

The very
first issue of...

SCH LA VIEWS

26 November 2015

Issue - 1



*The future ahead
in the trouble-torn Northeast*



SCHOLASTIC VIEWS

A MAGAZINE

BY THE SCHOLASTICS

OF KOHIMA JESUIT REGION

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Message from the Regional Superior



Dear Friends,

It gives me great joy to learn that the first issue of SCHOLAVIEWS will be out on 26 November 2015, the feast day of St John Berchmans, the Patron of Jesuit Scholastics. It has been the dream of our Kohima Jesuit Region Scholastics to bring out a magazine which would contain their views on various topics. It helps them to think, reflect and put in written form their views that they themselves have been assimilating and formulating. Each one has experiences, but it is a difficult task to put them in written form expressing them in a coherent way. Pen is mightier than sword. In this age of violence and gun culture, while the visual images are dominating the media to capture the minds of the young, like 'use and throw', nothing permeates the mind and heart for profound thinking and being affected by that. There are no quick solutions to the problems of today; and quick solutions do not last long. There is a need to sit, read, reflect and pray. When we bring the real world in our reading and prayer, the Lord speaks to us and that becomes a profound thought for oneself and for others. To train our mind in the right direction and to inculcate a culture of hard work expressing one's views in written form, is a strenuous work.

The theme of this issue is The Future Ahead in the Trouble-torn Northeast. When every group or tribe is trying to assert its identity in terms of land and socio-political expressions, they are bound to intrude into one another's identity. For the rest of the country, Northeast is filled with problems and troubles. But, amidst all the troubles, there is always a room for dialogue, respect and understanding; and so the future is filled with hope. Articles based on the theme will highlight what sort of future the people of this land are longing for and how to achieve it in a peaceful way.

I deeply appreciate the hard work of our scholastics who have contributed their articles to this issue, all those who will be contributing in the future and the editorial team, Schs Melwyn Fernandes and W K Pradeep, who have slogged so much to make this dream a reality. I would like to encourage all our scholastics to contribute some articles for every issue so that it grows from strength to strength and quality to quality. In the process, we definitely deepen our understanding of the Northeast and be to those who read this magazine a help to deepen their understanding.

May God bless your efforts!

- Fr S Arul SJ

Message from the Regional Coordinator for Formation (RCF)

Dear Friends,



It gives me great joy to witness the release of the first issue of “Scholaviews”, an e-magazine containing articles written by the Kohima scholastics. It has been the ardent desire of formators in the South Asian Assistency to see their young men delve deeper into academic pursuits, and creatively express the gems they garner through these pursuits. This is especially true for the Kohima Region which has close to a hundred young men in formation, many of whom are either first generation-educated or at the most, second. It is heartening to see that these young men, following the example of their older brothers in the Society, have come out with this e-magazine filled with articles that focus on a topic that is so close to the hearts of the people of the Northeast, namely, the search for peace amidst conflicts.

The Northeast of India, a land known for its beauty and complexity is unfortunately plagued by conflicts that destroy the very fabric that unites the peoples of this land. In this context, it is imperative for those working in the Northeast to find ways to resolve these conflicts and facilitate processes that bring peace. Who can do this better than young men from this strife-torn land who seek to build the Kingdom of God on earth by committing their lives to the Gospel through their Jesuit vocation? The young Jesuit scholastics who have contributed to this magazine are people who have in some way experienced the pain of conflict and the devastating impact it has had on people of all ages in the Northeast of India. And so, it is our hope that this creative expression of thoughts and feelings will enkindle in both the contributors and the readers of this magazine a renewed desire to work for peace.

I sincerely thank the scholastics for taking up this challenge and contributing articles for this magazine. It is a humble, yet, important beginning for us. I am particularly grateful to Schs Melwyn Fernandes and W K Pradeep for spending so much of their precious time to make this dream come true.

Wish you all an enjoyable reading.

- Fr Anand Pereira SJ

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EDITORIAL NOTE

*In 1550, one of the additions made by Ignatius and his companions to the original Formula of the Institute of 1540 was a statement that read thus: (Jesuits need to) be usefully employed in peacefully resolving conflicts. Just a few years of ministry had taught the early Jesuits that engaging in the defense and propagation of the faith, and the promotion of Christian life and principles, included the mission of reconciling people. Similarly, we, the Jesuits of Kohima, with our four decades of experience in the ministry have realized the crying need to bring reconciliation among people in this conflict-ridden, yet harmony-seeking, Northeast region of India. We have already been involved in various ministries aimed at establishing harmonious societies across the region. However, a lot more needs to be done to bring peace to this land. In this first issue of the **SCHOLAVIEWS**, the young Jesuit scholastics of the Kohima Region share their own views on the ways to speed up this process of bringing greater peace and reconciliation to this region.*

*The Scholastics of the Kohima Region, had been considering for years coming out with a magazine to express our views and reflections. This dream has finally come true in the form of this little magazine, titled, **SCHOLAVIEWS**. We, the editors, are immensely honoured and pleased to be part of this magazine's debut, that expresses the thoughts and ideas of our fellow scholastics in the form of articles, poems and drawings. We are particularly delighted that we are bringing this out on the feast of St John Berchmans, the Patron of Jesuit Scholastics. As you pick up this issue, we wish you pleasant reading, and request you to continue to support and encourage our efforts in building up a more peaceful Northeast India - For the Greater Glory of God.*

- Feast of St John Berchmans, 26 November 2015

*Blessed
are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called
the children of
God.*

1. SEVEN SISTERS AND A BROTHER



Norbert Kasomhung SJ

Oh! How lucky are we,
 To have such beautiful hills and valleys!
 To have air fresh and free
 Even when the world has less!
 Oh! How lucky are we
 To be unique and different from others!
 To have a variety of tribes and races,
 Variety of cultures and languages!
 Oh! How happy are we
 To be children of Northeast India!
 The seven sisters and a brother!
 But now sadness has filled our hearts.

Hatred rips us apart.
 We are exacting to follow our culture
 But destroy our exotic nature.
 We are proud of our motherland
 But forget to think of our human bond.
 Superstitious beliefs have taken over.
 Broadening of our minds has become slower.
 Guns and bombs are the common sounds we hear.
 Blood trickles like a stream everywhere.
 Cries and screams are heard everyday.
 Yet, "Who cares?" is the response today!

Shall we join the so called 'Patriotic group'
 And let our spirit droop?
 Shall we stay underground
 And forget the needy around?
 Oh let us choose what is right
 So our future shall be bright.
 If our hearts still cling to petty things
 Goodness and peace will never take wings,
 But when OUR hands join the OTHERS' hands lovingly,
 There, in harmony we'll live joyously!



An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind. - Mahatma Gandhi



2. A LAND OF INSURGENCY

Silbirth Sangma SJ

I was surprised one day when I heard my cousin threatening her son saying, "If you play with fire, I will call the militants to take you away." To my surprise, the boy stopped playing with fire instantly. I wonder whether the boy understood the meaning of 'militants', yet it created in him some kind of terror. In days of old, when a child cried, the parents would frighten the child saying, "If you do not stop crying, a ravenous tiger will come and devour you." But today the situation is different. The stories of head-hunters and ferocious tigers, which we heard as children, seem no longer frightening compared to the challenges brought about by insurgency.

The vibrant states of Northeast India are known for their captivating and enchanting nature, the mist and magic of their air, their mesmerizing colours and richness of heritage. But rising insurgency has unfortunately dampened this positive image of Northeast India, converting it into a land that seems to be perennially at a boiling point, about to explode at any moment. Sadly, in the explosion, it is the defenseless people who face the brunt. The simple people constantly live in fear of the militants. It is evident that the militants have become icons of fear and violence.

At first, they were considered heroes who fought for liberation from the Indian power. But, over the years, the militants have invented new shackles, for example tax, to bind their own people. As a result, the people have withdrawn their support to them. The insurgent groups have diluted the noble cause with their own selfish agendas. At present, they live to sustain themselves, of course, at the expense of the simple people. There is no error in saying that the militants live on blood money.

Joining militant groups has become an easy choice for the unemployed idle youth. They are lured by the power of a gun and the fear it can inflict on the minds of the innocent. Who does not want to enjoy this privilege of being feared? For in-

Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding. - Einstein

stance, the Garo Hills in Meghalaya have witnessed the emergence of more than ten fringe militant groups in just a decade. Despite the government's zero tolerance towards militants, every group has been extorting more money from the people. The militants seem to take advantage not only of the people's patience and tolerance, but also of their fear. If this menace has to end, the people have to join hands to eradicate it. It has to begin, first of all, by eliminating the fear of militants from the minds of the people. The people should believe in the power of unity against a handful of militants. Needless to say, in the process, some lives may be sacrificed; but our dear younger generations will live in peace. What can be dearer than a secure and peaceful life?

* * * * *

3. I CAN FEEL YOUR PRESENCE OH GOD!

Francis Gangmei SJ



I can feel your presence O' God.
You are here; You are there
Every time and everywhere.
In the plants and in the trees
And even in little seeds
Your presence fills my entire being.
Because You are my each and everything,
Because You are my eternity,
My Whole life to You I surrender.

When things go wrong and contrary to my will,
You're the one teaching me to be calm and still.
All that I am or hope to be
Reflects the love You've given to me.

Let me die, be crucified with Thee.
For Easter night will see me free.
Words can't express, mouths can't proclaim
O my God, what You are to me!

Peace comes from within. Do not seek it without. - Gautama Buddha



4. THE HMAR STRUGGLE FOR AUTONOMY

Joseph Zoliana SJ

*The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
but in ourselves.*

- *Julius Caesar* (William Shakespeare)

A Mizo swoons at the mere recollection of the Mizo insurgency of yesteryear. Keeping in mind the past bitter experiences of violence and brutality inflicted on civilians, I am going to focus on the existing political situation of the Hmars in Mizoram.

The Hmars vs the Mizos?

A sizable number of Hmars are still settled in Mizoram. The Mizo historians have never considered them as a tribe separate from the general Mizos. One such historian, Liangkhaia, stated, "For fear of the Lushais, the Hmars moved northward; hence they are called Hmars." (In Lushai the term *Hmar* literally means *the northerner*.)

When the Mizo Union was formed at Lakhipur, the term Mizo was intended to include almost all the tribes of Northeast India except the Khasis, the Garos, the Nagas and the Arunachalis; but it later on came to include only the Hmars, the Lushais, the Raltes and their kindred tribes. In Manipur, the Hmars were the first and only tribe to accept the Mizo nomenclature as their own, even before the Lushais and Raltes did. In the Lushai Hills, the Mizo Union was formed on 6th November, 1946; and it was only then that the Lushais and the Raltes accepted the term as their nomenclature as well.

The Hmar Struggle

Such was the solidarity and brotherhood shared between the Hmars and the Lushais that the Hmars did not feel the need to harp on their "Hmar identity". When the first political party, the Mizo Union took shape in 1946, the Hmars too were incorporated into it. As the Mizo Union Party gained momentum, the Hmars of Manipur wanted their territory to be integrated into the Lushai Hills Superintendent Area. This political upheav-

There is no way to peace, peace is the way. - A J Muste

al even led the then Manipur Premiere, P B Singh, to promise the Hmars that they would be given the status of a Regional Council provided they ceased to be part of the Mizo Union. On 29th April 1954, when the "Mizo District" was formed, the Hmars expected to be included in the Lushai Hills District. However, no change was made regarding the territorial boundary between the Lushai Hills District and the Manipur District. Hence, the Hmars of Manipur were left disappointed. The Hmars of Manipur vehemently took part in the struggle of the Mizo National Front (MNF) for the "Greater Mizoram". The peace accord was signed between the underground MNF and the Government of India, on 30th June 1986; but as per the Article 3 of the Constitution, the idea of merging the scattered Hmar areas failed once again.

The Struggle for Self-determination

The Hmars of Mizoram had shared the cultural ethos with the Lushais and they never had a feeling of "we and they". But the disheartened Hmars of Manipur began to influence the comparatively more peace-loving Hmars of Mizoram. The Hmar Peoples Convention (HPC) was formed in the year 1989. The HPC submitted a memorandum to the then Governor of Mizoram, Swaraj Kaushal, to obtain for it the status of Autonomous District Council. In the same year, the HPC took up arms against the Mizoram government; and there had been several gun battles between them until the peace accord was signed in 1994. The dissatisfied section of cadres parted ways with the overground HPC and formed the HPC-D in 1995. The initial objective of obtaining Autonomous District Council (ADC) changed into a demand for independent Hmar State (Hmar ram) consisting of the Hmar inhabited areas of Mizoram, Manipur and Assam.

What is next?

In the name of self-determinism, a vicious and never ending battle is being fought in every nook and corner of the world, and Northeast India is no exception to it. Hence, two questions arise in our minds: First, can unity be brought about despite diversity? Second, would it not be wiser to rise above our little differences and start concentrating on our commonalities?

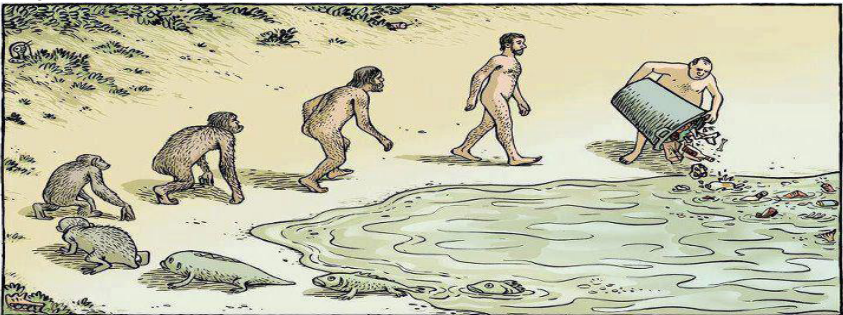


5. THE EXPLOSION!

Valerian Zou

It was a Saturday afternoon. The sun shone brightly. Spectators flocked eagerly to the ground to know who the champions would be. The clock chimed 2.30pm and the referee in black blew the whistle. The Winter Football- 2007 final match was kicked-off between ZYA in white jersey and Elima in red, at Sugnu local ground, Manipur. Fans were squealing and cheering their favourite teams with a gale of music. However, till half-time, none had scored any goal. At the seventieth minute, the people seemed to hear the sound of gun fire or a bomb explosion. A woman was seen running in panic towards the football stadium. On seeing her, the people began to run helter-skelter, but no one really knew the reason for her panic. As a result of the commotion, the exit gate was flooded with people and many met with minor injuries. But after an hour, people returned to the ground in search of their lost mobiles, purses and children. In fact, on inquiring, the people learnt that the woman who had run into the stadium was chased by an ox since she was wearing a red dress!

Perhaps, due to the violence of all degrees they have faced, a sense of fear and danger always lurks in the subconscious of the people of the Northeast. So, many questions arise with regard to the psychological condition of the people of the Northeast. I wonder if peace is ever possible when people seem to live in fear all their lives? I believe, real peace can exist only when fear has been eradicated from the minds of people; and I hope, that day is near.



Know that love is truly timeless. - Mary M Ricksen



6. IT'S TIME

Ngoni Dukru SJ

Why do we call it
'Trouble-torn Northeast India'?
Why do we look down up on our land?
Why do we always compare Northeast
with the rest of India?
Why do we talk only
about conflicts and problems of Northeast India?
Why do we think the Northeast
to be backward and undeveloped?

It's time that we change our attitude and mindset.
It's time that we unite our communities and work together.
It's time that we make use of our talents and resources
and be interdependent.
It's time that we stop relying too much on outsiders
to do our work.
It's time we learn to run our own markets
instead of making ourselves mere customers.

Let us celebrate the natural resources and rich cultures
God has blessed us with.
Let us promote a culture of self reliance and hard work
among our youth.
Let us appreciate and encourage our people
to use their ability and creativity.
Let us celebrate and encourage our musical and sporting tal-
ents.
Let us promote the spirit of collaboration and sharing
among the children, the youth and the adults.
Let us be ambassadors of this change of attitude
to the whole world!



7. INSECURITY VS FRATERNITY

Teilang Kyrasian SJ

In one of my visits to the house of a classmate of mine, his parents being Brahmins and knowing that I was a Religious hailing from Northeast India, asked me about the Christian population in the Northeast. I told them that most of the Northeastern states were filled with Christians. They looked at each other and asked me with a smile, "How is it that the Northeastern states have so many conflicts and underground activities?" I was dumbfounded. Yet, this is not the question I am going to ask or answer in this article.

My question is 'Can Northeast India ever be a peaceful place?' In other words, can conflicts and terrorist activities be eliminated here, where intolerance towards other communities is so strong? As Northeast India is multicultural and multilingual in nature, the answer to this question is rather complicated. Yet, there is a ray of hope in the midst of apparent troubles and turmoil. The only thing that we need to do is to identify and get to the root cause of all conflicts, and either change it or uproot it at the earliest. It is obvious that the root cause of these conflicts is insecurity, which is manifested in the justification of the action done with the pretext of protecting or preserving our own tribal culture and status. We seem to be ethnically and culturally over-conscious. This causes political and communal conflicts and leads to many other intertwined problems like terrorism and insurgency. Therefore, tackling this problem of insecurity is a must.

How to tackle the problem of insecurity is a million dollar question. The answer to this may differ from place to place according to the situation. One common solution for this problem

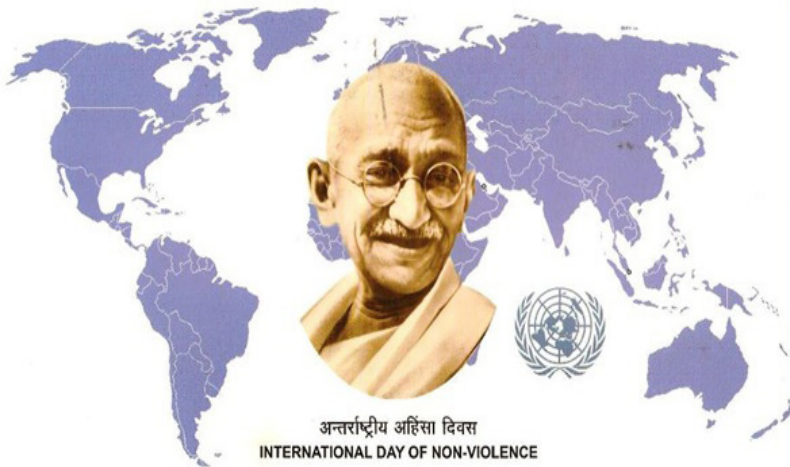
is to foster the spirit of brotherhood. Many states of the North-east are Christian. If we Christians live our Christian values, it will help us to strike at the root cause of these conflicts. It will also help us deal with the menace of terrorism and insurgency, and thus could change the Northeast to a heaven on earth.



OCTOBER 2: INTERNATIONAL DAY OF NON-VIOLENCE

In 2007 the United Nations declared October 2 as the International Day of Non-Violence. According to the United Nations General Assembly resolution on 15 June 2007, it is an occasion to “disseminate the message of non-violence, including through education and public awareness”. The resolution reaffirmed “the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence” and the desire “to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence”.

Gandhiji’s method of non-violence, which he primarily derived from the teachings of Jesus Christ, is a way that needs to be explored and implemented in our Northeast India, in order to attain greater freedom, peace and progress.



Peace is its own reward. - Mahatma Gandhi

Photo Gallery - 1



Violence is the last refuge of the incompetent. - Isaac Asimov

Photo Gallery - 2



Love now, not later. Also, love later. - Jarod Kintz

Photo Gallery - 3



There are no shortcuts to any place worth going. - Beverly Sills

Photo Gallery - 4



The future depends on what you do today. - Mahatma Gandhi



9. NORTH-EAST INDIA - THE HOTSPOT OF ETHNIC VIOLENCE

Liavi David Nukhu SJ

When we flip the pages of any Indian newspaper today, our eyes cannot but catch the headlines that present the Northeast of India as a hotspot of violence. The Northeast is rich with racial, linguistic and ethnic diversity, which unfortunately, is also the prime contributor for the frequent outburst of tensions and conflict.

For those of us who live in the Northeast, ethnic violence has become so common a phenomenon that it does not shock us anymore. It has become an intrinsic part of our life. The long-standing unrest in the region has created powerful conflicting systems, which condition our minds and shape the way we live. Resentment towards members of another culture, is instilled in young minds, which obviously condition their thinking patterns and behaviour.

This disunity among people of this region has contributed vastly to bringing down the rate of development to a snail's pace. This, in turn, has led to the mushrooming of insurgent groups and loss of credibility among political figures. In all this mess, the worst sufferer is almost always the common person who is struggling to make a living.

We cannot easily win over the confidence of people and have them change their attitude towards the present system, because they see it as oppressive and unjust. Ethnic problems and insurgency issues need to be understood in terms of the feelings and aspirations they represent and not just as a law and order problem.

There is an urgent wake-up call to all right-minded citizens, to deal with this challenge that stares at our face and jeers at our incapacity to wrestle and defeat it. The constant outbursts of violence are just symptoms; the real problem lies much deep-

Peace is the only battle worth waging. - Albert Camus

er. Some of the reasons might be the lack of acceptance among mainland Indians, insecurity within ourselves and within our cultures, and the greed of a few. While we cannot deny the past, we cannot hold on to it as if all solutions can be found only in history. We need to read the signs of times and respond in ways that are most appropriate in today's context.

GOD'S GRANDEUR.

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.

It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;

It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil

Crushed. Why do men then now not reck His rod?

Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;

And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;

And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil

Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;

There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;

And though the last lights off the black West went

Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs -

Because the Holy Ghost over the bent

World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

- Gerard Manley Hopkins SJ(1844 – 1889)

A Weekly Reminder

Without GOD, our week would be:

Sinday, Mournday, Tearsday, Wasteday, Thirstday, Fightday & Shatterday.

Remember seven days WITHOUT GOD makes One WEAK!!

Real generosity towards the future lies in giving all to the present. - Albert Camus



10. DROPS MAKE AN OCEAN

Martin Ao SJ

The heart of our 'Mother Earth' is weighed down with sorrow and sadness. We hardly find any place where there is no violence and bloodshed. All the four corners of the earth have witnessed the brutality of violence in one form or other.

Northeast India is a place of beautiful green forests. There is biodiversity in our ecosystems. God has blessed this land with abundance of grace. It is truly a land of milk and honey.

However, there is a big concern about various negative elements growing in this region. One such negative element is conflicts based on tribes, languages and ideologies. Some of these conflicts have been major ones; while others are minor ones. But the common driving force in all of them seems to be the selfishness that pervades human nature. So the root cause of these conflicts is often not at the community level, but at the individual level.

How does one promote peace and harmony in such a region? Actions speak louder than words. It would be absurd for one to go from mountain to mountain proclaiming the value of peace, while doing nothing in his or her personal life to reduce conflicts. What we need to do is to bring a change in our own life first, so that we can then inspire others to follow our example. As it is rightly said, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." We need to start something concrete here and now through efforts, big or small. We need to be more sensitive and discover the goodness of every human person realizing that God is present in each. We are called to be optimistic in everything we do. Things may be difficult, but are never impossible. Our efforts may seem small, but let us never forget that it is drops that make the ocean.



11. OUR WORLD

Barister Khongrymmai SJ

Today in our world
 There's no place for love.
 People are busy with earthly pleasures
 There's no time to care for others.
 Hatred rules the human race
 Mercy fails to show its face.
 Promise is just only a word,
 That people play in crossword.



Pride binds all people as slaves
 Young and old, no one escapes.
 Corruption rules over all nations,
 Ready to eat the world in seconds.
 We're mad about matters of money and power,
 Willing to do anything to satisfy our desire.
 We'd rob, steal and cheat the other,
 For 'I have to live, not my neighbor.'

It's painful to see
 That we've lost our dignity.
 Life, our life has become so cheap
 We don't care if some others weep.
 Oh! When will we have the courage
 To put an end to this outrage?
 Oh! When will we ever learn
 To live together again?



Rise up! Better late than never!
 In our hands lies our fate.
 Let us work hand in hand
 We'll make this world a peaceful land.



12. IS MULTIPLYING ARMY PERSONNEL AND GUNS A PATH TO RESTORING PEACE IN NORTHEAST INDIA?

Melwyn Fernandes SJ

BLAST! INDISCRIMINATE FIRING IN THE MARKET PLACE!
AMBUSH ON HIGHWAY!
UNDERWORLD DON SHOT DEAD!
ARMY PERSONNEL CRITICALLY INJURED!
DEATH OF A SUSPECTED TERRORIST IN POLICE CUSTODY!

These are the daily headlines of the Northeastern newspapers and news channels. For a tourist, reading newspapers in Northeast India can be a traumatic experience. It can also be shocking for the tourist to see the number of men in uniform and with guns of different sizes and shapes, patrolling market places, like hungry tigers restlessly looking for prey. The frequent negative portrayals of the various happenings by newspapers and news channels magnify the violent activities of the underground cadres and the military personnel, greatly affecting the psyche of the people. Mahatma Gandhi rightly said, "I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent."

The trauma I went through when I first landed in Kohima from mainland India, has left an indelible impression in my mind and heart. On crossing the check post at Medziphema, Nagaland, the bus was brought to a sudden halt. I saw a group of men in uniform armed with huge guns enter the bus for a routine check. They stared at us as if we were all stray criminals sitting right before them. For one who has not experienced the army's style of functioning, especially their tone of speaking and rude ways of frisking, it is really an intimidating experience. Sadly, for the locals, it is a normal routine. Later, on reaching Kohima town,

Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God. - Corrie ten Boom

I saw a crowd of army men patrolling the area with frightening guns, as if they were some professional tamers desperately looking for some wild animals. Upon inquiring about this strange sight, I learned that men in uniform with guns is a normal sight in Nagaland, and so is it in other states of Northeast India.

Historically, the Naga movement escalated when the army was sent in 1958 to control the rebel groups in order to bring peace. Ever since the arrival of the army in Nagaland, the locals have been in constant fear of violence from the army. Unfortunately, the result is contrary to the original purpose for which the army was sent. In fact, so far the presence of the army has done more harm than good. Implementing the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) in certain states of the Northeast, has only worsened the situation further. If army men are given unlimited powers to arrest civilians just on the basis of suspicion, then we are letting the hungry army taste civilian blood. This license to kill can strike the death knell to any peace process. This is not a mere assumption but a reality; and the State of Manipur bears witness to this ugly reality of rape, and so called 'encounter killings' by the army.

One cannot deny the fact that continual overemphasis on violence in the newspapers and news channels has done more damage than enhancing peace in the region. In remote villages, the youth, mostly the uneducated, get carried away by the violent pictures of shootouts, killings and bloodshed. These youth are not in a position to reason out and distinguish between good and evil. Moreover, recurrent violent images lead to contamination of ideas and ideologies, in the minds and hearts of youth.

One can dream of peace in such troubled zones only when the attitude of army personnel and the thinking patterns of the general public change. In order to make this dream come true, the unnecessary magnification and the unhealthy pro-

motion of the symbols of violence in the public arena, has to cease. It does not mean that the existing violence should go unreported. But the newspapers and news channels, and also the social media, should make conscious efforts to emphasize the goodness that exists in Northeastern society, rather than merely magnifying the aspect of violence, which in a way, sows the seeds of evil.

It is rightly said, "We become what we eat." One cannot expect anything good to come out when one is continually exposed to evil. Hence, if we feed the newsreaders with positive energy, the readers will radiate positive vibrations and relate optimistically with one another and with society at large. Similarly, instead of reinforcing our public places with more army personnel, we need to create an atmosphere which makes people feel more secure and hopeful. Consequently, it will pave the way to peaceful and harmonious co-existence.



In a time of destruction, create something. - Maxine Hong Kingston



13. GIVE ME NO MORE TOY GUNS

Shisha Simon SJ

Oh! What a bloody footprint ended there,
I followed it backward to lay it bare.
A little stream of warm blood flows everywhere,
People don't bother any more.
Who could those men be standing there,
well dressed and orderly?
A whispering voice catches my ear,
"Hunt him down! Hunt him now!"
The sudden silence, in the distance,
The little voice, seems like my own.
I won the game; I killed them all.
Oh! What a powerful memory,
Standing there facing my father,
Like a brave soldier standing in front of his commander,
With the best toy gun in my hand.
What a feeling running in my heart,
Filling every part of my body.

Now I play no more with my toy gun,
But still I play the game,
thrusting gunshots to fulfill my yearning.
I grew up with toy guns; played slaughtering games and
watched butchering movies.
Now killing gives me no feeling of wrong,
For the toy gun I played with as a child,
has now become a real one.
Such is the end when the toy comes to life.
Give me, give me no guns anymore;
For with the gun I can love no more, nor be loved anymore.
For I wish to love my brothers and sisters;
So that with them, I can enjoy the joy of living.



14. THE MEMORY OF VIOLENCE THAT NEVER LEAVES ME ALONE

Ngashan Angkang SJ

Violence is never a solution to anything; rather it brings disaster, pain, sorrow, untold misery, and even loss of life and property. My early childhood experiences have taught me this truth.

When I was three, my family had to abandon our village because of the Naga-Kuki conflict that took place in my State. This conflict brought hunger, thirst, pain and sorrow to my family and to many other families that had to flee from their native places. After three years of wandering, my family returned to our village to start a new life, but our dreams, hopes, and aspirations crumbled because of the start of a new conflict. As a boy, I had the experience of regularly being woken up in the middle of the night, because it was not safe for us to sleep in the house. Violence had shattered the student life of my elder brother and sister and many others like them. Thank God, we did not lose our lives. As an adolescent, I experienced extreme insecurity, while traveling through conflict zones. There were times when groups of militants occupied our village. They would enter our homes and take what they wanted. I can never forget those images.

As I relive those memories, I realize that, hard as they may have been, these experiences have taught me a great deal. They have taught me to face the challenges of life boldly, and never to give up even in the midst of adversity. I am aware that my own experience of violence and insecurity is just a tiny drop when compared to the pain and suffering faced by many others in the Northeast of India.

I believe that just as my past has influenced my present, so too, the pain and hardship of others is sure to influence the way they see life and live it. However, we can choose how we wish to look at these experiences. They could either build us or destroy us. We could either come out victorious or come out defeated. The choice is ours.



You miss 100 percent of the shots you never take. - Wayne Gretzky



15. REPRESENTATION OR MISREPRESENTATION OF THE NORTHEAST BY MEDIA?

Kulvi James SJ

The north-East has been caught up in political instability and unrest for the past several decades. It has witnessed bloodshed and violence in many different forms. The whole region is characterized by divergent social, cultural and linguistic distinctiveness. Unfortunately, each of these groups has its own list of concerns and grievances, which each of them have been trying to address in their own ways, some constructive and others, otherwise. The media could play a huge role in helping these groups focus on the right issues, rather than focusing on trivialities. A fair and unbiased presentation could lead people to work together for peace in the region rather than foment more division. But in all this, the media needs to tread that thin line by being sensitive to the sentiments and aspirations of the people. The media largely controls the mind of the people, and therefore, if not carefully monitored, could misrepresent facts and manipulate the truth.

The media has definitely not played a positive role when it comes to issues concerning the Northeast of India. The region gets so little attention in the media, and even that little is often heavily biased. There is neither participation nor involvement of the local people in the process of sharing information. Unfortunately, it is just a few people who share a similar ideology who rule the roost. The media often presents only a part of the picture, and so, people are not sufficiently and meaningfully informed. This part presentation of the truth has been hugely detrimental to the region. This is indeed a big challenge for the media because it needs to maintain a balance and use temperate language in order to foster a feeling of amity among various ethnic groups in the region.

The reports by journalists and TV news reporters have drastically affected the viewers' perception of the whole region

Lay a firm foundation with the bricks that others throw at you. - David Brinkley

and have often done more harm than good. The negative portrayal of Northeast India to the rest of the world has only helped to alienate further a land that is already isolated. Various issues have ripped apart the region and created turmoil, but the media has despondently failed to communicate these to the world.

Probably, the only issue that caught the attention of the nation and the rest of the world was when Manorama Devi, a 32 year old woman from Manipur, was raped and murdered by the men in the armed forces prompting 12 Manipuri women to strip themselves naked in front of the army camp, asking to be raped in full media glare. Most of the time, the media finds that the news items from the Northeast are not newsworthy because they are not 'juicy' enough to produce money.

So what is our Jesuit response to this biased representation of the Northeast by the media? Could we organize media workshops and encourage journalists to turn their eyes on this lonely yet lovely region? Such initiatives could probably usher in new ideas and new energy that could be used to foster peace, encourage trade, and usher in development. Our schools could serve as a powerful media to educate our students and teachers about the dangers of biased media and the harm it does, vis à vis a media that is unbiased and proactive bringing peace and justice. A long journey indeed! But a journey that is totally worthwhile.



The Company Commander and the First Sergeant were in the field. As they hit the sack for the night, the First Sergeant said, "Sir, look up into the sky and tell me what you see?"

The Commander said, "I see millions of stars."

First Sergeant: "And what does that tell you, sir?"

Commander: "Astronomically, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Theologically, it tells me that God is great and that we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, it tells me that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you, Top?"

First Sergeant: "Well sir, it tells me that somebody stole our tent."



16. WHOM TO BLAME?

Stephen Lalruatsaka SJ

If one were to ask people from mainland India what they knew about Northeast India, one would get a plethora of interesting responses. A large majority of them would probably know the Northeast only as a land of violence and killing. Others would opine that the Northeast is still stuck in the head - hunting era. Sadly, all this is far from the truth. The Northeast like any other part of the world is in the 21st century and is exposed to the latest cars and latest gadgets. Whom should we blame for these misconceptions about the Northeast? May be we ourselves are directly or indirectly responsible for them.

The irony is that we fail to portray the beautiful culture we have inherited from our ancestors. Most of us claim to be Christians, but our lives are far from Christian. Thanks to the ego and pride of a few leaders, our land has become a killing field. We have even forgotten equality, which is so central to our culture - an equality that sees every person, no matter which tribe he or she belongs to as one, an equality that does not see one tribe as being superior to another.

Our younger generation needs to learn to live in harmony and share with their counterparts in other parts of India, the precious gems that they have garnered from their culture. The rest of the world needs to know that while our land is not free from violence and killing, this is not the only defining feature either. We could let the world know more about our land by inviting them to enjoy our hospitality, which is undoubtedly one of the best, among cultures.



We are doing badly. I hope to sack some of my 'yes-men' and have some 'no-men'. Do I have your approval?

- Cartoon by RK Laxman, 14 May 2010



17. WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?

Danielson Syiemlieh SJ

The earth's change is reluctant;
 Its face resembles the undesired artificial mutant.
 The unnatural alteration affects consequently
 The whole living system, especially humanity.
 Is it not a consequence of human's irresponsibility?

Forget not the harm borne by humanity,
 Leaving humankind in a self-inflicted tragedy.
 The grudge, violence and enmity,
 Unearth its shattered morality and integrity.
 Posing a challenge to human beings with uncertainty.

Nature's law is based on equality
 But the brunt is faced unequally.
 Is it a mystery of diversity?
 A gap of mutual responsibility
 Based on human greed entirely.



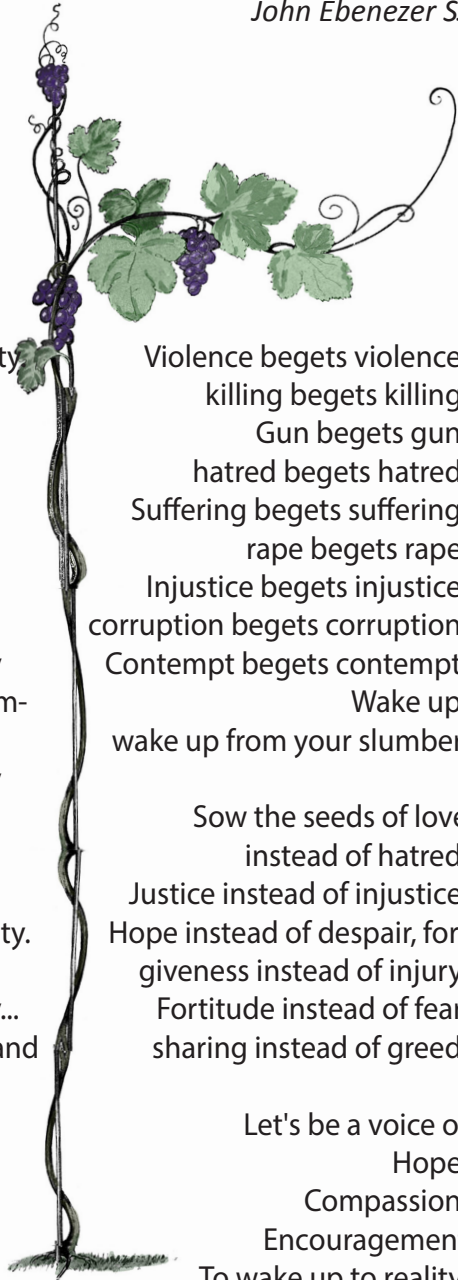
The sentiments of superiority and inferiority
 Are but fragments of a divided society.
 The thought of I, me and mine
 The main hurdle to true Commune.

The evolution saga tells that we are one,
 Placed in the One that holds us together as one.
 Indispensable is the presence of everyone,
 In the one family of the beautiful One.



18. WAKE UP

John Ebenezer SJ



The time has come
It's in the here and now,
To wake up to reality
Beyond our four walls of safety

This is not what we desire,
To live in dread and fear,
But in peace and tranquility,
And in true Harmony.

Lo and behold!!
Evil has crept into our society
That breaks our unity and com-
munity.
Hatred surrounds our locality
Where healing's beyond our
ability.
Wake up, Wake up;
Be not deaf to the call of reality.

There's a loud and painful cry...
Beckoning each of us to see and
not to sigh.
Wake up, wake up and see
What's happening
to our society.

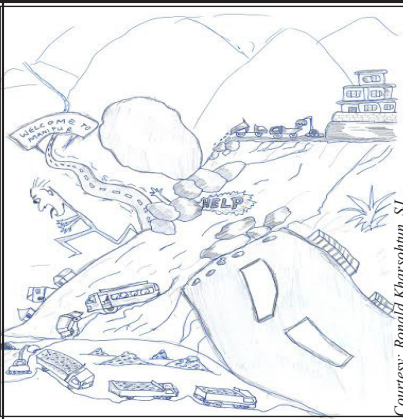
Violence begets violence;
killing begets killing.
Gun begets gun;
hatred begets hatred.
Suffering begets suffering;
rape begets rape.
Injustice begets injustice;
corruption begets corruption.
Contempt begets contempt.
Wake up;
wake up from your slumber.

Sow the seeds of love
instead of hatred,
Justice instead of injustice,
Hope instead of despair, for-
giveness instead of injury,
Fortitude instead of fear,
sharing instead of greed.

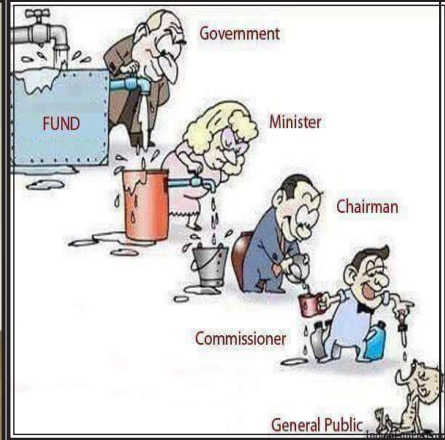
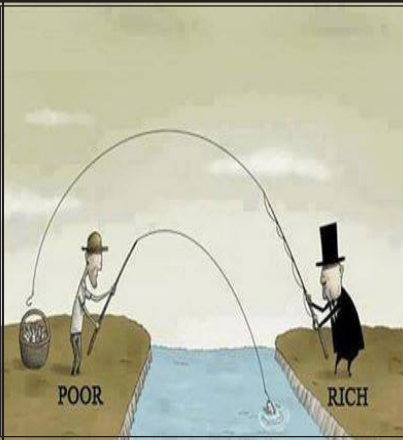
Let's be a voice of
Hope,
Compassion,
Encouragement
To wake up to reality.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

OUR WAYS OF PROCEEDING!?



Courtesy: Ronald Kharsolihun - SI



*Anywhere is paradise,
It's up to you....*



PEACE & CONFLICT



Michael Kerketta SJ