

## Report of North Eastern Social Research Centre, April 2007-March 2008

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**NESRC began on March 1, 2000 with a mandate of combining serious research with involvement in the field and encouraging other individuals and organisations to do research on issues of relevance to the Northeast. Staff of NESRC: Director: Dr Walter Fernandes; Associate Director: Dr Alphonsus D'Souza (Phesama, Nagaland), Research Associates: Gita Bharali, Pranami Garg and Elu Ndang. Librarian: Anamika Deka. Secretary cum accountant: Manisha Kalita.**

While research, the mainstay of NESRC received importance during 2007-08, seminars and networking around peace initiatives received much attention. Two studies were completed during the year and one reached the finishing point. Two more are being launched. NESRC also provided support to research done by some other organisations and individuals. It conducted 17 seminars, 13 of them in 5 States on issues around conflict and peace. Most of them were organised in collaboration with other organisations. These activities and the improvement of the library confirmed the mandate of NESRC.

### 1. Library and Documentation

During the financial year 2007-08, the library added 2 journals to the 35 that it was receiving already. With more documents and 500 books now the library has 4,000 volumes. While purchasing books priority is given to those on the Northeast. The books were computerised during the year in order to provide better access to the readers. The documentation too will be computerised during 2008-2009

### 2. Research and Action

NESRC completed two pioneering studies during the financial year and combined them with seminars meant to bring together people involved in issues they dealt with. The first study was a look at the Assam budget from the point of view of children. The second was an alternative to the cost-benefit analysis of people-displacing projects. The report of a third study that has been completed is being finalised. NESRC staff also gave professional support to some others doing research.

**1. Pranami Garg and Madhumita Puryakastha. Assam Budget 2004-05 to 2007-08:** This analysis of the allocations for children, done in collaboration with HAQ, Centre for Child Rights, New Delhi, is the first study of its kind in Assam. The look it takes at the allocations for children's education, development and protection shows that while children are around 43 percent of the population, the allocations are only around 17 percent. Most allocations are for education. Other areas such as development and protection receive scant attention. Some projects such as Applied Nutrition exist on paper but no allocation has been made for them. In addition, implementation of many schemes is weak.

**2. Gita Bharali. Alternatives to the Cost-Benefit Analysis of People-Displacing Projects.** Studies indicate that some 60 million persons have been displaced or otherwise deprived of livelihood 1947-2000 in the name of national development. Fewer than 20 percent of them have been resettled. The rest are impoverished and marginalized. The study done with support from DKA-KFO was an attempt to see whether after the high price that the displaced pay the projects can be justified even in economic terms. Its first part looked at the cost and time overruns, capacity installation and utilisation of more than 100 projects all over the country. The second part studied the social and environmental costs that the people pay. Projects calculate their cost and benefits exclusively according to the formal economy and exclude the social and environmental costs. Besides, a large number of projects have cost and time overruns. That aspect was studied from more than 100 projects all over India. Projects are sanctioned on the basis of 1:1.5 cost-benefit i.e. Rs 1.5 benefit for every rupee sent. The cost and time overruns show

that they do not keep to this criterion but they are rarely evaluated once they are sanctioned. The social and environmental costs are now being quantified. Indications are that if one adds them and the cost and time overruns to the project cost, the benefits will go below 1:1. In the third part, three projects economic, social and environmental of three projects were studied. Their documents were analysed and most persons displaced or deprived by them were interviewed to find out what they had lost to the project, what they had got from it and their present situation. One found signs of overruns in them.

**3. Walter Fernandes and Pranami Garg. *Development-Induced Displacement 1947-2000 in Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura*.** This study sponsored by Misereor is integral to the All India effort to create a reliable database on all displacement by development projects 1947-2000. Studies have been completed in nine States. In the Northeast it has been done in Assam where the official files speak of 4.2 lakh persons displaced from 3.9 lakh acres when in reality 19 lakh persons have lost their livelihood from 14 lakh acres. The present study continues the effort in the Northeast. Studies are being launched also in Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur. It is hoped to cover the whole region within two years.

**4. *Impact of Displacement on the Tribes of Eastern India*.** Walter Fernandes and Gita Bharali gave professional support to this study done by Action Aid India together with Laya, Vishakapatnam, Indian Social Institute, New Delhi (ISI) and others. Dr Marianus Kujur of ISI was its coordinator. The older studies were updated in Andhra, Orissa and Jharkhand and a new one was done in Chhattisgarh. Walter Fernandes also did a critique of the Rehabilitation Policy for Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group.

### **3. Publications**

For effective advocacy in support of the marginalized, the findings of the studies have to be circulated in the form of professional and popular publications. Professional publications should reach the regional intelligentsia through the local language. With this in view several publications were brought out during the year, the first of them being a professional Assamese book on displacement. The staff members of NESRC also publish their findings in professional journals, books and newspapers.

#### **Publications of the Staff of NESRC**

1. Gita Bharali and Walter Fernandes. 2007. *Unnayan Banam Sthanatharor 1947-2000*. pp. 200 Rs 150. This is the Assamese translation of the study on Development-Induced Displacement in Assam 1947-2000. The study on which it is based shows that 19 lakh persons have been displaced from 14 lakh acres 1947-2000 though official sources mention only 4.2 lakhs persons displaced from 3.9 lakh acres.

2. Walter Fernandes, Melville Pereira and Vizalenu Khatso. 2007. *Customary Laws in Northeast India: Impact on Women*. Pp. 222, no price. Published by the National Commission for Women, New Delhi. It is a comparative study of the customary law of five tribes in four States of the Northeast.

3. Walter Fernandes, Priyanca Mathur Velath, Ishita Dey and others. 2007. *The Draft Rehabilitation Policy (2006) and The Communal Violence Bill (2005): A Critique of the Rehabilitation Policy of the Government of India*. Pp. 80, no price given. Kolkata: Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group.

4. Walter Fernandes. 2007. *Self-Rule and Development: Are They Exclusive?* pp. 28, no price. Kolkata: UGC-DRS Programme, Department of Political Science, University of Calcutta.

5. L. Jeyaseelan. (ed). 2008. *Conflict Mapping and Peace Processes in Northeast India*. Pp 276. Price Rs 200. Compilation of case studies of conflicts and peace efforts in Assam, Manipur and Meghalaya.

6. Walter Fernandes, Gita Bharali and Vemedo Kezo. *The UN Indigenous Decade in Northeast India*. Pp. 156. Price 120. This evaluation of the first UN Decade for the Indigenous Peoples in the Northeast done among ten tribes in four States shows that very few ordinary tribals were even aware of the Decade. It seems to have remained with the tribal elite that attended international meetings. Based on

the analysis the authors make recommendations for the second UN Decade of the Indigenous Peoples.

7. Pranami Garg and Madhumita Purkayastha. 2008. *Share of Children in the Assam Budget: An Analysis of the Allocations 2004-05 to 2007-08*. pp. 38. Price Rs 25. This is the first study of its type to look at the Assam budget from the point of view of children's protection, development and education. The study as well as the publication were sponsored by HAQ, Centre for Children's Rights, New Delhi.

8. Pranami Garg. 2008. *Axom Budgetor Xixur Angxo: 2004-05 or pora 2007-08 Loi Abontonor ek Bislexon*. Pp. 40, Rs 25. This is the Assamese translation of the above book on child budget.

9. Walter Fernandes, Melville Pereira and Vizalenu Khatso. 2008. *Tribal Customary Laws in Northeast India: Gender and Class Implications*. Pp. 42, Rs 25. It is a summary and a popular form of the book on the gender implications of the tribal customary law published by the National Commission for Women. It is meant to be a tool of advocacy for changes in the tribal customary law in favour of gender equality.

### **Publications Outside NESRC**

Apart from our own publications the staff of NESRC share their findings also through professional journals, books and newspapers. They published the following articles this year.

#### ***Newspaper Articles***

##### ***Gita Bharali***

1. 'Unnayan Aru Manab Nirapatta' *Asomiya Pratidin*, 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2007.
2. 'Chari dasak Jora ak Sangram' *Dainik Janambhumi*, 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2007.
3. Singurar Krishak and Sarbaharar Sarkar' *Dainik Janambhumi*, 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2007.
4. 'Rastriya Punarsangthapan Niti 2003' *Dainik Janambhumi*, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2007.
5. 'Atmaparisayar Sandhanat' *Dainik Janambhumi*, 26<sup>th</sup> June 2007.
6. 'Unnayanr Mapkathi Hisabe Siksha' *Dainik Janambhumi*, 17<sup>th</sup> July 2007.
7. tarpurbanchalat Manab Sarabarah' *Dainik Janambhumi*, 25<sup>th</sup> July. 2007.
8. Praktik Durjog Kiman Praktik' *Dainik Janambhumi*, 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2007.
9. 'Rastriya Jala Nitir Khasara aru Jal Biradri', *Dainik Janambhumi*, 15<sup>th</sup> September.2007
10. Rajjor Dristit Janabirodhi Jalanitir Khasara', *Dainik Janambhumi*, 28<sup>th</sup> September 2007.
11. 'Puboloi Chowa' *Dainik Janambhumi*, 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2007.
12. 'Shanti Prakriya' *Dainik Janambhumi*, 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2007.
13. Rastrasanghar Khilinjjar Dasak Aru Uttar Purbanchal' *Dainik Janambhumi*, 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2007.
14. Rajje Grahan Nakare Jalanitir Khasara', *Dainik Janambhumi*, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2007.
15. 'Adivasir Bidroh Aru Antarastriya Chah Sanmilian;', *Dainik Janambhumi*, 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2007.
16. 'Bird Flu', *Dainik Janambhumi*, 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2008.

##### ***Walter Fernandes***

1. "The Look East Policy," *The Assam Tribune*, July 6, 2007.
2. "Develop, Displace and Forget the Poor," *Tehelka*, September 1, 2007.
3. "Land and Commissions" *The Assam Tribune*, November 21, 2007.

#### ***Professional Articles***

1. Walter Fernandes. 2007. "Mines, Mining and Displacement in India," in Gurdeep Singh, David Laurence and Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt (eds). *Managing the Social And Environmental Consequences of coal Mining in India*. Dhanbad: The Indian School of Mines University, University of New South Wales and The Australian National University, pp. 333-344.

2. Walter Fernandes. 2008. "India's Forced Displacement Policy and Practice: Is Compensation Up to Its Functions?" in Michael Cernea and Hari Mohan Mathur (ed). *Can Compensation Prevent Impoverishment? Reforming Resettlement through Investments and Benefit-Sharing*. Oxford University Press, pp. 181-207.
3. Walter Fernandes. 2008. "Globalization, Land Laws and Land Reforms in North Eastern India," in R. S. Deshpande (ed). *Contract Farming and Tenancy Reforms: Entangled Without Tether*. Mussoorie: Centre for Rural Studies, Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, pp. 51-66.
4. Walter Fernandes. 2008. "Land and Livelihood vs Land as Commodity," *Agenda* Issue 11, pp. 2-5.
5. Walter Fernandes and Sanjay Barbora. 2008. "Development, Displacement and the Right to Life," in Samir Kumar Das (ed). *Blisters on Their Feet: Tales of Internally Displaced Persons in India's Northeast*. New Delhi: Sage Publications, pp. 314-336.

#### **4. Seminars and Workshops**

Seminars and workshops help one to share knowledge generated at NESRC and get the benefit of what others have produced. During the year NESRC organised more than a dozen seminars by itself or in collaboration with others. NESRC staff members also attended seminars and presented papers at some of them, as a mode of sharing their findings with others, of learning from what others have done and of planning common action. Besides, the peace studies unit of Henry Martin Institute, Hyderabad sent one of their students for placement at NESRC from January to April 2008. Many Indian and foreign scholars and persons involved in advocacy on various issues visited NESRC. We also hosted an interaction with Prof. Patrick Hoenig of Cologne University, on conflicts and peace processes.

##### **Seminars on Conflicts and Peace**

A major theme of the seminars organised during the year was conflicts and peace initiatives. Between April and August 2007, NESRC collaborated with other institutions in the region as well as with CRS Guwahati and IWGIA in organising nine one-day seminars on this theme. Many persons are involved in peace-related activities. The effort in these seminars was to provide an umbrella for them to share their concerns with the hope of turning it into a platform for ongoing collaboration among them. These seminars culminated in a two-day Northeast level seminar at Guwahati.

1. ***Peace Initiatives in the Khasi Hills***, Meghalaya. Shillong: April 26, 2007, together with Martin Luther Christian University.
2. ***Peace Processes in Manipur***. Imphal: June 9, 2007, together with DSSS, Imphal.
3. ***Peace Processes in Nagaland***. June 30, 2007 together with Peace Channel, Dimapur.
4. ***Students' Involvement in Peace Processes***. Tura, June 16, 2007, together with DSSS.
5. ***Students' Role in Peace Building***. Shillong: July 14, 2007.
5. ***Land-related Conflicts and Peace in Tripura***. Agartala: August 4-5, 2007, together with ASHA.
6. ***Land and Peace Initiatives in Karbi Anglong***. Diphu, August 11, 2007 with Jirsong Asong.
7. ***Peace Processes in the Garo Hills***. Tura: August 13, 2007 together with Social Service Centre.
8. ***Students' Role in Peace Initiatives***, Kohima, September 29, 2007, together with Peace Channel.
9. ***Migration and Conflicts in the Barak Valley***. Silchar. With Assam University, October 4, 2007.
10. ***Conflicts and Peace in the Northeast, Guwahati, October 15-16, 2007***.

The one-day seminars culminated in the above two-day Northeast level seminar in Guwahati on October 15-16, 2007. It brought peace activists together with student leaders and scholars who could share their work. Its participants felt that in this region of ethnic conflicts history has become a tool both of conflicts and of peace building. Every community rewrites its history to declare itself indigenous to a given area, as such having exclusive rights over all its resources. The participants, therefore, decided to

organise State-level seminars on the history of each State in order to analyse how various communities use this tool. It is hoped that it will be a step towards a composite history of the region as a tool of peace. The following seminars were organised as a result of this initiative.

11. *Consultation of three universities* (Gauhati, Manipur and Martin Luther Christian) that have a peace studies divisions was held at the NESRC office on January 8, 2008 to review the work and to plan some common programmes during the year.

12. *Conflicts and History in Karbi Anglong*, February 23, 2008 in collaboration with Diphu Citizens' Combine for Peace.

13. *The Role of History in Conflicts and Peace in Meghalaya*: March 29, 2008, together with the peace studies division of Martin Luther Christian University.

More such seminars will follow during the next six months and they will culminate in a two-day Northeast level seminar at Guwahati in September 2008.

### **Other Seminars Organised**

#### **1. Seminar on Development-Induced Displacement and Rehabilitation in the Northeast.**

This two-day workshop organised on November 13-14, 2007 in collaboration with Panos, CASA and RGVN and IWGIA, brought together scholars, social activists and others involved in work among people displaced already or to be displaced by development projects in the Northeast. Rehabilitation is almost non-existent though many more projects are being planned. The situation of persons displaced by projects in the past and those to be affected by them in the future, was analysed and the rehabilitation policy of the Government of India was critiqued. Since displacement will be high in the Northeast during the next few years, the participants decided to work on a rehabilitation policy for the region that can protect the rights of the persons to be affected by the projects. The participants will meet again to reflect on the situation and to formulate a policy.

#### **2. *The Assam Budget 2004-2008 from Children's Perspective*, Guwahati: January 30, 2008.**

Based on the study of the Assam budgets this seminar brought together persons working on child rights in order to understand the budgetary allocations and plan advocacy with the Government of Assam for a higher share and better implementation of projects meant for children. Like the study on which it was based, also the seminar was co-sponsored by HAQ, Centre for Child rights, New Delhi.

#### **3. *Gender Implications of the Tribal Customary Laws in the Northeast*, Guwahati: Feb. 26-27, 2008**

This two-day Northeast level seminar sponsored by the National Commission for Women was held as a follow up of a study conducted by NESRC in 2005 on the gender implications of the customary laws of five tribes in four States. It showed that modernisation without preparing the communities for it, could go against women since with its individualistic value system, the customary laws were being given a stronger patriarchal interpretation than in the past. The seminar brought together scholars, activists and leaders of these and some other tribes to reflect on the situation of gender equity and suggest remedial action. The participants decided to follow up with their own communities.

**4. *The Assam Water policy, September 2007.*** At the suggestion of a committee member, the Assam Government put its draft water policy for public discussion. Jal Biradari, a civil society network took up the task of organising meetings on it. NESRC took an active part in it. Walter Fernandes joined the preparatory meeting that analysed the draft. Gita Bharali organised six of the seven meetings conducted in eight districts in western and central Assam. The meetings were sponsored by CRS, Guwahati. She also took an active part in the follow up discussion and press conference and wrote about it in the newspapers. The State has prepared a new draft and put it back to the public for its views.

### **Conferences Attended**

Apart from organising seminars, the staff of NESRC also took part in workshops and seminars organised by other institutions in order to share their own findings with their participants and to benefit from what other institutions and individuals have done in their fields of interest.

**They attended the following workshops.**

***Gita Bharali***

*Displacement.* Kalakshetra, Guwahati, April 27, 2007.

*Child Rights.* Guwahati: Omeo Kumar Das Institute, June 5, 2007.

***Walter Fernandes***

Interactive Session with the Foreign Minister of India on the Look East Policy. Shillong: June 16, 2007.

Release of the West Bengal Displacement Report by the Chairman, State Human Rights commission and the seminar following it. Kolkata: Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group, September 3-5, 2007.

Misereor Partners' Meeting, Guwahati: Bosco Reach Out, October 8, 2007.

International Meeting on the Budget organised by Action Aid, New Delhi: November 19, 2007.

***Pranami Garg:***

Seminar on the *Environment and RTI.* Guwahati: Ecosystems and Lawyers' Initiative. May 30, 2007.

Training Programme on the Child Budget. New Delhi: HAQ, Centre for Child Rights, June 11-13, 2007.

National Peoples' Convention on Budget 2008-09. organised by CBGA, New Delhi: November 14-15, 2007.

***Gita Bharali and Pranami Garg***

Seminar on Land Rights and Displacement. Gauhati University, June 17-18, 2007.

Training programme on the Analysis of the Budget. Northeast Network, Guwahati, July 2-6, 2007.

***Gita Bharali and Walter Fernandes***

Took an active part in meetings and action after the November 24 attack on the Adivasis at Guwahati,

**Participated as Resource Persons:**

***Gita Bharali***

1. A Training Programme on Gender Issues organised by NIPPCD, Guwahati, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2007.

2. Seminar on Tribal Land Alienation among the Khasis. Shillong: February 25, 2008.

***Walter Fernandes:***

1. Training Programme for Rehabilitation Practitioners. New Delhi: Council for Social Development, June 11-13, 2007.

2. One-Day Workshop on the CBCI Education Policy, Guwahati: August 25, 2007.

3. Orientation Programme for New Fellows organised by Panos at Guwahati, August 31, 2007.
4. Workshop on Adivasi Education, Tezpur: September 8, 2007.
5. National Seminar on the Implications of Immigration in the Northeast, Maram: Don Bosco College, September 28, 2007.
6. Social Analysis of the Northeast. Shillong: Oriens Theological College, October 22-23, 2007.
7. Orientation Programme for Lecturers, Gauhati University, November 23, 2007.
8. Orientation programme for lecturers from different colleges, Gauhati University, January 10, 2008.
9. Consultation on the Social Implications of Coal Mining. Ranchi: Coal India. January 11-12, 2008.

**Elu K. Ndong** was a Resource Person at a one-day Meeting of Nagaland and Assam Students with the People's Committee for Peace Initiatives in Assam, October 26, 2007.

**Presented the Following Papers**

**Gita Bharali and Pranami Garg.** 'Impact of Globalisation on the Tribals of Mongolian Origin in Northeast India'. Seminar *Society and Culture of Mongolians in North East India* Moranhat: Institute of Tai Studies and Research, 1-2 December, 2007.

**Gita Bharali**

1. "The Tea Crisis, Heath Insecurity and Plantation Labour Unrest" seminar on *Society, Social Change and Sustainable Development* Department of Sociology, North Bengal University, April 11-13, 2007.
2. "The Other Side of Development of Tribals of Northeast India" Seminar *Development of the Northeast and the Scheduled Tribes*. Department of History, Assam University, Silchar, Aug. 7-8, 2007.
3. "Displacement and Tribal Women," *Seminar on Tribal Culture*. Guwahati: Tribal Research Institute, September 6, 2007.
4. "Displacement, Common Property Resources and Gender" Seminar *Sustainable Development in the Northeast*. Nagaon: Nowgong Girls College, September 28-29, 2007.
5. "Development of Tribals in North East India" Seminar *Exploring Northeast India for Sustainable Development* Guwahati: Sanskriti, 23-25 November, 2007.
6. "Development-Induced Displacement, Common Property Resources and Impact on Displaced Women in India," *Conference of the Society for Applied Anthropology*, Memphis, March 26-29, 2008.

**Walter Fernandes**

1. "Land Laws and Displacement in the Northeast," Seminar on *Land Rights and Displacement*, Guwahati: Gauhati University, June 17-18, 2007.
2. "Customary Laws and Tribal Development in the Northeast" Seminar *Development of the Northeast and the Scheduled Tribes*. Department of History, Assam University, Silchar, August 7-8, 2007.
3. "Development and the Peace Process in Karbi Anglong" *Seminar on Conflicts and Peace in Karbi Anglong*. Diphu: Diphu Citizens' Peace Forum and Jirsong Asong, August 11, 2007.

4. "The Draft Rehabilitation Policy, 2006," *Seminar on the Rehabilitation Policy*. New Delhi: Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group, August 16, 2007.
5. "Loss of Livelihood and Sustainable Development in the Northeast," Keynote address, *Seminar on Sustainable Development in the Northeast*. Nagaon: Nowgong Girls' College, September 29, 2007.
6. "Land Laws, Immigration and Conflicts in the Northeast," *Seminar on Immigration and Conflicts in the Barak Valley*. Silchar: Department of Political Science, Assam University, October 4, 2007.
7. "Mines, Mining and Displacement in India," *International Mining Conference*. New Delhi: Indian School of Mining, Dhanbad with Australian National University and the University of New South Wales, November 19-21, 2007.
8. "Customary Laws and Tribal Identity in North Eastern India" *Exploring Northeast India for Sustainable Development* Guwahati: Sanskriti, 23–25 November, 2007.
9. "Development-Induced Displacement: The Class and Gender Perspective" *International Conference on The Emerging Woman in the Indian Economy*. Bangalore: Christ College, November 26-27, 2007.
10. "Understanding the Angami Today in the Context of Modernisation and Globalisation" *Seminar on Angami Society at the Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Academic Reflections on Selected Themes*. Kigwema, Nagaland, Japfu Christian College, November 28-29, 2007.
11. "Demography and Historiography of the Tribal People in India with Special Reference to the Northeast," *Seminar Theologizing Tribal Heritage: A Critical Re-look*. Aizawl: Aizawl Theological College, January 15-18, 2008.
12. "Demystifying Development as a Recipe for Peace in the Northeast," *Seminar Contested Space and Identity in the Northeast*. New Delhi: Academy of Third World Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, February 14, 2008.
13. "Land Laws, Conflicts and Peace in the Northeast" *Seminar on History as A Source of Conflict and Peace*. Diphu: Diphu Citizens' Peace Forum, February 23, 2008.
14. "Media and Cultural Dialogue" *General Assembly of Signis*. Guwahati: February 26, 2008.
15. "Development-Induced Displacement, Globalisation and the Rehabilitation Policy in India" *Conference of the Society for Applied Anthropology*. Memphis (USA), March 26-29, 2008.

**Pranami Garg.**

1. "The Assam Budget and Children," *Consultation on Preparation of Shadow Report to CRC*. Guwahati: Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change and Development, June 5, 2007.
2. "Rise of Demand for Autonomy in Assam: A Case Study of the Dimasa Autonomy Movement," *Seminar on Ethnic Identity and Globalisation*. Bagdogra: Department of Political Science, North Bengal University, January 10-11, 2008.
3. "The Thrust for Peace in Mizoram and Gender-based Victimisation: The Grouping of Villages," *Seminar on Women and Peace Processes*. Dibrugarh: Women's Study Centre, Dibrugarh University, March 25-26, 2008.



## **Television Appearances**

The involvement of the NESRC staff went beyond conferences and the written word to the electronic media. Gita Bharali and Pranami Garg made an appearance on Doordharshan Northeast as persons asking questions during the “Straight Talk” Programme on Women’s Status on April 17, 2007 and once again on May 11<sup>th</sup> 2007 on human rights. Pranami Garg was the anchor in the Special Programme on International Day against Drugs Abuses and Illicit Trafficking on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2007. Walter Fernandes was one of the two panelists at the Straight Talk programme on Peace in Assam on May 8 and November 11, 2007 and on “Peace in the Northeast” programme on June 7, 2007 and January 15, 2008. He was one of the expert commentators on *Doordharshan Northeast* when State Assembly election results were being declared in Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura on March 7-8, 2008. Besides, Gita Bharali was interviewed by more than one TV channel on the Draft Assam Water Policy. Walter Fernandes was interviewed on many occasions on peace initiatives.

## **Appointment to Committees**

During the year Dr Walter Fernandes completed his term as a members of the Expert Committee for the Northeast of the National Commission for Women. Later he was appointed a member of the National Council for Land Reforms, which is chaired by the Prime Minister of India.

Guwahati  
30<sup>th</sup> April 2008

Dr Walter Fernandes  
Director