

CHAPTER

2

HUMAN RIGHTS AND MANIPUR

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The second chapter dwells on the human rights status in Manipur, role of media, NGOs and other stakeholders who are working on human rights issues.

2.1 Human Rights Status in Manipur

According to Census 2011, the population of Manipur is 27,21,756 with a decadal growth rate of population with 18.65 per cent. Population density per sq. km. is 122. The literacy rate of Manipur is 79.85. Literacy rate among males is 86.49 and female is 73.17. Imphal West has the highest number of literacy rate in the state with 86.70 per cent.

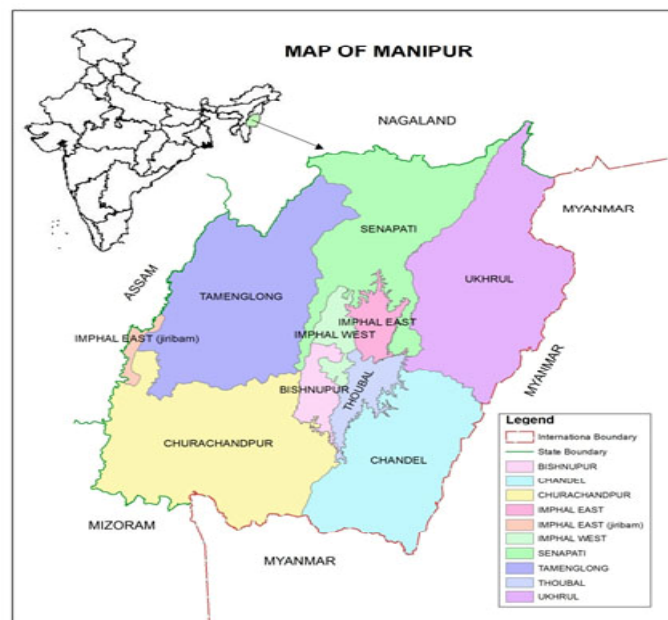


Fig. 2.1. Map of Manipur; Inset: India Map. Source: Government of Manipur

In terms of size and its demography, Manipur is a tiny place but large numbers of cases of human rights violations are reported through newspapers and electronic media in recent years. The Non-Governmental Organizations and Civil Society

organizations with the help of media jointly advocate the virtues of human rights in the state. This collaborative functioning has shown a positive insight in fighting for justice and rights of victims of human rights abuses.

The degree of Human Rights violations differs from place to place, depending on the one's cultural setting (Merry, E.S. 2007). But in general, any form of suppression and oppression of person/persons is a violation of human rights. Manipur, one of the seven States of the so-called North-Eastern India, also known as 'a jeweled land' for its natural beauty and rich culture has been in turmoil and unrest ever since the separatist movement that began in the 1960s and has been sentenced with a draconian act of Armed Forces Special Powers Act till date. Under Section 3 of AFSPA, the entire State of Manipur has been declared as a "disturbed area" since 1980, except seven Assembly Constituencies in the Imphal Municipality Area, which were de-notified in 2004. In a conflict-ridden place like Manipur, both men and women often becomes a target of Indian Army and police and have witnessed series of human rights violation in the State due the activities and policies of State and Non-state actors.

Human rights violations occur when there is use of excess of powers and actions by state (or non-state) actors abuse or deny basic human rights (including civil, political, cultural, social, and economic rights). Largely, in a state like Manipur, the increasing rate of violations of human rights are under the shadow of Armed Forces Special Powers Act such as extra-judicial killings, fake encounter, sexual crimes. On the other hand, criminal activities carried out by the armed militants, involved in bombing and grenade attack, kidnapping and extortion are among the worse problems in the state, apart from poor supply of electricity and water. Few years back somewhere in 2008, the issue of missing children became hue and cry in the state, when number of young boys were kidnapped by militants groups, recruiting child soldiers which left no stone unturned to make their presence stronger. This clearly shows that both the state and non-state actors such as separatist armed groups commit crime against the people of Manipur. On the contrary, Non-state actors particularly Non-Governmental organizations and Civil Society groups along with the media plays a significant role in protection and

promotion of human rights in state of Manipur. Many organizations are the defenders and advocate of human rights. Media and NGOs work hand-in-hand to uphold these rights.

Asian Centre for Human Rights reports several human rights abuses occurred in Manipur. During July-September 2010, the spate of bandhs and blockades continued in Manipur ruled by Indian National Congress. The much publicized 68-days economic blockade on National Highways 39 and 53 from April to June 2010 by United Naga Council and other Naga bodies of Manipur on the issues relating to the holding of elections to the six Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) in Naga inhabited regions of the state had virtually paralyzed normal life across the state. The economic blockade was finally lifted on 18 June 2010 after the leaders of Naga Students' Federation met the Union Home Minister and the Prime Minister in New Delhi.

In another instance, extortion by Armed Opposition Groups (AOGs) continued to be widespread in Manipur. Some of the targets include government officials, shops, factories, schools, media, banks and hospitals. During July-September 2010, several persons were kidnapped for extortion.

Human rights abuses in Manipur have been an ongoing issue. It has been reported that the Indian Armed Forces under the AFSPA have committed several human rights violations in order to suppress separatist movement in the state. Years of counter-insurgency operations against 'terrorists' have resulted in several proven and unproven violations of human rights – ranging from outright killing, to torture, to the burning of entire villages by the security forces.

Bablu Loitongbam explains that the public outrage against AFSPA was expressed in 2004, post-Manorama incidents such as the mother's protest at Kangla, the self-immolation of Pebam Chittaranjan (Vaid, M & Irom, S 2013).

As Amnesty International briefing on the law stated: 'The AFSPA empowers security forces to arrest and enter property without warrant and gives the security forces power to shoot to kill in circumstances where members of the security forces are not at imminent risk. It facilitates impunity because no person can start legal action against any members of the armed forces for anything done under the

Act, or purported to be done under the Act, without permission of the Central Government' (Amnesty 2005).

The movement to repeal AFSPA has not yielded popular slogans like those pertaining to corruption as the later impacts everyone's lives. AFSPA is restricted to the North East and Jammu & Kashmir (Vaid, M., Irom, S 2013).

On 2 November 2000 in Malom (Manipur) in retaliation, Assam Rifles soldiers reportedly went berserk and killed 10 civilians. The incident soon burgeoned into a major campaign for the repeal of the AFSPA. Irom Sharmila has become the key human right activist and a promising public figure fighting for the rights of common people in the state of Manipur.

The security forces in Manipur were accused of torture and extrajudicial killings. In January 2010, acting on a complaint filed by the Asian Centre for Human Rights, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) directed the state government to explain why reports were not being forwarded in 111 cases of alleged fake encounters in the state. (ACHR Impact: Manipur directed to explain 111 fake encounters). Police have become the main culprit of human rights violations in Manipur. Due to the excess use of power and force, they committed several crimes. The BT Road incident, indiscriminate firing at mob protests are some of the notable examples.

Civil Society Coalition on Human Rights in Manipur and UN prepared a joint stakeholders' report through a collective consultative process, consisting of informal and formal meetings, is an outcome of the collective engagement with the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders during her visit in January 2011. It provides vital supplemental information in the examination of India's human rights situation during the second cycle of the Universal Periodic Review conducted by the UN Human Rights Council. The report highlights key features of the unacceptable human rights situation prevailing in Manipur. The promulgation of AFSPA for the last 53 years in Manipur, itself, is a violation of fundamental right of common people, which grants the Indian armed forces special powers to kill on mere suspicion, search without warrant, obtain impunity, blatantly violating the rights to life, right against torture, right against arbitrary

detention and right to fair trial. A committee was set up to review AFSPA, headed by Justice Jeevan Reddy even recommended that it is highly desirable and advisable to repeal this Act altogether. But nothing has been done till date.

In other areas, Denial of Right to Self Determination of Indigenous Peoples is a massive problem in Manipur. Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination, as enunciated in Article 3 of UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) has failed to be recognized by the government. The Government of India introduces destructive, unsustainable development projects in Manipur such as the construction of Loktak Multipurpose Hydroelectric Project (HEP), Mapithel Dam and the proposed Tipaimukh Dam without the free, prior and informed consent of the people of Manipur. Social activists and the people affected are in constant effort to stop these developmental projects, as apparently the damage is higher than the benefit.

2.2 Role of Media: Media as a Weapon

Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said, "Press freedom is the corner stone of human rights. It holds governments responsible for their acts and serves as a warning to all that impunity is an illusion."

The responsibility of media in creating awareness about human rights goes beyond reporting such incidents. Media provides a platform where incidents and consequences of human rights violations are brought to light, moulds people's minds, builds opinion and develops attitude towards the events that have been happening around them. Media coverage of human rights issues has not been very satisfactory. However, due to the increasing amount of attention given by the media on these issues, it has become a powerful tool that can unquestionably strengthen the advocacy of human rights in the near future. It is a high time media gives extensive attention and publicity to the human rights violations at the international, national and local level.

Mass media are the generators and source of information. They carry the information generated by human rights organizations. Many human rights violations have come into light due to the coverage of mass media and are noticed

by the international community. There is a lot of coverage of human rights. It has saved many lives and protected freedom in many countries. At the regional level, with the help of mass media, both print and electronic media, the concerns related to violations of human rights, democracy, social justice, economic imbalances, institutional distortions and malfunctioning international debates on vital human issues, impacts of war, terrorism, globalization are being voiced and urge for quality human conditions. (Manohar Prabhakar, Sanjeev Bhanawat, 2004).

The purpose of human rights reporting provides the states to protect and enhance their human rights record and also to provide a concrete reminder to officials of their international legal obligations. Human rights reporting aim to promote and develop respect for human rights. The role of media as the monitoring function is not bringing the government in negative way. Monitoring helps to identify and subsequently provides remedy to any human rights situations. Human rights problems can be resolved by amending the relevant legislation, by modifying administrative practices or by issuing appropriate instructions to the authority concerned. Reporting process can act as a catalyst to the formulation of the carefully designed policies to respond to the problems that have been identified. Mass media serves the function of public scrutiny by checking government's accountability, evaluates the progress achieved in issues related to social, cultural, economic and other aspects of society. It also serves as agent of information exchange (Pramod Mishra 2006).

The press as the fourth estate in a democracy has a greater accountability to play constructive role. Newspapers make an immeasurable contribution in spreading human rights awareness. In Manipur, print and electronic media including the Internet play a significant role in promotion and protection of human rights and makes constant attempt to uphold the true spirit of democracy. Particularly, newspapers in Manipur in the recent years have become a powerful medium where victims of human rights expressed their grievances and agony.

Dailies published from Imphal namely Poknapham, Naharolgi Thoudang, Imphal Free Press, Sangai Express; Hueiyen Lanpao etc. are the main source of news and information in the state apart radio and TV. Some of the dominant cases of human

rights violations in the state are reported includes extra-judicial killings; Crime related to Women and children such as rape, molestation, harassment, trafficking, recruitment of child soldiers by underground militant organizations; bandhs and blockade that hampers normalcy in the state; violation of civil and political rights; and newly emerging rights such as Right to Education and Right to Health; Abuses by the Armed Opposition Groups (AOGs) includes killings, Abduction for Extortion, curtailment of Freedom of Press

Editors and human rights reporters investigate incidents of human rights abuses before presentation of news. They collect, analyze and interpret cases of human rights and also take in-depth interviews of the victims and present the story with objectivity. In burning political issues editors and journalists are often encounter immense pressure and threats from militants and government. Media at crucial times persuades government to change their attitude of indifference and bring positive gestures on issues that are happening in the state.

Biramangol Ningombam, reporter of a local newspaper, shares his experiences that in a conflict situation, the freedom of press is at stake. The life and working of journalists is at threat from both state and non-state actors and most of the time they have to compromise the situation according to time and the situation while undertaking their jobs. He further adds that their duty is to bring the news to the domain of public and the government so that people knows what is happening around them and make the government aware about what policy and programmes they should initiate in order to tackle such problems (Interview with Biramangol Ningombam, reporter of a local newspaper). On December 22 last year one journalist Thangjam Nanao Singh of Prime Time, a Guwahati-based satellite channel was killed at Thangmeiband area on 22 December in 2013 afternoon when police opened fire to disperse supporters of the Manipur Film Forum who had allegedly torched a police vehicle.

Chitra Ahanthem, editor Imphal Free Press gives her opinion on the objectivity in news reporting. She upholds the view that objectivity in news reporting can be achieved when one does not work under the pressure of any political party or any individual. Chitra emphasizes that there should always balance of news. Most of

the editorials are based on contemporary issues or events, which have taken place during the week. She mostly writes about gender related issues. When she was asked about ethical principles follow by the newspaper. Ahanthem confidently says their newspaper uphold ethical principles while reporting any news on crime. For instance, if there is a case of rape, the change of names of rape victim and accused is made mandatory. They published news and events that are questionable and have proof of evidence. (Excerpt from personal interview with Chitra Ahanthem)

The Tehelka magazine based in New Delhi has exposed the killing of Chungkham Sanjit inside a pharmacy on BT Road at Khwairamband market on July 23 last as a "fake encounter" seeks more humane laws and policing in the North-east. The International Press Institute (IPI) India Award for Excellence in Journalism 2010 was conferred on TEHELKA magazine for outstanding journalistic work done during 2009.

V. K. Rao (2008) believes that it is to note that improvement of media solely depends on themselves. Neither government nor public can mend the working and purpose of media. Human rights reporters should cover stories on human rights violation without any fear and inhibition keeping in mind such evil practices must be wiped away before the society becomes paralyzed. Human Rights will continue to violate if the media works under the clouds of fear and inhibition. Media is considered as the 'catalyst for social change. It is a high time to operate media without biasness and threat from both state and non-state actors and act as a vigilant to the society.

2.3 Role of Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations and other stakeholders in Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in Manipur

Amnesty International, an organization dedicated to cause of human rights. Human rights defenders include Journalists exposing human rights violations, Community workers teaching human rights education, Trade unionists defending workers' rights, Women working for the promotion of reproductive rights,

Environmentalists highlighting the impact of development projects on Indigenous Peoples land rights

Section 12 (h) of the Act envisages that NHRC shall spread human rights literacy among various sections of society and promote awareness of the safeguards available for the protection of these rights through publications, media, seminars and other available means and sensitize various functionaries in the Government/ local bodies etc. NHRC has been involved in spreading human rights awareness among functionaries of Government, especially Police, students, NGOs and general public.

Under Section 21 of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 provides for establishment of State Human Rights Commissions (SHRCs) in the States as well for the better protection of human rights. The NHRC conducts regular interactions with the SHRCs to explore and further improve areas of cooperation and partnership in promotion of human rights. As per the information received from the State Governments, 23 States have so far set up SHRCs. These States are -- Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa and West Bengal.

The Manipur Human Rights Commission (MHRC) was established in 1998 although the MHRC has remained defunct since 2010 as no new members has been appointed by the Government despite an order of Gauhati High Court to appoint its chairman within four weeks. The MHRC also receives most inadequate financial and personal support from the government, despite repeated appeals by the members of the Commission.

However, the Manipur State Commission for Women (MSCW) which was constituted on the 15TH September 2006 as a statutory body at the state level, in enactment of the Manipur State Commission for Women Act 2006, to safeguard the interests of women. The primary function of MSCW is to deal with every aspects of women's development. They look into complaints and take suo-moto notice of matters relating to deprivation of women's rights, take up cases of

violation of the provisions of the constitution and other laws relating to women in the state with the appropriate authorities, investigate and examine all matters relating to the safeguard provided for women. For example, MSCW has its own complaint and investigation cell. The cell having a civil court serves as an ideal window for women to access speedily as the Commission.

The Commission also undertakes beneficial promotional and educational research and conduct awareness programmes on the issues pertaining to women. For instance, in 2011, MSCW held a legal, health and educational awareness programme entitled “Chalo-Gao Ki Ore” (*Khungang Maikai Panglashi*) at New Cannon Village under Ukhrul District and also heard the needs and problems faced by the villagers i.e., their need for adequate drinking water facilities, market sheds etc. The Commission visited all the hills and valley districts including Moreh, a bordering town of Manipur with Myanmar.

The human rights issue in the recent years has gain more importance, with the growing concerns of human rights violations all over the world expressed by human rights organizations and activists. Human rights movement has started against human rights violations by several NGOs working in this area. Several human rights violations issues are another cause for giving news in newspapers. A close coordination between media and NGOs, social workers and lawyers, all elements of civil society –the bench and the bar, administrators and defense personnel, doctors and scholars, politicians and trade unionists, public and private sector employees. The increasing role of non-governmental organizations, voluntary bodies and other organs of civil society in advocacy and policy formulation have introduced a new element in democratic governance.

It cannot be denied the fact that the role of non-governmental organization in a conflict prone area like Manipur is tremendous. In line with Section 12 (i) of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, the National Human Rights Commission has been encouraging the efforts of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and institutions working in the field of human rights.

Human Rights Law Network (HRLN) Manipur and Human Rights Alert (HRA) have been recognized as main important defenders of human rights in the state,

which provides free legal aid to victims of army/police atrocities, torture, disappearances, rape and violence on civilians. Human Rights Activist, Babloo Loitongbam of Human Rights Alert asserts that they work closely with media, as newspapers are the main source that provides news related to human rights. They take up certain cases where there are violations of human rights. They further investigate these cases and even filed litigation on behalf of victims in Supreme Court. Recently, they filed 6 cases of extra-judicial killings in Supreme Court. They are prominent organizations that are working constantly for the safeguard of human rights in the State. NGOs conducts grass-root level human rights workshops in many parts of North-East Region, organize campaigns on cases of human rights violations using the law courts, domestic human rights institutions, international NGOs and the UN human rights mechanisms.

Citing a noteworthy step taken by NGOs in Manipur, the Extrajudicial Execution Victim Families' Association (EEVFAM) and Human Rights Alert (HRA), two organizations based in Manipur, submitted the petition for the investigation in September 2012. They submitted a list of 1528 extrajudicial killings. In its investigation, the Commission was forced to "address the larger question of the role of the State Police". The Supreme Court took a serious note of the PIL and alleged there had been apathy on the Centre and Manipur government's part to bring to book the guilty among armed forces and state police, which allegedly were responsible for 1,528 extra-judicial killings in last 30 years. The SC appointed committee is probing six cases of alleged extra-judicial killings in Manipur and six of the cases turned out to fake encounter cases.

The NHRC has recommended a total monetary relief of Rs 32 lakh as compensation to be paid by the State government to the families of victims of human rights violations in six cases of death in police/security forces action in Manipur. The NGOs share issues like extra-judicial killings, PDS, health and medical facilities in the State, Loktak Lake issues, prison reforms, human rights education at the State level, intimation about deaths in police/judicial custody within 24 hours of occurrence as per guidelines of the NHRC, intimation about death in police encounter within 48 hours as per guidelines of the NHRC,

intimation about death in State Government Homes/Juvenile Homes/Probation Homes; timely submission of the legible copies of the reports by the authorities, delay in submission of compliance reports and non-registration of FIRs by the police in time. (NHRC asks Govt to compensate Rs 32 lakh in 6 cases, October 26, 2013 Vol: XV/44, Sangai Express)

Academicians are taking keen interests in spreading human rights education in the State. The Centre for Human Rights Duties and Education, Manipur University not only offers long term as well as short-term course on human rights but also organizes workshops and seminars on human rights with an objective of spreading the significance of human rights in this conflict-ridden area, invited resource persons including police, doctors, lawyers, journalists and academicians. This is an important and serious step taken by educational institutions in promotion and protection of human rights among individuals.

2.4 Human Rights and Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) 1958

Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) was first initiated as an Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Ordinance and the President promulgated it on 22nd May of 1958. Later the armed Forces Special Powers Bill replaced the Ordinance. The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Bill was passed by both the Houses of Parliament and it received the assent of the President on 11th September 1958. It came on the Statute Book as THE ARMED FORCES (SPECIAL POWERS) ACT, 1958 (28 of 1958). It extends to the whole of the State of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura.

AFSPA is an act that empowers with special powers to the arm forces i.e., any commissioned officer, warrant officer, non-commissioned officer or any other person of equivalent rank in the armed forces may, in a disturbed area if he is of opinion that it is necessary to do so for the maintenance of public order, after giving such due warning as he may consider necessary, fire upon or otherwise use force, even to the causing of death, against any person who is acting in contravention of any law or order for the time being in force in the disturbed area

prohibiting the assembly of five or more persons or the carrying of weapons or of things capable of being used as weapons or of fire-arms, ammunition or explosive substances; arrest, without warrant, any person who has committed a cognizable offence or against whom a reasonable suspicion exists that he has committed or is about to commit a cognizable offence and may use such force as may be necessary to effect the arrest; enter and search without warrant any premises to make any such arrest as aforesaid or to recover any person believed to be wrongfully restrained or confined or any property reasonably suspected to be stolen property or any arms, ammunition or explosive substances believed to be unlawfully kept in such premises, and may for that purpose use such force as may be necessary. Protection to persons acting under Act – No prosecution, suit or other legal proceeding shall be instituted, except with the previous sanction of the Central Government, against any person in respect of anything done or purported to be done in exercise of the powers conferred by this Act.

The atrocious act of Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) is unknown to the entire part of India, except for the North East India and Jammu & Kashmir. In a place where, it has no relevant, do not know the amount of its consequences. In several parts of North East India, violence and mistrust is the by-product of this act and major human rights violations are committed under the purview of AFSPA.

Former Director General of Police KPS Gill, the man behind the suppression of insurgency in the state of Punjab had recently said that Army should not have been used in anti-insurgency operations in Punjab and Assam. He said "Operation Blue Star in Punjab and Operation Bajrang in Assam were not necessary. The operations were hijacked from the police administration creating mistrust between the police, security forces and civil society. As a result, many innocent people lost their lives."

Under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) numbers of civilians have lost their lives, living no stone unturned for them to retaliate against the act and demanded for its repeal. Following the rape and killing of Thangjam Manorama Devi, the government had set up a committee headed by Justice Jeevan Reddy to

look into the Act and even submitted its report saying the AFSPA should be “repealed”. However, despite the report, no further actions have been taken till date.

One of the intensifying examples is that of social activist Irom Chanu Sharmila who been on fast unto death for more than 13 years demanding repeal of the Act after indiscriminate firing that led to the death of 10 civilians by Assam Rifles near Imphal airport on November 2, 2000.

Satyabrata Pal, member of NHRC’s team recent visit to Manipur to monitor the socio-economic conditions and complaints of fake encounters, expressed concern over the substantial role of state police in gross violations of human rights rather than the central forces particularly Assam Rifles. Pal said “Manipur police is substantially involved in extra-involved in extra-judicial killings”. The commission investigated the 44 sample cases of extra-judicial killings that took place in Manipur between 2005 and 2010 and 30 were found to be fake encounters and also found the state government provided compensation in the form of monetary relief only in three cases. Earlier, a Supreme Court panel, appointed in response to public interest litigation (PIL) by a Manipur-based group, investigated some of the 1,528 alleged extra-judicial killings in the state between 1979 and 2012. The findings damned the role of Assam Rifles and the government.

2.5 Local Police Approach on Human Rights

Police are the law enforcement agencies and their powers include the legitimized use of force and are authorized to exercise the police services of a state within a defined legal or territorial area of responsibility. It occupies an important place for maintaining and ensuring law and order in society. However, they are also the evident as law-breaker due to their legitimate power. In Manipur, police force is brutal and corrupt and is the main culprit of human rights violations. There are many evidences that local police are involved in many crimes including drug

smuggling, sexual harassment, even rape cases and notoriously involved in fake encounters.

In recent news reports, the findings of National Human Rights Commission states that it is the state police that has been involved in gross human rights violations in Manipur, rather than the central forces particularly Assam Rifles. The commission investigated the 44 sample cases of extra-judicial killings that took place in Manipur between 2005 and 2010 and 30 were found to be fake encounters. It is evident from the fact that the November 2009 Khwairamband Bazaar incident where Manipur police commandos staged 'fake' encounters in broad daylight in which two people were killed. Many civilians' lives have lost in this name of conflict. However, history speaks the truth, security forces are infamous for rape and sexual assault against women in Manipur. The security forces were also responsible for sexual assault.

There is an increasing report of drug trafficking in the state, where cases of involvement of state forces are highly evident. Despite the stringent laws to combat drug smuggling in Manipur, the state has become a breeding ground for such crime as it shares border with Myanmar. On February 24, Manipur police arrested a Colonel-rank Defense PRO and five others after they were caught allegedly carrying illicit drugs valued at an estimated Rs15 crore. In a similar incident, 10 Manipur Police personnel, including two officers, a sub-inspector and a jamadar, have been caught red handed while transporting drugs worth approximately Rs 3.6 crore to the Manipur-Myanmar border town of Moreh.

Police on the other hand, in an attempt to clear the air of mistrust and fear between police and public and most importantly with intent to educate the masses about the growing concerns of mob justice that is happening in the state during incidents of crime. State police have taken initiative in organizing workshops and have participated in many public forums. On 28 July 2013, one-day Police-Media seminar-cum-workshop on the theme 'How police & media can work in tandem to deliver better justice to the people' was jointly organized by Manipur Police Department & All Manipur Working Journalists' Union. Several notable police personnel and journalists took part in the seminar, keeping their purpose before

the public. The forum was more of police having intent to deliver their difficulties during investigation and how media and other organizations hamper the process of investigations.

2.6 Human Rights and Insider-Outsider Issue

The fear of non-Manipuri outnumbering the locals, many civil society organizations are demanding for the implementation of Inner Line Permit system (ILP). Many non-Manipuri living in the state that came to the state in search of labour and work has become targets. Many have killed, murdered, and threatened to leave the state. The ongoing problem on the attacks against non-Manipuri living in the state has drawn the attention of Centre. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh while addressing the 'All India Conference of Directors General/ Inspectors General of Police- 2013 showed concerns over the security situations in the North-East. The target of non-Manipuris in Manipur needs to be tackled with collective resolution and firm determination. Asserting that security situation in the Northeast continues to remain complex with insurgency, extortion and agitations being the main disruptive elements.

2.7 Democratic Protest on Human Rights Violations in Manipur

India has the largest democracy in the world. The depiction of a democratic republic, which the Preamble envisages, is democratic not only from the political but also from the social perspective. It envisages not only a democratic form of government but also a democratic society, inculcated with the spirit of 'justice, liberty, equality and fraternity'. Freedom of expression, freedom to assemble, participate and protest is a crucial part of a democratic civil society. Manipur has seen numerous democratic and undemocratic form of protest for many years. In a democratic country, the very idea of protest has been defied for the last 13 years. From Chanu Sharmila has been fast unto death for the last 13 years, which certainly drew the attention of the international community for her, exemplary non-violent protest against the draconian act of AFSPA 1958. But the country having a pride of being the largest democracy in world fails to recognized and

reciprocate the will of non-violent and the most potent form of protest once Father of the Nation employed on the colonial rule of the British that brought freedom to the entire nation.

Apparently, violent protests have their way of getting the notice of the government and the public through their violent means such as demolition of public offices, setting up public transportation and goods on fire. These protests are short-lived and more effective as compared to the non-violent protest. Bandhs, highway blockades, curfews have proved to be more potent in the state. The protesters put their demands before the government and after few days or weeks or months of bandhs and blockade, they withdraw their protest after negotiations with the government.

One of the emerging new trends of non-violent protest in the state is that of formation of Joint Action Committees for any unfortunate event including killings, murders, grenade attacks, and any demands from associations like teachers associations for clearance of salaries etc. In Manipur, people have awareness of their rights and use democratic means to achieve these rights.

2.8 The face of Anti-AFSPA: Irom Sharmila Chanu

Irom Sharmila Chanu is famous for her anti-AFSPA movement in Manipur. Her movement has supported across the nation. Irom Sharmila Chanu began her fast on 2 November 2000 after the Malom Massacre and it became internationally recognized act of political protest, a non-violent dissent rather than retaliatory violence. In the sixth year of her fast, Sharmila decided to take her protest to a larger audience and began her protest demonstration on the evening of October 2 at Jantar Mantar (Vaid, M & Irom, S. 2013). Irom Sharmila points out that strong presence of army in Manipur has deepened the suffering of common people (Deepti Priya Mehrotra 2009). She refused food and water for 16 years and eventually ended her world's longest hunger strike on 9 August 2016 (www.thesangaiexpress.com). Amnesty International Prisoner of Conscience has given to Irom Sharmila Chanu. Amnesty International India calls on authorities to remove all charges against her and appeal to take actions to repeal AFSPA from

the state. (India: End of Irom Sharmila's hunger strike an opportunity to repeal AFSPA www.amnesty.org) published on 9 August 2016. She is a well-known human rights activist, journalist and a poet. Her cause was based on human rights and against inhuman activities under AFSPA. Anti-AFSPA Day was observed in Imphal on 11 September 2006, which made signed a petition expressing solidarity with Irom Sharmila in her brave protest, and demanded removal of AFSPA (Mehrotra P D 2009). Media attention received on her cause was seen in local dailies like the Sangai Express and Imphal Free Press, which routinely covered events in her campaign, and regional newspapers and other publications in Tehelka, Hindu and Telegraph, Reuters, BBC, UNI, PTI are already aware of her struggle and carried news (Mehrotra P D 2009).

“The Anna-Type support from the media certainly does not exist for Sharmila,” Says Pradip Phanjaobam, editor of the Imphal Free Press. Yumnam Rupachandra openly declares that the media is not really free in Manipur. The state has suppressed it, just as it has civil society, which can only function “within the likes and dislikes of the state government” (Vaid, M & Irom, S. 2013).