

**Women and Human Rights:
Some Reflections in North East India**

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Abstract

The whole fabric of society depends upon human rights. Human rights are essential components of sustainable development and therefore development of a society is not possible without respect of human rights. Respect of human rights makes freedom. They are part and parcel of life in society and they concern humanity. With all areas of human rights, whether civil, political, economic or social, human rights violations against women take specific forms. Entrenched structures and practices such as casts, customary laws, the family, religion etc continue to discriminate against women. Violence against women, regardless of the nature of the perpetrator- an individual, group, institution, the state or society, is a human rights violation, and is treated as such whether it happens in the home, within the family or in the society. Full realization of women's human rights requires the elimination of all forms of discrimination and the achievements of equality for all women. The protection of human rights is a constant struggle which cannot be won unless every man and women participate in it. Women, who are the victims of different type of violence, are struggling for the issues of violence in the state of Manipur, particularly and North East India generally. There is an imperative need for adopting an innovative and protective approach for actively encouraging those groups, communities, villages, societies that shun violence and adopt peaceful means. The problem of increasing violence can be analyzed from various dimensions to fully grasp its genesis, forms of manifestation and ways to effectively combat crime and violence. So, it is a right time to have a proper research study on the issues of human rights from different angle as a student of social science. This small

paper intends to highlight about the problems of women due to the violation of their basic rights within the socio political norms; and their contributions for the protection of human rights for all sections of the society which are the burning issues of the hour.

INTRODUCTION: Human rights are a set of rights which are fundamental and belong to every human being. It is the foundation of human existence and co-existence. Human rights are sign and symbol of human development and peace. Institutionalized through socialization process, predominantly by the family, school and messages disseminated through print and electronic media, sexism or patriarchy holds society rather tightly, throughout our life cycle. Sex related abortion, blame on women for not bearing child, female infanticide, discriminating women in intake of food and education, depriving women from decision making roles, child trafficking for sex worker, dowry abuse, physical and mental harassment which drive women to commit suicide, rape, workplace harassment etc. are all examples of explicit violation of human rights on gender parance. Lower status accorded to women in family and society results in gender based violence. The gender violence is a universal phenomenon which takes many forms across culture, race and class. Violence against women carried out by any individual, group, institutions or society as a human right violation. We envision human rights for women as the collective rights of women to be seen and accepted as a person with the capacity to decide or act on her own behalf and to have equal access to resources and equitable social, economic and political support to develop her full human being and to support the development of others. Economic institutions which are exploitative of women, social institutions which oppress them or legal institutions which pride themselves on equal justice are gender biased and clearly distort gender neutral notion of law.

Objectives: The main objectives of the paper are:

1. To study the issues of violation of women's rights;
2. To analyze the activities of women in connection with the issues and protection of human rights;
3. To find out the consequential steps for the protection of human rights for women as a member of the human society.

Methodology: This research paper involves the studies of political science, history, economics, sociology, anthropology, psychology and law. Both the primary and secondary data are used for this paper. Secondary data are collected from the relevant books, journals, magazines, document, reports etc from different sources. Primary data are collected through interview, questionnaire, and information from different governmental and non-governmental agencies. Observation method will be employed for this paper with its three components i.e., sensation, attention and perception were applied.

Review of Literature: The problems of human rights have been receiving the attention and concern of all the wise men and nations since long but the society is still deprived of concrete and lasting outcome. Michail S. Kimmel in his book “The Gendered Society” explains very nicely about both gender difference and gender domination in differential socialization process- the ‘nurture’ side of the equation. Men and women are different because we are taught to be different. From the moment of birth, males and females are treated differently. Gradually we acquire the traits, behaviors and attitudes that our culture defines as ‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’. We are not necessarily born different but we become different through the process of socialization. “Human Rights- Concept and Perspectives” written by Rev. M. Stephen draws attention to various types of human rights issues that exist in Indian and Global context. It is an eye opener to the stark realities of life and emphasizes the fact that human beings should overcome the problem of human rights violations as they live and respond creatively. Stephen arouses our conscious to have a social order which is just and human. Taking stock of security scenario, both internal and external, militancy and insurgency gave adverse impact on economic and industrial development. In different articles compiled in the volume titled with “Perspective of Security and Development in North East India” edited by B. Dutta Ray and S.K Agnihotri reflected on various issues pertaining to security and development in North East India. It also clearly discuss with the problems of ethnicity, trafficking, narcotics and migrations and also conflict resolution measures. Alice Thorner and Maithreyi Krishnaraj edited book “Ideals, Images and Real Lives-Women in Literature and History” brings together studies of how the women question was formulated at different times, the impact of conflicting pressure on women, their own reactions and the role they themselves played. There is a need for relating ideas about women and gender relations to the social and economic forces that shape history. “Violence against Women” written by Ashin Roy clearly highlighted that violence is both structurally and

functionally cast in society in its different shades of acceptability. Effecting and getting conditioned is the dialectics in which families could be comprehended while discussing the prevalence of violence over time and it scan with the variation so reckoned as to affect the different levels in which population tends to get divided, as also, to the depth of a 'person' hurt, getting caused or perpetrated. Sri N. Sanajaoba Singh's (edited) book 'Human Rights' presents a fair treatment of the human rights, standard, principles and norms to be followed in case of violations and abuses at the practical level. The judicial intervention and remedial measures rectify the abuses and violations. A regional touch has been found in the documentation of the Human Rights transgressions by the state in the context of North East India. The UN Human Rights Committees and the Amnesty International, among others have corroborated with the violation- records in their own format, which are appended for record. Terrorism, either of the state or non state groups has posed a serious threat to human rights and civil liberty. As corollary to the contemporary terrorism, the concept of human rights has become a highly challenged concept. The destruction of human rights of the civic communities particularly of the women community has no parallel. The mushrooming of insurgent groups and terrorist acts of both state and non state actors are responsible for violation of human rights. These things are clearly expressed by the different contributors from different states of North East India with the major issues in the book 'Terrorism and Human Rights in North East India' edited by Asok Kumar Ray and B.J Dev. The number of violence against women and children are increasing day by day. The number of women and child trafficking is on the rise. They are using as a tool by underground outfits. They are the soft targets of the crime mongering groups like drug paddler, black marketers etc. Rajkumar Manisana Singh in his book 'The Rights of the Child in India' clearly expressed that the rights of the child provided under relevant laws are to be protected. Children are innocent and are at a vulnerable age, children are mentally and physically immature. Because of their physical and mental immaturity, children need special safeguards and care because they are the future citizens.

Human Rights and Women: The human rights of women are judged in the type of the society we envision. We envision a society where we can act on our own behalf with dignity and freedom, recognition that we have both the rights and obligations to develop our full potential and support the development of others. The need of the hour is not only to accept women's right of equality as natural and human but also to be protected by state and

international organizations. In fact, women's subordination throughout the world should be recognized as a human rights violation and with due account to those structures of oppression that intersect and compound such subordination. Full realization of women's human rights requires the elimination of all forms of discrimination and the achievements of equality for all women.

Targeted legislation and other interventions (education, employment etc) are necessary to overcome the legal and social barriers based on gender equality. Women could play an important role in the developmental process; the need of improving the status of women was felt accordingly. The General Assembly proclaimed 1975 as International Women's Year. In 1975 first world conference of the International Women's Year was held at Mexico City where three themes- equality, development and peace were emphasized. The Indian constitution also lays down some provisions for the enforcement of the fundamental rights guaranteed by the constitution. The National Human Rights Commission and State Human Rights Commission; National Commission for Women and State Commission for Women; and a number of voluntary organizations are working for the protection of human rights against all forms of discriminations at the national and state level.

In spite of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights under the United Nations Organizations and the Constitutional safeguards in India, women are subjected to various forms of discrimination in every sphere, be it at home or at work places. Violence against women- in all societies around the world – remains one of the gravest and most common human rights abuse today. It thrives because of impunity, apathy and inequality.¹ "Women's rights are human rights", this famous phrase is a proclamation of justice and human dignity for women, because whenever a women is treated as inferior to a man she is also being treated as somehow less human than a man. Additional international and regional documents that relate to specific concerns have been established over the last 50 years and above. There have been broadly speaking three phases in the development of women's human rights.²

1. Amnesty International Report 2007, P.12

2. Women's Rights are Human Rights, Amnesty International India, 2004

The first phase was based on ensuring that women had equal political rights such as the right to vote and the right to hold public offices. The first generation rights are civil and political rights, enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which can be claimed by the individual against governments. These rights protect individuals from arbitrary interference by the state and are sometimes described as negative in that they require the state to abstain from certain acts such as torture or deprivation of life or freedom. An International Labour Organization (ILO) treaty during this period stated, that women should not work at night, presumably because this would be seen as clashing with their family duties. The main effect of this was to limit women's earning opportunities in spite of the provisions for advancement of the women.

The second phase in the development of women's human rights occurred between 1960 and 1980, and focused on equality and discrimination. This phase culminated in the setting up of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in 1979, which deals with the state's obligation to eliminate policies that discriminate against women and then sets out different areas of discrimination such as political and public life, employment, health care, financial credit, the law etc. this is a binding treaty, which means that states that have signed up to it must abide by it. However, for a long time women's rights were marginalized from the UN system and CEDAW operated in isolation from other UN treaty bodies, which did not integrate the rights of women, so for example the Committee against torture that were gender-specific.

The third phase in the development of women's rights as human rights began in the early 1990s. Here we see the attempt to integrate in a much more systematic manner the issue of women's human rights with UN human rights treaties.

Gender-based violence encompasses a wide range of human rights violation, including sexual abuse of children, rape, domestic violence, sexual assault and harassment, trafficking of women and girls and several harmful traditional practices. Anyone of these abuses can leave deep psychological scars, damage the health of women and girls in general, including their reproductive and sexual health, and in some instances, result in death. Violence against women has been recognized as 'the most pervasive yet least recognized human rights abuse in the world.' In the armed conflict situation in North East India many people are killed and kidnapped. Many newly married and unmarried women are forced to commit suicide to save

themselves against rape and social abuse by the security forces. With the increase of state violence in this region particularly against the youths and women, different women voluntary organizations could not remain in silent. The women community of Manipur staged unrobed protest march against custodial rape and killing of Ms Manorama by the Assam Rifles personnel on 11th July 2004. The demonstrators carried the honor of their community on their bodies and demonstrated that by raping them the army would defile the entire community.³

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: The physical and mental violence, so call domestic violence, women experience, and their need to gain respect within their own family and society have been obscured in other politicized issues. Violence against women created by drunkards within the family and outside has crossed over the limits in certain cases. Emotional and physical torture of women within their family by this issue is increasing day by day. When men became passive and moody, women took outside informal work (any available) to feed their families. When women exposed themselves for feeding their families they became independent and self reliant. It has a great negative impact on women. Men resulted anger to that independent of women and resorted to violence to assert their authority even though they are doing nothing except creating problems in the family. As a result of over possessive attitude of the male members of the family, women are often unaware of the help available from donor funded interventions. Even, again, when they have known about such programmes, women often have not sought help for fear of being subject to more violence. Due to the lack of women plus women support system that is so called in low conflict strengthened the problems of domestic violence in this society.

There are a number of gender crimes, rape cases, molestation, killing etc. which soaked all the people in the state. On 24-1-1986, Miss Luingamla Muinao of Ukhrul District was mercilessly murdered by two army personals and again on 8-3-1986, Km. Neelam Panchabhaiya discovered dead half floating in the Imphal River in a suspicious manner. People raised hue and cry throughout the state. Raped and mercilessly killing of Km. Kunjarani Devi and Km. R. K. Tamphasana Devi make a great soak to the motherly feelings of the women section.

3. Th. Binarani Devi, Women's Movement in Conflict Situation of Manipur, in Ray Asok Kumar and Chakraborty Satyabrata, (ed), Society, Politics and Development in North East India, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 2008, Pp.110-11.

Despite the increased labor input into paid work, women (particularly married women) either continued to bear the main burden of domestic work, or share it with other female members of the household, often their daughters. The North East region was well known for its food self sufficiency and its rich natural resources. Wood gathering, livestock and animal husbandry, handicrafts, handlooms, fishing and agricultural activities such as sowing, weeding, transplanting, harvesting and post harvesting activities like thrashing, husking, grinding etc. were undertaken by our rural women. With the commercialization of agriculture, women's job is taken up by men and mechanization has displaced a large segment of agricultural work. In the context of upgradation of agricultural development tools women were neglected. The transmission of knowledge about the new technologies like use of tractors, high quality fertilizers, selection of HYV seeds, pesticides etc. became man-to-man affairs. Men were increasingly drawn into the modernizing agriculture sector while women stayed in subsistence agriculture with no access to credits, training and technologies. The agricultural development has normally and almost entirely been manned by men right from the decision making to implementation.⁴ As a result of the structural adjustment programme initiated since the early 1990s in India, women have started to face displacement and deprivation. Displacement can be observed over the Northeast India as the forces of globalization, privatization and liberalization acting through Public and Private Corporation, backed by the Indian states over nation building exercise and its encroaching hegemony over local economy is ousting indigenous women's markets and production centers. Reduction dismantling the state financial social services increases pressure on the private sector to undertake the functions, resulting in higher prices or unavailability of services and greater demands on women to make up for lost services. In North East India, mainly in the tribal societies even after the introduction of Right to Property Act 2005, women do not have land ownership but they are engaged in cultivation, doing all the pre-harvest and post harvest works. We therefore find that in the turn of new millennium women's position in the different walks of life would remain at the low level.

5. Phukon Dolly, New Economic Policy and Its Impact on Traditional Skills of Women In North East India, in Day B Dutta, Dev Bimal J.(ed) Globalization and North East India, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 2008 P.349

Not only in the socio-economic fields, women are handicapped in the enjoyment of political rights. Mainly the prevailing patriarchal social structure does not encourage women to be active in the electoral politics. The customary laws of the various tribes in this region are in favor of men who continue to be superiority vis-à-vis women their respective societies. With the implementation of the 72nd and 73rd Amendment Act, 1992 there is a scope for more democratic district administration in the shape of district government by vesting more powers and responsibilities in the self governing bodies and involving the people in the making of their own destiny. These are indeed far reaching changes towards the realization of the dream of giving power to the people but the state of Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya remain out of the orbit of the 73rd Amendment and the hill areas of Manipur where the District Council minus Sixth Scheduled provision were once there, also do not come under the purview of the 73rd Amendment. This Act has provided for the reservation of one third seats in the Gram Panchayat and Zila Parishad for women. It gives a good chance for the women section to take part in the process of decision making at the grass root level. But in all the reforms or changes in the hill areas administration no special facilities for the women have been mentioned so far. In the higher political echelon of Manipur i.e state legislative assembly and parliament, upto 2012, not more than four women had been elected in the state legislative assembly of Manipur in spite of the women voter outnumbered male voters. Only one women M.P. was elected so far (Kim Gangte). Women's participation in local level political institutions like village panchayats and municipal bodies has also remained insignificant in spite of the government's policy of cooperation and reservation of seats for women.

Violence against women exists in various forms in everyday life in all societies. There are several instances where rape victims in any society do not report the atrocity committed against them for fear of physical safety as well as social stigma. This speaks poorly of both - which is deeply patriarchal in its attitudes- and our law-enforcing machinery. Instead of enabling women who have been victims of sexual assault cope with their trauma, large sections of our society often heap indignity on them. Legal rights of women in India are of very high order and in certain respect more than what is available for women in other countries. Violations are the order of the day than adherence to these laws. Personal laws are the laws, which govern marriage, divorce, inheritance, succession and adoption. These laws do vary based on a legal problem for women of different religions as they are put to differential treatment.

Violations of children's rights, specially girl child are still common in many places. The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which India took part, has declared that the children shall be protected against all forms of neglect, cruelty, and exploitation. He or she shall not be subjected to traffic in any form. They are still forced to work long hours under hazardous and under harsh conditions, ruining their health and missing opportunities for education. They are working as helping in different families. Factory owner, businessmen, rich families used children as their helper. They are cheated by some NGOs and public leaders by putting them in the orphanage or child care center etc and used them in whatever way as they wish. The constitution of India guarantees free education of children up to the age of fourteen. But in real practice, one can see innumerable children, age between 8-12 years are found to engaged themselves as vegetable vendors of Manipur (mainly in Muslim community). They help their families with some income that has been earned by selling vegetables which they have produced by cultivation along with their parents. There have been numerous cases, where they toil hand in doing domestic and household jobs in other people's houses, in exchange of a few rupees.

As a result of the insurgency and counter insurgency problems, people are totally confused in certain cases. Children has been kidnapped from the school or home for ransom; and found their death bodies after three four days. Minor children became the victims of armed conflict between insurgents and counter insurgents. Rape cases of minor are increasing day by day.

Women's Role in the Protection of Human Rights: Human rights, which are undoubtedly the inherent rights of a person, are threatened all over the world. So preservation of human rights has today become one of the prime challenges of civilization. The burning contemporary issues in human rights are- violence against women, violation of human rights in the conflict situation with different Acts, violation of child's rights etc. In spite of the governmental machineries and different constitutional provisions, covenants, Acts etc at the international and national levels, the role of the civil society organizations in the process for protection of human rights is noteworthy.

While women are suffering from different type of violence; they are struggling for the issues of violation of human rights in North East India, especially in Manipur. In all the movements against the violation of human rights in the insurgency and counter insurgency prone areas like Manipur, women are coming at the forefront in all the issues. There is an

imperative need for adopting an innovative and protective approach for actively encouraging those communities, villages, societies that shun violence and adopt peaceful means. The problem of increasing violence can be analyzed from various dimensions to fully grasp its genesis, forms of manifestation and ways to effectively combat crime and violence.

Keeping in view the duty of the Union under Art.355 of the Constitution, inter alias to protect every state against internal disturbance, it is considered desirable that the Central Government should also have power to declare areas as ‘disturbed’, to enable its armed forces to exercise the special powers. Areas declared ‘disturbed ‘ under the Armed Forces special Power Act over the past 50 years vary significantly according to their conflict history, ethnic constituency, and levels of militancy. However, all the areas where this act is imposed share a common experience of widespread human rights abuses. The AFSPA has also had the opposite effect in each state where the AFSPA has been implemented and soldiers have been deployed; the armed forces have become a symbol of oppression and an object of hate. Human rights violation has served to fuel conflicts and act as a recruiting sergeant for militant groups in many parts of the country⁵. Arbitrary detention, torture, and the killing of peaceful critics have had the effect of closing democratic and peaceful paths of opposition, forcing organizations underground and fuelling a growth in militancy. Not only from the side of the state actor, many militant groups have been responsible for human rights abuses, including torture, indiscriminate killing with bombs and landmines, hostage taking and targeted attacks upon civilians regarded as enemies.

Different women associations are fighting with the atrocities of the Armed Personnel with different Acts and bills in the state of Manipur especially the Armed Forces Special Power Act. The world famous naked protest in front of the Assam Rifles Forces on July 2004 was a remarkable protest performed by the women of All Manipur Social Reformation and Development Samaj in connection with the merciless killing of Thangjam Manorama Devi of Imphal East District. Not only in group, Irom Chanu Sharmila is continuing her hunger strike against this brutal Act. For opening the deaf ear of the government, on 10th December 2008, under the leadership of Smt K. Taruni Devi, President of the All Manipur Social Reformation and Development Samaj formed a group called ‘Sharmila kanba Lup’ at PDA Complex Porompat. Their motto is to support Sharmila and

demand to remove AFSPA from Manipur. A continuous relay hunger strike is still going on by the women from different parts of the state.⁶ People, mainly women of all sections support this movement because the cases related with the violation of human right is increasing so much, and Army and state forces commit the crime of human right violation in the name of this Act.

In Manipur different incidents occurred in connection with the violation of women's right like kidnapping, raping, killing, cases like, Neelam Panchavaya, Tamphasana, Ahanjaobi, L. Elizabeth etc. In such above cases The All Manipur Nupi Marup directly involved in the protest movement for finding out the real culprit, to give reasonable punishment and gave moral and physical support to those families.

For justification of my paper I took up some cases:

Case 1: Sri Khundrakpam Shyamkisor Sing of Khurai Ahongei killed his wife Khundrakpam (ongbi) Sanahanbi Devi on 8-4-93. All the women sections of Manipur soaked the incidents and protested from all directions. In this case also, the All Manipur Social Reformation and Development Samaj took a leading role and the culprit was arrested and put into jail. A campaign for safeguarding and killing of innocent women was launched and demanded the action against the real culprit by the women of Manipur under the leadership of All Manipur Social Reformation and Development Samaj. They submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister of Manipur on 11 April 1993.

Case 11: With the progress of India's Look East Policy, Moreh, Chandel Districk of Manipur Became one of the important as India's mouth to open with South Asian countries. Now here women are becoming the victims of unwanted activities like black marketers (carrying of drugs, alcohols, Heroin No.4 etc, which are not allowed by the law of the country), sex workers etc. And sometime they are becoming the victims of rape, molestation, human traffickers, gender crimes etc. Kha Nongpok Aunba Nupi Lup, in collaboration with other frontal organizations and association tried to remove such problems in the area of the Lup especially and involved such type of issues which are happening in any part of the state. Lam Khulling Mate, a physically challenged women,

9. Getting Away With Murder, Human Rights Watch, August 2008, P.4

10. Interviewed with Smt. K. Taruni Devi President, All Manipur Social Reformation and Development Sa maj

who is struggling her life with a small pan shop of Moreh was raped and killed by knotting her neck by her own chunni (cloth) on the night of 22nd Jan. 2009 by Ipham Aamir Khan and Achom Romen. Before finding out the real culprit, bandh was called by Kha Nongpok Apunba Nupi Lup along with other organizations and submitted memorandum to the Government for finding out the real culprit and punishment. The agony of the Lup reached the heart of the underground organizations. So UNLF, PLA, KYKL etc jointly tried to find out the real culprits and the said duo were found and gave death punishment. Before killing them, the UGs called a press meet and the duo were also admitted their crimes and narrated the story how Miss Mate was raped and killed. For avoiding such crime against women furthermore by any person, death punishment was given to the real culprit even though that was against the law of the country.

Case 111: On 24-2-1992, one tribal widow, named Lalmalsomi, 35 years, of Kom community, who have four children was captured by some Anti-Social Gang Groups. Her case was taken up by the All Manipur Social Reformation and Development Samaj with the help of State Police forces and saved the life of innocent widow in time. The Gang Party was also arrested.⁷

Case 1V: One Ningthoujam (N) Baby was death on 5th October 2009 at her husband's place. Parent of Baby along with the local women charged the family of Khwairakpam Chaoba, husband of (L) Baby for the death because Baby did not bring any dowry as formal marriage was not happened. So, women of Naransheina organized a rally but that was stop at Moirang by the police. United Naranseina Development Committee seeks cooperation and help from civil society organizations regarding the matter⁸. Some related persons regarding the issue were also arrested.

Cases of child trafficking and child abuse are increasing day by day in this liberalized world. Different governmental and non-governmental organizations are taking up different steps for solving these cases. Mala Lisham, Coordinator of Child line (Child

7. All Manipur Social Reformation and Development Samaj (office record).

8. Poknapham, 16/10/2009. p.5

Line unit constituted by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, is a national network to safeguard rights of the children) said she will make every possible effort to bring those 76 children rescued by a CWC in Tamil Nadu on Jan.23, 2010⁹. Out of these 76 children, 54 were from Manipur. Hundreds of children are reported missing from northeastern region every year and traffickers are increasing targeting children who are either poor or are victims of domestic violence. In many cases, the traffickers lure parents with promises of good education and food for their wards, and then take the children away to work in other states under inhuman conditions. This unit (ChildLine) detected most of the cases of illegal transfer of children from Manipur outside the state for the last few years.

-Number of Children Trafficked During 2007-2010:

Year	No of children	Destination
2007	05	Singapoor
2008	22	Chennai
2009	16	Chennai
2010(Jan)	54	Tamilnadu

One heart felt incidents was occurred in connection with the use of drug was happened in 1987 at Singjamei Thongam Leikai. An innocent five years small boy, Momocha Takhellambam was killed on 24th April 1987 by two drug addicts for just a small ear ring worth Rs. 180 only. For this merciless killing, different associations, mainly women's association organized meetings, processions, to draw public sentiments and also pursuing the government to punish the wrong doers.

During June- July 2008, there was a great tension in Manipur. Young boys and girls of below 15 years were arrested and one underground organization clarified in the local papers that they joined their organization willingly. There was a great hue and cry about the issue. All the Meira Paibi groups, Nisha Bandi groups, clubs, organizations etc. mainly by women groups came out and protested against the issue. They organized rally, sit-in-protest, seminar, open talks etc.

9. Times of India, 29-1-201, P.2.

CONCLUSION: So when violations against women or girls are not recognized as human rights abuses, women are collectively diminished as human beings and denied part of their humanity. Human rights are not a gift granted at the pleasure of governments nor can they be withheld by governments, or applied to some people and not to others. When governments act like this and deny human rights to a group of people in society, they must be held accountable. But governments are not the only one's responsible for human rights abuses against women. Corporation, NGOs, private individuals etc should also be held accountable. Too often cultural relativism in the form of social and cultural tradition is used as an excuse to deny the human rights of women. But we need to take account this factor very seriously. The universality of human rights means that they apply equally to women as well as to men. Here I want to put forward certain measures for the enforcement of the rights of women which can make them meaningful and ensure the enhancement and preservation of the dignity of women and, again, for proper implementation of the democratic norms in the society within the framework of the constitution.

1. Despite the ratification of the conventions, discriminatory legislative provisions in the social, economic and political spheres will exist including civil, penal and commercial codes and administrative regulations.
2. The goal of education should be parity in literacy, primary and secondary education and where feasible even of university students. Gender education should be included in the syllabus in any form.
3. There is a need to stop paying lip-service to the need for a minimum age of marriage, the explicit illegalization of female circumcision backed by stiff and enforceable penalties, and the enforcement of clearly enunciated population policies.
4. There is a need for effective communication of legal rights. It is necessary to access the level of understanding of their rights by women. The content and presentation of the legal material must be matched to the level of understanding of each group of women. Then the best means and channels of communication must be used.
5. It is only by a process of mass mobilization to create women awareness of the power of their vote as well as the support for their gender that they can achieve

their goals. More women must be encouraged and supported to participate and aspire to all of the highest bodies in every appreciable member.