

NORTH EAST INDIA WOMEN INITIATIVE FOR PEACE

MARCH 2013 NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends,

Warm greetings from Northeast India Women Initiative for Peace (NEIWIIP).

The journey of a humble initiative of women from India's Northeast that started in 2010 has now entered its second year. A network of over 120 women has been formed from across eight states of the region and efforts are on to further strengthen work for peace, democracy and rights of the people of region through this initiative.

On 3 and 4 May 2013 Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network, Control Arms Foundation of India, Northeast India Women Initiative for Peace in collaboration with India International Centre (IIC) with support of Heinrich Böll Stiftung, New Delhi will be organizing a conference on the theme "Weaving History of Northeast India Conclave Series-3: Including Histories of Northeast India in National Curriculum" at India International Centre (IIC), New Delhi.

Please find here March 2013 issue newsletter, positive news of March regarding Diaspora, history, peace and news on women empowerment from Northeast India and rest of the world to renew our hopes and strengthen our efforts to work towards peace making.

Meghalaya scripts another history, gets first women home minister

Source: Sentinelassam.com, 13 March 2013

Hours after the 11-member Council of Ministers was sworn-in on Tuesday by Governor Ranjeet Shekhar Mooshahary, Chief Minister, Dr Mukul Sangma allotted portfolio for the Ministers. Dr Mukul Sangma has retained with him Finance, Planning, Personnel and all other departments which have not been allotted to any other Ministers, while, the Home portfolio has been assigned to woman legislator from North Shillong Roshan Warjri. Warjri, has thus scripted history by becoming the first woman Home Minister in the North East and the second in the country after Sabitha Indra Reddy of Andhra Pradesh. [Read more:](#)

Northeast India: The country's next hot spot or the world's next flashpoint?

India's Northeast is pitching itself as the country's next tourism hot spot. But tensions fueled by Bangladesh, Pakistan, Myanmar and China could make it the world's next flashpoint. India's Northeast is pitching for a piece of the "Incredible India" tourism campaign, but the region is still simmering with dozens of separatist insurgencies, with the nations on its borders often throwing gas on the fire, according to a renowned Asia hand. "The northeast was not able to jump on the bandwagon of the campaign known as Incredible India," the Wall Street Journal's India Real Time blog quoted U.K. Sangma, a senior official at the North Eastern Council, as saying Tuesday. [Read more:](#)

Tripura Gets Maximum Women Legislators

Source: Hindustan Times, 1 March 2013

With five of the 15 women contestants winning, the Tripura assembly now has the highest number of women legislators since the state was carved out in 1972. All five, including social welfare minister Bijita Nath and former minister Bijoy Laxmi Sinha, belong to the ruling Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M). In the outgoing assembly, there were three women – Bijita Nath, Gauri Das and Rita Kar Majumder. All of them have been re-elected. Among the five is 52-year-old Tunubala Malakar. [Read more:](#)

Embracing democracy, Northeast rebels lay down arms

Khabar South Asia, 27 March 2013

Times have changed in the northeastern states of Tripura, Nagaland and Meghalaya, as recent election campaigning illustrates. In the past, the main topic of voter concern was how to combat and contain violent insurgencies that have plagued the region, but those armed movements are increasingly on the wane. As a result, politicians are now spending far less time on promises to contain insurgent violence, and far more on such issues as improving governance and quality of life. In a further sign of the trend towards peace, the candidates for the February assembly elections also included former militants who decided to renounce violence and return to civilian life. [Read more:](#)

Involve NE in Look East Policy: ASEAN leader

Source: Centre for North East Studies and Policy Research, 11 March 2013

If India wants its northeast to benefit from the much publicised Look East Policy, it must bring top leaders of south east Asia to that region and encourage dialogue and discussion there, says Surin Pitsuwan, till recently the secretary-general of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). "India can call a meeting of the ASEAN+India in the northeast, in Guwahati, on the banks of the Brahmaputra, from where your prime minister (Manmohan Singh) is elected," declared Pitsuwan, who was secretary general of ASEAN for five years, suggesting that the foreign ministers of the nations could meet in the northeast, at a summit. [Read more:](#)

Aribam Syam's Leipaklei, Manipuri Pony win National Film Award

Source: The Sangai Express, 18 March 2013

Two films of Aribam Syam Sharma, Leipaklei and Manipuri Pony have won the prestigious National Film award 2012 in different categories. The 60th National Film Awards for the year 2012 were announced here today at a joint press conference addressed by the Chairpersons of the three juries, Basu Chatterjee for Feature Films, Aruna Raje for Non-Feature films and Swapna Mullick for Best Writing on Cinema. Leipaklei got the best Manipuri film award while Manipuri Pony got the award in the Exploration/Adventure Films category. [Read more:](#)

North East Film Fest for Children

Source: Assamonline, 12 March 2013

CFSI is organizing North East Film Festival (NEFF) for Children, reaching out to privileged and underprivileged children of the region during March 10-24, 2013. In conjunction with Smile Foundation, the Children's Film Society India (CFSI) presents the North East film Festival for children. The inauguration programme was held on March 10, at Rabindra Bhawan. This film fest is meant for seven states of North East India. The festival will showcase six children's films which include award winning films like The Prince and the Crown of stone, Tora's Love, Touching Wild Houses [Read more:](#)

Maisnam Meiraba wins, creates history

Source: Hueiyen News Service, 17 March 2013

11-year old Maisnam Meiraba Luwang has created history by becoming the first Manipuri player to win, not just one but three medals, in any Badminton championship at the International level, that too, in his debut International championship. In the Israel Junior International Badminton, 2013 organised by Israel Badminton Association at Rishon Lezion, Israel, Meiraba outwitted his opponents in all the three events he sailed into the finals of Boys' Single Under-11 years, Boys' Doubles Under-13 years and Mixed Doubles under-13 years. [Read more:](#)

What Threatens Peace in India's Northeast?

Source: The New York Times, 15 March 2012

For India's Northeast to have a bright future, the region will need to avoid a few minefields. Most importantly, "a sustainable peace, including in the Kachin state (in Myanmar), is essential for all this to happen," wrote Thant Myint-U, the author of "Where India Meets China," in a message. This peace, and the subsequent reopening of road links, and the Trans-Asian Railway – which seeks to connect India to Myanmar – could be held up in the Naga inhabited areas because of disputes among the Naga, Kuki and Meitei ethnic groups over control of the hill tracts of Manipur. Forming a crucial link that would connect India to the economies of Southeast Asia and China ultimately depends on the calming of several ethnic battles. [Read more:](#)

Sikkim Culture and Heritage

Source: Library @KV2 Calicut, 6 July 2012

Sikkim is a small hilly state, bounded by vast stretches of Tibetan Autonomous Region in the North, Kingdom of Bhutan in the east, Nepal in the west and state of West Bengal in the south. The world's third highest mountain, Khangchendzonga, is regarded as the guardian deity of Sikkim. Sikkim is famous for its lush green vegetation, forest, scenic valleys and majestic mountains and a range of rich and magnificent cultural heritage and peace loving People who provide a safe haven for tourists. [Read more:](#)

Japan helps Sikkim's biodiversity worth \$ 25 Billion

Source: Sevendiary.com, 5 March 2013

Adding much greener, fresher and bigger organic celebration than elsewhere in the country. The tiny Himalayan state of Sikkim "God's own Garden," held its 2nd Sikkim International Flower Show 2013 from February 23, at the manicured Saramsa Gardens near Gangtok. The five-day long mega exhibition was participated by representatives from 9 countries, 7 Indian state Governments including Kerala, Mizoram, Karnataka. All in total, the global level floral exhibition saw over 31 private players setting up close to 82 stalls, attended by a footfall of over two lakh visitors. [Read more:](#)

Kongbam Ibeyaima's folk tales bag Sahitya Akademi award for Children's literature

Source: Kangleonline, 24 Sep 2010

Ngathem Ningol Kongbam Ongbi Ibeyaima's folk tales- Sorarengee Machanupi Atonbee Leimashang Amasung Atei Phunga Wareeshing in Manipuri was among the most outstanding books for children published in 24 Indian languages recognized by the Sahitya Akademi selected for the Sahitya Akademi Award for Children Literature (Bal Sahitya Puraskar) for 2010. [Read more:](#)

Northeast India States to get four new trains and new rail line

Source: Sevendiary.com, 7 March 2013

The Centre has announced four new trains and a new rail line for the Northeast while assuring that trains would ply for the first time in Arunachal Pradesh, with Harmuti-Naharlagun line this year (2013-14), reports The Telegraph. The Rupaiparasuramkunda new line, and the gauge conversion of Lumding-Silchar and Rangia-Murkongselek, is still waiting for approval. The proposal also include the doubling of New Bongaigaon-Kamakhyia via Rangiya section and Dimapur-Tizit in Mon district of Nagaland. [Read more:](#)

First social networking site in Assamese launched

Source: Sevendiary.com, 8 March 2013

A young Assamese entrepreneur to launch Prasangik.com, a social networking site – entirely in Assamese language. The beta site is already launched now, the website is prepared on the model and umbilical concept of the popular social site – Facebook, and its developed web font can be also viewed by users accessing through their mobile phones using the latest versions of Android apps. [Read more:](#)

Former President Kalam to teach at IIM (Shillong)

Source: Sevendiary.com, 10 March 2013

Former President and renowned nuclear scientist Dr APJ Abdul Kalam to teach at IIM, Shillong as a visiting faculty. Dr Kalam will teach Societal Transformation with Technology and its Application for two months – July and August, a report by The Shillong Times. The announcement was made at the third Annual International Sustainability Conference (SUSCON) of IIM Shillong on March 6, stirring much excitement and thrill among the present batch of 110 students of the prestigious institute. [Read more:](#)

Tarun Gogoi proposes Metro Rail for Guwahati

Source: Sevendiary.com, 12 March 2013

Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi has announced a host of new schemes – widening and upgrading of state highways, improvement of infrastructure and other civic amenities, including a Metro rail project for Guwahati city at an estimated cost of Rs 1,800 crore in his Budget for the year 2013-14, a report by Assam Tribune. The project will be funded by Assam Infrastructure Financing Authority (AIFA) as part of State Plan based on project reports prepared by the departments concerned. [Read more:](#)

Asian Cycling: Manorama Sprints to Silver

Source: Northeast Today, 12 March 2013

Deborah brought the maximum laurels for India in the track events of the Hero Asian Cycling Championships before T. Manorama Devi capped off the home team's effort with a stellar sprint on the concluding day of the competition here Monday. Sixteen-year-old Manorama rode the race of her life to win silver in the women's junior keirin. [Read more:](#)

Irom Sharmila: World's Longest Hunger Striker

Source: Sevendiary.com, 14 March 2013

Irom Sharmila Chanu (born 14 March 1972), also known as the "Iron Lady of Manipur" or "Menghoubi" is a civil rights activist, political activist, and poet from the Indian state of Manipur. Since November 4, 2000, she has been on hunger strike to demand that the Indian government repeal the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (AFSPA), passed on September 11, 1958, by the Parliament of India. It grants special powers to the armed forces in what the act terms as "disturbed areas" in the Northeastern Indian states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. It was later extended to Jammu and Kashmir. [Read more:](#)

Shillong Chamber choir performs with Zakir Hussain

Source: Sevendiary.com, 11 March 2013

Tabla maestro Ustad Zakir Hussain and Shillong Chamber Choir (SCC) performed together for the first time at a fundraiser event – Equation 2013: A Fundraiser For Equality, organized by Bollywood actor Rahul Bose for his non-profit organisation 'The Foundation' at the Trident Hotel in Mumbai on March 1. [Read more:](#)

Ulfa-govt peace talks tomorrow

Source: Press Trust of India, 6 March 2013

To give fresh impetus to the ongoing peace process, the Centre will hold dialogue with the United Liberation Front of Asom (Ulfa) tomorrow and discuss the group's demands to find a lasting solution to the three-decade-old insurgency in Assam. Union Home Secretary R K Singh will hold talks with the Ulfa delegation, led by its 'chairman' Arabinda Rajkhowa, and discuss on 'charter of demands' as part of the government's efforts to carry forward the dialogue process. [Read more:](#)

Connecting NE states of India with Myanmar by road a good move

Source: Tehelka, 1 March 2013

During the budget speech by Finance Minister P Chidambaram, amidst all the figures and jargon that everyone was waiting for, he gave a few seconds to announce plans for building a larger road network in the North Eastern states of the country. The Finance Minister also announced the plan to connect the regional states with Myanmar (also still known as Burma by many) by road, a plan which has been in the pipeline for a long time. The recent liberalisation of Myanmar, if you may call it that, came as a surprise to many. [Read more:](#)

Sikkim to woo tourists in metropolitan cities

Source: IANS, 9 March 2013

Buoyed by the "huge response" that the recently concluded Sikkim festival received in the national capital, the state's tourism board Saturday said it would focus on metropolitan cities to attract more tourists. The three-day festival that began in Dilli Haat March 7 attracted a large number of families who got an insight into the rich cultural history and picturesque tourist destinations of Sikkim, a statement from the Sikkim tourism department said. "We are excited by the huge response that the Sikkim festival got in the national capital. [Read more:](#)

For more information, please contact:

Manipur Women Gun Survivor Network
C/o Control Arms Foundation of India

B 5 / 146, First Floor, Safdarjung Enclave,
New Delhi - 110 029,
India

Ph: +91 11- 46018541 Fax: +91 11-26166234

[Feedback](#)

Email: Cafi.communicate@gmail.com

Website: www.neiwip.blogspot.com