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### Electoral Trends in the Armed Conflict Regions: The Concerned of Human Rights

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#### Abstract

Democratic elections are seemingly irrelevant in the armed conflict regions that violation of electoral rights on the eve of election is quite common and more serious in the hill and remote areas in particular. On the other, the matter of human rights violation in the context of armed conflict is very comprehensively found in such regions. Significantly

insurgent groups or extra-constitutional bodies have often been interfering in the electioneering processes which have great impact in the electoral rights. Efforts have been made to explore violation of electoral rights in the contemporary elections being held in the armed conflict regions.

**Keywords:** Extra Constitutional Organization, Politicization, Political Morality and Ethics, Criminalization of Politics, Position Paper, Militarism

#### Concept:

In contemporary, in the context of election - right to franchise –that to be candidature and electorate are in a sorry state. Such electoral rights are often violet in the hill and remote areas. Prevailing conditions of human rights in armed conflict region like Manipur in the north eastern region on India that seem to handle by state and non-state actors. Different acts of state and non-state actors have often been threatening human rights. On the other, many unwanted happenings are generated on the eve of election not only in India but also other democratic countries. Unfortunately, it seems to be taken as natural phenomenon as well as part of electoral politics. That most of the people are seriously concerned and emphasized only those cases of human right violation caused by security forces and militant outfits. Generally, people have ignored other cases of human rights that happening on the pre and post elections. Besides, till today democratic elections have been converting to plutocratic state of election which means only those candidates who supported by wealthy and powered could get elected.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights *Adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948*. On December 10, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction. (Ashwani 2000: 377-89) Some of theme that has significance in terms of electoral rights may be discussed as the following.

In the ‘*Article 1* all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.’ This article provides to respect all the human life that all are equal. ‘*Article 2* everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status...’ (Ibid. 390) denotes the political rights without any discrimination. ‘*Article 5* No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.’ (Ibid)

#### Statement of the Problem

Obviously, electoral rights in the North Eastern India became a big question where many electorates could not enjoy the right to franchise. Not only electorates, candidates too have been facing threaten from extra-constitutional organization. Various insurgency movements have been witnessed since long back. The situations compelled to lead unwanted incidents that

challenge to individual freedom. In fact, freedom or fundamental rights are very sorry state. Both the state and non-state actors are very free to act what they think. If there is any issue of violation of rights where state actors involved the matter were politicized. Besides, politicians have often been trying to make nexus on the eve of election. It is quite open that illegal weapons are aplenty at the time of election. Threat, coercive force, muscle power and money power became ingredient character of electoral trend. Moreover, some civil organization who loyal to the insurgent groups functioning like a political party and imposed does and don't to the electorates and candidates. Village chief / kings voted as representative of their electorates. In fact, voting right of the people are violated in the regions in general and hill districts in particular. No civil organization have serious on the matter rather taking into consider as electoral phenomenon. Such cases of human rights violation that found in rest of the conflict zone have separate character. Violence in the election is quite common in India but high 'militarism' which means suppressive outlook upon one another that what they said is right are widely appeared in the state. Sometime series of conflict have generated after election too.

### Review of Literature

Sometimes relevant articles focus on the human rights as 'conceptual' ideas are found in various reputed journals like but the contextual idea on the electoral rights are very few. Besides, many articles that published in the Local dailies are also found that was also based on the matter of human rights but approaches are varied from electoral trends.

In the context of the Indian polity, many politician or big powered indulges various activities that led to violation of rights in the discourse of election. With this view L. Muhindro discussed the situation under the theme of *Political morality and ethics in the Indian polity*, in the Indian Journal of Political Science 2008. (Muhindro 2008: 305-311) On the briefing of Amnesty International where Benjamin Zawacki, Amnesty International's Myanmar Researcher opined that, Amnesty assessed what governments do and not how they are formed—in this case, the government's promulgation two months ago of five Electoral Laws and four Bylaws. Provisions of these laws are in clear violation of human rights principles and standards; indeed one of the Electoral Laws provides that parties must declare that they will 'safeguard the Constitution'. (Benjamin 2010)

Max et al discussed on *On the Occasion of the Forum on Ensuring the Right to Suffrage of Persons with Disabilities in the 2010 Elections and Beyond*. (Max et al, 2010) Sanajaoba, N. discussed the conditions of human rights in the armed conflict in his article *Human rights in armed conflict areas Standard setting and binding obligations*.<sup>i</sup> It shall have a significance to study the case of Afganisthan where most of the people are very insecure. In the article published by (Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission AIHRC) under the theme *A call for justice: a national consultation on past human rights violation in Afganistan*.<sup>ii</sup> Thangkhonun Haokip's *Dictated elections: The root cause of all chaos—"Christians consigned into oblivion did not realise* cited the nature of election in the hill areas.<sup>iii</sup> Nairobi where electoral rights violated mentioned in the article *Burundi: Violence, Rights Violations Mar Elections*. (Burundi 2010) Increasing human rights violations could

undermine Burundi's electoral process unless the government takes immediate action, Human Rights Watch said. Experience in the Iran may also be cited as example of human rights discourse in relating to election Scott Lucas asserted in his article *Iran Special: Legal Analysis of Post-Election Violations of Rights*. (Scott 2010).

Among the more serious human rights aspects and implications of the Constitution—elaborated upon in Amnesty's 2008 Briefing Paper—include the President being effectively above the law; impunity for past crimes by government official, and a total suspension of 'fundamental rights' during indefinite and undefined states of emergency. (Benjamin, op cit) Those the laws disenfranchise include 'persons serving a prison term under a sentence passed by any court, Kohtwe, Democratic Rights Group Criticizes Burma's Election Directive opined that the new electoral law in the Myanmar is unacceptable. (Kohtwe 2010) Also according to the EC directive, political parties in Burma must apply to the EC for permission to hold political gatherings and to give speeches at least seven days prior to the event. In the analysis of Human Rights Watch that published under the caption of *Sudan: Abuses Undermine* ..., said that Violations of civil and political rights by Sudanese security forces throughout the country are seriously undermining prospects for free, fair, and credible elections in April 2010.<sup>iv</sup> Freedom of press which is considered as fourth estate also exploited in Ethiopia that is confirmed from the paper published on the online. Ethiopians go to polls next year amidst concerns about human rights abuses. 'The free press in Ethiopia has been decimated, he noted, "many independent journalists have been forced into exile; some are forced to self censor."<sup>v</sup> In general election, when voters have no money to meet their day-to-day needs, a small amount of money can easily buy a vote. But the situation at the upper levels is worse. At the national level, members of the DPR and the MPR may 'sell' their votes for certain issues.<sup>vi</sup>

On the concern of human rights in the election of Iran the work of Shadir Sadr on *A Legal Analysis on Violation of Rights in the Post-Election Events*, published by Iran Human Rights Documentation Centre on June 2010 will give an insight of the causal and effect that experienced in Iran but mostly base on post-election. (Shadir 2010), 'Nearly one year has passed since the widespread public protests to the announced results of Iran's 2009 presidential election. In the past year, a harsh crackdown in various forms across various sectors of society has rendered the human rights situation in Iran more precarious than ever before. During this time, many human rights lawyers and activists have voiced their criticisms of Iran's human rights record under the country's current, existing laws.<sup>vii</sup> Simon Papuashvili reported the situation of human rights violation in the Georgia election that in Election report published by Human Rights Centre on the theme of *Georgia's Parliamentary Elections – Unprecedented Brutality and Election Fraud, Monitoring of Elections of May 21, 2008*, made a clearer picture of Georgia election.<sup>viii</sup> In another case, bribing voters is prohibited by both the Election and the Criminal Codes of Georgia. However, candidates for Majoritarian MP, mostly from United National Movement openly provided presents to voters. (Ibid) In the recent trends of violation of rights, an article christened *Election Violence in the North Eastern States of India*, expressed the incidents happen in the course of 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha election.<sup>ix</sup> The region had first, second &

third phase of polling where nearly half of the polling booths identified in the three categories of sensitive, very sensitive and hyper-sensitive. Strong contingents of Army, central paramilitary & state forces have fanned out all over the States against any attempt by militant outfits to sabotage the polls and to ensure a smooth polling.

Analytical observation may be made with the situation found in the Burma though the country is now military rule where election was held in 1990 but electoral rights are still in vague. Consequent upon various quarters that insist to replace military junta in the Burma, now another general election is going to be held in Nov. 7, 2010. Significantly, the United States joined Australia, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia in calling for the creation of a U.N.-led commission to investigate alleged war crimes by Burma's military junta. In the follow up strategy on Aug. 18, 2010 the White House in a statement said the commission could advance the cause of human rights in Burma by 'addressing issues of accountability' for members of the regime. The Obama administration also hinted at the possibility of further sanctions. Such a commission of inquiry against the military leaders has also been sought by the Burmese human rights groups. The issue took prominence when Tomas Ojea Quintana, the U.N. special rapporteur for human rights in Burma, released a critical report to the Human Rights Council in March 2010.<sup>x</sup>

### **Major Encountering Complicacy to the Democratic Election**

Election gives a chance to electorate to choose their representatives for a definite period for good governance which is inseparable from the democratic process. So, success of democracy largely depends on the level of electoral system and its participation. Voting is one important form of political participation through which citizen can influence the behaviour of political leaders. Surprisingly immoral politics have been dominating democratic characters and norms.

### **Case Study of Election 2002-07 in North East India**

Different insurgency groups have been undergoing their activities in the North Eastern Region of India since long back. In the midst of movement election is also part and parcel on the way of Indian democracy to the region too. One of the most affected states in the region is Manipur, situated in the border area to Myanmar. Former independent kingdom Manipur was merged with India coercively by 1949. Since then mass uprising and insurgency movement had begun in the late 1970s. There are more than 32 ethnic groups and about 34 insurgent organizations that struggling against Indian government.

Naga civil society / social organization group like United Naga Council (UNC) had already declared proposed instructions to be followed by Naga candidates and warned not to contest election on any political party instead Independent. And searching for Naga candidate those who loyal to them and have strong support on Naga Unification and fear of God. As a new strategy National Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN-IM) leading Naga insurgent group which is now in political dialogue with government of India, has gradually enter in the state politics directly or indirectly by condemning government's delaying tactics. On the other hand government of India (GOI) has golden opportunity when they (IM) arrive in state politics in one

sense. In this case all the Naga politicians seem to be within the command of UNC. On the eve of election they have taken "Undertaking" as oath to do for the Naga movement from the entire Naga candidates.

As the elections were to be held at a time when the minds of the public were unsettled, no worthwhile chance was likely to be brought.<sup>xi</sup> In a development predicted to have wide implications on the forthcoming elections 2002 and after, a meeting organized by UNC at its headquarters at Senapati, where in the meeting 47 Naga aspirant candidates signed a pledge that in the event of their return to the 8<sup>th</sup> Manipur Legislative Assembly, they would support the Naga cause. It is worth to mention that Naga cause include Naga unification of all the Naga inhabited areas. (Greater Nagalim) The joint pledge includes 'Naga MLAs once elected would raise the issue of Naga political problems in forum including the Manipur Legislative Assembly. It also said all Naga MLAs would be compelled to fight and campaign unitedly on issues concerning the problems of the Nagas, and those MLAs who turn back on the pledge and signed would have to willingly face the ire of the Naga people.'<sup>xii</sup>

The question is that how the Naga candidate will serve for a particular community that almost all the constituencies where they have to nominate constitute different communities like Kuki, Nepali and other tribes. If they do so they may not be considered as representative of the concerned constituencies. On the other such pledge will affect to the electoral rights of the other community though they have chance to choose alternate candidate on the fray. On the other, more or less pledge for particular purpose to support the communal agenda may affect the election code of conduct and also be simply moral duty of the aspirant candidate in the sense that if the candidate returns to the Assembly no legal action may be initiated by the UNC. There was lot of contradiction as politicians who signed the undertaking spoke out different version in the public.<sup>xiii</sup>

### **Violence Mars the Electoral Scene**

A Gypsy and a Maruti car of the Congress candidate in Ukhrul constituency were also pushed down the ravine at Lunghar village by armed persons on February 18.<sup>xiv</sup> Manipur People's Party (MPP) has demanded that re-poll be conducted in all the polling centres in 41 Chandel Assembly constituency alleging widespread booth capturing and proxy voting by armed supporters of the BJP candidate a day ahead of the actual casting of votes.<sup>xv</sup> Gunmen obstructed poll personnel and cast votes in favour of the BJP candidate, further, adding that booth capturing and rigging were carried out in almost all the centres. He alleged BD Behring was supported by armed persons.<sup>xvi</sup> The six workers along with the vehicle they board were also abducted.<sup>xvii</sup> Violence erupted in the constituency at about midnight when party workers of two candidates confronted each other.<sup>xviii</sup>

The BJP workers said two of them (booth capturers) were beaten by the public.<sup>xix</sup> Armed persons also captured polling station 59/20; Polling materials were snatched. In the Singhat AC, Unidentified persons barged into polling station 60/9 in the late night and snatched ballot papers and stamped the same in favour of a candidate.<sup>xx</sup> In Singhat AC, <sup>xxi</sup> Karong AC, <sup>xxii</sup> the agent said unidentified gunmen captured ballot boxes and papers in the night of Feb. 19 & 20, 2002. Workers of the Congress (I) candidate snatched and destroyed ballot boxes of seven polling centres namely

Nalong, Makuinong, Kadi, Lemta, Kuilong, Thenjang and Lasan. Six ballot boxes were snatched away by armed persons while the polling officials along with agents of candidates were taking them on foot towards Tamei.<sup>xxiii</sup> Candidate W. Keishing has filed a complaint with the DC, Ukhrul in this regard.

In Ukhrul district, the UNC made a sweep the candidates it backed won all the three seats of the Naga-dominated hill district, which is also the home district of Thuingaleng Muivah, general secretary of NSCN(I-M). In Tamenglong district, however, Khangthunang Panmei, an independent candidate who was abducted by NSCN(I-M) cadre days before the third phase of the polling and was literally forced to announce his withdrawal from the contest, won by a margin of 8,46 votes from the Tamenglong Assembly constituency, defeating the UNC-sponsored candidate sitting MLA Samuel Jendai.<sup>xxiv</sup>

In 2007, the UNC declaration further continued, the Naga people of Chandel district shall persistently execute the call of the UNC at the grass root level by abiding the principles and objectives of the Position Paper 9<sup>th</sup> General Election 2007, Manipur. The declaration then resolved that all the respective Naga tribe Hohos shall take the responsibility to translate the Position Paper on the 9<sup>th</sup> General Election 2007.<sup>xxv</sup> The position paper of the UNC further stated that electoral politics operated in parallel the politicians have executed the politics of tribalism, money power, political party tickets, vested interests etc, adding, <sup>xxvi</sup> leaving the Naga vision in the backburner, they have utilised the years of their tenure to consolidate their space in the politicking drama. At the same time another declaration from all village chiefs would also be taken to ensure their villagers definitely support the projected candidates.<sup>xxvii</sup>

The (UNC) has charged some Naga individuals of trying to throw confusion into the mind of the people.<sup>xxviii</sup> The NSCN (K) has accused the UNC and the All-Naga Students' Association, Manipur (ANSAM) of directly monitoring the ensuing Manipur Assembly elections at the behest of the NSCN-IM. The Khapleng faction of the NSCN said that the NSCN-IM has selected its own 'pick and choose persons' as independent candidates. In a statement issued by the secretary of the NSCN-K said that the course of action taken up by the NSCN-IM, UNC and ANSAM is not 'election but selection.' The NSCN (K) further said that since election is usually conducted under Indian laws, it was up to the Government of India and its Election Commission to decide whether the said exercise was *election or selection*. Warning the UNC and ANSAM, the NSCN-K said that the two social bodies would be held sole responsibility if any untoward incident takes place resulting in the loss of human lives and properties on account of 'undue interference' by them.<sup>xxix</sup>

### Findings

- In the armed conflict states like Manipur, election is not free and fair which is evident by various appearances of electoral trend on the eve of election where different proscribed groups interfere in the electioneering process though the boycott is on another matter.
- Most of the people even including civil societies and political elites seem to consider violation of electoral rights in the discourse of armed conflict as normal order of the day influence by circumstances.
- Some hill base NGOs or civil organisations and student bodies base on particular community or loyal to

insurgent group, for instance have been acted as authority.

- Dictate culture initiated by some civil organisations like UNC and insurgent outfit like NSCN-IM violates electoral rights of not only Naga electorates but also other electorates of different communities.
- Though the government took up security measures to ensure electoral rights it can't secure free and fair election that lots of psycho-fear developed in the mines of electorates.

### Recommendations

- Protection of human rights which includes electoral rights and fundamental rights of the citizen should be respect by the concerns including state or non-state actors.
- Security arrangement in connection with election should be made one month ahead to those sensitive areas where suspicion arose that electoral rights may be violated by non-state actors.
- Stern action should be initiated against those culprits who threat electoral rights, challenges to the freedom of thought and conscience.
- Civil societies and NGOs should be far away from the militarize conception, otherwise it will encourage in various forms of conflict, communalism and malpractices.

### Conclusion

It may be recalled that Chiefs Justice of India J. S. Verma has said that 'criminalization of Politics' is subversive of free and fair elections which are a basic feature of the Constitution. The Supreme Court noted the important of free and fair election and right to adult franchise.<sup>xxx</sup> In various countries the standard of politics have been deteriorating day by day is proved by various instances that commonly see on the eve of election. In fact most of the politicians have emphasised on the power politics through various unscrupulous activities. It is worth to mention in this regard that Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative and Voluntary Action Network, Delhi, made a research work under the aegis of Maja Daruwala, (*et al.*) *Right to know- A voter's Guide*, in which various arguments and analysis were made. In general, people are deeply worried that too many dirty and dangerous people stand for elections and come to power. The author observed that there are about 700 legislators in India (MLA, MLC, and MPs) who are history seekers - those with previous criminal records at police stations. Many of them enter Parliament and state assemblies as lawmakers lacking knowledge about the Constitution or a commitment to the country's laws. More and more good and capable people keep out of politics as they don't want to connect with an activity that they see as corrupt to the core. Contesting elections requires huge amounts of money, which is another discouraging factor for the common person. A recent study commissioned by the Election Commission of India tells us that the top four candidates in many constituencies spend between Rs. 80-100 lakhs each during the Lok Sabha elections. (Maja *et al.*, 2003).

Money power and muscle power seems to be a pivotal factor to win elections. It is evident that more and more criminal elements are entering active politics and even detained in the jail. Voters often have to choose between candidates who

have criminal connections and records and little commitment to the rule of law by which India must be governed. Elections have also become a game of numbers and percentages with votes being demanded on the basis of caste, religion and community identities. Such activities of poor quality of candidates are discouraging people from voting. Informed participation is at the heart of every democracy. On the other in the armed conflict regions threat to vote or not to vote as well as not to involve in the electioneering activities are widely available which is clear evidence of violation of electoral rights. The case study cited above also proved the state of electoral trends in such regions which is far away from democracy. Nevertheless, conception of militarism that acted as authority by individual or a handful of people seems to become a societal culture in such armed conflict regions. The people in general have lots of dilemma in such phenomena and demean the value of democracy to some extent.

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<sup>i</sup> The Sangai Express, (English local newspaper) May 3, 2006

<sup>ii</sup> AIHRC, (2009), *A call for justice: a national consultation on past human rights violation in Afganistan*, [PDF], (Online) available at: [www.aihrc.org.af/Rep\\_29\\_Eng/rep29\\_1\\_05call4justice.pdf](http://www.aihrc.org.af/Rep_29_Eng/rep29_1_05call4justice.pdf) - , accessed on April 12

<sup>iii</sup> Thangkholun Haokip, (2010) *Dictated elections: The root cause of all chaos "Christians consigned into oblivion did not realise"* in The Sangai Express, (English local newspaper) May 5

<sup>iv</sup> Sudan, (2010), *Abuses Undermine Impending Elections End Rights Violations, Ensure Free and Fair Process*, January 24, (Online) available at: <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/01/24/sudan-abuses-undermine-impending-elections>, Accessed on Feb. 23, 2010; In one example from South Darfur, national security forces beat and arrested an election observer and detained him without charge for 25 days. In Khartoum, the capital, armed national security forces assaulted and arrested members of an activist group for distributing fliers with slogans opposing President Omar al-Bashir. 'The Khartoum government is still using its security forces to harass and abuse those who speak out against the ruling National Congress Party,' said Georgette Gagnon, Africa director at Human Rights Watch. 'That is no environment for holding free, fair, and transparent elections.'

<sup>v</sup> Douglas Mpuga,(2009), *Concern about Human Rights as Ethiopia Prepares for Elections*, Washington, DC November 21, Wendaferew added that the [political] opposition is completely restricted and there are violation human rights. Commenting on the recent conviction of 27 Ethiopians accused of conspiring to create public havoc in an attempt to bring down Prime Minister Meles Zenawi's government, Wendaferew dismissed their trial as ridiculous. "The Ethiopian government has used the court system to push its agenda and to criminalize any dissent in the country."

<sup>vi</sup> Hermawan Sulisty, (2010), *Electoral Politics in Indonesia: A Hard Way to Democracy* [PDF] (Online) available at: [library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/01361004.pdf](http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/01361004.pdf) - accessed on Feb. 12, 2010, stated that the international outrage arising out of the recent announcement of electoral laws in Burma, one of ASEAN members, is also likely to be discussed, either formally or informally. The election law announced on March 10 prohibits anyone convicted of a crime from being a member of a political party. It prevents hundreds of political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi who is the general secretary of National League for Democracy (NLD).

<sup>vii</sup> Scott Lucas,(2010), *Iran Special: Legal Analysis of Post-Election Violations of Rights (Shadi Sadr)* (Online) available at: & <http://enduringamerica.com/2010/06/20/iran-special->

legal-analysis-of-post-election-violations-of-rights-shadi-sadr/ accessed on March 30, 2010. Further it is mentioned that indeed the article based on basic rights set forth in the Constitution of Iran and officially-recognized common laws. After reviewing the limits and provisions in the law concerning the aforesaid rights, I've attempted to highlight of some of the most prominent and specific cases in which widespread violations of these basic rights occurred.

<sup>viii</sup> Simon Papuashvili, (2008), *Election report - Georgia's Parliamentary election-Unprecedented Brutality and Election Fraud* [PDF], Human Rights Centre, May 21, (Online) available at: [www.nhc.no/php/files/documents/.../Election\\_report\\_Georgia.pdf](http://www.nhc.no/php/files/documents/.../Election_report_Georgia.pdf) - accessed on March 3, 2009

<sup>ix</sup> Northeast, *Election Violence in the North Eastern States of India* (Online) available at: <http://www.coresource.info/northeast.html>, accessed on March 2, 2009 It is also learnt that, at least four EVMs were damaged at Papum Pare, Ziro, Daporijo and West Kameng districts in Arunachal Pradesh. In Manipur suspected militants destroy EVMs at Senapati, Chandel, Tamenglong and Ukhrul districts. In Nagaland, Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) were damaged by miscreants in two polling stations. In Sikkim an EVM was smashed at Sukhaipokhari and in Assam EVMs were drowning in a pond at Alangpur, couple of EVMs and voting papers were damage at Katlicherra and Three EVMs smashed at Kanthalguri.

<sup>x</sup> Nehginpao Kipgen, *Obama commissions inquiry of Burmese Human Rights*, The Huyen Lanpao (English local newspaper) Sept. 12, 2010

<sup>xi</sup> Joy, O., MPP president said in a press conference, the Imphal Free Press, (English local newspaper), Imphal, Feb. 7, 2002

<sup>xii</sup> The Imphal Free Press, (English local newspaper), under the caption of *Naga candidates sign pledge to make common cause once elected*, Imphal, Feb. 8, 2002

<sup>xiii</sup> The Sangai Express, (English local newspaper), under the caption of *Federal Party harping on State autonomy*, Imphal, Feb. 9, 2002

<sup>xiv</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>xv</sup> The Sangai Express, (English local newspaper), under the caption of *MPP demands re-poll in all Chandel booths*, Imphal, Feb. 22, 2002

<sup>xvi</sup> The Manipur Mail, (English local newspaper), Imphal, Feb. 22, 2002

<sup>xvii</sup> Newmai News Network, (English local newspaper), Nagaland, Feb. 22, 2002

<sup>xviii</sup> The Sangai Express, (English local newspaper), Imphal, Feb. 22, 2002

<sup>xix</sup> Naharolgi Thoudang, (Manipuri local newspaper), Imphal, Feb. 22, 2002

<sup>xx</sup> Final phase poll marred by large scale booth capturing, (Online) available at: <http://www.e-pao.net/epRelatedNews.asp?heading=1&src=220202>, accessed on Dec. 21, 2009

<sup>xxi</sup> Poknapham, (Manipuri local newspaper), Imphal, Feb. 22, 2002

<sup>xxii</sup> Newmai News Network, (English local newspaper), Nagaland, Feb. 22, 2002

<sup>xxiii</sup> Newmai News Network, (English local newspaper), Nagaland, Feb. 23, 2002

<sup>xxiv</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>xxv</sup> The Sangai Express, (English local newspaper), under the caption of *UNC kick starts poll campaign*, Imphal, Dec. 5, 2006

<sup>xxvi</sup> Poknapham, (Manipuri local newspaper), Imphal, Dec. 6, 2006

<sup>xxvii</sup> The Sangai Express, (English local newspaper), under the caption of *UNC spells out criteria for Naga candidates* Imphal, Dec. 6, 2006

<sup>xxviii</sup> The Sangai Express, (English local newspaper), under the caption of *UNC slams Naga individuals*, Imphal, Jan. 19, 2002

<sup>xxix</sup> NSCN K warns UNC, ANSAM, (Online) available at: <http://www.e-pao.net/epRelatedNews.asp?heading=9&src=230107>, accessed on March 22, 2008

<sup>xxx</sup> Gokul Sharma, *Voting Human Rights of Prisoners: He can be MLA or MP but cannot vote*, [PDF] (Online) available at:

<http://drgokuleshsharma.com/pdf/voting%20rights.pdf>, accessed on April 3, 2009 asserted that still dubious practices are also seen in the Indian election system that violates rights of the prisoners to cast their vote; despite they have the right to be candidature. It is very common to say but it is a fact that a person, who is not convicted and who is simply under trial, simply a prisoner cannot cast his vote from jail or otherwise from a place where he is detained but he can very well contest election from jail.