ORCHID

Edition 2

The St. Stephen's North East Society

ORCHID is published annually for the staff and students of St. Stephen's College under the North-East Society of the college.

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FROM THE EDITOR

The North-East means different things to different people. For some of us it is home, it is identity, it is the place which has moulded our sensibilities and how we see and perceive life around us. And for many among us it stays and is a part of who we are. The essence of the region is strongly manifested in its music, art and literature, which are so intermeshed with the daily life of the people that it becomes difficult to tell one from the other. It's a hotchpotch and a medley of colours, rhythms and flavours, each unique and enchanting in its own aspect and disposition.

However, after an arduous search conducted among the dusty and timeworn shelves of our college library I was rather disheartened at having found just one commendable anthology of writings on the region, among the several hundred thousand volumes of academic as well as non-academic work. Literature documenting the biodiversity, music, folklore and poetry of the region is sparse and when available, of considerably poor quality. One feels that an entire experience has been effaced from a pan-Indian narrative for whatever reason, be it lack of translation or careful deliberation. This absence has been felt, time and again, not just in library spaces but in wider spaces of representation like the mass and print media where, even in this age of information technology, the "North-Eastern experience" is driven to the periphery and not consciously and conscientiously engaged with. This journal, if nothing else, is a humble attempt to provide representation and facilitate discussion regarding this very experience.

A lot of hard work and dedication has gone into the making of the journal, and I personally and on behalf of the entire society would like to thank each and every member of the editorial and design team for making its publication possible. Herein, I would like to end my editorial note with a quote by Arundhati Roy which I feel sums up and perfectly conveys my resentment and discomfort regarding the North-Eastern equation. It goes something like this: "There's really no such thing as the 'voiceless'. There are only the deliberately silenced, or the preferably unheard."

Ishwari Deka

Maphou Dam, Manipur
Picture by Anna Iangrai

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All photographs in this edition are taken by the respective contributors unless specified otherwise

The President's Parting Word

3rd Year, B.Sc. Mathematics (Hons.)

Vanessa Beddoe

When the outgoing seniors of the batch of 2016-17 elected me as the President of the St Stephen's North-East Society, despite feeling elated I was also really unsure as to how I was going to conduct and head one of the biggest societies in college (in terms of number). This society, in addition to being one of the youngest, is one of the most diverse societies in college. Being a part of it since the first days of its conception and its initiation into the Stephania family, I have witnessed all the hard work and dedication that has gone into its formation and formalization. This is a society nurtured by a few extremely dedicated seniors who wanted to generate awareness about the region, specifically starting from the college space itself. Being a part of this journey has not just been an educative but also a rather pleasant and gratifying experience. Henceforth, I have tried to summarise and point out certain core principles and objectives that this society is built upon.

Objectives of the Society

The St. Stephen's North-East Society is an embodiment of the College's ideal of unity-in-diversity. Formed on 1st February 2016, it is, as of yet, the newest society among the multiple societies in College. The fundamental aim of the society is to bridge the social and cultural divide between the North-East and the rest of India. The objectives of the society are to promote social and cultural integration between the North-East and mainland India, to showcase the rich cultures and traditions of the region and to provide a platform wherein topical issues pertaining to the North-East can be discussed and awareness be created.

The Logo

With the creation of the Society in 2016, we immediately felt the need to design and establish a logo at the very beginning. The society logo has various elements, each representing an important part. Here's the deconstruction of the logo.

- *Shield:* The backdrop of the logo is a tribal warrior shield. It symbolises the protection and preservation of various North-Eastern cultures and traditions through this society.
- *8 Hill ranges at the bottom:* Represents the 8 states of North-East India. (Note: This is only for representation purpose. The North-East region does not comprise of hills only)
- *St. Stephen's College Logo*: This is to symbolise that the Society functions within the purview of the College, its ethos and principles, and its existence for the welfare of the college and all its students.
- *Hornbill feathers above the College logo*: Many communities in the North-East (like the Nagas) have a traditional practice of crowning individuals (particularly hunters and warriors) with headgear adorned with hornbill feathers to honour their successes and achievements in hunting and wars. The more successes one has achieved, the more feathers one has on one's headgear; they are similar to present-day medals of honour. Similarly, the hornbill feathers on the logo above the college logo symbolises the crowning of the college for its achievement in bringing together students from diverse backgrounds (including cultural), the celebration of this diversity and for providing a conducive space for learning through interactions between these various cultures- made possible with the existence of societies like the North-East Society.

Unicolour

Unicolour is the annual cultural event organised by the society to showcase the various dance, music and art forms of the eight states. With the outlook of incorporating as many ethnicities as possible, Unicolour tries to give the college a wholesome purview of the cultural specificities of North-East. This year, it brought Manipuri, Bamboo and Maring warrior dances to the mess lawns along with Khasi and contemporary Manipuri songs. We hope that this event is carried forth by our juniors on an even grander level and continues to draw in as many members of the college fraternity as it has done since its two years of inception.

The Annual Lunch

With the purview of giving the college fraternity a taste of the flavours and food habits of the region, the annual lunch seeks to serve a diverse spread of different dishes from the

North-East in lieu of a nominal amount of money. This year as per the feedback given by people who had the lunch, Bamboo Shoot chicken and Sanpiau were some of the well-loved dishes. In future years, we hope to see an even more diverse spread which will appeal to the taste-buds of the college community.

Annual Journal

It was on 6th April 2016 that the first edition of Orchid, the annual journal was published and archived in the college Library. The journal soon went online. It was headed by S. Lina Poumai, Head of the Literary Department (St. Stephen's North-East Society) and Editor in Chief (2015-16) of Orchid. The name of the journal was chosen after much deliberation. 'Orchid' would represent the region even with its great diversity as a whole. In the introduction to the journal (first edition) the explanation was such: "According to the Indian Journal of Hill Farming, the North-East Indian Region as a whole supports 50% of the total flora of the subcontinent and of the 1,331 species of orchids found in India, North-East sustains around 856 of them. Out of these, 34 species are among the threatened plants of India and 85 species are endemic (they are not found anywhere else) not just to this region but also endemic to the home states where they are found in all the 8 states of North-East India."

This photograph was taken at the Orchid Research Centre located at Tipi in West Kameng District of Arunachal Pradesh, about 65 km away from Tezpur (Assam) towards Bomdila (the district headquarter of West Kameng). It is situated on the west bank of Kameng river (also known as Jia Bharoli in Assam) surrounded by high hills covered with semi ever green tropical rain forest vegetation. It stretches over an area of 10 hectares of flat land comprising of office buildings, an orchidaria, a tissue culture lab., a museum, a herbarium and several gardens.

The Nation and the Periphery

Contesting Narratives

Reuben Paulianding Naulak

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"Man's history is being shaped according to the difficulties it encounters…" begins Rabindranath Tagore in a superb essay where he undertakes a scathing attack of what he terms as the "Nation of the West" (Tagore, 2009:33). If this fact was clear to him at that time, it is much more so in ours where the vicissitudes of social and political life seem to be much more pronounced and have amplified many times over. But the shaping of this history is in dispute, the hegemony over which is being sought by an ideology and its adherents. This is the idea of 'Nationalism'.

Although unquestionably instrumental to the Independence struggle, nationalism has outlived its original purpose and, as of now, donned the seemingly innocuous and even admirable project of civil cohesion. The irony of such attempts, wherein efforts to unite only engender assertions of difference, will be examined here. This will be accomplished in light of the North-East, the country's peripheral region, which is perhaps the most definitive example of this contradiction.

Our account begins from India in the pre-colonial era, hailed by Tagore as the "India devoid of politics, the India of no-nations..". (ibid.:36)

Pre-Colonial India

Pre-modern and pre-colonial society in India was characterized by a pluralistic outlook towards people of distinct affiliations- race, religion, custom, etc. Tagore saw that the problem given to India was the "problem of race" (Tagore,2009:34). People of different races had arrived and settled in the subcontinent and interacted with one another. India's response to this multitudinous and assorted agglomeration of people, he wrote, was the "social regulation of differences on the one hand, and the spiritual recognition of unity on the other" (Ibid.:34). Thus, its history had been one of "continual social adjustment and not that of organized power for defense and aggression" (ibid.).

Identities in those times were flexible and people were not barred from retaining multiple identities. People had "fuzzy" identities (Behera,2010:215). The attitude of tolerance towards communities that were different from one's own was distinctive of Indian society.

Despite the existence of multiple kingdoms and other modes of authority, there was no one sovereign power which exercised absolute control over its subjects and, therefore, no state requisitioning the identity of its subjects. This was largely due to the paramountcy attached to Hindu society over the state (ibid.:216). The political authority of the rulers was thus greatly curtailed and this allowed the fluidity of social boundaries.

The Transiton to Modern Nation-State

The advent of colonial power significantly changed this social organization. Discussions on the rule and misrule of the British over the span of three hundred years is beyond the purview of this paper. It is, however, pertinent to highlight the consequences of the encounter between what Tagore calls the "India of No-Nation" and the "Nation of the West" (Tagore,2009:36).

India succumbed to the colonizers, which was inevitable as the latter was technologically superior and was organized, unlike India, which, at that time, was a mere collective of communities and small principalities subsisting on agriculture and trade. Subservience was not the only thing colonial power introduced in India - using a cognitive apparatus of figures, maps and numbers to understand and categorize the amalgam of people, it initiated the process of cementing their fluid identities (Behera,2010:216-217). The consequence of

> . . . the country's North-East poses a different problem, that of integrating groups that have not been a part of history and yet have been forcibly incorporated into history. Both questions are equally urgent and a permanent and amicable settlement must somehow be reached.

this was that people began to develop a sense of territoriality, and started perceiving the group to which they belonged as an exclusive collective self. These identities, when fixed, were increasingly susceptible to political mobilization. Power was centralized, and the image of India came to be projected as a "geographic and demographic entity" (ibid.:219).

By their mere presence, the British inadvertently handed over to India the key to its emancipation. This was the idea of the 'Nation'. "The idea of the modern nation-state", as Ashish Nandy puts it, "entered Indian society in the second half of the nineteenth century, riding piggy-back on the western ideology of nationalism" (Nandy,1994: v).

This 'ideology' proved to be a unifying force for the subjugated masses, especially when wielded by Gandhi, who instigated the people en masse against the colonizers. The intermittent struggles against the British transmuted into a national movement and thereafter was a force to be reckoned with. This nationalist sentiment established a hegemony on Indian society, subsuming all variant- and sometimes dissenting- voices by incorporating them within the nationalist agenda. This led to the eventual expulsion of the colonizers, whose departure marked the dawn of a new era in Indian history -the era of the modern Indian nation-state.

The British left behind a country in turmoil, which had to tackle a host of complex socio-economic problems while trying to carve out its own political space in the international arena. The Partition left a deep and lasting scar on popular memory and, from then on, there was a resolve to protect the territorial integrity of the country at all costs. For this purpose, the nationalist ideology was once again employed, the difference this time being that it was not directed against an external agent – the British- but against dissenting voices within the country. The label of the 'other' which was originally assigned to the British was now pinned on elements within Indian society.

The Nehruvian modern nation-state, modelled after the European experience, poses a fundamental problem, that of cultural unification being a pre-requisite of the modern nation-state; it allowed the recognition of only a "single, determinate, demographically numerable form of nation" (Behera,2010:220). However, this ideal was a far cry from the ground realities in India, which was essentially and factually plural.

This fundamental contradiction, between a 'homogenizing' ideology which is unable to grapple with questions of diversity, and the fact of a plural Indian society, have fissiparous consequences for the country (Lamba,2013:125).

The North-East Question

In this post-independence setting, the North-East presents itself as a challenging piece of the puzzle. After the departure of the British, India was bequeathed lands that had never figured in her imagination, while those that had were severed from her. She lamented the loss of the erstwhile East Bengal and huge swathes of territories to the North-West, which later became Pakistan. In the North-East, she encountered a relatively unknown entity – a stranger in her midst with whom she was forced to live under political unity by the blind forces of nationalism. And under the dictates of that ideology, the new nation-state undertook the project of locating and establishing a commonality with the region.

However, barring meagre records of chance encounters with local principalities in the past, this was a futile project. Neither an inquiry in histories nor one in cultures could supply a substantial basis for claiming a common heritage, and even when it seemed to, it was intensely contested by sections of the populace. Moreover, the hills of the region, which comprise of no less than sixty percent of the total land area, were part of the contiguous uplands of Southeast Asia, termed "Zomia" by historian Willem van Schendel, and investigated in depth by Professor James C. Scott (Scott,2009). The settlers of these regions were 'stateless' people whose lifestyles were designed to evade the overreaching tentacles of the state.

An important part of their strategy, as Scott saw it, was to not keep a recorded history. The only source from which one might collate details of their past is through their oral histories, which can only be taken with a pinch of salt.Thus, the nationalist project could not locate the history of a large portion of the region and thereby had no tales to appropriate within its narrative.

The British had chosen to adopt a non-interventionist policy towards the North-East, especially in relation to the tribes inhabiting the hills, by using colonial apparatuses like the Inner Line Permit, Backward or Excluded Areas, etc. This ensured the segregation of the region- and therefore the people - from the mainland. Though the people there had occasional conflicts and skirmishes with the colonizers, their struggles were, strictly speaking, never part of the national movement.

To them, they were either fighting

People of different races had arrived and settled in the subcontinent and interacted with one another. India's response to this multitudinous and assorted agglomeration of people, he [Tagore] wrote, was the "social regulation of differences on the one hand, and the spiritual recognition of unity on the other."

for their ruler, or community, or land, but never for the 'Indian nation'. In fact, 'India' was non-existent to most of them. This was noted by Jawaharlal Nehru, who said, "The essence of our struggle for freedom was the unleashing of a liberating force in India. This force did not even affect the frontier people in one of the most important tribal areas", and again, "They never experienced a sensation of being in a country called India and they were hardly influenced by the struggle for freedom or other movements in India. Their chief experiences of outsiders was that of British officers and Christian missionaries who generally tried to make them anti-Indian" (Chandra,2008:142).

Their omission from the mainstream nationalist movement later engendered their exclusion from the national imaginings, which derive themselves from the independence struggle. These imaginings tend to include and exclude peoples and groups based on their contribution to the nationalist struggle. Romila Thapar notes this predilection, writing that "Anti-colonial nationalism produced a history that largely referred to the past of groups that had been active in the national movement and were therefore thought to constitute the nation" (Thapar,2014:36).

On account of this, the North-Eastern finds little or no space in the narrative orchestrated by nationalism. Emphasizing on "religious nationalism", which Rinku Lamba views as being effective for bringing about the "cohesiveness that can enable constructing a people with a strong collective identity" was also not practical, as Christianity, owing to the work of Christian missionaries in the region, had already taken root and established a stronghold among large portions of the North-Eastern populace (Lamba,2013:142).

Nonetheless, numerous attempts were, and are, being made to forcefully blend these divergent strands of experiences within the fold of nationalism. There is no dearth of instances where such projects have been blatantly carried out. The move of the Centre to label Rani Gaidinliu as a freedom fighter on the centenary anniversary of her birth came under harsh criticism from sections of Naga society, which charged right-wing groups like the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh(RSS) and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad(VHP) with attempts to "hijack her narrative into the fold of Hinduism" (Kamei,2015).

The same government provoked a similar backlash a year later when they tried to portray Khuangchera, a Mizo warrior who died fighting the British in 1890 as a 'freedom fighter' . Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) and Mizo Students Union (MSU), two leading students' organisation of the Mizos, opposed the move, and wrote to the PM, stating that "during that time, Khuangchera or any Mizo did not know anything about India, let alone fight for its freedom". They went on to add that "he fought against British expansion and occupation of Zo country, not for the freedom of India."(Mizoram, 2017).

While one may engage in endless debates and speculations over the facts, and the intentions of such historical figures, it is impossible to deny the prevalence of popular resistance emanating from the country's peripheral region against efforts to forcibly induct them into the national mainstream.

The Naga Accord, a framework agreement signed between the Government of India and the NSCN-IM on the 1st of August, 2015, was hailed as being 'historic', accurately so, given that it was the culmination of over eighty rounds of negotiation stretching over the course of almost two decades. Though its contents are yet to be disclosed, the parties to the agreement made it clear that the points agreed upon centred on the acceptance of the "uniqueness of Naga history and culture" (Bose, 2015).

What is astonishing about this is the fact that such acknowledgements had to wait for over six decades, during which bodies pile up alongside the hatred and widening chasm between both sides. Such instances only evince the anxiousness of the nationalist project to repress any counter claims of legitimacy. One can also legitimately pose the question: What of the "unique" histories and cultures of other groups who have as much, if not more, claims to "uniqueness" based on these grounds?. Questions of this nature would perhaps expose the disconcerting ambivalent stance of the state towards these issues and, furthermore, any attempt by it to give a satisfactory answer would only betray its partiality towards groups with more political leverage.

The state also has a 'strategic interest' in the North-East, which shares an international border with five neighbouring countries. This fact, along with the sovereignty demands of various insurgent groups, has been used as a pretext by the Centre to militarize the region. K.S. Subramanium accurately observes that "the security-centric approach dominating official thinking had led to "conflict management" and not "conflict resolution"." (Subramanium,2016:3).

The Nehruvian modern nation-state, modelled after the European experience, poses a fundamental problem, that of cultural unification being a pre-requisite of the modern nation-state; it allowed the recognition of only a "single, determinate, demographically numerable form of nation". However, this ideal was a far cry from the ground realities in India, which was essentially and factually plural.

The initiative must arise also from those dissenting sections of the North-Eastern populace who must give up their insistence on differentiation . . . and embrace the idea of pluralism. . . efforts should be directed towards establishing commonalities on shared values of democracy, individual liberty, pluralism, tolerance, etc.

Concerns of uniting and holding the country together have also been frequently cited as the reason for such dreadful measures, though, ironically, such efforts have only served to further segregate the region and alienate the people therein.

Looking Ahead

What is the way forward then?

Romila Thapar views the problem for India to be "one of integrating groups that have been part of history but have been excluded from history" (Thapar,2014:34). However, the country's North-East poses a different problem, that of integrating groups that have not been a part of history and yet have been forcibly incorporated into history. Both questions are equally urgent and a permanent and amicable settlement must somehow be reached. Possibly, this will happen through a process of revision and reorientation of historical narratives and constructing a broader and more inclusive criterion for belongingness.

Recent developments signal a rising tide of questions and contestations, though not without fervid resistance from right-wing groups. One must ensure that pressing concerns such as these are given the chance to ride this wave. The initiative must arise also from those dissenting sections of the North-Eastern populace who must give up their insistence on differentiation – which, as M.S. Prabhakara points out, is no different from the Hindutva movements, both being fuelled by hatred of the 'other' (Prabhakara,2009) - and embrace the idea of pluralism.

The folly of seeking for things where they do not exist, which offers nothing but frustration, must also cease. Rather, such efforts should be directed towards establishing commonalities on shared values of democracy, individual liberty, pluralism, tolerance, etc.

This is not to suggest that these ethos are absent in the present times, but rather to stress upon the fact that their inculcation is an ongoing process which needs to be propelled and constantly foregrounded.

Let me conclude with a fair warning by Bikhu Parekh: "Those who ignore their history as well as those who remain trapped in it are condemned to repeat and pay for it" (Parekh,2006).

My hope is that we can find and build new narratives between those two extremes.

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Orchid Transplanting in Khuilungtang

Jessica Jakoinao
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Caring for orchids or any other plant may seem like a daunting task if you're dealing with one that's not endemic to your area. Well, there are plenty orchids thriving in the gardens of most houses across Northeast India; growing effortlessly. Too bad for us folks in Delhi. We can only read about them. If only these plants could survive on our appreciation.

But don't get me wrong. However naturally sprung they may seem in some households, they've been carefully transplanted. And much artistic attention has been paid to its visual appeal. It's almost a competitive art. A small number of shops in Ukhrul sell them too but I doubt that their many owners know much or bother about their subspecies, hybrids, multiplication and medicinal uses, beyond its ornamental feature. I'd gladly call it a carefree hobby, this orchid transplanting.

I accompanied a lady, and other ladies too actually, from Khuilungtang on her annual orchid hunt in the month of June, last year. The place is located on the outskirts of Ukhrul, on a hill, in Manipur.

My questions would largely go unanswered. If answered, not to a scientific accuracy of my liking. So I decided to stop interrupting her work and be of use by helping out. I came across quite a few different kinds of orchids while walking through the woods. It seems that you really need not know about the species of the orchid you are dealing with. Just deal with them based on the way you found them. It's quite a simple and unfailing strategy.

But I couldn't help myself from doing some namesake research. A majority of orchids are perennial epiphytes, which grow anchored to trees or shrubs in the tropics and sub tropics. An epiphyte is a plant that grows harmlessly upon another plant (such as a tree) and derives its moisture and nutrients from the air, rain, and sometimes debris accumulating around it. Epiphytes differ from parasites in that epiphytes grow on other plants for physical support and do not necessarily negatively affect the host. Epiphyte species make good houseplants due to their minimal water and soil requirements.

Some orchids are lithophytes. Lithophyte plants grow in or on rocks. Chasmophytes grow in fissures in rocks where soil or organic matter has accumulated. These orchids grow on rocks or very rocky soil. Lithophytes that grow on land survive on nutrients from rain water and nearby decomposing plants, including their own dead tissue.

I would have happily told you more about the other kinds, but that really isn't what this submission is all about. It's more about the unscientific but experiential wisdom I was honored with. But in all honesty, I must confess that I, a fearless tribal born, was unable to help the lady who so generously imparted her own experiential orchid knowledge out of sheer... fear. The reason being that orchids do need fertilizers when transplanted, if you're an especially caring planter. Now, where do you suppose this supreme source of the organic fertilizer is found? In the hollow of trees! In the depressions high up! And the deeper into the woods, the better! Thank god for the effects of excessive hunting that the risks of dying by animal attack was low. I may have even broken a sweat at twenty degrees Celsius.

Upper hollow of the tree.

The woman collecting the manure as I held the torch over the upper opening on the tree trunk.

Lithophyte orchids on a rock by a field, that were taken out after being reached following a careful climb (applying the rock climbing skills imparted by the Hiking Club of the college).

Lithophyte orchids growing on a huge mossy rock.

Lithophytes transplanted from the rock in rocky soil.

Epiphytes transplanted onto garden trees.

Almost every house in Khuilungtang has a garden tree decked with epiphytes.

These orchids can be placed on stumps and logs that are sometimes carried all the way from a field into the yard.

Collecting debris accumulated in the dents where the tree branches out.

Scooping the debris with the help of a hand shovel.

The rotten core is a site of animal nests, animal defecation, and microbial metabolism that fertilizes the soil and debris that accumulates, making it a good source of manure for your orchids being transplanted. Honestly, I still wouldn't do it myself.

So that's all I shall share with you. When you get yourself a home in a more favorable climate to orchids, you may apply what you learnt. "O heck! The newbie!?" the ladies may even say when you win the Best Garden Orchid Award.

Manually collecting the 'fertilizer', risking insect bites.

A hand shovel being used to scoop the manure.

Into the bag it goes.

Walking back home after a mushroom hunt, one of the ladies chanced upon a wild orchid with red flowers. It made a good garden attraction.

Jam thāk rey āgao ānyit ma.

Content is happiness.

Illustration by

Allen Leom Lepcha

3rd Year, B.Sc. Mathematics (Hons.)

Daybreak at Lad Rymbai

Ishwari Deka

3rd Year, B.A. English (Hons.)

Nostalgia, the red of chrysanthemums
Carry me to you....
Monalisa,
Find your way to Nongpoh some morning
I'll meet you there.
While my guitar strums chords in tune with,
The restlessness in our hearts.

ক্রিচেনথিমাম যিমানে ৰঙা,
মোৰ তোমাৰ সোৱৰণীও সিমানে ৰঙা।
মনালিছা নংপুলৈ এবাৰ আহানা,
ময়ো যাম ছুটি পালে নংপুলৈ
মন-দিম মন-দিম গীতাৰৰ সুৰে সুৰে
অধুৰ মধুৰ কোনোবা ৰাতিপুৱা।

This is the last verse of a song by prolific Assamese singer-songwriter duo, Bhupen Hazarika and Jayanta Hazarika, and one of their most cherished and popular collaborations. While growing up in Assam, local radio stations would play this song, once in every few days and the house would resonate with a plaintive whistling that, over the years, has still not left me. The song called, "*Shillongore Monalisa Lyngdoh*" is about a beautiful and elusive Khasi girl, Monalisa Lyngdoh, whom the singer meets while posted in Assam's erstwhile capital, Shillong.

This song, among many others, is reflective of the way Meghalaya, specifically Shillong, figures in the mass imagination of the people of Assam, who felt a deep sense of loss when the State was partitioned in 1972 and the United Garo, Khasi and Jaintia Hills came to form, what is today known as Meghalaya. The song similarly reverberates with the composer's personal sense of loss at his having to leave his beloved when all government ministries and departments shifted to the newly formed capital of Dispur in Assam. While recalling his tenure in Shillong, the singer fondly remembers the time spent with Monalisa Lyngdoh, who all throughout the song plays her old, worn-out guitar, while they meet on drizzling Sunday mornings in the Shillong peak, till today a popular spot for young lovers. After the partition, they move to different places, Monalisa to Laban in the East Khasi Hills and the composer to Dispur in the Brahmaputra valley and their nostalgia is coloured by a yearning not very different from a lot of people in Assam who had spent their childhood and youth in Shillong and were witness to a confluence of both cultures.

Every summer, while growing up, we kids would eagerly wait for the month of July because summer vacation meant packing your bags, hiring a tough car for the hills and heading out to Shillong for a week or so. The excitement hit just when the car took a diversion, leaving the teeming city of Guwahati behind, and filled up with the cacophony of a dozen or so cousins singing along to unintelligible folk songs on the radio. Maybe it's nostalgia, coloured red, and biased towards certain memories that refuse to leave, but for me personally, Shillong has always been a place of refuge and comfort - of radio stations carrying to my room in an one-horse town Beatles, Denver and Dylan, interspersed with shifty weather reports of sun and rain, so much so that, I knew more about the new bakeries and cafes coming up in Shillong than I knew about the place I was living in; of stories of my caretaker who had run away from home to work in the coal mining districts of Meghalaya and come back home after a decade long exile; of bags full of fresh radishes, betel nuts and cauliflowers that my uncle, then a student in the North Eastern Hill University, brought for my mother during Bihu.

In1971, after the Government of India passed the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act, Meghalaya, which then constituted two districts of Assam and enjoyed limited autonomy within the state, acquired full statehood. The official language of the state was changed from Assamese to English to accommodate the diverse ethnic and demographic groups, and the state charted out its own plan of development for the future. Most Assamese families settled in Shillong or elsewhere moved back to Assam, which by now had a new secretariat in Dispur. Assam also moved ahead with its own plan of action and dissociated itself from Meghalaya regarding administrative and political matters. Both states have seen their own milestones and setbacks ever since and apart from a few border and resource disputes, share a camaraderie which dates back to a shared past.

However, both states are rife with internal tension regarding widespread insurgency, changing demographics with the influx of millions of illegal immigrants every year, political instability and property right disputes over the past four decades or so. There's also a shared feeling of alienation from the Central Government and national media, which refuses to acknowledge or give representation to pressing issues of the region, which veteran journalist Rajdeep Sardesai, while covering the 2012 Kokrajar riots in Assam, aptly referred to as the "tyranny of distance" shared collectively by the North-East. Therefore, the road ahead for not just Assam and Meghalaya, but for the entire North East towards inclusion and integration is a shared path and seems tough and rather distant.

The political and personal often go hand in hand, but unlike changing

governments and political scenarios, the nostalgia associated with Meghalaya, remains intact. This is why, I was pleasantly surprised when I saw the newly elected chief minister of Meghalaya, along with his Cabinet Ministers, groove to a Beatles song on television during the New Years' Eve of 2017 because it was vaguely reminiscent of a Christmas of almost a decade ago, when I woke up in the sleepy town of Lad Rymbai at daybreak, while travelling back from Karimganj, and saw my car trail behind a long procession of Christmas festivities which only culminated in the evening when we reached Shillong.

A yearning comes back in different shades and moods, bringing back memories of rain drenched Shillong mornings; the warm reassurance of tea and Marie biscuits by an old fireplace in the Circuit House; spotting flowers, ferns and tree frogs with my mother in Cherrapunjee; scaling the entire breadth of the state while travelling to Barak Valley and certain permanent stopovers on the highway, starting from Nongpoh to Jowai. It is coloured red like the Chrysanthemums in the song; it is sweeter than the ripe plums and passion fruits we stop to buy on the road each time we go back. And we try and keep going back -- to seek refuge, consolation and satisfaction -- in something that is as elusive as Monalisa Lyngdoh and the plaintive whistling of an old song.

JUST DELHI THINGS

Cingh San Nem

3rd Year, B.A. English (Hons.)

It was my first assembly in the College Hall. A bunch of students who had just cleared the interview were going to be classmates for the next three years – perhaps even best friends. A sense of randomness and intentionality intertwined in the air – random, because we were from different backgrounds, but intentional because we had been handpicked.

A very talented orator once quoted that sight can make one blind.

I seated myself next to a girl. She seemed very excited and approachable so I began a conversation.

What's your name?
Biambi.
Hey, are you from the Philippines? You look very Filipino.
Ha-ha, no. I'm from Meghalaya. Sadly, not everyone knows where Meghalaya is. I've been asked if it's in Malaysia.
That's crazy!

She had assumed I was Indian; I vaguely remember her thinking I was from the 'North-East.' Are you from Manipur? Nagaland? Mizoram? Questions such as these have been targeted to me, to which I would respond by politely shaking my head. While it is very hard to look beyond the physical attributes of a person, yet not jump to conclusions (which had been the case in the aforementioned example), it requires patience to be the object of such conclusions. However, I've come to realise that people will usually treat me like a 'North-Easterner,' which I've come to notice, is more or less equivalent to the status of a 'foreigner.'

I'm from Burma, I came here because my dad's a diplomat.
Suddenly, the demeanor shifts. Fascination takes over indifference. This is slightly difficult for me because I feel unsure of how to engage further with the person. There are days when not everyone is pleased that I'm from Burma, and not everyone likes the fact that I'm an ex-diplomat's daughter. Inevitably, I face a new set of questions.

I haven't quite ventured out of Delhi but no one's ever thought that I might be from elsewhere. Sometimes, I do derive pleasure out of asking people where I'm from, and they would name the eight states of the North- Eastern part of India before saying,

'Um. West Bengal?'
No, from Myanmar. Burma.
Oh! Do you know Aung San Suu Kyi?
Yes, I do.

I think I'm used to those questions now. If patience is indeed a virtue, such experiences build it up. One fact remains: whether it works in my favour or not, I blend in Delhi quite well.

To 'The pot calling the kettle black': It's nothing but a psychological projection. Can you douse the fire below that burn our bottoms, making fluids, not solutions, churn; before even the walls are covered in soot and others follow suit? Stop cooking this way? Whaddaya say?
Jessica

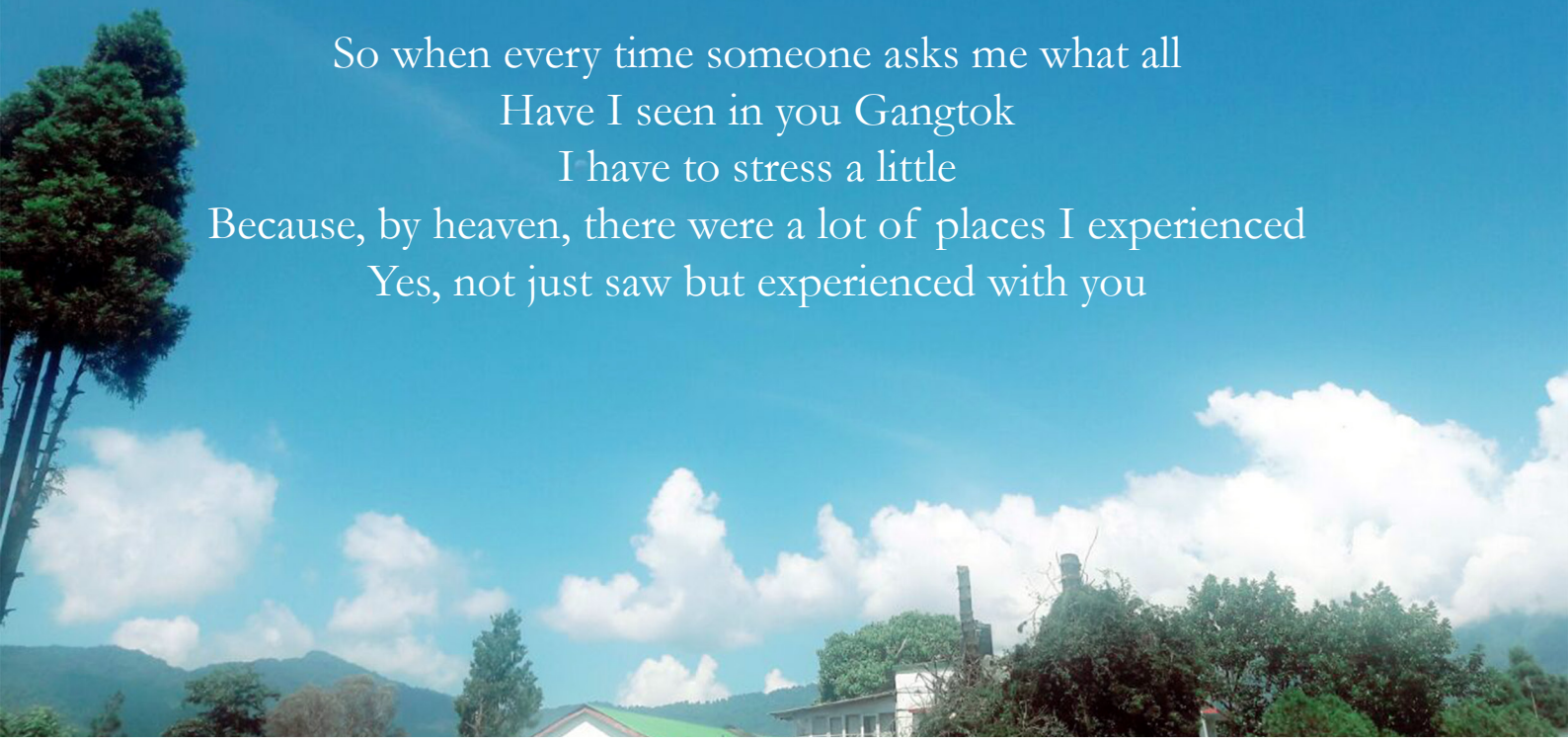
Gangtok in Pockets

Manu Mahima
1st Year, B.A. History (Hons.)

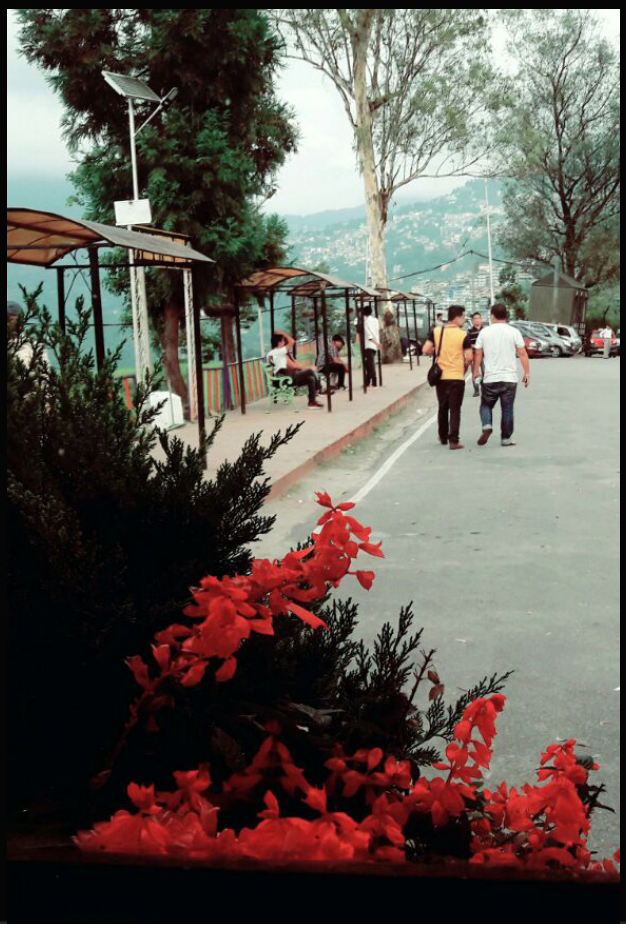
This is not a praise poem
This is a **me** poem giving way to a **you** poem
We barely know each other Gangtok
But some poems and interactions reflect countenances
They are about a fresh visage that touches the heart.

The passing glimpses and glances into souls
Are like the winds of your land, Gangtok
In which when I pull down the car window
They rub against my cheeks
Just as my mother does when affection drips from her palms
Like the rainy evenings when my breath fogs up the glass
And I write my name in the fogged part.

So when every time someone asks me what all
Have I seen in you Gangtok
I have to stress a little
Because, by heaven, there were a lot of places I experienced
Yes, not just saw but experienced with you



Of the times I simply stood on one hilltop
Gazing at the rest that echoed my happiness
To attempting to take some sunrises, some sunsets back home
Fitting them in all the pockets of all the bags I brought
Feeling that the pockets were few
So I stuffed some memories in the back pocket of my heart
And let some crawl beneath my bones



About the car rides through the
Mountain paths which I wish never ended
Rolling and rolling and rolling
Over the top singing with the clouds
And then landing smoothly back in the arms
Of the sturdy slopes
So yes, this is not a praise poem
This is a **me** poem giving way to a **you** poem
Because I feel obliged with all my heart
To carve you a **you** poem
Which is nothing compared to the
Symphony you have carved on my heart
Thank you Gangtok!

The North

Subhrangshu Pratim Sarmah

2nd Year,
B.A Pol. Science (Hons.)
Hindu College

Around mid-July, last year, most of Assam was neck-deep in one of the worst floods it had witnessed, with the number of affected people soaring beyond 15,70,571 and the number of relief camps exceeding 332 -- housing a total of around 12,27,786 inmates. However, as horrifying images of animals and human beings stuck in the debris and unhygienic surroundings were getting avidly circulated on several social media platforms, the national media, barring a few exceptions, appeared to be in deep slumber, showing total apathy to the grave situation. Instead, it was busy highlighting the water-logging in the millennium city Gurugram (erstwhile Gurgaon)!

Had a calamity of such a scale occurred in Mumbai or Uttarakhand, the Television cameras would have reached ground zero immediately and termed it a "national disaster", but in this case, the particular incident happened to be from India's "forever Cinderella" - the North-East. The lives of the people of Assam seemed to matter less compared to that of other states. This is why not many people in the North-East were surprised when the successful organization of the South Asian Games, 2016 (including its opening ceremony, graced by the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi) in Meghalaya and Assam was completely blacked out by the national TV channels and the catastrophic impact of the earthquake which shook Manipur at the beginning of this year received abysmal coverage. In the age of globalization when our cell phone screens constantly beam with notifications within seconds of the occurrence of any event in any part of the world, isn't it slightly absurd that the news from India's North- East finds least room in the news desks of national media? Isn't it quite "step-motherly" of so-called mainland India to fuel such discrimination towards this part of the country?

Senior journalist Rajdeep Sardesai has described this phenomenon as "tyranny of distance." This echoes a similar view of Shashi Tharoor who had once told us personally: "Our media is excessively Delhi-centric and the farther you are, the less coverage you get!" According to a different view, the presence of very few TRP boxes in the North-East, hardly exceeding 30, is another prime reason why the corporate owned media houses find it difficult to give due coverage to the news of the North-East. Moreover, it seems that for the pan-Indian audience, the news of some activities of the Delhi Chief Minister invites more attention than the news of a certain Irom Sharmila who had been fasting for the last 16 years in "distant" Manipur (Sharmila broke her fast recently).

A huge number of people associated with these media houses candidly say that poor connectivity in the North-East and unavailability of speedy Internet service in several areas make it difficult for journalists to report the events adequately. It's often seen that while most media houses keep only one or two reporters in Guwahati (the capital city of Assam) for the entire North-East, the major newspapers somehow never fail to compress all the news from the entire North-East region in a single page of their Kolkata edition, let alone bring out a specific edition for the region.

Senior anchor of India Today, Karan Thapar, was personally optimistic, citing several examples of how the national media has started to give due importance to the North-East. However, he also stressed that the people of the North-East must convey this issue assertively to as many editors as possible for prospective course correction. But questions regarding the level of engagement and genuine concern remain unanswered. The level of engagement that journalists have for, say, a mundane bank robber in Ghaziabad, or for some controversial statement of a political leader, is nowhere to be found when it comes to reporting similar news from the North East.

Why is it that despite the presence of journalists from the North-East in the topmost posts of national news channels, the region has to beg perpetually for getting a mere five-minute news slot?

It's not that we don't have any solution. Many people from the region along with reporters from the national media houses are consistently trying to solve this problem of "lack of representation". The local news channels of the region must play a proactive role in ensuring that the incidents they cover reach the national media houses in time because the national media houses usually borrow footage from local channels.

East Amnesia

The tie up between "Times Now" and the Assamese satellite news channel "News Live" is noteworthy in this regard. Moreover if the filmmakers of the North-East or the rest of India start making short films on the unexplored positive issues of the North-East and take the initiative of telecasting them on news channels, then the stereotypes and misconceptions that the Hindi Heartland has regarding North-East might gradually wither away.

The politicians, artists, entrepreneurs and business houses of the region must help the groups concerned in this regard. To add to it, one should not forget the power of social media. At a time when the idea of citizen journalism is gaining momentum, with just his smart phone or tablet, one could spread any important news to a larger group with the possibilities of creating the desired impact. In no way would the "hashtag" influenced media houses be able to debar news from the North-East if the issue trends on Twitter!

But in this whole process, the role of the youth will be highly important. From Asia's cleanest village Mawlynnong in Meghalaya to the Logtak lake in Manipur or the Forest Man from Assam, Jadav Payeng, to the literacy rate of Tripura, interesting information about the North-East have to be prepared in written format and spread across India. In the process, various North Eastern students living in different places of India must play a crusading role in bridging the gap. The local channels of the North-East must focus on quality news instead of solely fixing their stereotypical cameras on drunk girls, neighborhood skirmishes and cheap talk.

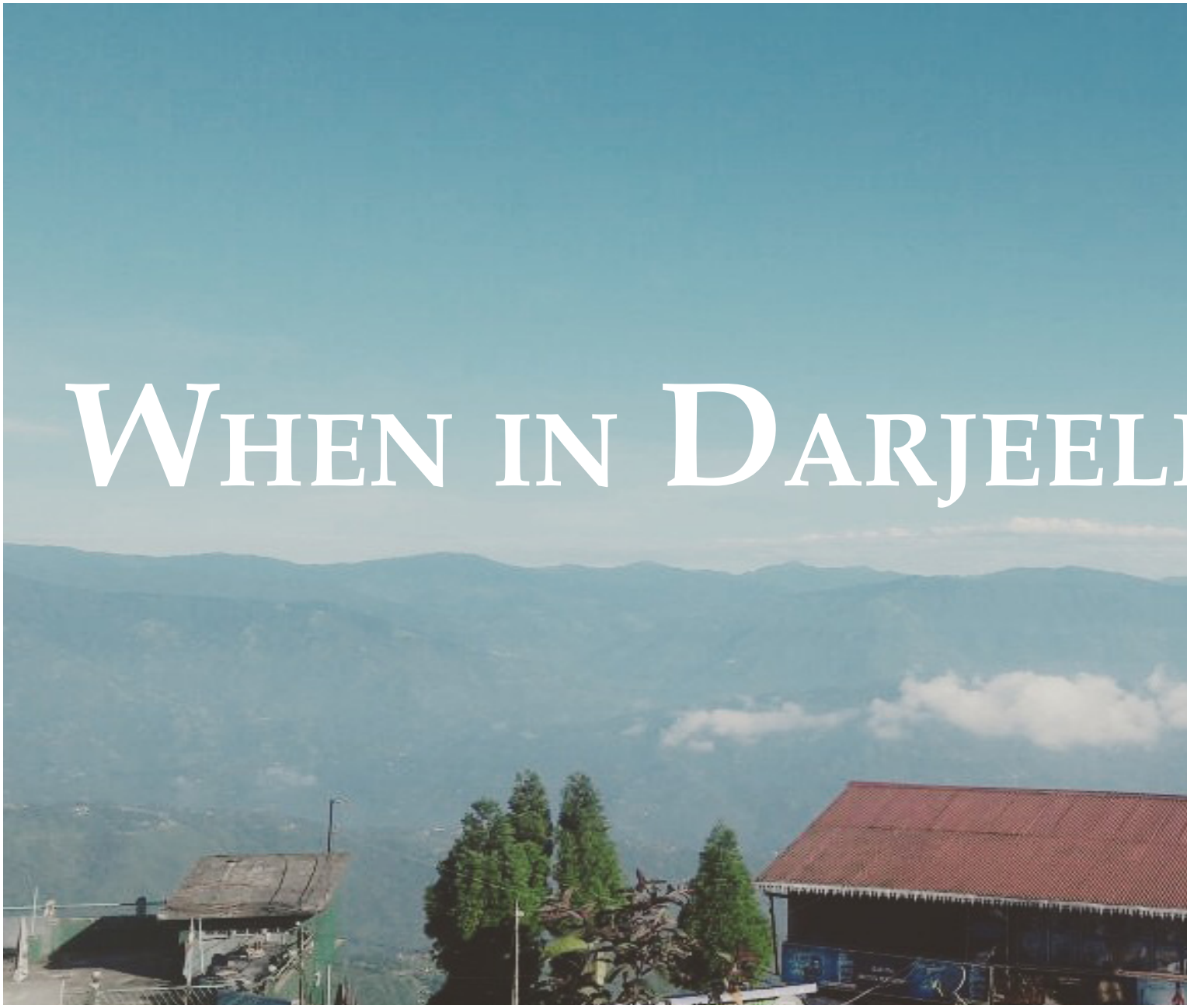
The North-East oriented novels and translation works in Hindi and English must occupy a preeminent room in the world of fiction without ado so that the stories of happiness and despair from the North-East touch the nerves of those same Indians who empathize with the protagonists of Chetan Bhagat's 'Two States.' Writers from North-East like Aruni Kashyap, Ankush Saikia, Uddipana Goswami are some important names to reckon with in this regard.

It is deeply appreciated that the media has started to highlight the North-East in the realm of culture; the limelight received by singer Papon is the best example in this regard. The more the youth of the region interact with Indians from other states, the more are the chances of India's North-East gaining due importance. The North-Eastern festivals organized in different cities of India throughout the year should focus on attracting more people from outside of the circuit rather than confining to the people of the region.

It is only in the currently concluded Assam Legislative Assembly Election that the national media has covered an election of the North-East for the first time, with great intensity, and for whatsoever reason, a trend of extensive reporting and analyzing of the activities of the new government has been observed, which could probably herald a new dawn vis-a-vis national media's reportage of the North-East. The coverage that the Arunachal Pradesh fiasco has received this far has indeed proven this change in attitude.

It is important to understand that it was only during the Assam Agitation that the national media bothered to throw light on the North-East after a long period of lull since the 1962 Indo-China war. In fact, even when the Indian Air Force bombed Mizoram in 1966 to wipe out insurgents -- the only instance when the Government of India bombed one of its own states -- it received no mention in any national media platform.

The scenario has improved to a great extent now. But what's important is the genuine concern which the media houses need to direct towards the North-East to address this issue wholeheartedly. The people of the North-East also have to try their best to make their stories reach the pan-Indian audience so that the integration of the North-East with the rest of India reaches new heights.



When in Darjeeli

Manu Mahima

1st Year, B.A. History (Hons.)

One of these days you will look into the mirror and see someone you just don't recognize. Somebody so miserably caught in the web of mundane trivialities that you forget the beauty of your name. You don't remember the lyrics to your favorite song, you don't remember how it feels to run like a child; maybe you aren't doing enough, maybe you are doing too much, maybe the present circumstances wrack your nerves, but you have to stick with it. Responsibilities are burning your shoulders and you want to escape. You are not running away from anything. You just want to meet the long lost carefree you, whose face is brighter than the April sunflowers. What is wrong with it? Who is stopping you? Follow your gut. A few months ago I did too, I followed my gut and landed in this helluva district called Darjeeling.

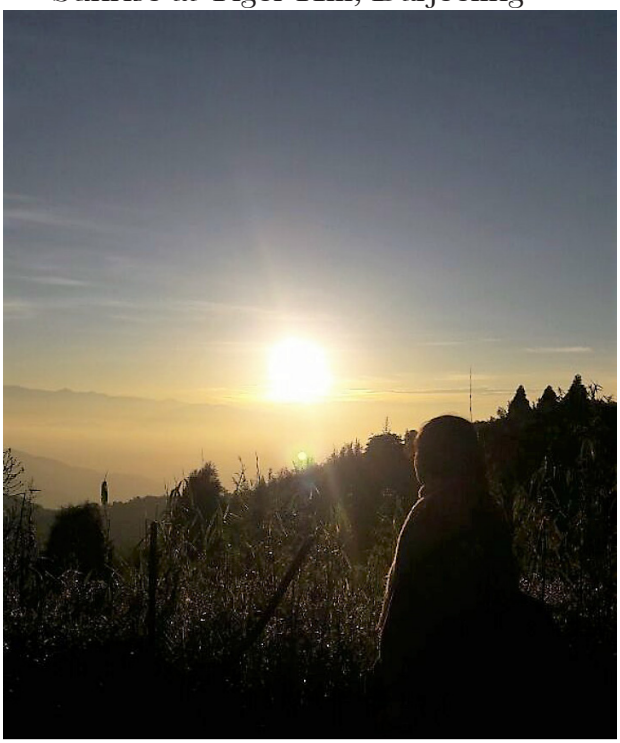
In Darjeeling, rain does not have any discretion over its outpours and neither does the fragrance of the tea gardens know where not to go. If you are lost and know not where to go it's absolutely fine with Darjeeling because this place survives on similar ideals. You would find yourself woven in an inexplicable sort of extraordinaire. You might want to fall in love with the pretty tea gardens hanging on the gigantic mountains. You can finally smile genuinely after puking all the way to your destination (I mean it. It is a mountainous district placed on a horrendous height of 6,700 ft; you can puke a little to reach this beauty) and if by any chance you happen to be a poet, by luck or otherwise, you might find heaven here.

You can bare your emotions here in between these hilltops. They play beautiful melodies despite their overall hard appearance. For a while just forget that you are someone, rip the sticky identity. Sit with the locals, grab some nice hot green tea, sip it slowly, let it tickle your insides with its warmth, pull up the jacket hood a little, play La vie En rose on full volume and, by God! just throw those goddam earphones at Kanchenjunga range or something but just throw them, they cut you from people; unlearn all that you have learned till now. Wake up at 3 AM. Take a taxi and see the glory unfold before your naked eyes, trust me nobody can be luckier than you

If you see the sun rising on the Tiger Hill. The sunlight beautifully dances on the Kanchenjunga mountain range that effortlessly illuminates the soft rays. There you will heal, you will feel pure, you might as well cry, it is like nothing you have ever known, something you can never explain, to anybody. When you'll finally get back home you'll miss the unctuous touch of the green tea against your tongue, the quiet mountains, unpredictable rains, winds that slap you like they don't care, teaching you not to care so much but just enough.

The best part is when you return, you will be radiating with light and will have revived the courage to deal with life, yet again.

Sunrise at Tiger Hill, Darjeeling



The sunlight beautifully dances on the Kanchenjunga mountain range that effortlessly illuminates the soft rays.

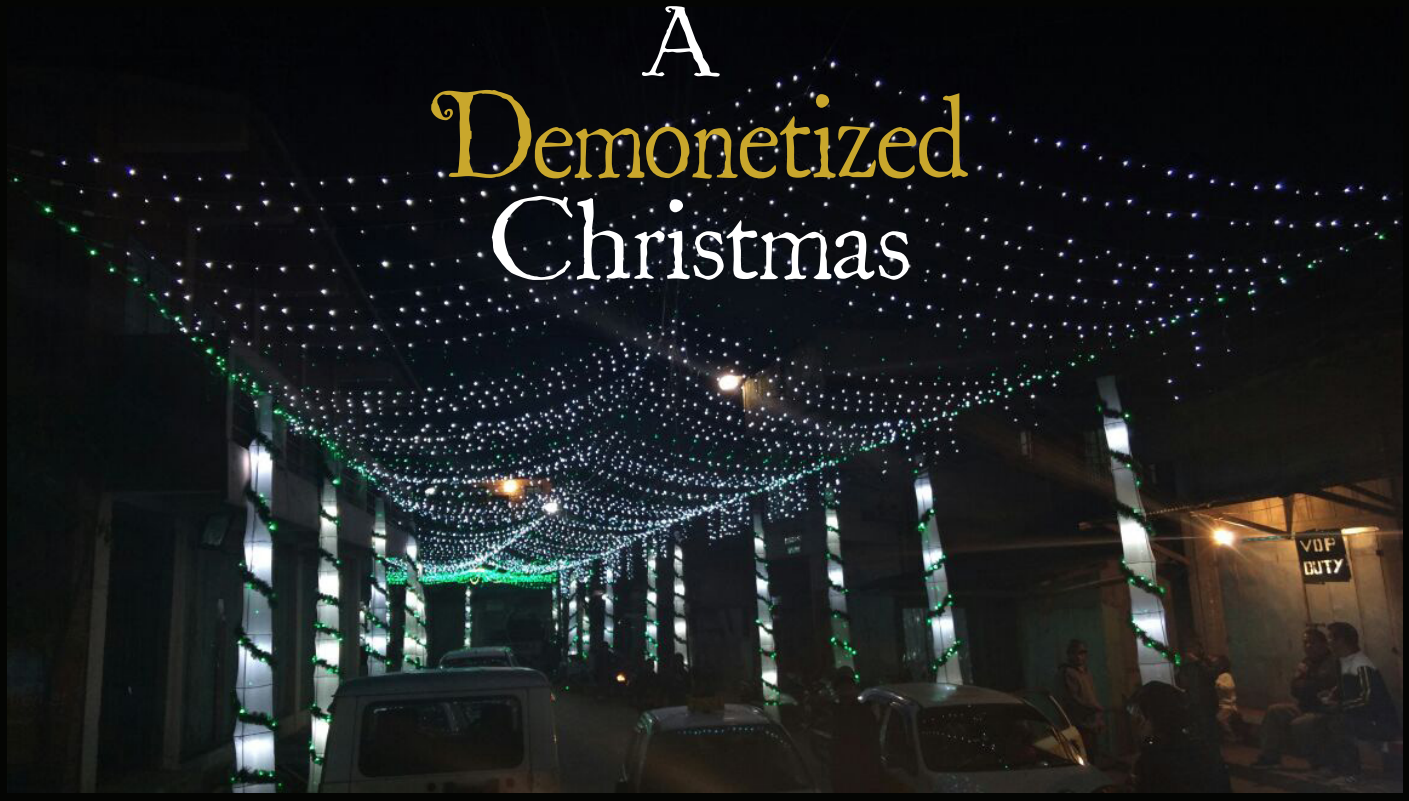
There you will heal, you will feel pure, you might as well cry, it is like nothing you have ever known.

Christmas in Mizoram, 2015

Photographer: Opa da Tochhawng (@opa_da_tochhawng)

Christmas in Mizoram, 2016

A Demonetized Christmas



Vanlalhriati Tlau
2nd Year, B.Sc. Mathematics (Hons.)

The highlights of a Christmas celebration in Mizoram are its bright lights that fill up every nook and corner of each street. The festivities, and the communally felt "Christmas feeling", usually begin and grow once the lights have been put up. And one can't help but feel the spirit of joy and giving that Christmas brings when we take a look at the pretty decorations illuminating the streets.

The year 2016 however, to put it honestly, had a somewhat diminished sense of celebration. The funds for the lights were more or less donated by every household for their respective localities.

It was not a sad Christmas in any way, just a little less happy than other years.

But with the onset of demonetization, people barely had enough hard cash at hand to meet their day to day needs and therefore could not afford to donate any money.

It was not a sad Christmas in any way, just a little less happy than other years in some ways. When one looked at the streets, the lights that had brought out the Christmas spirit in everyone were nowhere to be seen. Some localities were lit up, yes, but many were not.

Stranger in a Familiar Land

Bethamehi Joy Syiem

1st Year, B.A. History (Hons.)

Someone once asked me if I truly belonged from Shillong. At the time the ten years old I said, "Why wouldn't I belong here?" But then, time and life would end up making me doubt that answer. I say this because although I was born in beautiful Shillong, I never grew up there. It hardly mattered though. It never made a difference to me as a child. No matter where I lived, 'home' was always a small town of pine scented air, gentle rolling hills and love that knew no bounds. Perhaps, I romanticised the idea of going 'home' because growing up as an outsider in another land is no wonderland. Changing schools and hearing unfamiliar languages only made it harder. Because I did not 'belong' elsewhere, I desperately believed that I belonged in Shillong.

My memories of my home-town were largely based on long summer vacations spent playing cricket with my cousins or reading Enid Blyton till I ran out of books to read. I held on contentedly to these memories till I turned thirteen. I had stepped into the new world of adolescent curiosity and burning desire. One of my greatest desires then, was to move back home where I 'belonged' or at least I thought I did. After my first day in the eighth grade, I went home and convinced my parents that the school I was at in Bengal was not enough. I needed to go back if I was to excel and with longing eyes, I persuaded them to let me go.

My parents thought it would not have been fair to rob me of the experience of living among my own, a place where everyone spoke my language and I did not look 'so different'.

So, I set out to finally become the 'Shillongite' that I thought I was destined to be. It is almost funny, in a cruel way, how high expectations can prove fatal and heart breaking to a young impressionable adolescent. In fact, too many expectations have never been good for anyone at all. I soon learnt that I was a fish out of water even in my own 'home'.

As a child, I struggled with being someone from the North-east. Other children would ask me why I spoke Chinese but did not look Chinese, the most common question being, "Are you half-bred?" Most people asked what 'Khasi' was when I explained that it was the language I spoke. Some would laugh, or cough.

*"Khansee?" *cough* *cough**

I don't believe most of it came out of maliciously racist attitudes. Rather, it came largely out of ignorance. But, it was hard nonetheless. I was an alien in my own country. That is why I desperately needed to go back to my own land. What broke my heart was that, even there, I was an alien in a way that I had not thought of. The plains had made me somewhat of a hybrid.

"I never could fit in but I learnt that I could still belong."

"I was an alien in my own country. That is why I desperately needed to go back to my own land. What broke my heart was that, even there, I was an alien in a way that I had not thought of."

I should never have expected an all-girls school to be made of dreams, especially for the strange "new girl". The hardest hit for me was that I could not connect with the people, my people.

For the first time I felt like I was strange not because I was born elsewhere or spoke a different language, rather, I was strange because of who I was.

The large majority of my new class were exactly like me (so to say). They dressed like me.They looked like me. They spoke my language. But I was not one of them.

I ended up living three years of my life there with them. I became the 'Shillongite' that I had so wanted to be and somewhere there, I found that while the place is still beautiful on its own, my identity could not rest on it. I was a stranger in a familiar land. Somehow, the things the others spoke of, their shared experiences, their perspective on life and the way they did things were all strange to me. In the beginning, I tried hard to fit in. I tried to be like everyone else but my efforts failed me miserably as my insecurities and shortcomings got the best of me.

But it wasn't all that bad and gloomy. Experiences are life's best teachers and so it was my experience of trying to assimilate and conform that taught me that 'belonging' was far from fitting in.

I never could fit in but I learnt that I could still belong. That understanding came out of an uphill journey that taught me that relationships and people are more important than places. I found best friends among the strangers in my 'familiar' town of dreams. I found best friends from unfamiliar cities of strange languages and stranger customs. I learnt that it is never the place that determines whether or not you are home. It is the people.

Places are like paper and relationships are the stories that are written on it. I struggled with my identity for the longest time but now, I understand that my strangeness could indeed be my strength.

As I move on, wandering through life, I learn that I can belong only if I open my eyes to see beyond culture and into the human heart. Perhaps I will never truly fit in anywhere, not in the way that someone else with a life different from mine might have. But I have come to know that not fitting in like everyone else is more than okay. Fast forward to my life now, having moved out of Shillong and having experienced newer and stranger lands, I know now that I can be proud of my people and where I come from while also learning to live and enjoy my time as a stranger in my country.

Different is after all, beautiful.

Irom Sharmila and AFSPA: A New Chapter

A Talk by Sanjoy Hazarika

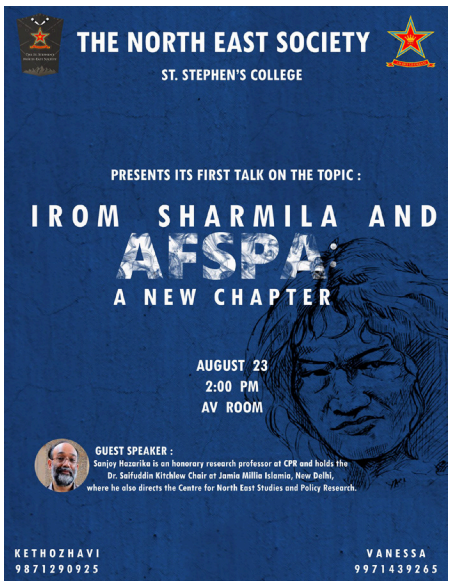
Vivienne Hrilrokim

1st Year, B.A History (Hons.)

Professor Sanjoy Hazarika, the Director of the Centre for Northeast Studies and Policy Research at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, talked about the prevalent issues and missing rudiments in the troubled state of Manipur in relation to Irom Sharmila with Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) and the Northeast region to students here at St. Stephen's College. People assembled in the AV room at 2 pm on the 23rd of August, 2016, days after Sharmila broke her 16 years long fast on 9th of August, making the time and place of the talk relevant in regard to the current developments.

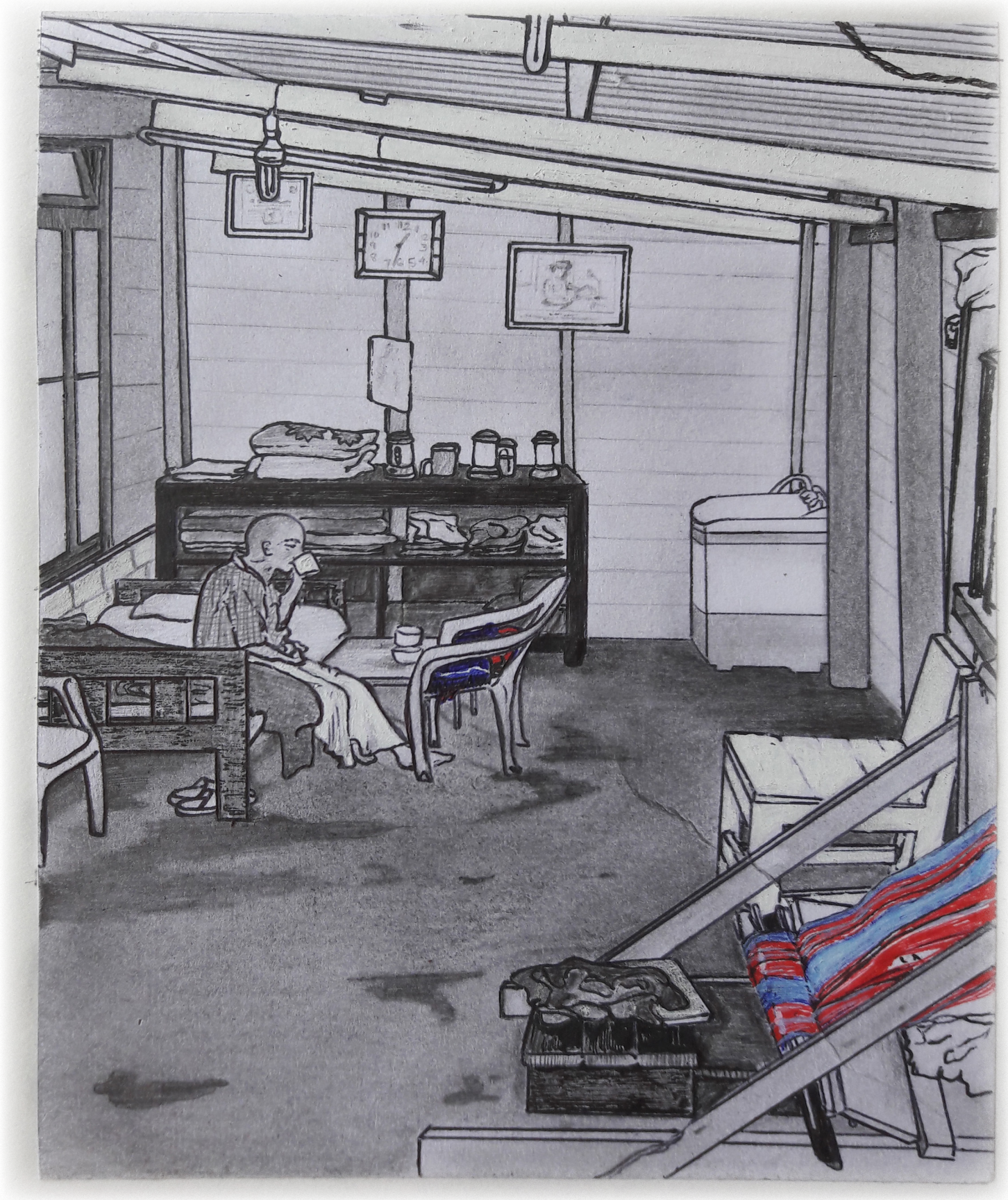
Hazarika began by speaking about the overarching political climate of Manipur before he got into the dynamics of Sharmila's fast and her subsequent decision to join politics after ending it in August. Irom Sharmila, famously known as the Iron Lady, gave up her 16 year long hunger strike for the repeal of AFSPA, which continues to operate majorly in parts of Manipur, Nagaland, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh among other states. Tripura decided to withdraw the Act in 2015.

Although Professor Hazarika termed it as a 'sleeping act' in parts of the Northeast, he also asserted that the Act has immense significance for the Indian state. The act is a very bare act with six sections and was piloted through Parliament in 1958, by the then Home Minister Gobind Bhagat Pant, who did not talk about insurgency but merely stressed on the disturbances in the Naga hills and that the state needed the help of the army to curb the disturbances. Calling the Act a 'skeleton act', the professor emphasised on the atrocious nature of the act, focusing on Section 4 that authorises any officer to conduct checks, and open fire to the point of causing death.



Irom Sharmila, now 44, initiated her solo campaign against this Draconian law in the year 2000, after the infamous Malom Massacre, where 10 civilians were slain by the paramilitary troops while waiting for a bus. In subsequent years, she became the face of the fight against AFSPA in this part of the country. Termed as a 'prisoner of conscience' by Amnesty International, most of her struggle took place while she was under the custody of police. Although she had to face criticism from family, she was successful in garnering popular support. On her decision to end her hunger strike, Professor Hazarika, stated that she was likely to lose supporters but at the same time he asserted that she had the personal liberty to start a hunger strike as well as to call it off. According to him, the hunger strike was a fundamentally weak and flawed move on her part, for he feels that Manipur is too far away for the Centre to take heed. He also made a strong statement -- "I don't think she lost. I feel that the Indian state lost, morally, for 16 years."

The law has been in place for over half a century now, and it is unlikely that it will be repealed in the near future in Manipur. Laws can be constitutional but not always just. Professor Hazarika ended on a highly pessimistic note by reiterating what a former National Security Advisor had commented, "It does not matter what government stays. Governments will come and go but AFSPA will stay forever".



Jessica Jakoinao
2nd Year B.A. English (Hons.)

Splash page (comics) from a work in progress.

View from the entrance to Awo Fareng's room in Phalee, Manipur.
The traditional handloom and shawl in progress may resemble the ones of the tribes in the Ifugao province, Philippines, but it is that of the Tangkhuls.

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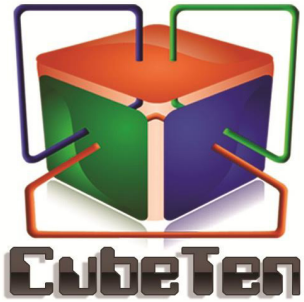

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Notes/Messages