

A call for unity conveyed on the occasion of the International Human Rights Day

# 10 DECEMBER 2008

It is to remind on this occasion of the International Human Rights Day that the notions of dignity and equality as recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should enable the world community in envisioning through practices of these notions a world free from domination, repression and injustice. Similarly the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights emphasise on the significance of political aspirations of the people in order to ensure self-determination as foundation for freedom and justice. Ideas about strengthening and protecting them, and of course, the politics around these ideas have today reformulated the notion of dignity and equality. Today, various sections of the humanity, be it cultural, political or social, have successfully started to bring these ideas to the domain of intensive political engagement and mobilisation.

The provisions of the Declaration and the Covenants allow free choice of programmes for economic, social and cultural development for each nation (e.g. Manipur) to pursue and urge every government to follow the path to democracy, peace and development through such programmes. In light of the spirit of the Declaration and the Covenants, the people of Manipur have been struggling for democratic rights of equality, freedom and dignity. However, what follows since the beginning of these struggles is a series of brutality of the Government of India through explicit military repression, atrocities and violation of human rights. As a consequence of these undemocratic and militaristic practices of the Indian Government, Manipur stands today completely dehumanised, and terrorised; its economy completely pauperised and the society irreversibly disarranged. Thousands of cases of rampant killing of innocents, assassination of children and women, detention and enforced disappearance are becoming the order of the day, all under clearly defined objectives of the Government of India to efface any form of democratic struggle in Manipur.

India's geo-strategic interest and the greed for expansionism, both economic and political, which are vividly shown in various strategies of the Government of India, has now become powerful source of justification for and legalisation of the intense form of using terror by the State as a technique to gain the economic and political ends. What is developing in Manipur is an increasingly contested ideology of the Government that seeks to suspend democratic rights, concretise economic displacement and political marginalisation. As a result, development is completely out of question. Productive forces, especially the youths, are utilised in militarization projects of the State by giving them job for containing the struggles for democracy. Manipur's identity of being a nation and its values is now gradually under a threat.

Manipur Students' Association Delhi (MSAD) believes that our struggle for democracy should take new strengths to further intensify the inspiration of Universal Declaration of human Rights. On this solemn occasion of the International Human Rights Day, that is 10 December 2008, we extend our solidarity to all those who are fighting for democratic rights in different parts of the world and at the same time, call for unity of the oppressed and exploited peoples across the globe to rise up together and fight for justice, democracy and peace.

**Apunbana Yaifarae !  
Unity is Victory!**

## A BRIEF ECONOMIC PROFILE OF MANIPUR

- Manipur's per capita net income (SDP) based on a quick estimate at current prices is Rs. 11,370 for 1999-2000 as against the All India Average of Rs. 16,047. The range employment in the state service sector is very limited with 71,508 persons employed in 2001-2002 out of a total population of about 23 lakhs. In 2001 nearly 10, 00,000 [ten lakh] of people live on irregular and limited income.
- In the primary sector 50% of the main workers are engaged in agricultural activities. Agricultural labourers with negligible area of arable land for cultivation has increased from 28,613 in 1981 to 47,350 in 1991 and to 1,20,991 in 2001. Marginal labours who do not have any cultivable land and who survive on an average of 100 working days have been increased from 38,322 in 1981 to 55,528 in 1991 and more than doubled in 2001. The decadal growth rate of marginal workers is at 32.9 %.
- Industrial growth remains stagnant with micro enterprises (79,555) and the small-scale units (8771). This accounts for larger segment of the industrial sector. Whereas most of the state-owned corporations have been closed 30.86 % of small scale industrial units are sick and 90 % of micro enterprises are in trouble.
- The people have lost their control over natural resources (including land) as a result of constitutional restrictions. For instance collective right of the people of Manipur over their land, wetlands and waters are regularly de-regulated by Indian laws (e.g. Articles 3, 270 and 272 of Indian Constitution, Land Revenue Act 1960, Land Acquisition Act 1894, etc) and transferred for private use to foreigners, government agencies and corporate bodies for economic exploitation. Forests are stripped off, water bodies destroyed, agricultural lands submerged and residential areas displaced through mismanagement of projects (e.g. Loktak Hydro Electric Project, Tipaimukh Project, etc.) and neglect of maintenance.
- There has been steady increase in the number of poverty from 5.29 lakhs in 1987-88 to 7.19 lakhs in 1999-2000. Only 12.41 % of the households in Manipur have access to modern toilet facility in 1997 (National Human Development Report, 2001, - page 171) and 37 % safe drinking water (Economic Survey, 2004-05)

**Please take part**

## **International Human Rights Day Observation**

Organised by Manipur Students' Association Delhi

Venue: Delhi University Garden, Opposite VC office, University of Delhi, Delhi -7

Date: 10 December 2008

Time: 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.