

# **Education in the midst of Violent Conflict in Nagaland and Manipur**

**An Exploratory Study**

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## **About Aman**

AMAN, a Delhi based NGO was established in 2002. It envisages a pro-active role for civil society in the reduction of conflict and the mitigation of its effects. Its philosophy is based on the concepts of *ahimsa* and *samrastha* (non-violence and harmony). In the area of non-governmental civic initiatives, the rationale for AMAN arises from a recognition that man-made disasters must be added to those caused by natural calamity. While relief is imperative in the aftermath of a disaster, a purely reactive approach is insufficient, even in the context of natural disasters. All of AMAN's networking, sensitisation, research, legal aid programmes and humanitarian assistance aim at strengthening social institutions and resources for the anticipation and prevention of conflict, and at non-violent conflict resolution. AMAN has initiated several action research programmes on issues such as legal aid, access to justice, psychological impact of violence and trauma counselling, pedagogy, land rights, Dalit rights, role of panchayat's in managing common property resources, monitoring government acts like NREGA, and RTI. Presently AMAN's programmes are being implemented in Bihar, Kashmir, Maharashtra, Nagaland, Manipur and Assam.

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Consultation Proceeding Report.

## Introduction

### Education And Violent Conflict Interface

#### The Context

At the beginning of September 2004, several hundred children, teachers and parents were held hostage in the gymnasium of a school in Beslan, North Ossetia. The harrowing events in the days that followed brought to the fore in the most barbaric way, a phenomenon that had been happening for quite sometime now but was not given enough attention - the fact that schools and children have become targets in violent conflict. Working on violent conflict in South Asia, we have seen this to be a ground reality in Kashmir, Gujarat, Bihar, despite the fact that attack on educational infrastructures are regarded as war crimes under international law. It is by now well known that violent and protracted conflict in the North Eastern region has caused immense human suffering, destroyed the socio-cultural fabric of society, and resulted in extensive economic damage. As violence has spilled over into homes, streets, displaced people, collapsed civic life, schools and the education system has also come in its grip. In recent years, the government has tried to address the conflict from the perspective of development, building infrastructure, roads, but the issue of building/rebuilding the social infrastructure, where education plays a crucial role, is left unattended. A number of development agencies and NGO's have also sought to promote dialogue, crisis prevention, peace-building. However, education within these frameworks has not been adequately emphasised. In most initiatives and intervention plans for conflict resolution, the role of education in promoting individual and collective peace constituencies remains marginalised. Hence Aman Tust's exploratory study on "Education in the midst of Violent Conflict" was a small step towards filling this gap.

This was also important because nationally, and internationally, a number of "education for all" frameworks have emerged. In India, the 93rd Amendment guarantees education as a fundamental right to all its citizens in the age of 6-14. The global community has signed up to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which includes two specific education related goals: achieving universal primary education; and eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education. However, wars and violent conflicts obstruct the functioning of schools, damage educational infrastructures, prevent children from going to school, (the case being doubly so for girl students). Unless these factors

are addressed, education for all will remain a distant dream. For today, globally there are more than 104 million children prevented from attending school as a consequence of wars, violent conflict, and emergencies<sup>1</sup>. It is thereby significant that within the UN, education has been recognized as an important part of humanitarian response by the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC). Another positive development has been the fact that the Education for All Framework adopted by World Education Forum in Dakar, 2000 also gave an explicit call to support education in emergencies, leading to the creation of Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) in 2001. However, the challenge is to make these declarations, a reality on the ground, and give it concrete shape in conflict affected regions in India where education remains a far cry.

However, while discussing education in conflict situations, it is also important to recognise that education per say, does not always play a positive role in conflict preventions. Rather, classrooms in conflict zones are often sites where ethnic, religious differences are reinforced. Patriarchy, violence and intolerance are perpetuated through selection of curriculum, teachers, propaganda. For instance, research has revealed that a number of text books in Gujarat were directly responsible for demonising the muslim community, and contributing to communal hostility and hatred.<sup>2</sup> The use of textbooks to fuel hatred was also a finding of the study conducted by Oxfam's Violence Mitigation And Amelioration Project (VMAP)<sup>3</sup>. Hence it is important to pay attention to the pedagogy of education, and develop modules that inculcate a deeper understanding of conflict, and peace.

It is from such a perspective that what was initially a study on status of education in the North East, soon became a study on education amidst violent conflict in the North East. Given the lack of available material and little research on the topic, the sensitive nature as well as the very many inter-layered issues involved, limited time and other resources, the study was designed as exploratory, and focused on two states of the North East - Nagaland and Manipur.

### **Socio-Political background of the 2 North Eastern States : Nagaland and Manipur**

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1 Klaus Seitz, Education and Conflict, published by GTZ, 2004,p.9.

2 See Deepa. A's "Gujarat's textbooks: Full of biases and errors" in IndiaTogether, <http://www.indiatogether.org/2007/feb/edu-gujtexts.htm> (Accessed 24th. July 2007)

3The following extract is from a recommended third year B.A. textbook for the student of history in Maharashtra. The chapter on Mahmud of Ghaznavi is used blatantly by the author to launch a tirade against Islam itself. The opening para reads: "The advent of Islam might have been a boon to the Arabs who got united under its banner, and were enthused by it to carry on conquests in Asia, Africa and Europe but it has been a curse for the people outside Arab world because wherever the Islamic hordes went, they not only conquered the countries, but killed millions of people and plundered their homes and places of worship and destroyed their homes, places of worship and above all their artworks" VMAP Project, Oxfam, Aman Tust emerged out of the VMAP project.

The **North** Eastern Region (NER) of India consists of eight states, viz., Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura. It is home to 32 million people belonging to more than 220 ethnic groups, speaking over 400 languages and dialects. The region is bounded in the **north** by the Eastern Himalayan ranges, in the south by Chittagong Hill Tracts and Chin Hills and in the west by the western mountains. It has over 4500 km. of external frontier with Bhutan, China, Myanmar and Bangladesh, making this region geo-politically and strategically significant with all the underlying dynamics of a sensitive frontier region. Often seen as one of the most disturbed regions in South Asia, the North East remains a zone of prolonged violent conflict that range from armed insurgency demanding secession from India, to insurgency for autonomy, ethnic clashes, insurgent group infighting, from problems of continuous inflow of migrants to the fight over control and access to resources<sup>4</sup>. These problems are further compounded by economic backwardness, lack of development and basic infrastructures, and socio-political instability. However, what is generally referred to as the North East is not a homogeneous region, for each region/sub region is characterised by its own distinct dynamics, culture, traditional institutions, problems and issues. Within the North East, both Manipur and Nagaland have been gripped by violent conflict and been sliding along the conflict, cease fire, conflict continuum. The region has seen increased militarisation be it in the name of countering insurgency or on the streets, in the increase in numbers of small arms, breakdown of governance, gross violation of people's human rights and dignity, rise in ethnic nationalism. The impact of varied form of violence has affected day- to- day life and human security of people. Particularly vulnerable are children and young people, who have had to spend their most impressionable years living through, negotiating, suffering displacement, and surviving every day violences. It has left deep scars that can last for generations. Some of the effects can be seen in the rise in number of crimes, drug trafficking, drug addiction, increasing violence within homes and against women. In the given situation, the role of education becomes significant.

**Manipur:** Manipur is surrounded by the states of Nagaland on the north, Mizoram on the south, Assam on the west, and is bounded by Myanmar on the east. Having an area of 22,327 sq. km, it can be broadly divided into valley, and hill area with approximately 33 ethnic tribes, among them Meities and Nagas being the most dominant. The hill and the valley is not merely a geographical division but also a fault line of internal conflict between these two dominant groups. In the last few decades, Manipur has

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<sup>4</sup> Bina Laxmi Nepam, "Small Arms Proliferation and Women's Responses to Armed Violence in India's Northeast". Unpublished Report, Aman Trust 2006. p.2

witnessed violent unrest and conflict. At one level, there is a strong feeling of alienation from mainland India, further exacerbated by the problems of scarce natural resources, lack of development and severe unemployment- all of which feed into the secessionist movement against the Indian union. At another, there have been violent clashes between the different ethnic groups within the State, often alleged to be fuelled by the larger conflict. For instance, though tensed relationship exists between the Meities and the Nagas, but the ethnic divide sharpened after June 2001. This is when the Government of India conceded the demands of the Naga revolutionary leaders to extend the ceasefire operational in Nagaland, to Naga inhabited areas of Manipur as a precondition to resuming peace talks. The Meiteis feared that by implication this meant an endorsement of the Naga demarcation of the boundaries of Greater Nagaland or Nagalim, and there were violent protests. Though there was no direct confrontation between the two major communities, a fragile peace and bitterness has become the order of the day. In addition, Manipur has also witnessed violent clashes between the Nagas and the Kukis, the Kukis and the Meities.

Today, Manipur is a militarised zone. There are about 33 insurgent groups or Armed Opposition Groups (AOGs). Many of these groups are involved in an ever increasing cases of extortion, kidnapping and killing of innocent civilians. Normal life is paralysed as "*bandhs*" are frequently called by one or the other insurgent groups. On the other side, there are over 350 Military stations. It is estimated there is one army man for every 20 Manipuri. Reportedly the Chief Minister of Manipur Mr. O.Ibobi said , 8000 civilians and 12, 000 members of Government forces and AOGs had been killed since the armed resistance began in 1970s.<sup>5</sup> Besides, a number of laws like TADA (Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Prevention Act, 1987), NSA (National Security Act, 1980), UA(P) Act (Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, 1967), Armed Forces Special Powers Act of 1958 have been in operation in the region. All this has had a severe impact on the day to day life and well being of the people. This study is an attempt to understand the impact of all this on primary and secondary education, to get inputs from the ground, and be able to plan a much needed intervention.

**Nagaland:** Naga movement is one of the longest running state versus community struggle against the Government of India. The movement has gone through various phases, witnessed the creation of the state of Nagaland in the 60's, and unprecedented escalating to violence in the 70s and 80s. The state was also bought under the purview of Armed Forces Special Powers Act, and the National Security Act.

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5 Leban Serto, Issues and challenges to Primary /Secondary Education amidst violent conflict: Ethnicity , Curriculum and conflict, paper presented at Aman's Consultation, 13th January.2007. Details in 'Proceeding Report', Annexure 1.

The Nagas have been demanding a sovereign Nagalim, constituted of "62 different tribes, inhabiting a contiguous homeland bound in the north by China, in the West by Assam, in the south by Manipur valley, Mizoram, and the China Hills (Burma) and in the east beyond the Chindwin River, along its tributary the Uyl River (Burma)"<sup>6</sup>. This is however been a contested. Infact, the question of borders has been a source of tension in the region as many of these tribes spill over over the four administrative states of Manipur, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh. Inter factional infighting has also intensified among the three dominant insurgent groups, (NSCN, NSCN (IM) and NSCN (K))<sup>7</sup> since the 90s, particularly after declaration of ceasefire between Government of India and NSCN (IM), and NSCN (K). The early 90s saw a blood bath in the form of ethnic clashes between the Nagas, and Kukis of Manipur and Nagaland. The violent conflicts in Nagaland has taken a severe toll on people, men, women and children- who have suffered, been killed, violated, displaced, their villages burnt. As of now, though the ceasefire continues, tension persists. Pointing to this fragile state, Dr. Vnnueh, Naga People Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR), says that "*the threat of the ceasefire being broken is always a reality*".

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6 Mr. Bengdang, Member of Ao Hoho, Interviewed in Mukukchung, 13th. June 2007

7 Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland, Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland,(Isac-Muivah, and Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland,(Khaplang)



## **Methodology**

This study has evolved out of recognition that there is insufficient information on the issue of education and violent conflict in the North East to enable. Such a research was important for i/ the development of effective peace education initiatives, and ii/. To inform the emerging policy frameworks on "Education For All".

### **Objectives of the Study.**

The concrete objectives of the study were to :

- a/ Review of Government of India policy on Education in the context of North East, particularly the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).
- b/ Flag up issues of education in conflict from the fields to inform policy, design intervention.
- c/To review peace modules being initiated in schools, among youth by NGOs, other civil society organisations.
- d/ To document one or two civil society initiatives, innovations in the field as case studies which carry with them the potential to be replicated or mainstreamed.

### **Research Method**

Nagaland and Manipur were chosen as the area of the study given the fact that both these states have had a long history of conflict as well as a vibrant civil society. Newspapers from the two states had also reported incidence of violence, and protest on the issue of textbooks and syllabus. In addition, Aman had local contacts in the two states which was crucial for such a study.

As a starting point of research, information was collected and analysed using secondary and primary sources. Secondary data was collected from electronic database; using reference list in libraries as well as through hand searching of key journals, meeting and tapping existing networks, relevant organisations, and individuals who were working on education. This was further supplemented with primary documents like census, newspaper reports, government policy documents, published and unpublished documents and reports of local NGO's.

Field-based research was conducted in Nagaland and Manipur. As this was an exploratory study, and dealt with a number of intangible and complex relationships such as ethnicity, conflict, violence, gender- we opted for the qualitative method. In-depth interviews were conducted with students, student union leaders; teachers; principal forums; parents; peace, human rights and women activists; academics; NGOs; government officials, politicians, community and religious leaders; media persons. A comprehensive interview guide/probes was prepared, and the questions were kept open ended.

In addition, mid way through the project, a consultation was held in Chizami, Nagaand, involving key stakeholders for inputs, as well as a check on the research design. The consultation included a variety of participants from the two states working on primary and secondary education- NGO's, school teachers, Village Committee and Village Education Committee (VEC) members, church groups, women's organisations, human rights groups, government officials involved with the implementation of the Sarva Shiksha Anhiyan (SSA), youth organisations, organisations working on peace education. Besides highlighting a number of neglected concerns, the consultation exercise was an opportunity to get feedback and information from the ground, share and invite suggestions on the research design and the need for intervention, and to build a network of concerned persons and organisations.

The data was subsequently analysed keeping in mind the research objectives and drawing interconnectedness.

### **Scope and Limitation of the study**

The study is preliminary in nature, and geared as a scoping study. It aimed to cover a wide gamut of issues that cross cut education in a situation of violent conflict. It thereby seeks to achieve breadth rather than depth of coverage. The focuses is on primary and secondary education in Nagaland, and Manipur from the lens of violent conflict. It is by no means meant to be read as generalisations on education for all seven states. Many of the issues that have been thrown up by the study, (such as "Ethnicity, Conflict and Curriculum") are fields in themselves, that need further probe and research. By flagging them, we hope to have brought to the fore some important concerns in the region with regards to education which must be addressed by different stake holders, and in future research.

## Chapter - I

### Educational Policies: A Critical Analysis

#### Background

Basic education was recognized as a human right in 1990s. It has been long demonstrated that emphasis and investment in education by any nation contributes to overall well-being of the present and future generations. Education leads to both economic and social returns; decline in poverty and income distribution; fertility, population and health outcomes; political and economic developments; dynamic externalities associated with education and above all a better quality of life for the citizens.<sup>1</sup>

The importance and hence the provision of free and compulsory elementary education is well recognized in the international and national arena. At the international level, in Article 26 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights, (UN,1950); Articles 13 and 14 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) and Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child(1989) 1 , Human capital revolution around 1960s, World Conference on Education For All at Jomtien in 1990 and adoption of World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) in the same conference and its assessment at Dakar in 2000 and the Millennium Development Goals have well established the importance of education in the social, economic, demographic and political development of a nation. Still many developing countries are struggling hard to attain universal elementary education.

The Government of India in its preamble in the Constitution under Article 45, made a resolution to provide free and compulsory education up to the age of 14 within a period of 10 years. The National Policy on Education (1986) and its Programme of Action (1992) reiterate the Constitutional Directive that free and compulsory education of satisfactory quality to be provided to children up to the age of 14 years before 21st century. Though this target period has been revised time and again, it still eludes. Recently the bill on Elementary Education as a Fundamental Right has been passed in the parliament in its 93rd Amendment. Elementary education as a fundamental right underlines the responsibilities of the Central government in facilitating to achieve universal elementary education in a federal set up. Indeed, the concurrency in education between the federal and state governments is strengthened in the centrally sponsored programme, namely Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, as the center is taking a partnership

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<sup>1</sup> Rani. Geetha. P, 'Financing Elementary Education and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan'

role in fulfilling the long cherished goal of universalizing elementary education, besides its international commitments on the goals of 'Education for All'.

The momentum of interest in universalizing elementary education in the country began with the National Policy on Education (1986). It was identified that the state of educational infrastructure in elementary schools was dismal to achieve the set goal. Hence, a centrally sponsored scheme called Operation Blackboard was initiated in 1987 to improve the educational infrastructure in primary schools all over the country, with three components, viz. class rooms, teachers and teaching-learning equipment. Around the same time two other important nation wide schemes were initiated, i/ teacher education, ii/ the non-formal education. Acknowledging regional variation, specific schemes were initiated either in the later part of 1980s or beginning of 1990s. The National Policy on Education was modified to cater to the up coming needs in 1992. The modified policy further envisaged the improvement and expansion of education in all sectors, elimination of disparities in access and laying greater stress on improvement in the quality and relevance of education at all levels, including technical and professional education. It also emphasizes that education must play a positive and interventionist role in correcting social and regional imbalance, empowering women and in securing a rightful place for the disadvantaged and the minorities.<sup>2</sup>

International aid for education to India for the first time came through these projects. It is to be noted that prior to the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), the various projects implemented in the education sector were all programme specific, focusing on one or few specified activities / items. DPEP was the first initiative to cover the entire sector of primary education, which attempted to address the issues and problems in primary education in totality. DPEP was launched in 1994. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was launched in 2001-2002 and became operationalized in 2004 included all the other programmes launched earlier.

### **Education in the North Eastern States:**

The government of India made special provisions for the development of education in the North East Region. In pursuance of the Government's Policy, all Central Ministries /Departments earmark 10 % of their budget for the development of North Eastern region. In case of shortfall in the expenditure of this budget, the money gets transferred to a new reserve fund in the public account titled, Central Resource

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<sup>2</sup> Annual Report, 2005-06. Department of Elementary Education and Literacy and Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India

Pool for Development of North Eastern Region. An inter-ministerial committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of DoNER administers this Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR). Under this policy, proposals worth Rs.480.68 crore for the development of educational infrastructure in the North Eastern Region (NER), has been approved. Funds amounting to Rs.392.81 crore was released as on 30.11.2005. Out of this Rs.14.84 crore was released in 2005-06.<sup>3</sup>

In the central sector, these proposals mainly relate to infrastructure development of central institutions like the five central universities in the North East. This includes construction of staff quarters, academic buildings, library buildings, administrative buildings and purchase of laboratory equipment, books, etc. The important central sector institutions in the North East Region are Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, North Eastern Regional Institute of Science and Technology (NERIST), Itanagar, National Institute of Technology (NIT), Silchar, Regional Centre of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), and Central Universities of Assam, Tezpur, Mizoram, Nagaland and North Eastern Hill University (NEHU). Projects are in various stages of implementation<sup>4</sup>.

10 per cent of the Gross Budgetary Support (GBS) excluding Externally Aided Project (EAP) is required to be spent for the development of North Eastern Region. The Department of Secondary and Higher Education has been able to step up expenditure in the NE Region under its several ongoing schemes. It has been able to exceed the 10 per cent target during the last three years. The Department of Elementary Education & Learning is also striving to increase its expenditure in the NE Region.

A provision of Rs.261.05 crore and Rs.1053.00 crore has been kept for NER under budget expenditure 2005-06 for the Departments of Secondary & Higher Education (S & HE) and Elementary Education & Literacy (EE & L) respectively. Out of this an amount of Rs.187.57 crore and Rs.501.60 crore has been certified for expenditure on various schemes of the Departments of S&HE and EE&L till 31.1.2006.<sup>4</sup>

A High Level Group (HLG) under the chairmanship of Minister of Human Resource Development and comprising of the Chief Ministers, Education and Social Welfare Ministers of the NE States, was set up on 19.11.2004 for considering specific issues relating to all sectors of education and women and child

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3 Annual Report, 2005-06. Department of Elementary Education and Literacy and Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India

4 Ibid. pg

4 Annual Report, 2005-06. Department of Elementary Education and Literacy and Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India

development in the North Eastern States. The first and second meetings of the HLG were held at Guwahati on May 29, 2005 and at Delhi on January 10, 2006. Major programmes of the Department are District primary Education Programme (DPEP), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Lok Jumbish, Shiksha Karmi, Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education (EGS&AIE), and National Programme of Nutrition Support to Primary Education (NPNSPE) accord priority to areas of concentration of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is an all encompassing, time bound program launched for universalizing elementary education in the country. The assistance under the programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was on a 85:15 sharing arrangement, between the Central Government and the State Government, during the Ninth Plan and on a 75:25 sharing arrangement during the Tenth Plan.

All the North Eastern States are covered under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) Programme. The total approved Annual Work Plan & Budget (AWA&B) of NE States for 2005-06 under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan amounts to Rs.600.49 crore. The Government has released Rs.328.55 crore as on 23.1.2006. This includes Rs.41.00 crore to Arunachal Pradesh, Rs.138.57 crore to Assam, **Rs.13.27 crore to Manipur, Rs.23.23 crore to Nagaland**, Rs.19.25 crore to Meghalaya, Rs.16.53 crore to Mizoram, Rs.6.00 crore to Sikkim and Rs.70.70 crore to Tripura.<sup>5</sup>

In the actions undertaken, the Ministry has been pursuing in state share under the SSA for the NE region, with the planning commission. Also in the interim, the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) would provide 15 per cent of the State's 25 per share out of the Non-Lapsable Central Pool Resources (NLCPR) for the NE States for the remainder of the 10<sup>th</sup> plan.

There has been a shift in the approach towards education with SSA. There is equal emphasis given towards improving the quality of education. Amongst the various initiatives under the SSA programme, Nagaland was one of the States where Computer Aided Learning (CAL) was introduced. The main aim of SSA was to bring about a reduction in drop out and repetition rates, enhance achievement levels of the students. So using the Information and Communication Technology in the form of CAL would facilitate in attainment of the SSA objective. Under this a provision of Rs. 15 lakhs per district per year was made available to the States. In Nagaland it has been implemented in 80 Govt. schools, covering

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<sup>5</sup> Annual Report, 2005-06. Department of Elementary Education and Literacy and Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India

Class V to Class VIII.

Mid-Day-Meal Scheme launched by the Government in August, 1995 mainly aimed to improve enrollment, attendance and retention of children studying at Primary Stage as also their nutritional status, have been implemented in all States of North East. Under this scheme cooked meal (mid-day-meal) is provided to the children. During 2005-06, approx, 68.15 lakhs children were covered under the Scheme for which an amount of Rs.334.50 crore was allocated for NE Region. Against this allocation, an amount of Rs.148.59 crore was released to the States (as on 2-2-2006).

In the seven states that comprise the north east part of India, concern of violent conflict has been in the forefront in this region for long. Such an environment can have significant effect on the planning and delivery of education in these regions.

### Focusing on Education in Nagaland and Manipur

Nagaland became the sixteen state of the Indian Union with Kohima as its capital on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, 1963. Prior to this, it was a district of Assam known as the 'Naga Hill Districts'. Of the seven districts that make up the present Nagaland, Kohima has the highest literacy rate, and Tuensang and Mon are considered to be educationally backward.<sup>6</sup>

State/District	2001			1991		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Nagaland	67.11	71.77	61.92	61.65	67.62	54.75
Mon	42.25	46.7	37.12	36.02	41.9	29.1
Tuensang	51.3	55.97	46.12	48.39	53.98	41.98
Mokokchung	84.27	86.14	82.2	77.85	80.52	74.88
Zunheboto	69.73	73.43	65.8	64.36	70.76	57.63
Bokha	81.28	85.69	76.46	73.92	81.06	65.99
Dimapur	78.15	82.16	73.34	68.65	73.64	62.42
Kohima	74.28	81.44	66.64	69.58	77.24	60.6
Phek	71.35	78.97	63.08	62.59	72.28	51.34

Source: Census of India 1991

Census of India 2001

Besides these, three more subdivisions were also declared as backward, such as, Aghunato, Mehimi,

<sup>6</sup> Roy J, 'The North East Elementary Education' New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House, 2005

Penen. Several reasons have been cited for this. Most of the villages situated in these parts vary in attitude from 194 to 3098 meters, and are both inaccessible and socio-economically backward. Inter-village communications are often interrupted due to heavy monsoons and landslides.<sup>7</sup> However, during the consultation Leban Serto (participant from Centre for Peace Education, Manipur) mentioned that need assessment studies should be done at district and village level. He also mentioned that the Government of Nagaland is more sensitive towards such interventions than the government of Manipur.<sup>8</sup>

Talking about the education status in Manipur, Mr. Serto pointed out that in Manipur, the 6<sup>th</sup> schedule is not functioning for the last 18 years and there has been no elections under the 6<sup>th</sup> schedule since then. He mentioned that in Manipur, teachers often feel scared to go to small villages or other sensitive places, specially hill districts, as these places are infested by insurgents. Thereby affecting the quality of education in the government schools. He mentioned that in these situations, private and church run schools are functioning much better. He shared that insurgents groups are also occupying colleges and schools, and burning down many premier colleges and other institutions. Thus, he suggested that introducing something like, 'emergency education' should be helpful in such areas.<sup>9</sup>

Language is another important factor affecting the development of elementary education. Since as many as sixteen Naga dialects have been officially recognized as the mother tongue at the primary stage, text book preparation and procurement of sufficient number of language teachers are a problem. Also according to the Fifth All India Education Survey of NCERT, the percentage of trained primary school teachers in 1986 was 87.6 and 50.6 for the middle school level. Despite a comparatively good teacher-pupil ratio at the elementary level, the standard is very low, especially in subjects like Science and Mathematics.<sup>10</sup> Commenting on this Evangeline Odyuo (NBCC) mentioned that in Nagaland, often the least educated teachers are selected at the primary school level. She suggested that such an approach needs to be changed.<sup>11</sup>

In the recent past, the school syllabus has remained at the heart of tension amongst the two states and within the ethnic groups in Manipur. Violent conflict presents the states with one of its most formidable obstacles to education and development. Providing education in emergencies not only ensures that

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7 Roy J, 'The North East Elementary Education' New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House, 2005

8 See proceeding report. Page 23

9 See proceeding report page 24

10 Planning Commission, Education Division, "Progress and Problems of Educational Development in the States and the U.Ts of North Eastern Region", Mimeo, New Delhi, 1985-86

11 See proceeding report. Page 25



children realize their right to education, it provides them with a sense of hope and normalcy when their lives have been disrupted, promotes their psychological and social wellbeing and cognitive development, and lessens the risk of them being recruited into dangerous activities. Providing quality education in emergencies is among the best ways to mitigate the impact of conflict on children, and it helps lay a solid foundation for peace and development.<sup>12</sup>

A snapshot view of the status of elementary education in the two states of North East India is presented below:

***Table:1 Male / Female and Total Literacy Rates for the Nagaland and Manipur; Change in the Decadal Literacy Rates<sup>13</sup>***

<i>States</i>	<i>Literacy Rate (in %)</i>			<i>Literacy Rate</i>	<i>Change in Literacy Rate</i>
	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>		
Manipur	68.87	77.87	59.7	59.89	8.97
Nagaland	67.11	71.77	61.92	61.65	5.45

***(2001 census)***

During the consultation, it was pointed out by Lc Jinine Meitei (participant from Human Rights Alert, Manipur) that the decade long conflict in both Nagaland and Manipur has had a significant effect on the life of people and daily education, specially girls as they are more vulnerable. Armed forces have occupied many school and college buildings. There is however a crucial gender difference in the 'fear factor' of boys and girls. But there is not a lot of difference between men and women with regard to their vulnerability in front of the army. As for boys, they are scared of being picked up and killed, and for girls they are scared of been raped and killed.<sup>14</sup>

***Table: 2 Total Number of Recognized Primary Institutions in the States of North East India for the period between 2002 – 2003<sup>15</sup>***

<sup>12</sup>Academy for Educational Development (AED) and the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children with support from AED and the Mellon Foundation, *The Education Imperative Supporting Education in Emergencies*, January 2003

<sup>13</sup>Census of India 2001, Statistical Handbook of each State.

<sup>14</sup>See proceeding report Page 10

<sup>15</sup>Census of India 2001, Statistical Handbook of each State.

<b>State</b>	<b>Number of Primary School (2002 - 03)</b>
Manipur	2573
Nagaland	1352

Note: The term 'Primary School' is used in the census to include Junior, Basic, Upper Primary school / institutions

Source: Census of India 2001, Statistical Handbook of each State.

**Table:3a** *Comparitive Enrollment Rates in the States of Manipur and Nagaland for Age Group of 6 – 10 for Boys and Girls for the period of 2005<sup>16</sup>*

<b>State</b>	<b>Age Group 6 – 10 BOYS</b>						
	<b>Government</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>Madarsa</b>	<b>EGS</b>	<b>Never Enrolled</b>	<b>Droup Out</b>	<b>Total</b>
Manipur	34.6	60.4	0	0.6	3	1.4	100
Nagaland	78.9	11	0	0	7.4	2.4	100
All India	76.9	17	1	1.1	2.9	1.1	100
<b>Age Group 6 – 10 GIRLS</b>							
Manipur	38.71	56.06	0	0.30	4.07	0.86	100
Nagaland	80.32	10.09	0	0	6.95	2.64	100
All India	78.81	13.72	1.06	1.19	3.88	1.34	100

**Table:3b** *Comparitive Enrollment Rates in the States of Manipur and Nagaland for Age Group of 11 – 14 for Boys and Girls for the period of 2005<sup>17</sup>*

<b>State</b>	<b>Age Group 11 – 14 BOYS</b>						
	<b>Government</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>Madarsa</b>	<b>EGS</b>	<b>Never Enrolled</b>	<b>Droup Out</b>	<b>Total</b>
Manipur	30.92	59.07	0	0	4.24	5.76	100
Nagaland	62.87	9.59	0	0	6.42	21.13	100
All India	72	19.1	0.8	0.6	3	4.7	100
<b>Age Group 11 – 14 GIRLS</b>							
Manipur	39.55	48.30	0	0	4.29	7.86	100

<sup>16</sup>Department of Education, *Annual Report 2002 – 2003: Annexures Page 1*, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

<sup>17</sup>Pratham, *ASER Report*, 2005

State	Age Group 11 – 14 BOYS						
Nagaland	55.85	10.36	0	0	11.67	22.12	100
All India	71.2	16.1	0.9	0.6	4.8	6.4	100

Source: Pratham, ASER Report, 2005

Lc Jinine Meitei (Human Rights Alert, Manipur), on commenting on the enrollment rate of Manipur government schools said that its much less than that of Nagaland and said the possible reason might be due to problems faced by the parents, like fees and so on, thus the government should look into it and develop some mechanism to address such a problem.<sup>18</sup> Adding to that Lebon Serto also suggested that the enrollment in government schools is not low because the parents have difficulties to send their children to schools, but because the quality of education is very poor in the government schools which leave most parents without any other option rather than send their wards to private schools.<sup>19</sup> But here Wetshokrolo Lasuha (Lecturer, Dimapur Government College), added that 82% of the population of Nagaland is rural. And most of the private schools are in town. In the villages, there are only government schools. Thus the enrollment percentage will be very different in villages than in town, of the government schools<sup>20</sup> And thus the cure to the problem of low enrollement rate is not private schools. There is need to improve the quality of education delivery in the government schools.

Also there is a practice of substitution where the teacher employs someone else from the locality by paying Rs.1000 to Rs. 1500 per month. Mr. Serto also shared that the SSA program has not been implemented properly in Manipur. SSA has also suffered greatly because of the delay by the Centre to release the full amount allotted in Manipur. The main reason cited by him was that when the information regarding funds get to the insurgents, they start demanding their shares in that money, which often leads the State to a stalemate situation.

***Table: 4*** *Comparitive Table Showing the Gender Differences in Access to Elementary Education for Manipur and Nagaland for Age Group of 6 – 14 for the period of 2005.*

State	Government School		Private School	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Manipur	47.3	52.7	54.5	45.5
Nagaland	57.5	42.5	58.1	41.9

Source: Pratham, ASER Report, 2005

18 See proceeding report .Page 23 and 24

19 See proceeding report, page 24

20 See proceeding report, page 25

***Table: 5 Comparative Table Showing the Children Out of School for Manipur and Nagaland for Age Group of 6 – 10 and 11 -14 for the period of 2005.***

<b>State</b>	<b>6 – 10</b>		<b>11 - 14</b>	
	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
Manipur	49	51	44.7	55.3
Nagaland	56.3	43.7	54.3	45.7

*Source: Pratham, ASER Report, 2005*

During the consultation the participants shared that there are efforts made from the side of the government in Nagaland. The concept of ‘joyful learning’ has been introduced. Seno Tsuhah (from North East Network, Chizami, Nagaland) while talking more about it said that this new concept focusses on learning to be more experiential.<sup>23</sup> Kezevino Krome (from EBRC, pftusero, Nagaland) shared that this new pedagogy is ‘child centered’, where the learning is activity based. She also mentioned that such a pedagogy may prove to be specially helpful in conflict region like Nagaland and Manipur.<sup>24</sup>

The need to collect and document reliable micro-level data from both the district and village level was emphasised during the consultation as well as during the field visit. Mr. Serto mentioned that there is hardly any information regarding the budget allocation under different government schemes. He also pointed out that there is need for a proper monitoring and evaluation of the projects. In some districts, like Mukukchung, micro level statistics are available, but again its reliability can be questioned.<sup>25</sup> Ms. Krome, also mentioned that sometimes the data is tampered on purpose. She explained that when schools apply for funds like for midday meal and other such things, they give a higher enrollment percentage such that they can get more funds approved. Many times there are different types of data made to suit different purpose. Thus there is need to generate objective and authentic data.

Howevare, Ms. Krome also mentioned that after the SSA, they have been entrusted with the monitoring and collection of statistics. So after the introduction of SSA, authentic statistics are expected to be generated.<sup>26</sup> Mr. Serto shared that to a large extent functioning of VEC has also served to check corruption in Nagaland. Further suggesting that NGOs taking up the role of forming a monitoring boby can be dangerous, as it might become yet another way to siphoning out money.

<sup>23</sup> See Proceeding Report, page 25

<sup>24</sup>See Proceeding Report, page 25

<sup>25</sup>See Proceeding Report, page 23

<sup>26</sup>See Proceeding Reports, page 25

### **Status of SSA in Manipur and Nagaland:**

The status of SSA in Manipur can be assessed by the problems that exist in the implementing agency, the State Education (school) Directorate. The department has been among the top list of the departments of the State Government which received highest number of complaints over irregularities in appointment and fraudulent withdrawal of money by the State Vigilance Commission. Frequent strikes and bands called by the different groups in Manipur has also had a significant effect on the implementation of SSA<sup>A</sup>. Manipur is also amongst the five States of India which recorded the highest number of out of school children, due to lack of schools, inadequate classroom facilities and teachers. In a study done by VVD on status of primary education in the hill schools in Manipur, indicates that the culture of substitution of government school teachers by local teachers has left the education situation in a dismal condition. Adding to this, they frequently also take transfer with post from the hill to the valley leading to a poor teacher student ratio in the hill schools. Also the frequent ethnic clashes in the hill districts often becomes an excuse for the teachers not to attend to their postings in the schools in these areas. All these indicates to the fact that SSA has not been effective to improve the quality of delivery of education<sup>B</sup>.

However, in Nagaland, the state of SSA was found to be much better than Manipur. One of the main reasons been that the implementation of SSA has been collaborated into the communitization process functioning in Nagaland. Under this, the Village Education Council (VEC), is in charge of the schools in the village and the SSA money comes to the VEC and gets distributed by it. And as Ms. Krome shared that, because the money comes to the VEC and not to some contractor, the corruption is much less. According to her, SSA seems to be doing well, only in places where the community is actively involved. For instance, the school in Chizami received funds to build a three room extension, but the VEC used the money judiciously to construct six rooms instead<sup>C</sup>. Another reason for better working of SSA is the important role played by the Church in its implementation. The NBCC (Nagaland Baptist Church Council) has 115 schools under it. They collaborate with the NCERT to train teachers and heads of institutions. SSA was initially implemented in the State by NBCC and then handed over to the other State machineries<sup>D</sup>.

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A 'Issues and Challenges to Primary/Secondary Education Amidst Violent Conflict: Ethnicity Curriculum and Conflict. Jan, 2007 Leban Serto,

B 'Anomalies of Primary Education in the Hills', Volunteers of Village Development.

C Kezevino Krome, EBRC See proceeding report, pg 14

Thus it may be seen that though the government data indicates concrete steps taken towards universalising elementary education, there are still lots of challenges that needs to be addressed. During the consultation, it was pointed out that there is an urgent need to generate objective and authentic data. However, it was also pointed that there needs for a monitoring mechanism of these different policies and schemes introduced by both the Central and State government. It was also discussed that the quality of delivery of education of government schools needs to be addressed keeping the constant state of conflict in both Nagaland and Manipur in mind. The group also said that though the government, especially in Nagaland, is taking positive steps towards that end.

## Chapter-2

### Issues and Challenges to Primary/Secondary Education amidst violent conflict in Nagaland and Manipur.

The interplay between education and violent conflict is complex. Education does not cause war nor end them, but every education system can carry the potential to either perpetuate or mitigate conditions that lead to violent conflict. It is well recognised now that schools can reproduce the values/attitudes/social relations of dominant group, and the education systems are most often complicit in conflict. At the same time, education in conflict situations often exhibits a surprising resilience. It has been observed that diverse forms of formal and non formal education rarely cease to function completely amidst all the destruction, and resurfaces as violence subsides<sup>8</sup>. This is marked by a number of weaknesses and constraints—such as chronic shortage of qualified teachers, sheer number of conflict affected children, youth and people, civil society in disarray, weakened/corrupt political authority, overwhelming control of insurgents groups, shortage of funds, among others. Nevertheless, this resilience of the education system offers its own challenges and opportunities for social reconstruction. These factors underline the importance of understanding the interface between education and conflict. Hence, this chapter highlights some of these issues and challenges that affect Primary/Secondary education in Nagaland and Manipur. It must be stated at the outset, that though written under separate subheadings, many of these negative impacts of violent conflicts on education occur in differing, yet closely interwoven forms.

#### 1/. Ethnicity, Violent Conflict and Curriculum

Ethnicity lies at the heart of many conflicts in the northeast, and has spilled into the education system. The agitation over school affiliation, and text books brings to the fore the very intersectionality of education, ethnic biases and divisions, and violent conflict in Nagaland and Manipur (see the box given below)

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8 For eg. The clandestine home based schools in Afghanistan which developed in response to Taliban's active repression of schooling for girls and women. For details see Kirk, Jackie and Winthrop, Rebecca, "*Meeting EFA: Afghanistan-Home Based Schools*", Academy For Education Development, 2006.

On 4<sup>th</sup>.July 2007, seven government schools in the hill districts of Manipur were set ablaze by suspected volunteers of the All Naga Students Association, (ANSAM) Manipur. In September, last year, another 10 schools in the Naga dominated hill areas were ransacked or burnt . Such incidences have been linked to the ANSAM's campaign since June 2006, for switching to the syllabus of the Nagaland Board (NBSE) in the hill schools in the state. The campaign has been marked by burning text books of the Board of Secondary Education, Manipur, (BSEM), strikes,violence, economic blockade including one which lasted for 52 days-bringing immense misery to the people in the valley area which can be totally isolated in such an event. (*Imphal*

According to Paul Hiring, "The hill people have faced a lot of discrimination and been denied the right to education and development by the valley people. The BSEM syllabus imposes Meitei Mayak i.e the Meitei language on us. Our own language, culture, history have no space in the syllabi. It is not just a political issue but something linked to our very way of living and future generations"<sup>9</sup>. Within the Imphal Valley, the protest is seen by many as a move towards pressing for the unification of a Naga homeland, and not just a question of text book and syllabus. It thereby evokes violent sentiments<sup>10</sup>. Some activist also felt that ethnic divide and fighting was being fuelled by the government of India to dilute the Manipur's cause of independence. "The case of neglect of schools, colonisation of our culture is faced by every one in Manipur, and not just the Naga hill tribes", was a statement one often heard in the valley, while talking to respondents from the Meitei community. Speaking on the issue of curriculum bias and education in Manipur at the consultation organised in the course of this study, Leban Serto, a leading peace educationist, stated that education system especially the primary, high school and secondary is taking a beating, and is in a state of "imbroglio". This has led to various statement and protest and also discontentment among the student communities, who are also divided along ethnic lines and party politics. Conflict, corruptions, ethnicity and lack of good governance have compounded the problem into a deeper crisis. The issue of affiliation by the Manipur Naga students to the Nagaland Board of Education has been one of the larger issue of the education system in Manipur. The present Govt of Nagaland led by Rio favoured the affiliation which was supported by the MP (outer Manipur), Mr. Charenamei. In his statement the MP stated that in the context of the present issue raised by NSF (Naga Student Federation), and ANSAM (All Naga Student Association, Manipur) , it is very pertinent to mention that the rejection of the text books by the Naga students was bound to

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9 Interview with Paul Hiring, President, ANSAM, on 4<sup>th</sup>.June 2007.

10 Interview with Pradeep, Editor, Imphal Free Press, 4th.June.2007. Imphal.



happen as the education system followed in the state of Manipur has never been in the interest of the tribal minorities including the Nagas. The Naga students of Manipur though separated by the imposed stated boundaries has found the syllabus prescribed by the NBSE very friendly owing to ethnic affinity, cultural and historical oneness. The MP also in his letter to the HRD enclosed a copy of the Government of Manipur order vide no 16/11/02/SE(S), dated 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2005 regarding the imposition of Meiteri language and Meitei Mayek script upon the tribal students in the education system".<sup>11</sup> In Manipur the Mr. Charenamei wrote that "the most insensible and cruel act of the Manipur Government is the imposition of ban on private schools from getting affiliation to the CBSE and ICSE which is nothing but violation of the rights to education to the tribal people".<sup>12</sup> According to Dolly Kikon, the BSES social Science reader for class VIII dwells heavily on way of life in the Imphal Valley. It only gives a cursory look at the tribes and communities- in descriptions of shifting cultivation as a primitive method of farming, narrations of the spread of Christianity, or topographic charts that compare population, literacy levels and landholding between the Imphal valley and the hill districts.<sup>13</sup>

The worst affected by this conflict are students. According to a member of Private School Principal's Forum (who did not want to be named) the tension over Manipur-Nagaland board affiliation has left students as the worst victims. In his school, which suddenly had to switch to Nagaland board within five months, only 18% passed the class X exams. The rest failed. 'The time was too short to cover the syllabus, our teachers were totally unfamiliar with the new syllabus, exam pattern, and the students just could not cope. We were working under a lot of threat from opposing insurgent groups and were caught between one set of them opposing affiliation to NBSE, and the others supporting and pressurising us to switch. Students were traumatised and fearful even as they sat writing the exams. Parents have also been upset, and full of apprehension. As a result, a number of students have dropped out of school and taking up vocational courses. We are all in a dilemma. Such a change should be done with a proper strategy."<sup>14</sup>

On the otherhand, Dolly Kikon explains that the case of NBSE curriculum is not too different. It reflect similar biases of mainstream India. Surveying the the Class VIII Social Science textbook developed by

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11 Leban Serto, CPEM, Speaking at the consultation on "Issues and challenges to Primary/Secondary Education amidst violent conflict: Ethnicity curriculum and conflict", Chizami, Nagaland, 13th -14th January 2007. For details, see "Proceeding Report", Annexure I.

12 Leban Serto, CPEM, Speaking at the consultation on "Issues and challenges to Primary/Secondary Education amidst violent conflict: Ethnicity curriculum and conflict", Chizami, Nagaland, 13th -14th January 2007. For details, see "Proceeding Report", Annexure I.

13 Dolly Kikon, Divergent memories in Manipur, September 2006, See [http://www.himalmag.com/2006/september/analysis\\_2.htm](http://www.himalmag.com/2006/september/analysis_2.htm), Accessed on 10.7.2007.

14 Incognito, Interviewed with Principal of a private school on 5th.June 2007, Manipur.

the Nagaland State Council of Educational Research and Training for the NBSE, Kikon points out that it hardly devotes any space to Naga history and culture. It largely focuses on mainland India and is deficit in highlighting local history. The first eight sections are devoted to India's role in the modern world, the colonisation of the subcontinent and the anti-colonial struggles. The part of the textbook devoted to Civics includes sections on subjects such as National Goals and Democracy of India, The Society in India, Economic Reconstruction, National Integration, Defence of the Country, India and the World, and World Problems – but nothing specific to the North East. Only the History section of the reader manages to include a chapter on Naga society, and even this is extremely cursory, putting an overwhelming emphasis on qualities such as 'simple, honest and hard-working' when describing the Naga people's past. This is perceived as 'condescending and reductionist stereotype" , and to be promoting an image of the 'simpleton Naga'. Modernisation is equated with the coming of locks and keys – guards against the dishonesty that plagues Naga society today. The perceived ills of modernisation are blamed on the oppressed themselves. The present generations of Nagas, it is said, are not sufficiently hard-working. In other places, the textbook proffers that they are not in the same league as their 'simpleton' ancestors because they "lie, steal and are lazy". Such an approach totally glosses over the changes that the Naga society has undergone in the by five decades of militarisation, of brutalisation of public space by the systematic and perpetual policing of civic structures by the Indian state. What we see today is a polity and civil society characterised by violence. Political questions are elided, and the text dwells instead on what it sees as the ramifications of the "ills" of the Naga people: AIDS, alcoholism and drug addiction. The issue of text book bias and conflict raises larger questions of representation, and political hegemony in education. The only way out is the transformation of the education system.<sup>15</sup>

## **2/. Impact of Violent Conflict on Girls/Women's Education**

Violent conflict affects the whole community. However, its impact on women and girls, who already live at the margins, is particularly complex. By now, it is well established that situations of violent conflict reinforce a number of patriarchal norms<sup>16</sup>, though much work remains to be done on the ground. Women, and even more vulnerable- young girls, suffer violations from different warring factions, and face violation/marginalization of their rights, need on daily basis.

As it emerged during this research, and from earlier studies<sup>17</sup> women's status in Manipur and Nagaland

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15 *ibid.*

16 This has been highlighted by the Beijing Platform of Action, by Women Activists, and innumerable reports on Women and Violent Conflicts

17 See "Baseline Report on Women in Armed **Conflict** Situations in India". Prepared by NEN and coordinated by IRAW Asia Pacific .

is far better than women in other parts of India. According to Seno Tsuah, NEN coordinator, Nagaland, “gender biases do exist within the customary laws practiced by many communities and poor political representation of women, but the comparatively more egalitarian tribal culture, absence of practices of seclusion, has given women more space”<sup>18</sup>. In Manipur and Nagaland, women were visible in public sphere, enjoyed mobility, had solidarity networks amongst women's groups, such as mothers front within each ethnic groups, traditional cooperative systems, women's markets (like *Ima Keithal* or mother's market in Manipur) and forms of cooperative village action, which seemed to sustain and promoted social cohesiveness and women's collective action (as that of the *Meira Piebies* or the *Naga Mother's Association*). Women, as elsewhere in India, contributed in a big way in to the economic sphere. However, unlike many parts of India, women of some of the communities of the region seemed to enjoy some amount of economic autonomy. In terms of education, in general, the North East region fares well with other parts of India, and in terms of girls education, the overall picture does not seem bleak. However, a serious problem has been an increasingly high dropout rate in general. In Nagaland and Manipur, the female drop out rate is higher than that of male. This is surprising given that women enjoy better status on the whole. Can one rule out the role of violent conflict in creating this paradox? This becomes an even more serious question when read with another contradiction- the declining sex ratio in Nagaland and Manipur. <sup>19</sup>According to NEN report on women and conflict<sup>20</sup>, although no data is available, instances of rape and domestic violence are on the rise in Nagaland, and Manipur. Overall, one of the biggest fall-outs of a situation of armed conflict in both the state has been increased violence against women and girls which has underpinned other patriarchal discrimination against women.. The fallout of violent conflict on women's and young girls education must be seen within this overarching context.

One of the immediate and direct impact of violence is on access to education, and mobility. A study in Kokrajhar province in Assam in 1999 found that armed violence episodes had had a serious impact on education due to curfews and the closure of schools for long periods of time.<sup>21</sup> Ethnic clashes in Churachandpur, Manipur, in June 1997 brought education to a complete halt as many students had to be transferred to safer areas to prevent kidnapping or assault by warring tribes. In Moreh, for example, Thangsamang Haokip, General Secretary, Kuki Students Organisation (KSO), stated that "access to education has become impossible with villages getting caught in the infighting, as well as clashes with

18 Consultation, Chizami, 2007

19 Paula Banerjee, “Between Two Armed Patriarchies: Women in Assam and Nagaland”, In Rita Manchanda, ed., *Women, War and Peace: Beyond Victimhood to Agency*, (Sage; New Delhi, 2001)p. 140

20 *ibid.*3

21 Cited in NEN Report, n.17

security forces. Take the case of Khagjogi bloc which borders Burma, in Chapikaro sub division, Chandil district. Here 90 kuki villages have been affected. There are landmines everywhere and students are killed by these land mines on their way to school. Villages are sandwiched between security forces and undergrounds. When army approaches, people are asked to move into unsafe zones by undergrounds, and used as human shields. What can people do but flee. They are displaced. Families, children end up in refugee camps with no opportunities to go to school and are often forced to work for their livelihood<sup>22</sup>. Besides 10% of state budget is given to undergrounds, and as a result, many schools which ought to have been constructed are not built<sup>23</sup>. In Nagaland, the cease fire does give a mirage of normalcy, but violent factional infighting continues on daily basis. This obstructs students from going to school, and feeling secure. In Manipur, innumerable 'bandhs' have been extremely disruptive. Educational institutions suffer from innumerable malfunctions. There is severe shortage of well trained teachers, educational institutions have been taken over either by insurgent groups, or the security forces, or have suffered destructions, been burnt down; the overall collapse of civil institutions in both the places has led to rampant corruption and misgovernance. Though such a situation affects both boys and girls, the interrelationship between conflict and education remains highly gendered. For instance, when school buildings are 'taken over' in certain affected areas, the tendency is to send the boys to the school in the neighbouring village. Girls education suffers, as the area is not considered safe, and education is perceived to be very low in the priority list. Girls who had been enrolled in schools then are made to stay at home, and work. Again while both young boys and girls face physical torture or violence by the armed forces or rival groups, men get sympathy from the community, whereas women and their families carry an additional burden of 'shame', and a fear of being ostracised by the community if the violation was of a sexual nature. This makes families doubly fearful of sending girls to school.

The gendered pattern where violence and militarization becomes one of the biggest barriers to access to education is quite similar to Kashmir. Ritu Dewan's study on Kashmir reports that from the start of the journey to and from school, young girls faced sexual harassment and humiliations—they would be teased, taunted, their *dupattas* and *burqas* would be snatched by the security forces<sup>24</sup>. The case in the north east is not too different, and such harassment persists. In Manipur, N. Sanjita, a schoolgirl, committed suicide, after she was raped by the 12<sup>th</sup>. Grenadiers at Jiribam in October 2003. The

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22 Interview with Thangsamang Haokip, General Secretary, Kuki Students Organisation (KSO), Imphal, 6th. June 2007.

23 *ibid*

24 Dewan, Ritu, "What does Azadi mean to you?" In. U. Butalia (ed). *Speaking Peace: women's Voices from Kashmir*, 2002

environment of militarization reinforces, and at times even creates new patriarchal norms about women, their bodies, and of “honour” and "shame". This is evident in the growing trend of ‘moral policing’ of education. Schools are important, and very public sites where restriction and moral policings are often conducted, and where identity politics are played out on women’s bodies. For instance, when the banned Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (a rebel group fighting for an independent homeland for the predominantly Hindu Meitei community) took up “Operation New Kangleipak” to cleanse education, one of its diktat was the dress code of traditional phanek (sarong) for girls, women and women teachers in educational institutions, accompanied by a threat that those violating the dress code and wearing saree, salwar and trousers would be shots.

Another problem that needs urgent attention is that of HIV/AIDS and drugs abuse among teenage girls students, who are increasingly becoming vulnerable, but in such an environment, unable to get access to information, help or treatment.

While looking at the context of gender, armed conflict and education, it is also important to also highlight the issue of girl child soldiers. Schools are often sites where recruitment of child soldiers takes place. This was a sensitiveness topic and difficult to explore within the limited time of the study, but it is a concern that must be flagged up for further probe. In Manipur alone, there are reportedly 900 to 1,000 girl soldiers fighting with armed groups, and girl child soldiers make up approximately 6-7 per cent of child soldiers<sup>25</sup>. In Nagaland, Evangeline, (NBCC), while speaking on the impact of conflict on Women/Girl students in Nagaland, suggested that in their state, there was a problem of young girls joining the underground, and having easy “access to money and other means.”<sup>26</sup>

### **3/ Impact of Violent Conflict on Youth**

Youth, has been defined as an age group between 15 to 24. But many point out that it is socially constructed and differs from one culture to another. Richard Curtin, one of the main theorists of the idea of youth as a transition phase, suggests that in most societies, the defining dimension of the transition to adulthood coincides with demonstrating the capacity to contribute to the economic welfare of the family. Youth is considered as a complex interplay of personal, institutional and

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25 “Girls With Guns: An Agenda on Child Soldiers for Beijing Plus Five”, See [http://66.102.9.104/search?q=cache:xT2XOgc3cPUJ:www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/story\\_id/000050.pdf+harassment+of+school+girls+in+Manipur&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=in](http://66.102.9.104/search?q=cache:xT2XOgc3cPUJ:www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/story_id/000050.pdf+harassment+of+school+girls+in+Manipur&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=in), Accessed 26<sup>th</sup>.May 2007, Time 12:24 PM

26 Evangeline (NBCC) speaking at the consultation organized by Aman as a part of this study “Assessing Needs and challenges of education (Primary and Secondary) in the midst of violent conflict in Nagaland and Manipur”. Nagaland, 13<sup>th</sup>. 14<sup>th</sup> January 2007.

macroeconomic changes that most young people have to negotiate<sup>27</sup>. Therefore, this age group becomes especially vulnerable in situations of violence and conflict. In Nagaland and Manipur systemic conflict for decades has left deep scars on the youth.

In Nagaland and Manipur, it was highlighted during the consultation that on one side there was a feeling of alienation, and an environment of militarization/gun culture. On the other, an acute situation of unemployment, drug abuse, alcoholism, lack of opportunities for higher education and better career. These together created a volatile situation, making young people susceptible to taking up arms. Decades of militarization has disrupted patterns of social relationships. It has led to contest between generations within the family. The younger generations perceive themselves as leaders, and the older generations have little control left in their hands, and out of fear, have given way to this. For example, earlier, it was the village elders who adjudicated inter-personal and family matters. Now this is increasingly done by young, gun wielding militants. There is a situation of anomie, a crises of values, and within it a mushrooming culture of gun, growing problems of small arms, among others. This is quite similar to the situation in Kashmir, where a study on the *Impact of Violence on the Student Community in Kashmir*, also demonstrated that continuous conflicting situations had led to a breakdown in social order,<sup>28</sup>. Today, in Nagaland, and Manipur, a large section of youth now tends to perceive 'gun' as a symbol of masculinity, and an easy way to "fame", "popularity", and money. Schools, often become a place where these macho roles are played out, and where every small fight carries with it the potential of getting violent.

The situation of 'insecurity' in the two states does not help. Young people also live with a constant insecurity and fear of being 'picked up' by insurgent groups or by armed forces. The problem is compounded by the sweeping powers that the state's armed forces enjoy over every local persons. It is common for innocent youths to be picked for interrogation, torture, under draconian laws.<sup>29</sup>. In Manipur for instance, there are high incidences of enforced disappearances of young people. According to Vikhole Venuh, (Head Master, CMH School, Pfutsero, Nagaland) young people are usually the targets of both insurgent groups and security personnel".<sup>30</sup> This has a serious impact on both their access to education, as well as on their mental health. In Nagaland and Manipur, 'the insurgents collect taxes from private

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27 United Nations World Youth Report, (2003:16)

28 Kashani, S, Kanth I, and Fazili G, ' The Impact of Violence on the Student Community in Kashmir', for Oxfam (India) Trust, New Delhi; under The Violence Mitigation and Amelioration Project, (2003)

29 Kashani, S, Kanth I, and Fazili G, ' The Impact of Violence on the Student Community in Kashmir', for Oxfam (India) Trust, New Delhi; under The Violence Mitigation and Amelioration Project, (2003).

30 Vikhole Venuh Head Master, CMH School, pfutsero, Nagaland. See proceeding report page 10

schools and hostels. They stay in the heart of the town and scare the students, thus causing hindrance in their education. Last year many students were injured when two insurgent groups tried to attack each other. All this has induced fear in students that prevents them from going to school and colleges.” Says Vikhole.<sup>31</sup> The impact of these various factors on high drop out rates is age of 14-16 years cannot be ruled out.

Research indicates that Manipur and Nagaland are among the six Indian states to have the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence<sup>32</sup>. Reports also indicated that most of the HIV infection in the North East is due to use of injection drugs<sup>33</sup>. The youth are also targeted for larger political agenda. The recent controversy regarding the affiliation of schools in Manipur to the Nagaland board is one such example (dealt in the section of ethnic, violent conflict and education). In both the states, student union play a significant role in politics and affinities run along ethnic lines. Hence students are often in the midst of any ethnic or other political imbroglio.

#### **4/ Structural Problems of Primary/Secondary Education System Manipur and Nagaland**

Long drawn conflict has left a deep mark on the the education systems, leading to a lot of unrest among the student community.

a/. Schools as zones of violent conflict: One of the serious problems faced in Manipur and Nagaland is “take over” or occupying of school buildings by underground insurgent groups, or by armed forces. At times, schools are turned into battle grounds as different groups clash, bullets are fired and there have been incidences of students getting caught in the cross-fire. Schools buildings are burnt down and ransacked resulting in huge loss of property as well as opportunity for education. Some of the schools that have been burnt down are Ukhrul Higher Secondary School (around Rs. 5,28,000 property of the school damaged), Kachai High School (around Rs. 30,000 property lost), Phungyar High School (Rs. 20,000 property lost), Kamjong High School (Rs. 60,000 property lost), Kaziphung Government High School (Rs. 80,000 property lost), Shangsak Government High School (Rs. 19,000 property lost), Chingai High School (Rs. 1,85,000 property lost), Raphei High School (Rs. 2,18,600 property lost) in Manipur’s most backward hill areas.<sup>34</sup>

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31 *ibid.*

32 NACO: [www.nacoonline.org](http://www.nacoonline.org); UNAIDS India Country page: [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org)

33 UNAIDS India: [www.unaids.org.in](http://www.unaids.org.in), NACO Annual Report 2002-2004.

34 Imphal Free Press, 4<sup>th</sup>.July 2007

Violence has also left its scars in the minds of school going children. In Manipur and Nagaland, a number of children had witnessed/experienced violence. In a context of increasing anomie and general devastation that accompanies violent conflicts, this had serious impact on their mental health. According to Ms. Kezevino Krome, (EBRC, Pfutsero, Nagaland) "what is happening all around does affect children and their ability to learn. However, the teaching community who have also been part of this society and victims, and with no awareness or training about these issues of traumatised children and their learning barriers, we often do not understand"<sup>35</sup> Many respondents also pointed out that the overall environment of violence also leads to increasing violence within the school. "In such a situation, what happens in the classroom often mirrors what is going on outside." Small squabbles can turn into violent fights.

*b/ Shortage of good teachers* : One of the main concerns voiced in the field was the Chronic shortage of qualified teachers, and an oversupply of unqualified or underqualified teachers. Many qualified persons have left, or tend to find jobs else. Stating the situation as it exists on the ground in Nagaland, Vikholie Venuh stated that "many teachers who are teaching today in government schools, are technically not trained to do so and are in the job due to politics and connections. Private Schools in order to pay less salary, and earn more profit, employ teachers with the minimum qualifications. Therefore, teachers are neither sincere, nor regular in the schools. Many of them have no commitment to uplift the society. They took up this job for their survival only"<sup>36</sup>. The situation in Manipur seemed even more serious. Voicing this concern, Leban Serto pointed out "in Manipur, teacher quality is deteriorating day by day due to so many reasons, such as law and order situation. There is poor infrastructure development, lack of vision and mission for education, political interference in recruitment of teachers, improper payment, lack of involvement of guardians etc. In Manipur, there is also a huge disparity between schools in the valley and schools in hills, the latter being quite neglected"<sup>37</sup>

Added to this is the problem of "*substitution*" in the schools. This means that a teacher who is supposed to teach in a school, employs someone else by a paltry sum per month. According to a study conducted by VVD (Volunteers for Village Development, Manipur) "almost all the non local teachers do not go to their postings, they employ mostly local drop outs paying just Rs. 1000 and carry out their own private business elsewhere. In some cases, schools are run by substitutes as private school denying the poor

35 Interview with Kezevino Krome, TOT, EBRC, Pfutsero, Nagaland, 17th. January 2007.

36 Venuh, n.30.

37 Serto, n.11



children access to their basic right to free primary education (for instance, Molnom Govt. UJB school and Urangpat LP school).<sup>38</sup> In addition, many teachers also remain totally absent but get full salary. These teachers either have understanding with village chiefs or manage to sign their weekly or monthly attendance at a time. The problem is further compounded by "irregular attendance, non-functioning of government schools, alarming drop outs, non functioning of school management committee, fictitious enrollment numbers, non implementation of midday meal schemes.

The situation in Nagaland seemed better. A major role in accounting for this improvement has been played by the "communitisation of education" process. Under this, the community as a key stakeholder has been empowered to hold teachers accountable, approve their leave sanctions and salary slips and to ensure implementation of government schemes. The communitisation (dealt in detail later) of education however has been a success where the Village Education Committee is active. It nevertheless had had very positive impact on the working of educational system in Nagaland.

*c/ Problems faced by teachers, and School Administrators:* Interviews with teachers, school administrators also brought out a number of problems they faced. The conflict situation, as many pointed out, also disturbs the state of mind, and way of living of the teachers. One of the biggest concern voiced by the teachers was that of security. They faced interrogation from the army when it sometimes took over the schools, or came looking for insurgents. Teachers, principals and other staff of schools also faced threat, and were at times direct targets of attacks. This has been the case in the conflict over School affiliation. In another incidence, the Yawol Kanna Lup group in Manipur shot 6 males teachers in the leg, and severely beat up two women teachers as "punishment" for helping students cheat in their exams. Insurgents groups also collected money in form of 'taxes' from schools and colleges, including government schools. According to one respondent (name withheld) the NSCN (IM) collects Rs. 300 annually from schools in Nagaland. Teachers face harassment and pay extortion money, and cuts from their salary as an established norms. The fear of the gun leaves no space to refuse or ask questions.

Another problem faced by the teachers was that of political interference. According to Kevizino Krome, "Political parties have treated the teachers like a football, kicking them to different parts of the State, when they are not in favor of them. Teachers don't have academic freedom as they live in constant fear. It has serious impact and has stagnated progress of education. All this has created fear among

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38 See Anomalies of Education in the Manipur Hill Areas, VVD –FGC Report, Ukhrul, Manipur

teachers and students. Therefore, I would like to sent out a strong message that ‘teachers be spared from the ugly hands of politician and be given an autonomy whereby the teachers and student community will be at peace to march ahead with quality education’<sup>39</sup>

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39 Krome, Consultation, Nagaland, 13th. January.

## The Case of Communitization of Education in Nagaland

### A Unique Experiment

In Nagaland, a marked change is visible on the ground. In Pufsero, Phek District, "there has been a significant increase in school enrolment, attendance of teachers, reduction in the dropout rates," says Atele Rune,<sup>40</sup> Teacher, Nazreth School, Pufsero. This is also true in other parts of Nagaland. According to Unicef's study, between 2002-2004, there has been significant enrolment of both boys and girls with zero percent drop out in as many as 23 out of 28 villages covered under the study. Teacher attendance improved more than 90 percent in 18 of the 28 villages and unauthorized absence has been totally eliminated in 17 of the 28 villages. Data from 17 of 28 village schools showed a clear trend of children shifting from private schools to government schools indicating growing confidence with government schools.<sup>41</sup> This slow revolution is attributed to what has been termed as "communitization" in Nagaland.

Communitisation is a unique partnership between the government and the community, aimed at improving the delivery of public utility system. Within it, the community is recognized as a key stakeholder, beneficiary, and manager of public goods. It therefore involves transfer of government assets to the community, empowerment of community through delegation of governmental powers of management and supervision of day - to - day functioning of employees to village committees. It also demands ensuring accountability of government employees posted at the service delivery level to local communities and control of government assets by village committees including the responsibility for maintenance, amelioration and augmentation of assets. "Communitisation is based on triple 'T' approach. Trust the user community. Train them to discharge their newfound responsibilities and Transfer governmental powers and resources in respect of management", says Shri R.S.Pandey, the then chief Secretary of Nagaland and pioneer of the Communitization program<sup>42</sup> The passing of the

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<sup>40</sup>Atele Rune, Teacher, Pufesero, Interviewed on 16th. January 2007

<sup>41</sup> Communitisation of Social Capital to Empower Rural Nagaland. See website : <http://nagarealm.com/index.php?name=News&file=article&sid=3660&theme=Printer>. Accessed 4<sup>th</sup>. June 2007

<sup>42</sup> R.S. Pandey, "Communitisation in Nagaland: A Unique Experiment in Empowering People, See website: [http://pib.nic.in/release/rel\\_print\\_page.asp?reled=27034](http://pib.nic.in/release/rel_print_page.asp?reled=27034), Accessed 4<sup>th</sup>. June. 2007.

Nagaland Communitisation of Public Institutions and services Act, 2002 launched this process in primary education, grass root health services, electricity, and is now has been extended to other public services.

In the sphere of rural education, communitisation has meant empowering the village community to own and to develop the government primary and middle schools as its own. For this, a local legal authority, the Village Education Committee was created. Mr. K. Z. Mero is one such VEC member in the village of Chizami, Phek District<sup>43</sup>. In the same village there are 14 other members, each with a tenure of 3 years, elected by the Village Council. The VEC in Chizami includes a women representative, a religious representative from the local church, student representative, as well as a representative from the parents, and others from the village councils. Women's representation is not just a case with Chizami but has been built into the communitisation act itself. "We, the community are the owners of the educational institutions. All money be it for the SSA, or salaries of teachers and other staff must be channeled through us. It is all accountable and transparent." says Mr. Mero. He further adds, "we practice no work, no pay to stop absenteeism of teachers and other such problems." This has been possible because all salaries of government employees in the village school comes in advance to the VEC account, which then disburses the salary. The VEC is also entrusted with the task of ensuring discipline and regular attendance of teachers, and deduct salaries. All leaves of the school employees requires prior sanctioning by VEC. For long term leaves, adequate notice must be given to the VEC so to make inter-school utilization of teachers, and select/recommend substitute appointments. Funds for purchase of text books, furniture, construction and repair of buildings are also channeled by the government through the VEC account, and under its monitoring. The VEC was also made responsible for universal enrolment. In Chizami, The headmaster of the local government school is the secretary of the VEC, and maintains accounts. This is audited by the community, as well as the by the government. When, the local elementary school was being rebuilt under the SSA program, it was closely monitored by the VEC, and decided by the community to use the money efficiently and construct an additional room

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43 Based on field work in Chizami, Nagaland, January 2007

The VEC meets thrice a year and takes stock of information/problems faced by students, teachers, parents. If there are major problems, it is then referred to the Village Council. Many of these problems in Chizami have to do with shortage of uniform, pens and stationeries. Problems also arise when differences between the VEC and the school governing authority or the head Master. This happens, at times when the VEC is not too familiar with the running of the school but must be consulted for all governing decisions. Problems also arise in regularisation and disciplining of teachers who may have been appointed through political contacts. In places where the overall education is high, and VEC is constituted of qualified people, they have been effective in the overall working, raising enrollment levels. For example, the communitisation has been extremely successful in kunuma, Kohima district, as overall the village has high development and many members with higher education, or in professional or beuracritic services. In contrast, according the Asagla Phom, in Longelong, there have been other problems. “The overall development is low, and it is difficult for people to break out of the traditional power hierarchy and question elders and tribal head in the village. As a result, the communitisation program does not have the same accountability or transparency<sup>44</sup>.” There is also a need to link communitisation to RTI Act (Right to Information Act. This though has been done on paper, but RTI remains extremely difficult to implement in Nagaland. At one level there is a lack of awareness. But more difficult is the fact that given the fact that money is paid as ransome, tax to the underground groups, people are fearful of filing RTI applications as this can invite threats.<sup>45</sup>

However, despite these challenges, communitisation of education provides a remarkable experiment in primary education. It offers an alternative to privatization or government management of education, a case that primary and other public utility systems have much to learn from.

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44 Asangla Phom, Phom Baptist Christian Association ,Longleng, Nagaland, Interviwed on 14<sup>th</sup>. Jan. 2007

45 Interview on 10<sup>th</sup>. June.2007. Name withheld.

## Chapter-3

### Review of peace modules

#### I.I .Defining peace?

*“If you have to talk about peace than you have to understand that the tree of conflict is very complicated.*

*You have to be careful not to simply look at the branches but also examine the roots”*

(Interview with Jenine Meitie, Human Rights Alert)

‘Peace’ in Manipur and Nagaland seemed to have many interpretation. In a region where a number of fault lines run and form the basis of violent conflict- state versus community, between different insurgent groups, along lines of ethnicity, language, the word peace itself seemed to have become suspect. We were often asked what we meant by the word “peace”- Did we mean ‘peace’ which can be imposed from above without addressing the grievances of people who felt alienated and which did not address issues of “justice”? Did we mean silent peace brought about by ceasefires- a situation where the more overt ‘war’ is absent, but innocent people continue to be killed, gross violation of human rights is still being perpetuated from various quarters, and an overwhelming sense of insecurity stalks the everyday living of ordinary people? For instance, in Manipur, with a large presence of armed forces, bitter conflict and distrust among the hill and the valley people, 33 insurgent groups operating, one has to be careful when and where one goes, who one talks to and what one speaks? Calls from unfamiliar numbers, evening visits to peoples houses often go answered, as the fear of extortion from armed underground groups loomed large. Hence, it is important to define at the outset the very term peace. Peace, as we see it from the perspective of the discriminated and the disempowered cannot be delinked from human security and justice. As an active concepts, it must go beyond the situation of ‘absence of war’ to ensure conditions of overall wellbeing, freedom from fear and structural inequalities, and enabling an environment for sustaining life and human dignity for all- in the ‘home’ and the ‘street’<sup>46</sup>. One of Aman’s long term objective is to promote peace education/peace course as a small step in the direction of creating such an enabling condition. Our approach is not to provide a peace prescription, but rather to transform conflict towards non-violent ways of dealing with differences. Hence review of peace modules/courses/education was an important exercise as way of getting inputs and feed back for designing a comprehensive peace course that is holistic, as well as

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46 Too often violence within homes and against women remains invisible despite feminist research having illustrated the continuum of violence from the battlefield, to the streets to the homes.

contextualised to the ground realities of the region. Given below is the findings of our review of peace education/courses/modules in Nagaland and Manipur.

## **2/. Reviewing Peace Modules/Courses/initiatives in Nagaland and Manipur**

As of now, we did not come across a comprehensive peace course that deals with the theoretical as well as the practical underpinnings of peace, though the need for such course was expressed by a cross section of people we interviewed- peace activists, school teachers, parents, women's groups, among others. There are some initiatives that deal with building awareness for peace education, or with the issue of peace within gender or Gandhian studies. We thereby broadened our definition of peace studies to include varied initiatives that i/ in some measure are geared towards constructively engaging with violent conflict with the objective of transforming it, and ii / towards creating values, knowledge, skills, attitudes towards a culture of peace. Given the fact that peace education goes beyond traditional educational settings and involves the community at large, and that the region has a rich experience of vibrant community/women's/church based peace initiatives, we blurred the distinction between the formal and informal structure. This enabled us to tap directly into activities of a cross section of people, particularly women, as valuable resources that needs to be mainstreamed in a comprehensive peace course/module, but would otherwise have been rendered invisible. What we describe below is by no means a comprehensive list of all individuals, organizations and initiatives dealing with the broad issue of peace or education in Manipur and Nagaland. Given that it is a pilot study being conducted to feed into Aman's objective to develop a peace course for the region in future, we confine ourselves to what can be taken as representative cases.

### **2.1 Manipur.**

**a/Peace Promotion Project** - The context of Peace Promotion Project (PPP) was the Naga Kuki violent conflict of 1993 which resulted in a death toll of over 800 people, displaced 304 villages and affected another 144 village.<sup>47</sup> The killings continued for almost 10 years. The PPP included a network of NGO's which began its intervention by giving relief assistance, meeting immediate needs of the affected families, and then working to promote unity and bonds among the rival ethnic group. The second stage involved intense negotiations were carried between the affected communities to allow each other to

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47 Interview with Mr. Jubilate, Volunteers for Village Development, 3<sup>rd</sup>.June.2007, Imphal.

return and settle back in their homes and villages. A committee was formed with representatives from Kukis, represented by Kuki Imnpi Manipur (KIM) and Nagas represented by United Naga Council (UNC). Mixed groups were formed at the local level. The next step was to build their capacities, skills and knowledge on peace, and democratic processes of conflict resolution. The PPP program has ended. According to Mr. Jubliate (Director, VVD and active in the PPP) “the time duration for the PPP project was too short to come up with any concrete and substantive results. There is a need to take the learning of the PPP and relate it to other conflicts in Manipur, as between the hill people and the valley people”. The PPP has undoubtedly provided an important framework for imparting peace education at the grass root and community level in Manipur. However, it seems to have taken a back seat as the Naga-Kuki conflict has receded. It has worked successfully on issues of reconciliation between the Nagas and the Kukis. In some of the villages where the PPP was successful, a major achievement has been the doing away with the system of tax payment by the Kuki tribes to the Naga Villages around which they live. The challenge in applying this framework to other conflicts in Manipur, where a number of core issues of justice, socio-economic marginalization, alienation remains unresolved; where a number of political groups operate with their own distinct vision, is undoubtedly riddled with a host of complications, and is an issue that needs further probing.

**b/Volunteers For Village Development.(VVD):** VVD has been working with communities in the hill districts of Manipur by building networks with other NGOs for peace promotion, mediating in conflict for reconciliation, rehabilitating displaced villages and training peace cadres. Two important initiatives of the VVD have been the Mangai Project, and the Fraternal Green Cross (FGC), both focusing on peaceful coexistence between the Naga and the Kukis. The Mangai Project uses the traditional concept of friendship or Mangai to build peace between two conflicting communities of the Nagas and Kukis by focusing on children. The *Mangai* is an age old tradition where two people from different communities would become friends, and refer to each other as *mangai*. The friendship is supposed to be very strong where one can even sacrifice their life for the other’s well being. This tradition was practiced by the families of different communities, and VVD has tried to revive it, working with children and encouraging them to have *mangais* across Kuki and Naga communities. Through this, they hope to build a generation free from animosity.

The FGC has emerged out of the PPP work in the violent hit areas of Senapati and Ukhrul. The VVD-FGC worked in stages. The first phase focused reaching out to more and more affected people through



relief. Under this, GI sheets (roofing material) were provided and the community would help in building the houses that were burned. This was also done to generate some kind of community support system. In some villages, community also decided to shift their location, and for that assistance was provided by the FGC-VVD by means of water pipe-lines and other such help. The next phase focused on the healing process, and peace building. They organized community sports where attempt was made to bring together both the communities. Another initiative was the Pulpit Exchange Program, where Pastors from both the communities were employed. The Naga Pastors would go to the Kuki village for Sunday prayers and talk about peace and forgiveness and vice-versa. Through such processes, they have been able to build community based organizations, like the Area Peace Committee, the Developmental Partners Coordination Committee (DPCC) etc in the some of the most sensitive areas. At present, FGC has been trying to withdraw and create sustainable CBO's, and work for long term peace between the two communities.

**c/.Women building a culture of Peace.** As Bimola Devi, (Dean of Social Science, Political Science Department, Manipur University) stated, “women in Manipur have a long history of being peace promoters and peace builders.”<sup>48</sup> In the present scenario, every community in Manipur has a strong women's (mostly mothers) front. Among the Meitei community it is the Meira Paibis, the Naga women's association amongst the Nagas and the Kuki women's association of the Kuki community. The Meira Paibis or the 'torch bearers' have a long history of struggle since the Monarchical and British rule. The present 'Meira Paibi movement is the continuation of the 'Nisha Bandh' movement, wherein women have linked their activism of fighting alcoholism, drug abuse, violence within the community, to resisting human rights violation by security forces, and excesses committed by the insurgent groups to some extent. Forming human wall to prevent innocent local youth from being forcibly taken away by security forces, snatching innocents from their custody, naked protest against rape of Manorma and for repeal of Armed Forces Special Powers Act have been some of the powerful and effective ways through which the Meira Paibis have linked activism from home/community/ street, and between human security , justice and peace.

Similarly in the hills, the Naga women and the Kuki women are the guardians in their respective tribes. They have played a pivotal role in restoring peace and harmony during Naga-Kuki clashes, where

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<sup>48</sup>Prof. Bimola Devi, Dean of Social Science, Political Science Department, Manipur University, Interviewed on 6th June 2007

gruesome killings became a way of ethnic cleansing . It was at that moment that women walked long stretches in difficult terrain (sometimes walking 3-4 days continuously) to meet their respective armed militias and underground outfits to tell them to stop killing each other. The Kuki Mothers' Association, also called "the Kuki Mothers' Association for Peace and Social Reformation" also played an active role in the clashes in Churachandpur District between the Paite and Kuki communities. Women of both the communities came out, offered joint prayers and appealed to end the mindless violence. The Naga Women's Association has been extremely active and the Tangkhul Shanao Long (All Tangkhul Women's Association) was honored with the award given by the Indian Federation of Small and Medium News Papers in Sept. 1995 for their courage and struggle in bringing peace and development.

**d/ Centre For Peace Education, Manipur (CFPEM):** CFPEM was formed in 2000 by a group of peace educationist, and teachers who felt there was an urgent need for peace education at the local level. CFPEM has been working to promote peace education, holding peace related workshops in university and colleges. CFPEM also held a month long certificate course on conflict and peace studies. The course dealt with wide ranging topics relating to conflict and peace. Altogether 26 participants registered during the one month course from local hey represented the teaching community and NGOS/FBOs\_

### **Challenges**

A number of problems also must be mentioned with regards to these efforts. The women's (mothers) associations may join hands at a high point of conflict, but unfortunately, interaction amongst them is rare. They mostly work in isolation and independently focusing mostly on community/ethnic specific problems without developing a common strategy. While talking to different groups, it was striking how prejudices, and bitterness would spill. The women's group also consisted mostly of older women, mothers which gave them a special status in the community, but they often did not take up feminist agenda. For instance, on the issue of political representation in the village, many of these women who had been members of these associations would categorically state that customary laws, even if they were opposed to women., could not be changed. Recruitment of young and new members was also a problem. But one of the biggest problems in Manipur was the the inability to cross ethnic divide, suspicion and biases. This seemed to run very deep was true of many groups, individuals, activists- be it women's association, human rights groups, peace activists, students unions, many NGO workers. The fact that each community also had its own insurgent groups, its youth wing and host of other

organizations – it was not cooperation but rather balance of fear that maintained some form of status quo Manipur.

## **2.2/Nagaland**

**a/ Naga Hoho:** Naga Hoho is a federation of all Naga tribes, (or what can be described as a traditional parliament) with representation at three levels, the village, the tribe, and finally the all Naga Hoho at the apex. Formed at Workha in 1994, Naga Hoho represent all tribes living beyond the borders of Nagaland and has played a pivotal role in peace building, negotiations and reconciliation. As a representative body of the Nagas, the Hoho enjoys tremendous legitimacy, which enables it to play an active role all forms of political and strategic dialogue, be it with the Indian state, or with the different groups like the NSCN (IM) and NSCN (K)<sup>49</sup> and between conflicting tribes to maintain peace.

The Naga Hoho has often worked in close coordination with the NMA, NSF, NPMHR and civil-political groups among the Nagas towards transforming conflict. In one of their recent efforts, the Naga Hoho along with the other civil society bodies have begun a ‘people to people’ with groups in Assam in the bordering areas of the two states where Assamese and Naga tribes inhabit together and tensions over border demarcation has been a source of tension. The initiative is known as ‘**People Committee for Peace Initiative**’. Similar efforts have been made with groups in Manipur, particularly with the Meiteis, but here prejudices run deep and the dialogues have met with little success. However, one of the biggest draw back of the Naga Hoho remains that it is largely a male structure. When inquired about women’s representation during the interview with one of the executives of Naga hoho, he stated that there are none, and mentioned that there is a Women Hoho to take care of the women’s problems<sup>50</sup>. This is a cross cutting pattern that can be observed in many civil societies in Nagaland. Even the Naga Council which boasts of having women representatives has only 2 women amongst 38 men.

**b/ Women building a culture of Peace:** The Naga Mother’s Association (NMA), founded in 1984 is one of the most prominent voices of Naga women. The impulse for mother’s to come together was a sense of concern and frustration of the mothers against growing menace of drug abuse, alcoholism among the youth, and an ever increasing domestic violence. Initially NMA worked closely with the different government departments to control inflow of drugs into the State, and also worked to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. They were also the first to identify and report the first few cases of HIV/AIDS

49 National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak Muivah) and National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Kaplant)

50 Interviewed on 10.06.07

in the State. By the 90's, however, Nagaland saw mindless killings and violence, perpetuated by the security forces, as well as a fall out factional infighting among Naga insurgent groups. According to Kasheli, President of the NMA "everyday a dead body would be found. Someone's son was killed everyday. We would go and give the body a burial". But the mothers had to act. They soon formed a Peace Team, and began a campaign 'Shed No More Blood'. They were also the first to voice the concern of the women, the worse victims of conflict, into the mainstream discourse. NMA has a long history of struggle where they have resisted young and innocent youth been taken away and indiscriminate killings, by both the army and factional groups. NMA is one of the strongest women groups, who have not only struggled to protect innocent lives, but have also reached out beyond Nagaland to narrate the stories of human rights violations and injustice towards women and by this build credibility for their peace work<sup>51</sup>.

Watsu Mongdung is another prominent women's group, mostly representing Ao women. It has been a strong voice demanding justice for the mass rape of women in Mokokchung by the security forces. Watsu Mongdung has worked towards promoting self reliance among women, especially amongst families where there are no men. They have raised issues of women's rights, like women property rights. They have also acted as a strong force, negotiating and mediating between people of Mokokchung and the army, to bring about peace<sup>52</sup>.

In Nagaland the sense of tradition among women is very strong. Therefore, as mothers, they have been able to exert some authority. But when it has come to asserting themselves in public roles, women have kept away or had little space<sup>53</sup>.

**c/ Naga People's Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR):** NPMHR was formed on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1978, in response to a situation of gross violation of human rights by the armed forces. There are three sectors of NPMHR, the Delhi, South and Nagaland sector. Each sector has a convener. And then there is a Secretariat of the NPMHR.

The NPMHR works in collaboration with the other civil society groups in addressing issues of human rights violation. It has been on the forefront of the Naga struggle and has filed a number of PILs to

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51 From interview with Ms. Kashili, President, NMA on 12.06.07

52 Banerjee. P, ' Between Two Armed Patriarchies: Women in Assam and Nagaland' in *Women, War and Peace in South Asia: beyond Victimhood to Agency*, 2001 Sage Publications India Ltd, New Delhi

53 Ibid pg 165

bring to fore violation or denial of human rights. As for dealing with internal conflicts between groups and communities are concerned, NPMHR has chosen not to interfere and leaves it to the tribe to sort things out. The NPMHR has also been, at times criticizes for not adequately addressing human rights violation by under ground groups. NPMHR, however has played a crucial role in persuading the different factions not to break the ceasefire issues. They have also been playing an active role in the on going people to people dialogue with the 'People Committee for Peace Initiative' in Assam.<sup>54</sup>.

**d/ Naga Students Federation(NSF):** NSF is the Naga student's representative body, and also been active in peace negotiations. It has undertaken different initiatives to reform the education system. In one of their recent efforts, NSF has conducted a thorough study of the school system and understanding the number of teacher in every school, in different important areas of Nagaland. The study revealed huge discrepancy in the number of teachers, in the number of class rooms, the educational qualification of the teachers and in the subjects been taught, from district to district. NSF has also raised questions regarding the relevance of the curriculum to the Nagas. In this context, they have also worked on developing a more contextualized curriculum. However, even at the NSF, women remain missing from all decision making position.

**e/ Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC):** The Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC) is the apex body of all Baptist church organizations in Nagaland. There are about 1343 churches under the NBCC. There are 20 associations under NBCC. The local churches come under these associations, representing respective tribes. NBCC has the following departments; Educational Department (Sundays schools), NDO (with the aim to create a holistic development), New Life Ministry (works on HIV/AIDS and other concerns of the youth), Women's Department and the Nagaland Missionary Movement.

The NBCC in the past has played a crucial role in the Indo – Naga Conflict negotiations. However, NBCC has since over the decades stepped back from this, and confined it self more to addressing internal conflict amongst the communities and groups. It must be mentioned that the Church in Nagaland, with a predominantly christian population, enjoys a lot of respect and influence. In case of conflict between tribes, members of NBCC's peace Committee first talk to the leaders of the tribe and then talk to local people, urge them to stop violence, and attempt at negotiation. The key word in their approach is to initiate a dialogue. The NBCC has very effectively used the teaching of the bible to talk and promote peace in different levels. However, the Church is also at times becomes caught in violence.

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54 <http://nativenet.uthscsa.edu/archive/nl/9408/0237.html>, accessed on 30<sup>th</sup> of July, 2007

Rev. Kari shared that the Church often gets used as a shelter by under ground groups, and at times becomes the site of cross firing either with the army, or among the different factions. They have made efforts to stop this and are campaigning to make Churches a 'peace zone'<sup>55</sup>.

**f/Morung Foundation:** *Morung for Indigenous Affairs & Just Peace* works with a vision of 'Just Peace', which derives its belief from the idea that true and lasting peace cannot exist without justice. Morung Foundation runs a daily newspaper Morung Express.

They began their work by conducting series of workshops on peace building, in different parts of the north eastern states. From all this emerged their understanding of various issues on the ground, which led them to start the daily newspaper, with the vision of creating a sustainable impact on the ground. They figured that building a peace course was difficult for them, as people have very little time to devote to such kind of programs. Morung Express was thus set up with the larger vision to work with the grassroots, the marginalized and towards realizing the vision of ensuring Just Peace. They, through their daily news paper, want to promote the concept of values and peace. They approach peace as a political agenda and not just 'absence of War'. Thus Akhum Lungchari<sup>56</sup> suggested that, peace education should address the larger political issues, to help in contextualizing the different things happening on the ground. Morung Express is two years old, and is based in Dimapur.

**g/ Peace Channel:** Peace Channel works with youth, and has been the brain child of Rev. Father C.P. Anto. The peace channel is path breaking initiative where the message of peace and humanity is passed through the medium of television. This channel seeks to transform the culture of violence by engaging the youth as leaders and peace activists. They conduct training programs, seminars and workshops for students, youth, employees and other professionals to develop skills to cope with conflict by peaceful means. They are based in Dimapur.

**h/Center For Gandhian Studies and Research(CGSAR), Nagaland University, Lumami, Nagaland :**  
The Center for Gandhian Studies and Research (CGSAR) is a UGC sponsored program. The Center started functioning with effect from February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006 and Prof. A. Lanunungsang Ao is the Director of the Center.

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55 Interviewed on 12.06.07

56 Interviewed on 09.06.07

The Center will work in collaboration with other organizations and groups working towards peace education. The strategies adopted by the Center will be to identify potential institution/organizations/bodies including individuals who are working in the field of Gandhian thoughts, and peace and development, gather information and examine the relevance of those programs in the context of local situation. Accordingly, the Center will prepare a working directory of such information for easy communication.

The course has been designed to address concepts like conflict resolution, strategies and concepts of peace building and human rights and then further delineating Gandhian concepts and methods of dealing with conflict. According to Prof. A. Lanunungsang Ao<sup>57</sup>, While churches have talked about peace, through Gandhian Studies, the course would be the first attempt in the state to actually look at method of transforming conflict through non violence means.

**Challenges:** Though various institutions, traditional structures, civil societ groups exist within the Naga Society which have pro actively worked towards peace and human security, however some challenges exist. Tribal divisions, for instance often act as barriers. Women’s representation in decision making remains very limited, though some efforts are being made to change this. Women groups like NMA and Ao women association are have played an important role for over two decades and have been able to negotiate and carve out their strong identity. And yet NMA has kept away from raising other critical issues of representation or equal property rights.

The Church, which in the past had played a crucial role in addressing the larger conflict, has confined itself increasingly to spiritual matters. The Center for Gandhian Studies and Research (CGSAR) is a crucial intervention. However, as Dr. Lanunungsang Ao expressed, how relevant the teachings of Gandhi will be in Naga society is yet to be seen.<sup>58</sup>

### **Recommendations**

From the discussion presented in this report, the following recommendations are made as points that need urgent action

**1/ The need to “mainstreaming conflict” in the ongoing "Educational for All" initiatives.** At the national level, the focus can be on the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)<sup>1</sup>, and at the global level, on the

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<sup>57</sup> Interviewed on 13.06.07

<sup>58</sup> *ibid.*

MDGs. Indeed, it would be worthwhile at this stage to do a micro level, in depth research/documentation on the problems and challenges faced by the SSA in the conflict affected states of the North East. This would be an effective tool to inform policy, as well for advocacy. Lack of authentic data/statistic about enrollment/drop outs was also found to be a problem. many complained that such data is often compromised in order to avail funds for schemes like mid-day meal. Hence, such a micro level research would also help to highlight these gaps.

**2/ Need for a campaign for making schools 'peace-zones'.** As has been elaborated in the report, schools have been targeted, burnt down, occupied, as well as turned into battleground by security forces and insurgent groups. This is in violation of international law, and there is an urgent need to involve different sections of society, religious leader, community leaders, peace activists, women's groups and other CBO's/NGO's to build a campaign against this.

**3/ Need for systematical on curriculum bias in Syllabus.** The importance of this cannot be emphasised enough, given the potential it carries to inculcate prejudices, hatred, or positive values of tolerance, peace and co-existence.

**4/ Training of Teachers on peace education.** Teachers play an important role in molding minds, and are the key to transferring values based, peace education. However, in conflict affected areas, shortage of qualified teachers is an acute problem, as is the oversupply of under-qualified teachers. Many teachers are themselves victims of the situation, and yet must be able to deal with young mind. Hence capacity building and training of teachers on peace education is an urgent need.

**5/ Need for in depth research to investigate the links between violent conflict and high drop out rates in Manipur and Nagaland.** As discussed in the report, both the states fare relatively well in comparison to the rest of India as far as primary and secondary education is concerned. However, the growing drop out rate, and a higher drop out rate for girls in states where women have traditionally enjoyed better status, is a disturbing trend. "Does this, or how much is this trend linked with violent conflict' is a question that needs to be urgently researched, and addressed.

**6/ Need to design a vibrant peace course as a point of intervention:** In the strife torn region of the North East, years of militarization and violent conflicts of varied nature has shrunk the civic –political life, and created an atmosphere of insecurity, distrust, bitterness and prejudice. There is an urgent need to create a culture of peace and dialogue. Towards this, a multi-disciplinary and well designed peace course is the need of the hour. It is important that such a course should be contextualised within the re-



ality of the region, but also adequately emphasise "internationality" in investigating issues of violence, conflict, war, and its many ramifications. The problem with many of the peace initiatives in the region has been their compartmentalisation, and the inability to build solidarity outside entrenched divides. Hence, the peace course should address interconnectedness between the local and the global, between ethnicity, gender, militarisation, and other issues.

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# **ANNEXURE**

## **Assessing Needs and challenges of education (Primary and Secondary) in the midst of violent conflict in Nagaland and Manipur**

*Report on the proceedings of the Consultation Report held at the Resource Centre, North East Network, Chizami, Nagaland, 13th-14th January 2007.*

*(Supported by National Foundation of India)*

Aman Trust in partnership with North East Network (NEN), held a one and a half day consultation on "Assessing needs and challenges of education in the midst of violent conflict in Nagaland and Manipur". The consultation brought together a cross section of participants from the two states- NGO's, school teachers, Village Committee and Village Education Committee (VEC) members, church groups, women's organisations, human rights groups, government officials involved with the implementation of the Sarva Shiksha Anhiyan (SSA), youth organisations, organisations working on peace education. The idea behind the consultation was to bring together different stake holders involved and working on primary/secondary education so as to effectively flag up concerns that impact education amidst violent conflict; to broadly get inputs and suggestions from the ground on Aman's ongoing pilot study on the issue, and the direction in which future intervention and work is needed. The consultation also provided an opportunity to build a network of concerned persons and organisations in the North east.

The need for such an initiative arose from the fact that both Nagaland and Manipur are regions affected by long drawn violent conflict. As an organisation working on conflict prevention, and on pedagogy for peace, we have been concerned about the fact that both the states have seen increase militarisation - be it in the name of countering insurgency or on the streets, in the increase in numbers of small arms, breakdown of governance, gross violation of people's human rights and dignity, rise in ethnic nationalism. Against this context, an urgency was felt to (re)look at the interface between education and conflict. For at one level, schools can reproduce the values/attitudes/social relations of dominant group, and the education systems are most often complicit in conflict. Indeed, text books and questions of state board affiliation have been in the midst of controversy in parts of Manipur and Nagaland. At the same time, education can be a powerful tool for intervention, to change mindset, to meet new needs, to build peace, to rebuild societies.

The consultation began with Seno Tshuah, Coordinator of North East Network, Chizami welcoming the participants and facilitating their introductions. This was followed by a brief introduction about Aman and about the purpose of the meeting by Jamal Kidwai, Director, Aman Trust. **The First Session**, facilitated by Jamal, focused on the broad "**Issues and Challenges to Primary/Secondary Education amidst violent conflict**" with two presentations- by **Dr. Chubatola Aier**, (Education Forum, Mokukchung/Aao Women's Association ) from Nagaland, and **Dr. Leban Serto** (Centre For Peace Education) from Manipur. The presentations high-lighted some of the key issues about education in both the conflict affected states, and emphasised the need for peace education, thereby setting the tone of the discussions.

i. Speaker: Dr. Chubatola Aier: "**Issues and Challenges to Primary/Secondary Education amidst violent conflict in Nagaland**" : Chubatola emphasised on two important issues 1/value education which will produce "*the complete person*" and not just be primarily exam oriented.2/the need to integrate peace education into the educational system system to gear up "*towards fostering values, attitudes, and conduct to forge a new culture of peace and non-violence.*-to replace the deep rooted culture

of war and violence and its consequent relations of domination, oppression and imposition."<sup>59</sup> She described peace by two words in the Aao language- *yimjung* and *'tesunep'*. *'Yimjung'* is the external state of absence of conflict and violence. *Tesunep* is the emotional and spiritual well being that helps one to cope with all circumstances of life, it implies stillness and peace of mind. Thus, peace ,according to Chubatola is understood not only as the absence of conflict, but implies the total well-being of a person. Given below is the paper as presented by Dr. Chubatola:

"India has a long and respected tradition of learning, and today its educational system are guided by NPR, 1986. Accordingly, each state has its own Board and Departments to frame and implement policies relevant to their own needs and contents. However, though each educational institution will have its objectives and attitudes, we fail to see a clear philosophy of education which will produce "*the complete person*". There is no effective engagement with value education for individual development and for nation building. The school and its activities are primarily exam oriented and prepares its product to such employment on the basis of their results. This surely is not the only function of education.

Life, as Krishnamurthy writes is not only passing on examination and finding a job. Life must be understood and experienced in all its multifaceted fullness. Attainment of peace is one of life's greatest gifts. Here, peace is understood not only as the absence of conflict, but implies the total well-being of a person. In the Ao language, we have two words for peace "*yimjung* and *'tesunep'*. *'Yimjung'* is the external state of absence of conflict and violence. *Tesunep* is the emotional and spiritual well being that helps one to cope with all circumstances of life, it implies stillness and peace of mind.

As such education, in order to fulfill the scope of its function must be able to provide for not only a particular need of the people, but should also cater to those needs leading to a totally fulfilled life. This is where inclusion of the principles of peace building in the school curriculum become important.

Recent years have seen a deeper emphasis being given to include "value education" in school curriculum's. This is a very positive step. This is a part of the existing curriculum into which peace building syllabi can be easily merged. However a weakness is that, very often policies are given only lip service and there is no sincerity in quality education implementation. If only all indicators involved in various levels of education would understand the influential role they play, and would take the pains to engage with the texts and materials in such a way as too see practical results, there is no reason why we should not see generations of conscientious citizens striving for, and achieving peace.

Many projects and studies have already been carried across the world on peace Education for children and youth. If we are committed to this strategy for our people, we should be able to show successfully from already existing materials and methodologies given below:

1/ the aim of a program in value education developed by Usha Jesudasan..

- To Help young children get good moral beings from a very early age and develop their inner strength, , so that they can become more responsible for themselves, for those around them and for the world around them too.
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- To help them explore and understand their relationships within the family and friends and neighbours and to to find ways of resisting problems in a mutually fair and peaceful manner.

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59Objective of Unesco Chair for Peace, Puerto Rico.

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- To encourage a deeper understanding of themselves as human beings and to respect and accept people as they are, so that they can share this respect by loving and caring for others and all life.
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- The class room is in itself a small world where a child's values can be developed such as courage, discipline, responsibility, honesty and respect for others. Loyalty and friendship are first encountered here in the class room and both practiced and perfected here, thus preparing children for later occasions under serious decisions and judgments will have to be taken.

2/ The goals of the UNESCO as proclaimed during the "International year for Culture and Peace."

- 1 Respect for the Life and dignity of every human being;
- 2 Rejection of violence in all its manifestations and practice of active non-violence.
- 3 Liberation of generosity - to end all exclusions, injustice and oppressions;
- 4 Dialogue for understanding and defense of freedom of expression and cultural diversity;
- 5 Promotion of sustainability development; and
- 6 Reinvention of solidarity through new forms of communal sharing and democratic principles.

Conclusion: In conclusion we can only reiterate that Children of the North East have endured a life of violent conflict long enough. It is obvious that such a long term conditioning will have very many adverse effects. It was recently commented by an official that "Nagaland is dying". We must never allow this to happen, we must take into our hands all options which can restore to the people the peace and tranquility that we deserve. This will require that we be willing to put in place systematic and organised measures which will bring about sustainable changes, and not just be another stream pouring into a desert.

ii. Speaker: Sr. Leban Serto - "**Issues and Challenges to Primary/Secondary Education amidst violent conflict in Manipur**" : Dr. Leban Serto spoke from his experience of working on peace education in Manipur, and about the various dynamics of militarisation in the, the state of education in the midst of it, on issues of ethnicity, curriculum and conflict, and emphasised the need for peace education. Given below is his presentation.

"The world is not in peace now. There is a lot of scepticism about peace education. People say that human being are inherently not peaceful. As an anthropologist, it can be said that human beings are cultural, human being are territorial, human being are hostile, but one thing that occurs to us is that the behavior of violence is a learned behavior and doesn't run into our genes. Thus we can also unlearn this behavior. This is how in the context of conflict that a lot of new thinking is emerging. I am involved with a school of thought known as 'Hague people for peace', to which I belong. From this there are a lot of strands, there are 6 to 7 strands, one of them is promoting peace education. We feel there is need for peace education in India, and specially in the north east.

We say peace education, but in the conceptual core of peace education is how to control violence, and how to eliminate violence. There are two things we firmly believe:

- (i) It combines all the subjects under the holistic concept of peace. In the absence of such holistic idea of peace, we believe that the learning is fragmentary and compartmentalized.
- (ii) Peace education humanizes education.

It is with this idea that we promote peace education. In the practical sense we try to teach the young people skills, to relate to each other non-violently.

-learning to articulate problems peacefully

-learning to listen

-learning about basic human rights standards

We also believe that if education liberates, Peace education liberates absolutely.

One thing that occurred to us is that, in conflicting areas, specially Manipur, people wake up every morning with mind boggling news. News of violence and killing is heard everyday in newspapers. My uncle was also killed. When I go home, my daughter often asks me if people will kill us also. I tell her that God is there and He will take care of us. Its often very difficult to answer such questions. In Imphal we launched a protest on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January, against the kidnapping of the two children. There were 1500 children who went for a procession. This is how the situation in Manipur is, deeply in conflict. There are about 18 insurgent groups in Manipur and there are 350 military stations. There are roughly 15,000 army personnel in Manipur. If one looks at the numbers, you will realize that there is one military personnel for every 20 Manipuri. The whole state is very militarized.

In 2004, we had a meeting on emergency education, which was hosted by this organization known as CORE. Emergency education is a concept that is growing. Under this they are trying to monitor and evaluate education system in conflict zones. This concept has been promoted a lot by UNICEF in different parts of the world. One of the problems of Manipur is that, the state has suffered due to the cycle of unemployment, environmental disasters, communal hatred, nationalism, abuse of human rights, increase in drug trafficking, increase in HIV. These are some of the problems that we have identified. We need to address localized needs. Anna Pinto was going for the international consultation in Katmandu, that year, 2004, we put forward some recommendations for this consultation for the State of Manipur.

Now coming to **conflict, ethnicity and militarization**. The local thinkers specially Meitei thinkers say that Manipur was a princely State. September 21, 1949 is observed as a 'black day' in Manipur. The whole genesis of the different insurgents groups have been discussed in details in my paper. Another emerging conflicts that we have is that of ethnic antagonism is very high in Manipur. Recently, in Manipur the Mar group issued a quit notice to the Meitie group. In the hill district all the hill based groups and the army have a ceasefire. There is an apprehension that the army is taking side with the ethnic group and playing one ethnic group against the other. Sometime back there was a 52 days economic blockage by the All Naga Student Foundation in protest. There was tremendous suffering by the local people. They also tried to pressurize the government. There is also another blockade going on. We have a lot of ethnic groups, about 33 recognized ethnic groups, then we have the different tribes, then we have the *metei's*, then there are various business migrant communities. But it is sad to say that most of these student groups are divided along the lines of ethnic identities, and party politics. These students bodies are very powerful.

**The education system:** The Naga people demand that they don't want to be a part of Manipur education system. There are a lot of students who are already affiliated and this is causing all the confusion. Already a lot of students have affiliated, and there is a lot of support from the NSF from Nagaland. Technically this is going to divide the whole community. All the Government high schools are affiliated to Manipur board and most of the private schools have become Nagaland board in the hill regions of Manipur. So this has lead to conflict in each village.

There is also a culture of substitution in the schools. By this we mean, that the teacher who is suppose to teach in the school, employs someone else by paying Rs. 1000 to Rs. 1500 per month. Then we have irregular attendance, non-functioning of government schools, alarming drop outs, school management committee not functioning, fictitious enrollment numbers, midday meal schemes not implemented. The SSA programs have not been implemented properly in Manipur and the excuse given by local MLAs is that the autonomous district councils are defunct for the last 18 years. But the truth is that the autonomous districts councils have not elections for the last 18 years and the primary education, which is suppose to be their responsibility is thus in a very poor stage. Here the tribal leadership is also to be doubted.

Moreover, these blockages and *bands* have created a lot of economic backwardness and a lot of loss is incurred because of this by the State. Recently the chief secretary was lamenting that the growth rate of Manipur is the lowest in the whole of North East. Per day we loose 7.54 crores if there is a band. In one year, we lost 841 crores because of the bands. This is again only for Imphal, other districts haven't been evaluated properly.

The SSA has also suffered because of these reasons. The very implementation of the SSA program got delayed, the Center has still not released the full amount allotted to Manipur. What happens in the State is that, when they know that some funds are going to arrive, the insurgent groups demand for money. This brings stalemate situation.

Recently we had a consultation of Manipur Alliance for Child Rights, now we are planning to associate with the National Alliance for Fundamental Right to Education and Equity (NAFRE), which is fighting for Right to Education. Mr. Tyagi was also there. He mentioned that the problems in Manipur might be because of wrong education. And I think he is not wrong. One of the concern that we have had is that there is need for Peace education is strongly felt in Manipur. Education must help in promoting communal harmony and peace.

In 2005, we had a project, known as the educating the teachers for peace. It was funded by CRS. In India we collaborated with the department of education, under this we oriented about 183 teachers in this course. The government of Manipur has still not responded for this program, so the training of teachers has to go hand in hand with the change in curriculum. Also, there should be superordinate goals, like saving the world peace, saving the environment and all, so that our youths can look beyond just smaller ethnic goals. This is teach the youth to value and respect humanity at large, and talk about world peace, gender justice, human rights for all. This is what we mean by superordinate goals where we should try and look beyond our own smaller problems.

In our one month certificate course that we introduce last year, 21<sup>st</sup> September to 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2006. We did it as an experiment and it worked out very fine. There we had an imminent educationists from the State of Manipur, Father M.C. George, he is the founder of Don Bosco school. He taught peace in our curriculum. He emphasized on asking a lot of questions to ourselves, like what is our human nature?our relationship with the others? Father Jaseline, also took classes on conflict resolution, he is presently the Chancellor of all the catholic Diacesion. He has given a lot of valuable directions, he said that our youth have to cultivate the values of being broadminded and unselfish. We have to become non-zingoiestic, which means not to become war like. We strongly believe in peace education and must advocate and campaign for larger goals like, to reduce the budget for military expenditure and move to social and health spending. In Manipur, Shivraj Patil, had come and in this visit he was suppose to get 'Peace and Economic package' for the people of Manipur. But instead he gave 400 AK-47 to the State. In peace education we encourage to invest more on education rather than military on sides of both Government and insurgents.

In order to make education holistic, participation from the whole community is inevitable. In North east, the situation is not normal as they have had conflict for so long that there is a lot of mistrust and abnormal thinking, we have to get them to a normal way of thinking and then develop them to their highest human potential. 'The whole of north east has to grow and develop together.' Learning for communal and ethnic harmony and right to dignity for life and peace. Therefore the kind of education that is required in this area should address the following needs, developing a two-fold strategy, first to draw them out of conflict, normalize it and then to develop them to their fullest human potential and develop a cultural of peace.

### **Discussion:**

Zinine: There is a lot of bitter experience in Manipur, but I am afraid that there are a lot of practical problems which add to the present situation.

K. Z. Mero: Regarding the school affiliation, do the people in these areas appreciate this concept or oppose it?

Leban: Regarding the education system in Manipur, the community is divided, but between the student communities in Manipur and Nagaland, we call it the All Naga student Association Manipur, and the others, all support this affiliation, but the congress MLAs and M.Ps don't support. Last year after the consultation of HRD in Guwahati, there was a lot of heated discussion. Most of the student bodies of Manipur want to get their affiliation with the Nagaland board, and they have affiliated also, they have burned the text books of the Manipur board. Some of the MPs are also supporting them, but the problem is that if these students affiliate with the Nagaland board, then they will not get scholarship from the Manipur government. Also in each village there will be problem, as the higher secondary government schools are Manipur board and the private schools will be Nagaland board. So, there is a need for a strong leadership to solve this problem. It is a sensitive issue and the government of both the States needs to initiate a dialogue. The education in the process will suffer. Very interesting is that education is on the concurrent list, whereas law and order is on the state list, so the Center should take a stand and play a role in resolving such matters. The Right to Education bill, the Center has just sent model bills to the different States, the Central is passing the buck to the State. The Center is not playing its role.

Chubatalo: If we take it out of the political arena, in an academic sense, every one has the right to be in any board rather than making it a political motive.

Anindiya: Education is very often used as a tool for propaganda. It specially becomes important in conflict situation, as there is collective violence. Education is largely a reflection of States philosophy. And in a conflict situation the State philosophy is getting challenged. In conflict situation, the education is decided in New Delhi, instead of people deciding what they want to learn. There is a lot of resentment among people. In Assam, for example, the curriculum was very anti-Bengali and there was very clear bias in most of the things specially the way history is constructed. Things like this becomes all the more relevant in a conflict zone. It makes things more politicised. Instead there should something like 'lived history' of the community, that should be taught the generations to come.

Jamal: Education is a very politically loaded activity. Education is used as a tool by every dominant power. It also talks about justice, if there are human rights violations and other things happening, it affects the education of the place. That is the reason, why we are here holding this consultation to flag



out such issues. People don't have a say in the curriculum and etc. We need to reflect on such matters, AMAN trust along with some of you can put forward some recommendations and suggestions at the policy level?

Richa: How much role should the center play? As we are talking about localizing education also.

Leban: NCERT does give guidelines and the State should follow. The National curriculum framework, 2005 is framed by the Center, and the State is supposed to follow these guide lines. The Center has a lot of say, as education is on the concurrent list. The State lobbies are not very strong. There are issues like the issue of minority institutions are protected by the government of India. Also as I said earlier, education is in the concurrent list and therefore given all these reasons, the center should play an important role. Also there is need for community initiative in education like Communitisation, as in Nagaland. The way it has been implemented here, the civil societies, teachers forum, private forums and church should come up and should play more proactive role. In Nagaland the communities are very compact, whereas in Manipur the community is totally uprooted because of conflict for so long. I also don't know the solution, we really need to put our heads together and then lobby with the government.

In India, peace is taken as a Hindu Muslim affair. It is not the same case in North East. The question is how to make these 135 different tribes to live together. Therefore the need to bring in curriculum which recognizes the right of the others. This is required to check ethnic conflict. And ethnicity is international problem, and we cannot avoid it. It is like a forest fire, once it starts it'll spread like anything. So we need to seriously think on this issue and together take steps.

**Session 2:** Facilitated by Seno Tsuhah, the second session focussed on **“Education and violent conflict from the perspective of Youth, and Gender”**

i. Speaker - Wetsbokrolo Lasuha : **“Youth, Impact of violence and Education”**.

I will try to define the two concepts, youth and violence which will be dealt with during the course of this paper. Youth is the period of life when there is a lot of enthusiasm and energy. Violence is perpetuating of harmful actions on another human being. Education by its nature is normative in its outlook. It may be said that a mere accumulation of information is not knowledge and education.

In Nagaland is the 16<sup>th</sup> State and has 11 districts and many dialects. The basic characteristics of Nagaland can be described as a place where the youths were dynamic and chivalrous. Presently there is a lot of Western influence, most of the youths have been divided as educated and non-educated. Many of them are urban educated and their income is higher than the Naga traditional economy. The consumerist trends have also caught them. Their values have changed now. On the other hand, the uneducated people have lesser opportunities on the job front. Their world view is comparatively narrow and their modes of profession are still traditional.

Problems faced by youth:

- Unemployment, drug abuse, alcoholism, being mis understood by their parent generation.
- On the other hand there are higher education opportunities and higher potential to fulfill their life aspirations.

Traditional education long existed before western education came in. The family festivals served as learning grounds. The modes of learning were usually through oral tradition. When the impact of western education became implicit by the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Today modern education has become central to

their life. Pre-primary and primary education have become common in the state.

Violence and youth:

- violence in the broadest sense existed amongst the Nagas since time immemorial. They were engaged in traditional warfare and savage activities, before the advent of modern ways.
- But violence and conflict in the present context are related to the Naga movement of self determination and strive for sovereignty, that began in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- The conflict between the Naga people and Indian government became bloody in the 1950s and it was contained with the declaration of the peace process and the ceasefire which was signed in 1964. Yet there was conflict, in the 1990, NSCN was formed and there emerged more conflict. It took an ugly turn with the formation of the Kaplang faction of the NSCN. The conflict was then contained with the signing of the ceasefire with the NSCN (IM) faction and the Indian government, in 1997. Though there is peace on that front, but the factional conflict still persists.
- 
- Like the other freedom movements, the Naga freedom movement has its own fall out. There are armed robbery, extortion and forcible occupation of educational institutions and hostels.
- Educational funds getting deducted by the factions
- Taxation on the educational and non-educational staff by the factions.
- Corruption in the name of conflict.
- 
- Violence and Positive role of youth:
  - 
  - not withstanding discouragement with the ongoing conflict, they have taken up enterprise.
  -
- Impact of violence on education:
  - schools have closed down
  - occupation of colleges, schools and hostel by insurgent groups
  - educational funds getting extorted by the different factions.
  - Corruption in the name of conflict

Suggestions:

- intensive course on peace education
- incorporating peace education in the curriculum
- peace activist to be promoted
- orientation course on peace education for teachers
- values education at school level

ii. Speaker : Evangeline: "**Assessment of impact of conflict on Women/Girl students in Nagaland**"

NBCC (Nagaland Baptists Church Council) has under it 115 schools. We organized heads of schools conference. We encourage compassion. We collaborate with NCERT, where they train teachers and heads of institution. Where we tell them to have compassion for the society. We work with SCERT and the government of Nagaland. They used to fund us initially and give training also. SSA was also to be implemented by NBCC, and then later given to the other State machineries.

Naga society was very patriarchal in nature. Cultural reformations are happening, but still boys get more encouragement than girls. Now though, equal opportunities are being given to both. Cultural gender role are very specific but changes are happening.

In Nagaland, there is no major gender conflict. There is equal property rights. Nagas as a society has trends like, women help in kitchen look after house. Women are also more hardworking. These days, women are becoming more smarter and getting a good match is difficult. Thus incidents of promiscuity are increasing. Also destroying the tribal sanctity. Schools should play a role in addressing these kind of problems.

In Nagaland every church has Sunday schools. In the Sunday schools moral values are taught but this should be incorporated in a bigger way into the curriculum. Parents should be encouraged to take more interest in education of students and also become gender sensitive. Parents and teachers association meetings should happen regularly and discuss problems faced by them.

Impact of conflict in Nagaland may not be common with other places, were incidents of rape and molestation are common. Major impact is leaving the girls open to promiscuity. Incidents of promiscuity are increasing as there are many youngsters who are involved in underground activities. They have easy access to money and other means, which encourage them to live immoral life. Many girl children to become financially independent, are getting into trade of alcohol and other things, and to satisfy their needs they are leading immoral life.

The education should be more geared to be professional and we need to contextualize education and thus help students understand our local situations better.

iii. Speaker: Zinine: "**Gender, Violent Conflict and Education in Manipur**".

Everone here may know Sharmila, who has been on hunger strike for the last six years in Manipur for repealing AFPSA. In one of her speech she had mentioned that, 'I love peace very much, but before that we should have right to justice..' The only things we all in Manipur are fighting for is Justice and peace. We want justice and its only after that we can have peace. Conflict in north east, specially in Nagaland and Manipur are of two types; Inter ethnic conflict and Indo-Naga/Indo-Manipur conflict. To deal with the conflict, we need to first find out the root cause of the conflict.

The conflict that exists between India Vs Nagaland and Manipur is what they call as neo-colonial. There should be a democratic space to understand the root causes of the conflict. The civilization or culture of the place should be taken into consideration and respected. Low tolerance between tribe and other people in Manipur. Sanskritization /Hinduisation of people is becoming a big potential danger in Manipur. The tribal people have low tolerance for hindu people, and because of all this, there is conflict. These are some of the root causes of conflict.

**Education system:** The history is very divided. The history is causing hostility among people here and also mainland India. It stimulates a lot of hostility between people and also among mainland India. There should be 'lived history', then the conflict will reduce a lot. In the context of education, only 30% of the curriculum is common, but problem is only with history, social science and a little with language. If the history of indigenous people will be taught, it will be useful for them. In Manipur, there is not a lot of gender issue for example Miera piebies (Women's Human Rights defenders group) are an important group. They are every where. The valley and tribal women are every where and women are very active in Manipur.

Justice is the key issue to transforming such conflict, and to do that the AFSPA has to be repealed. Our Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh also agreed that it is an inhuman Act, but still it is there. A democratic space should be created. Justice and democracy are key to better education, and better economic development.

## Discussion

K. Z. Mero: The Naga's and Meiteis were very close friends from the beginning. They both came from Burma and settled down in Mekhel in Saponarang/ Sanapati district. Each village had their own government. For their social life, they had their own institutions in villages, where the village elders would discuss with young people the problems of the village and how they can be dealt. The people then were very hard working and brave. They knew how to protect themselves. They also knew how to do their own cultivation, on the whole they were independent people. They had a rich culture. Some of these values still remains in the villages. But after the British came in 1892, they got Christianity with them. From that time onwards, primary education was initiated, headhunting stopped. Political movement started. During the World War I, a group of Naga's went to France as guides. They formed a political forum called the Naga Club in 1918. Kaplong was a British administrator. The Naga club had submitted a proposal with the Simon Commission in 1929. The Naga hills were excluded from British India. In 1935, the British parliament discussed about that and in London, they excluded the naga hill. In 1946, they formed a political association called the Naga National council (NNC). In the name of NNC, the Naga's declared independence on the 14<sup>th</sup> of August, 1947, the flag was hoisted in Kohima. It was already informed to the UNO. In 1951, the Naga struggle for independence took a bloody side. Ceasefire took place in 1964. But there was a deadlock by 1969. Again in 1980 another political organisation was formed called the NSCN. They declared ceasefire with the government of India in 1997. Now peace talk is continuing with Nagas waiting for the results.

Richa: How has the AFSPA affected the education of women in this context of conflict?

Zinine: Long traumatized life has affected the daily education of people, and definitely of girls, as they are more vulnerable. Armed forces have occupied many school and college buildings. Phobia of the army is more in case of women. But there is not a lot of difference between men and women with regards to their vulnerability in front of the army. As for boys, they are scared of being picked up and killed and for girls, they are scared of been raped and killed. Its almost the same for both. The girls are also now taking active part in youth organizations. But there is no denying the fact that women are the worst victims of conflict.

Richa: Are there lot of girl students in the student unions?

Zinine: There are not many girls in the organization , but they are taking active part.

Anandiya: Adding to what Zinine has mentioned, I would want to say that not only conservative historians, but many progressive historians like Romila Thapar and Vipin Chandra, they also while mentioning India's history don't mention anything on North East. It is outrageous, that we have to study something like this sitting here, where we don't get to study anything about ourselves.

There is very little known about the history of north east. But here unlike in parts of mainland India, gender related problems are much less. There are at least no female foeticide. When there is conflict, women are seen as a property of the other community to take revenge. The Indian State, is comprised mostly of upper caste people, thus the interpretation and documentation of history is done to suit their

purpose.

Vikhole Venuh: When IM insurgents attacked the army. The army attacked the innocent villagers. The IM insurgent groups collect taxes from private schools and hostels. The insurgents are staying in the heart of the town and scare the students, thus causing hindrance in their course of education. The IM tacks around Rs.300 annually from schools. They give intimation to the proprietor about their activities. Last year also many students were injured when the two groups tried to attack each other. They are scared to stay in the jungles, so they will stay in the heart of the city and scare the students. The students are scared to go to school.

The young people are usually the targets by both the insurgent groups and security personnel. There is a constant 'fear for life' among the common people of Nagaland. The insurgents are collecting taxes and demanding money from schools and colleges. They even extort money from government schools. These incidents that is been narrated does not feature into any data or statistics, because people are scared of speaking and taking names. But the truth is beyond ignorance.

Leban: The methodology adopted by the insurgents is almost the same for all the places. All these are affecting education. The teachers are also harassed very badly also. The cuts in the salary are already decided. The central government needs to step up immediately and take appropriate actions to deal with these problems.

Session III:

Vikhole Venuh:

### **Vikholie Venuh**

To begin with conflict in school systems, there are many private schools run by different organisations. All these schools have a slight differences from each other. Let us see that in brief:

i. *Administration*- Schools run by private individuals, are different from church run schools and community run school.

ii. *Syllabus* All the registered and recognised schools, weather private or govt. are under Nagaland Board of Schools Eduction (NBSE). The syllabus starting from Class 8 - 10 or above are same. But among Private schools, starting from primary to class 7, can take any one syllabus from the 5 publishers given by NBSE. Catholic institutions have same syllabus, same question paper all over Nagaland. Whereas other church run (Baptist Churches) and private individuals do not have this system.

iii. *Yearly calender and routine*: Schools in warmer places are diferent from schools in in colder places, such as winter and summer vacation. Some schools have 8 periods, whereas some have 7 periods in a day. In timings some schools artarts by 8.00 am, whereas some at 9 pm.

*School facilities*: Many schools, specially private schools do not have the required facilities as per government directives. They don't have playgrounds, spaces for recreation and other facilities. Some schools only have class rooms and offices to accomodate students and teacher. Some schools operate only with the motive of making money, so schools are packed as much as they can. Most schools don't have science laboratories, libraries, computer education, nor do they provide quality education.

*Teachers Staff:* Many teachers are technically unfit for they are unemployed through politics (Govt. Schools). Private Schools in order to pay less salary, and earn more profit, employ teachers with the basic minimum qualifications. Therefore, teachers are not sincere, nor regular in the schools. Many of them do not have the burden to uplift the society. They took up this job for their survival only.

*Students:* Students whose performance is poor or just satisfactory, find education as a burden. Drop out seems to be more at the age of 14-16 years due to several reasons. At this age, they feel that the gun culture gives them fame and popularity, and money. Therefore some join the underground factions. Some discontinue their studies due to poor economic conditions of the parents. And in some cases, they do not want to be under someone's control. Therefore they drop their studies. Social evils, troubles and problems are high in our society, and these dropout students are one of them. Therefore we need to make our education system more interesting, practical, job oriented, applicable to our daily life, in order to overcome these social evils in our society.

Kezevinuo Krome: Experience from the ground, Impact of conflict on Teachers and Students participation

The normal state of mind is disturbed by wars and conflicts which has seriously effect on teachers and student community on the progressive side of education. Such conflicts are:

*State Politics:* Democracy has been denied to teachers community. Political leaders have viewed teachers as football, kicking them to every corner of the state, when one is not in the political favor and it even go to the extent of terminating one's job. Teachers are denied of academic freedom or autonomy freedom unlike the university teachers. They live with constant fear which disturbs the normal state of mind of an individual i.e. Peace, owing to political conflict.

Therefore, I would like to sent out a strong message that 'teachers be spared from the ugly hands of politician and be given an autonomy freedom whereby the teachers and student community will be at peace to march ahead with quality

*Political Conflict in sovereignty movement:* Education was a far cry for students community during the Indo Naga War. Where only a handful of schools existed which were located far off. In the absence of free movement owing to conflict many students left the school. Hence, the literacy growth became stagnant. The teachers were the interpreters and a little mistake they make, they were beaten black and blue. These things had serious impact on the progressive side of education and this became stagnant.

The emergence of various factions among freedom fighters and their clashes have created continuous mental tension. Some schools have turned into battle field. Living under unexpressed feeling of pain and fear the normal state of mind of the child is disturbed and has effected the total development of the child and the smooth functioning of the school.

*Social Conflict:* 'ism' conflict like tribalism, regionalism and village ism have destroyed the social value. The spirit of feeling oneness as a whole which is important for the students and teacher community is being destroyed. It would be worth mentioning some of the social views which create social conflict such as: gambling, alcoholism, immoral activities which are unhealthy practices and has direct impact on the teacher and student community.

- Conflict between landowner of the school and the school authority when the expectation of the landowners are not fulfilled, conflicts come in, disturbing the normal function of the teachers and students.
- Owing to localizing school education system through communication, the powers and functions are transferred to local bodies. There are times when conflict arises between NEC and teacher community thanks to lack of understanding and management having negative effect on the conducive atmosphere of facilitating and learning. Types of VEC and teachers, eg: some of command or order which cannot be digested instead of being a facilitator.

D) Family conflict: Parents discriminate children studying in government schools and private schools. The private school children are always given the preference, where as the government school goer is always left out at the mercy of the department for any privilege. This has turned out to be very bad story and have become a hindrance to quality education for students and teachers of government schools.

Career Conflict: (Needs, interest, capacity) Parents tend to ignore the interest of the child. They forced or try to make student child a doctor but the child's interest is to be an educationist and not a doctor. And such conflict sports the career of the child. Education becomes burden and not a joyful learning.

- School administrators and teachers conflict- teaching is a team work and not an individual work. But some school administrators and teachers fail to built cordial relationship amongst themselves which results in poor professional academic performance owing to lack of unity which have direct impact on the student and teachers. These conflicts have become an obstacle in imparting quality education in our context. Let us put our heads together consider some of these ground realities so that education system at Primary and Secondary level will have a better system.
- Best practices can be documented. (success story)
- Make schools a peace zone
- Infrastructure development

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Krome: EBRC: trains teachers, does inspection and discuss the problems faced by the teachers to run the schools. They form a bridge between the ground level schools and the department.

The conflict situation disturbs the normal state of mind and affects both teachers and students. In this state of political conflict, the teachers have been denied their democratic space. Political parties have treated the teachers like a football, kicking them to different parts of the State, when they are not in favor of them. Teachers don't have academic freedom an they live in constant fear. It has serious impact and has stagnated progress of education. Schools have turned into battle field. The factional party started firing at the schools thats when they were shut. All this has created fear among teachers and students.

Political conflict in the sovereignty movement: education was a far cry during the Indo-naga movement. Due to conflict the movement was restricted, thus many students had to leave their education and the literacy rate came down.

Conflict has destroyed social values. Causing immoral activities like gambling, alcoholism etc to take place. It has impacted the minds of students. The insurgents demand money from schools, which makes

it difficult to sustain, the expectation of the landlord is not met and which then leads to schools shutting down.

Communitization: The system of communitization which has been introduced in Nagaland, is working fine. But there are many problems when it comes to the ground. There are conflicts between village management body and the teachers. The funds are not well managed sometimes and thus conflicts sets in causing negative impact on education.

The village education committee is responsible for the education in a particular village. At the village level it is difficult to find educated people in the committee. Therefore the election of the committee is very important.

Family conflict: parents discriminate between children studying in government schools and private schools. Private school students are given more attention and preference, whereas the government school students are left to the mercy of the teachers.

Career conflict: The needs, capacity, interest of the child needs to be considered. Parents don't consider this and force them to pursue careers which they don't have any aptitude and interest.

The administration and the teachers association should run in harmony with each other, unless this is done, education will suffer.

Teaching is a team work of the teacher, parents, and the administrator. They should all run in harmony with each other. The VEC should provide a conducive environment for education.

The members of the VEC is selected by the Village council, from the village. In Chizami there are 15 members in VEC each having a tenure of 3 years. There is representative of the women, from the religion side also, the student side, and the parents side also and of the council. Sometimes the teachers report that the VEC members don't have any idea but still they want to govern. The problem is that each school is managed by the headmaster but he has to consult the VEC, who have no idea, so there is conflict between them often. Also there is problem with the teachers, some of them have got their jobs because of merit, but many are politically appointed, so they are not qualified. Many of the teachers who are qualified also, when posted to remote villages will not go, instead they will appoint someone else paying them Rs. 2000 a month. In Nagaland there are around 700 private schools, people prefer private schools over government schools. Some private schools are running just for profit, but many are very sincere, as they know that if they work they will get salary otherwise not.

But with the SSA, the state of the government schools have really come up. The funds are used properly. The infrastructure building, under SSA, like water facilities, toilets, classrooms etc are much better. In Nagaland, all the money comes to VEC and because the money doesn't come to one contractor, the corruption is much less. The SSA program is doing well, only in places where the community is actively involved.

Leban: Documentation of best practices of SSA, specially of the communitization process in Nagaland. The church has also played a good role in initiating the SSA program. The church looks after only the innovative education program now, and all the infrastructure building done under SSA is looked after by the VEC. We should also appeal to all the insurgent groups to make schools a peace zones and ask them not to interfere with the school functioning.



In Manipur, education, means examination. In Nagaland, also talks about comprehensive and continuous evaluation is in progress. It is also in experimentation in class VIII where grades systems will be used instead of being marked. In this 30 mark will be reserved for internal marking, 20 marks from practical examination. Extra tuition creates a lot favoritism, make parents will not send them to school, but when the exams come they will send their children for extra tuition. We are trying to discourage extra tuition, and we are planning to organize tuition in the schools during the examination months.

There should be some common standard for infrastructure, like the size of class, no. of students in one class. (Seno)

Government has come up with alternative subjects, like IT, agriculture, and other subjects which are very important for local people. So the Nagaland government is taking greater initiative in positive direction.

Asangla Phom: (she reads her paper)

Pre school education should be introduced. The churches have introduced and it has proved to be very successful. A child gets ready and is equipped before he joins the formal school.

Leban: NBCC, has done a lot of work in Nagaland. NBCC, is very influential in keeping the peace process going on in Nagaland. I have seen the way NBCC has been working. Church is one group that both the faction respect.

Jamal: The state of schools in Nagaland is better than in Manipur, possibly because the church has played a very proactive role in education. The church is very well integrated with the community.

Richa: Do you think that its just the Church or is it that because that there has been a relatively long period of ceasefire in Nagaland and Manipur is still amidst violent conflict? And do you think that the success of the process education can also be given to the communitization process in Nagaland.

Asangla: Communitization is there, but I think the Church has a major role to play also.

Rona: There are also a lot of people following the indigenous religion, is there a conflict between them?

There are schools run by the Catholic church, by the Baptist Church and also by the Haraka community. The Haraka schools are sponsored by the Central Government, and the teachers are sent from there. Here the teachers speak very good Hindi, and the students are sent for excursions in Delhi, Mumbai, Darjeeling every year. They will tell the students that you are holding onto your own original religion, stick to it, Christianity is a bordered religion. There is conflict some between them. Also here in Mosulumbi, one RSS school is also there, the students are from the Christian community, some teachers are also from the Christian community. Some parents are too poor to send their children to school, so they go these schools. It is rare case, but such incidents are also happening.

Seno: There is a confusion. It is called Lenikewe, it is the traditional religion, or the first kind of religion. There is confusion among people that it is some thing like Hinduism. So the RSS people are supporting them. Even the Haraka movement is lot to do with RSS.

Haraka movement is a revivalist movement, saying that tribal people should go back to their original religion. It is there everywhere in the world. (Leban)

Leban: Nagaland is the only English speaking state. Nagaland known as the only state with the highest Christian majority population. So it is almost called a Christian state, even Mizoram is called a Christian state. But interestingly Manipur is not a Christian state. Thus no money is given to churches. In Nagaland thus what happens is that the social welfare department works side by side with the church, which has worked out to be very successful. The church development goes hand in hand with the community in Nagaland. As you must have heard the slogan, 'Nagaland for Christ', thus people give very generously to the church and thus making government programs successful.

Richa: Can it be technically called a Christian State? Don't you think it can be dangerous to have such a thing, to mix religion with politics.

Human being is th most important thing, for human beings to become a good citizen, even if it a Christian state or Hindu state, it doesn't matter. The elementary schools are very important, if the children are taught from the beginning to become a proper human being, they will grow up to become truthful citizens and good adults of this soil.

Communitization in Nagaland:

The process of communitization was initiated in 2001-2002. During that time the Chief Secretary was Mr. R.S. Pandey, along with some other high level government official initiated this. Under this health, power and education were given to the managed by the village council.

The structure of communitization: The village council selects the VEC. But its has to be very representative. There will be representation from the council, from the teachers, from the parents, and also according to the Communitization act, there should be at least one or two women representative in all the projects. The concept of communitization was that the community is the owner of the institution, be it the school, health center etc. The money is given through the VEC, to the teachers and other staff. We are practicing 'no work no pay'. The head teacher is the secretary of the VEC. The accounts are maintained by him. The government comes for audit and people can conduct their own audits to the proceedings and functions.

Problems faced: Three times in a year the VEC members meets. During these meetings all the information from parents, students and teachers are obtained. If there are major problems the matter is referred to the village council. From the parents side, they have problems to get school uniforms, to get the pens. There is a students union in each village and they also have a representation in the VEC.

The communitization process is till class X. The VEC and VC members are not paid members. The process of decentralization is rather tricky, as there are too many responsibilities but limited power.

In Manipur the SCERT is taking care of class I to VIII, (State Council for Education and Research and Training). In Nagaland they take care till class X.

The problem was that the communities were not properly engaged and made aware about many of the functioning, thus they were not properly involved. In Manipur there is the School Development Board/Council, which was suppose to be working similar to that of VEC, but there is not too much

known about it. There is a possibility of civil societies to play a role in filling up these gaps, in the whole structure of community based governance.

SSA is a time bound program till 2010. There are a lot of schemes under this. The SCERT is developing a new syllabus under this program. These syllabus is more gender sensitive with respect to the earlier ones. There are MDGs thus the everything is very rushed. The central government is thus pushing everything to be completed. But there is not much quality.

The mention about that there is no gender conflict. We agree that we don't have any violent discrimination on us, but women for most of the time are not allowed to make the decision.

Leban: This is very true specially in north India, where though the women are taking part in village panchayats, but they don't have any decision making power, its the men who rule any ways. The women don't want to come forward.

Richa: But this is also something to reflect that why women are not coming forward? What are the reasons stopping them? That's is where we will understand the gender dynamics.

In many places in mainland India, women have been given Panchayat positions, but its the husband who calls the shots. They are often called 'panchpati'.

Richa: Its a very important point that has been put up. If we see women who have entered politics, they have always been through either their husbands or their fathers. This has also been the case with male politicians. But we need to also understand that women who have lived in the private spere, have been kept behind the closed doors of the house don't have any other network other than their family. Their first network will be their family, unlike men who have a larger social network. So if we stigmatize women without getting the whole picture, then it can be quite dangerous, as we will be targeting those women who are actually coming out and doing something.

#### **14<sup>th</sup> of January (Second day)**

The second day began with a presentation by Aheli on the Government of India's education policy in the North East, and brief summarization the first days discussion by Richa. The session was then facilitated by Richa and focus was on the highlighting priorities and future plan of action.

Aheli's presentation:

Discussion and summary of the first day by Richa:

Leban: Small need assessment studies can be done at districts and village level. All the districts might not be done, some model district can be picked up and assessment done. The government of Nagaland are more sensitive than the Manipur government. The budget allocation was not known before, this kind of data sharing from AMAN was of help. But there is need for proper monitoring and evaluation of the projects.

In mukukchung district, we have SMA and the DMA (District Mission Authority), there micro level statistics are available. It might not be very accurate. But sometimes accountability is a very important factor to ensure better functioning. Thus a very good monitoring system should be done. In Nagaland,

VEC is helpful to check corruption, but in other places, a body countering this should be established. Having NGOs to do monitoring is also very dangerous, as it might be another way of siphoning out money.

In psetusero district of Nagaland, the money allotted was published in the local news paper, thus ensuring transparency which has helped. Under communitization, transparency and accountability has to be maintained. Each VEC transaction is properly recorded. Each VEC has a joint account with the head in-charge of the school. The governance of Nagaland is much better than that of Manipur.

There is a good relationship between Right to Information (RTI) and other things. In Nagaland RTI is well implemented. NBCC is also been involved to spread the awareness about RTI. In Manipur, it has not been implemented properly. We don't even know if there is a office. In Manipur, most of the villages are under the 6<sup>th</sup> schedule, so they are not under the RTI. So there is a confusion regarding RTI functioning. There is a need for them for a research to under north east to help in better implementation of RTI.

But in Manipur, the 6<sup>th</sup> schedule is not functioning for the last 18 years. There has been no election under the 6<sup>th</sup> schedule for the last 18 years. In Nagaland, the e-governance project is also been implemented as an experimentative project. If this project takes off, then everyone will have direct contact with the higher government officials.

In Manipur, teachers feel scared to go to small villages or other sensitive places, specially hill districts, as these places are infested by insurgents. The quality of education of private and church run schools is much better. And also insurgent groups are occupying colleges and schools, premier colleges and institutions have been burnt down. Thus introduction of something like 'emergency education' should be initiated and started in these places.

Summary of the first day's discussion:

- history of Nagaland and Manipur and how it has been recreated.
- Value education as an important component of school education
- Peace education
- Courses for teachers
- teaching of 'lived history' as a part of the curriculum
- concept of 'justice' in dealing with conflict
- lack of statistics /data and making it available
- Schools to be made as 'peace zones'-advocacy with government and insurgents
- highlighting of the best practices
- Church in a more active role
- RTI as a tool
- Communitization of education and other basic amenities
- Women playing an important role in conflict resolution, specially in the north east
- Monitoring and evaluation and ensuring accountability in the government mechanism
- Government school teachers also performing poorly because of the attitude of the people. They look down upon the government schools

82% of the population of Nagaland is rural. So, most of the private schools are in the town. In the villages, there are only government schools. Thus the enrollment percentage will be very different in villages than in town, of government schools.

Richa: There is a difference between the private and public schools. It is important that we look at education as a right, so that we can demand free and compulsory education from the State. Improving private schools is important but another issue.

Chubatalo: The government schools, its also the quality of education that needs to be demanded. Thats why parents go for private schools as the quality in government schools are poor.

Better teaching methods: The concept of 'joyful learning' has been introduced. It is in its experimental stage. This concept highlights the need to make the learning process more experiential. These methods will be more helpful in conflict regions.

In Nagaland, all the government schools are trained in the new pedagogy of 'child centered' learning. Now the private school teachers are also getting trained under this system. The theme of this new pedagogy is 'joyful learning'. Its an activity based teaching method. The children were made to do things that they want to learn and not force them.

There was an experiment done at the primary level, were play rooms were made. The children were very interested to come to schools and play in those play schools. It was like a pre-school.

In many districts, after imparting the training for the new pedagogy many senior teachers have resigned from the post, as they didn't feel confident enough to cope with the new pedagogy.

Krome: When schools apply for funds like midday meal and other such things, they give higher enrollment percentage such that they can get more funds approved. Many times there are different types of data to suit different purpose. Thus the statistics available are often doubtful.