It came on the Statute Book as THE ARMED FORCES (SPECIAL POWERS) ACT, 1958 (28 of 1958).

LIST OF AMENDING ACTS

1. The State of Mizoram Act, 1986 (34 of 1986).
2. The State of Arunachal Pradesh Act, 1986 (69 of 1986).
3. The Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers (Amendment) Act, 1972 (7 of 1972).
4. The Armed Forces Special Powers (Extension to Union Territory of Tripura) Act, 1970.
5. The Repealing and Amending Act, 1960 (58 of 1960).

THE ARMED FORCES (SPECIAL POWERS) ACT, 1958

(28 of 1958) [11th September, 1958]

*An Act to enable certain special powers to be conferred upon members of the armed forces in disturbed areas in the State of *[Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura].*

Be it enacted by Parliament in Ninth Year of the republic of India as follows:-

1. Short title and extent – (1) This act may be called ****[The armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958]**.
*** [(2)] It extends to the whole of the State of ******[Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura]**.

2. Definitions: In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires-

- (a) “Armed forces’ means the military forces and the air forces operating as land forces, and includes other armed forces of the Union so operating;
- (b) ‘Disturbed area’ means an area which is for the time being declared by notification under section 3 to be a disturbed area’;
- (c) all other words and expressions used herein, but not defined and defined in the Air Force Act, 1950 (45 of 1950), or the army Act, 1950 (46 of 1950) shall have the meanings respectively to them in those Acts.

3.Powers to declare areas to be disturbed areas – If, in relation to any state or Union Territory to which this act extends, the Governor of that State or the administrator of that Union Territory or the Central Government, in either case, if of the opinion that the whole or any part of such State of Union territory, as the case may be, is in such a disturbed or dangerous condition that the use of armed forces in aid of the civil power is necessary, the Governor of that State or the Administrator of that Union Territory or the Central Government, as the case may be, may by

notification in the Official Gazette, declare the whole or such part of such State or Union territory to be a disturbed area].

*Subs. By Act 69 of 1986, sec.43 for “Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura and the Union territory of Arunachal Pradesh” (w.e.f.20.2.1987.) **Subs by Act 7 of 1973, sec. 3 for ‘the armed forces (Assam and Manipur) special Powers Act, 1958” (w.e.f 5.4.1972). ***Subs by Act 7 of 1972, sec. 4 (w.e.f 5.4.1972). ****Subs by Act.69 of 1986,sec. 43 for ‘Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura and the Union Territory of Arunachal Pradesh’(w.e.f20.2.1987). Sec 5]The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958.

COMMENTS

(i) The Governor is empowered to declare any area of the State as “disturbed area’. It could not be arbitrary on ground of absence of legislative guidelines; *InderjitBaruav.State of Assam*, AIR 1983

Del. 514.

(ii) Section 3 cannot be construed as conferring a power to issue a declaration without any time limit. There should be periodic review of the declaration before the expiry of six months; *Naga People’s Movement of Human Rights v. Union of India*, AIR 1998 SC 431.

4. Special Powers of the armed forces – Any commissioned officer, warrant officer, non-commissioned officer or any other person of equivalent rank in the armed forces may, in a disturbed area,-

(a) if he is of opinion that it is necessary so to do for the maintenance of public order, after giving such due warning as he may consider necessary, fire upon or otherwise use force, even to the causing of death, against any person who is acting in contravention of any law or order for the time being in force in the disturbed area prohibiting the assembly of five or more persons or the carrying of weapons or of things capable of being used as weapons or of fire-arms, ammunition or explosive substances;

(b) if he is of opinion that it is necessary so to do, destroy any arms dump, prepared or fortified position or shelter from which armed attacks are made or are likely to be made or are attempted to be made, or any structure used as a training camp for armed volunteers or utilized as a hide-out by armed gangs or absconders wanted for any offence;

(c) Arrest, without warrant, any person who has committed a cognizable offence or against whom a reasonable suspicion exists that he has committed or is about to commit a cognizable offence and may use such force as may be necessary to effect the arrest;

(d) Enter and search without warrant any premises to make any such arrest as aforesaid or to recover any person believed to be wrongfully restrained or confined or any property reasonably suspected to be stolen property or any arms, ammunition or explosive substances believed to be unlawfully kept in such premises, and may for that purpose use such force as may be necessary.

COMMENTS

(i) Conferment of power on non-commissioned officers like a Havaldar cannot be said to be bad and unjustified: *Inderjit Barua v .State of Assam*, AIR, 1983 Del 514.

(ii) The armed forces must act in cooperation with the district administration and not as an Independent body. Armed Forces could work in harmony when they deployed in disturbed area: *Luithukiav. Rishang Keishing*, (1988) 2 Gau LR 159.

5. Arrested persons to be made over to the police –Any person arrested and taken into custody under this Act shall be made over to the officer in charge of the nearest police station with the least possible delay, together with a report of the circumstances occasioning the arrest.

In case of arrest of any person, army authority is duty bound to handover to the officer-in-charge of the nearest police station with least possible delay: *Horendi Gogoi v. Union of India*, (1991) Gau CR 3081.

6. Protection to persons acting under Act – No prosecution, suit or other legal proceeding shall be instituted, except with the previous sanction of the Central Government, against any person in respect of anything done or purported to be done in exercise of the powers conferred by this Act.

7. Repeal and Saving - [Repealed by Amending and Repealing Act, 1960 (58 of 1960), First Schedule, sec.2 (26.12.1960)].

Annexure-III

Extracts: Report of the Committee on AMENDMENTS TO CRIMINAL LAW; Justice J.S. Verma (Retd.), Justice Leila Seth (Retd.) & Gopal Subramaniam; January 23, 2013

Offences against women in border areas / conflict zones

10. We now address a very important, yet often neglected area concerning sexual violence against women – that of legal protections for women in conflict areas. Our views on this subject are informed by the plight of a large number of women from areas in Kashmir, the North-East, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh who were heard at length in the course of preparing our report. We are indeed deeply concerned at the growing distrust of the State and its efforts to designate these regions as ‘areas of conflict’ even when civil society is available to engage and inform the lot of the poor. We are convinced that such an attitude on the part of the State only encourages the alienation of our fellow citizens.

11. At the outset, we notice that impunity for systematic or isolated sexual violence in the process of Internal Security duties is being legitimized by the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, which is in force in large parts of our country. It must be recognized that women in conflict areas are entitled to all the security and dignity that is afforded to citizens in any other part of our country. India has signed the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance¹⁰⁶, which has to be honoured. We therefore believe that strong measures to ensure such security and dignity will go a long way not only to provide women in conflict areas their rightful entitlements, but also to restore confidence in the administration in such areas leading to mainstreaming.

12. To this end, we make the following recommendations for immediate implementation:

- a) Sexual violence against women by members of the armed forces or uniformed personnel must be brought under the purview of ordinary criminal law;
- b) Special care must also be taken to ensure the safety of women who are complainants and witnesses in cases of sexual assault by armed personnel;
- c) There should be special commissioners – who are either judicially or legislatively appointed – for women’s safety and security in all areas of conflict in the country. These commissioners must be chosen from those who have experience with women’s issues, preferably in conflict areas. In addition, such commissioners must be vested with adequate powers to monitor and initiate action for redress and criminal prosecution in all cases of sexual violence against women by armed personnel;
- d) Care must be taken to ensure the safety and security of women detainees in police stations, and women at army or paramilitary check points, and this should be a subject under the regular monitoring of the special commissioners mentioned earlier;
- e) The general law relating to detention of women during specified hours of the day must be strictly followed;
- f) Training and monitoring of armed personnel must be reoriented to include and emphasize strict observance by the armed personnel of all orders issued in this behalf;
- g) There is an imminent need to review the continuance of AFSPA and AFSPA-like legal protocols in internal conflict areas as soon as possible. This is necessary for determining the propriety of resorting to this legislation in the area(s) concerned; and
- h) Jurisdictional issues must be resolved immediately and simple procedural protocols put in place to avoid situations where police refuse or refrain from registering cases against paramilitary personnel.

Project Supported By:

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Welthungerhilfe (Formerly German Agro Action)was founded in 1962 as the national committee of the “Freedom from Hunger Campaign” set up by the United Nation’s Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). Welthungerhilfe has helped people in Africa, Asia and Latin America fight hunger and poverty, secure their own livelihoods and new hope in their lives. Non-profit making, non-denominational and politically independent, it is run by a board of honorary members under the patronage of the Federal Republic of Germany. The guiding theme of our work is help for self-help.

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Project Implemented By:

Control Arms Foundation of India (CAFI) was founded on 10th September 2004 in New Delhi by a group of concerned citizens from all across the country to address humanitarian concerns due to rising armed violence in India. CAFI has been working in the Northeast Region of India for the past 7 years through its sister organization, the Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network, which was set up to help women in Manipur. Also in the year 2009, CAFI set up Northeast India Women Initiative for Peace (NEIWIP) working for peace in Northeast region of India.

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