

The Geopolitics of Indigenous Trauma

ASIA INDIGENOUS OBSERVER





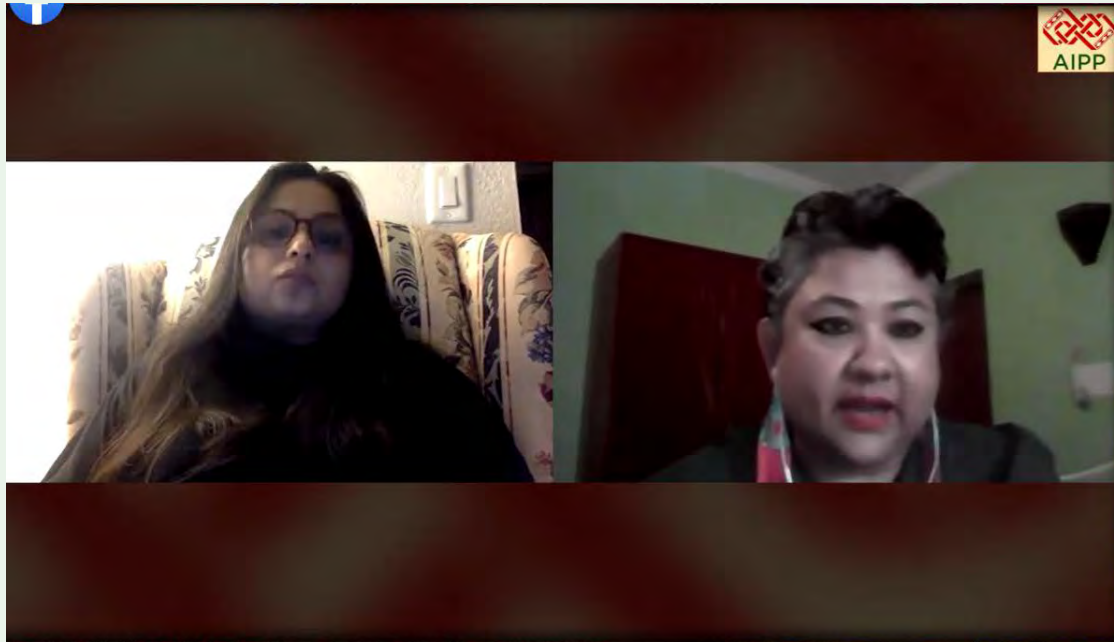
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AIPP PRESENTS

Decoding the Impact of Political Violence on Indigenous Psyche



On October 10th World Mental Health Day, we sat down with psychoanalytic psychotherapist Zehra Mehdi who is also a doctoral candidate at Columbia University. Her thesis focuses on the impact of political violence on marginalized groups and its impact on the mental health of people forced to fight for rights and resources, whose very identity is under constant threat politically, economically, and culturally.

What happens to Indigenous Peoples when they are consistently invisibilized with no representation of them by them? How does structural violence affect intersections and generations? What does intergenerational trauma look like? How can interpersonal abuse affect relationships within families and communities?

These are some of the questions we have tried to delve deeper into as we shed light on the need to understand the various forms of trauma. Destigmatizing mental illness, mental health education, awareness, and advocacy against social stigma, particularly for Indigenous Peoples is a political act; for those on the margins constantly under threat of being pushed over the edge.

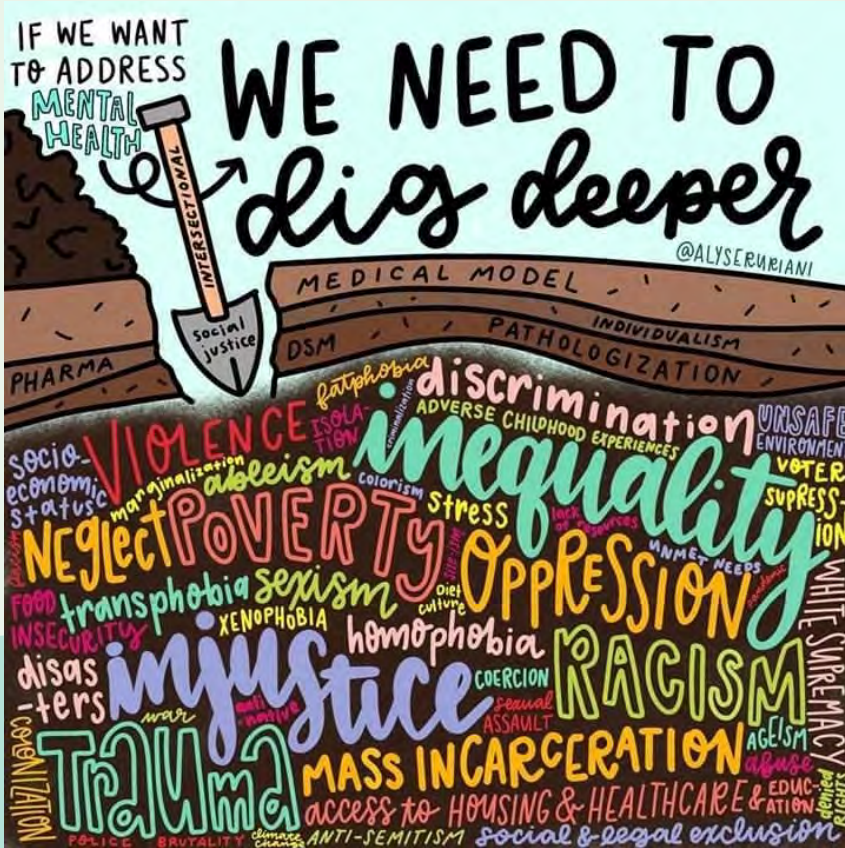
We hope you watch and share this very important episode of the Indigenous Routes podcast on a topic that isn't talked about much and yet is crucial to building resilience in our fight for justice.

Watch the full episode here <https://www.facebook.com/AIPPnet.org/videos/294228789057701/>

#WorldMentalHealthDay

POINT OF VIEW

The Geopolitics of Indigenous Trauma



Artist: Alyse Ruriani (@ALYSERUIANI on Instagram)

Nina Sangma writes in an essay on the The Chaos Outside Versus the Calm Inside: “Whoever said an idle mind is the Devil’s workshop was probably someone who puts profits over people under the assumption that a state of stillness is unproductive and disastrous to one’s wellbeing. That is, any action unaccompanied by the pursuit of money or social currency is expendable. The quintessence of modern life is a form of psychological warfare aimed at encouraging overworked, underpaid and unfulfilled people to tranquilise themselves through an endless cycle of overproduction and overconsumption while believing that the measure of one’s success is through the failures of others. Advertisers, marketers, family, friends, peers and politicians are constantly drowning us in the din of propaganda. Buying is being. Good roads and malls may be the indicators of progress but neither provides last-mile connectivity to healthcare nor paves the way to inner engineering. An eviscerating fact considering we are the most depressed country in the world, facing a staggering mental health crisis where **one in seven** Indians suffers from poor mental health and where **surveys** suggest that India has only about 9,000 psychiatrists for its 1.3 billion people.

The obvious question then should be to ask why access to mental healthcare isn't as easy as going out to buy Crocin? Why is an effective system of management aimed at well being denied to a population as big and diverse as ours when we are clearly in desperate need of it? Providing instead fertile ground for godmen and slippery life coaches who sense a business opportunity in preying on people, further aggravating their mental health concerns. A situation as ridiculous as allowing a butcher to perform cardiovascular surgery. The answer lies in the phrase, "the personal is political." The privileged yet constantly overworked, mentally fatigued person is most likely to be a profoundly ignorant person who can't question the status quo and the dystopia that is explained away as the "new normal". The apathy shown towards others and the othered is reflective of the same apathy reserved for oneself. Often, instant gratification becomes a form of self-soothing and self-care. It is these privileged caste and class groups that in turn project their fragility, frustrations and violence on the oppressed Dalit, Bahujan and Adivasi population whose levels of access and affordability to wellness and healing is further inhibited by the State; a State that is wholly made up of the upper caste in whose best interests it is to sustain the supremacy of the existing class and caste structures by giving the historically traumatized blunt tools with which to self-sabotage even in their absence. "

This essay was published by Mad in Asia Pacific. You can read it in full [here](#)

Teacher, companion, motivator: Adivasi-rights activist Dayamani Barla remembers Stan Swamy



“To understand the life struggle of Stan Swamy, it is necessary to understand the history and struggle of the Adivasi community in Jharkhand and the country. There is a need to understand the traditional rights that Adivasis have on natural resources such as water, forest, and land. It is only then that we can appreciate what Swamy stood for and fought for. Swamy was a Jesuit priest and an Adivasi-rights activist who was arrested in 2020 and booked under the draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act, 2019. He was denied bail and died on 5 July 2021. In my many years as an activist in Jharkhand, I closely knew Swamy. We began to interact often after I met him at a program related to Adivasi-rights in Ranchi around 15 years ago.”

Read the full story here https://caravanmagazine.in/communities/adivasi-rights-activist-dayamani-barla-remembers-stan-swamy?fbclid=IwAR0jL6WHF5ZFhV7PbWgPcu_M0Ta1dp6tshD7jmyRBL59mNV6qPtRmvyZw8

"Why Are You Studying? You Guys Will Easily Get Government Jobs."



Art: @huesonmycanvas (Instagram)

"Conversations surrounding Adivasi issues in India tend to get side-lined over reservation, overlooking generations of discrimination and exploitation. Sunita Bari writes of her experiences of making her own space as a tribal woman."

For much of my childhood and adolescence, I tried to hide my surname from people I had just met. My experience had taught me that if I revealed my surname, the conversation would progress in the following manner—first they will ask what kind of Adivasi I am, then the topic will move on to reservation and quota, and then they will refer to the image of an Adivasi as someone who wears leaves. It is as if I exist only to prove a point.

I was a kid growing up with my sister in a small town called Sindri where my father, a government employee, had just been transferred. There was a handpump in the colony from where we fetched our water. One day, my sister and I were standing patiently for our turn. In front of us was an older woman filling her water-pot. I don't know what happened exactly but within a heartbeat I saw the woman fuming and getting angry. I must have accidentally touched the handpump which caused her to start scolding us. She then emptied her pot, washed the entire area and got her refill. Remembering that incident still pierces my heart.

There was no place safe enough to assert my identity. After leaving Sindri, we began living in Delhi. Back then, my best friend would frequently invite me to her home. When I visited, we always ate from the same plate as we loved to share our food. But one day, her family witnessed us doing so and it led to a big chaos.

Read the full story [here](#)

HUMAN RIGHTS RADAR

Philippines Army Harasses Human Rights Defender



Bai Bibyaon, who is also known as Mothers of the Lumads is the first and only Chieftain in the history of Monobo people of Philippines. Since 1994, she has been a leader and environmentalist advocating the rights of indigenous people's collective right over the land and natural resources of Pantaron Mountain Range. She has been in the frontline to defend their ancestral land against big mining corporations, logging and corporate plantations and in due course has been victim of threats and harassments by militaries. On the 18th September, 2021 in Nasilaban, Bry. Palma Gil, Talaingod, Davao Del Norte armed soldier under the 56th Infantry Battalion forcibly gathered families and relatives of Bai Bibyaon and Coerced them through a signed document to get the woman leader from its sanctuary. Recently, the relatives of Bai Bibyaon were forcibly moved to Talaingod Municipality by the military and the Local Government which has endangered their lives.

We condemn this harassment and violation of rights of the Indigenous Peoples.

Full statement: <https://bit.ly/3FI396r>

Hearing the human: Ensuring due diligence legislation effectively amplifies the voices of those affected by irresponsible business



Image courtesy: PRODESC

IPRI, in partnership with Business and Human Rights Resource Center, PRODESC, Frontline Defenders and the ALLIED coalition, produced a policy brief: “Hearing the human: Ensuring meaningful due diligence legislation effectively amplifies the voices of those affected by irresponsible business’. The full policy brief is available in English and Spanish.

It makes the case that genuine due diligence depends on meaningful stakeholder engagement, which in turn must address retaliation risks and attacks on rights-holders and HRDs, as well as limitations to their civic freedoms. The goal of this briefing is to push for inclusion of this angle in the legislative text on EU’s Sustainable Corporate Governance Initiative, including mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence (mHREDD), to be adopted by the EU later in 2021.

Read the full report [here](#):

Gaibandha Santals, Bangalees protest proposed Rangpur EPZ at Bagdafarm



Hundreds of local Santals and Bangalees of Gaibandha today demonstrated in the district against the proposed Rangpur Export Processing Zone (EPZ) establishment in Sahebganj-Bagdafarm area under Gobindaganj upazila.

Sahebganj-Bagdafarm Bhumi Uddhar Sangram Committee organised the demonstration held at Katarmor beside the Dinajpur-Gobindaganj regional highway. Santal leaders from adjacent districts including Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Naogaon and members of civil society from Dhaka were present at the rally -- from 11am to 5pm, reports our Bogura correspondent.

Speaking in the programme, Advocate Shirajul Islam Babu, a leader of the Adibashi-Bangalee Parishad, said Bagdafarm is a cropland area where farmers can grow crops three times a year.

"Without having a feasibility study and not talking to locals, including 1,200 Santal families, the BEPZA chairman recently declared to establish an EPZ in the farm area. It is not acceptable to us," said Shirajul, also secretary of Gaibandha District Bar Association.

Philimone Baske, president of Sahebganj-Bagdafarm Bhumi Uddhar Sangram Committee, said during visit, the executive chairman of Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) declared that the proposed EZP will create employment opportunities for more than two lakh people.

He claimed that actually locals will not get job opportunities as foreign businesses will set industries here and recruit manpower.

If the Bepza authority does not stop their activities, we will go for tougher programmes, added Philimone Baske.

Photo: Adv Sirajul Islam Babu

[https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/gaibandha-santals-bangalees-protest-proposed-rangpur-epz-bagdafarm-2189116?](https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/gaibandha-santals-bangalees-protest-proposed-rangpur-epz-bagdafarm-2189116?fbclid=IwAR2kMN78IVXFjJYDYaMDv-FKssdU02DX-XM3UD6w8Kz-LdQ4zwG62tduNiQ)

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Illegal Extraction of Sand & Stones Diastrous for Environment & Indigenous Peoples Livelihood in Netrokona, Bangladesh



A syndicate is extracting sands and stones illegally from Mahadew river of Kalmakanda under Netrokona district of Bangladesh. The local administration allegedly is playing a silent role in this illegal activity. The syndicate is using high power dredging machines to extract the sands & stones from the places nearby Indigenous dwelling areas. Ultimate impact crashes the river bank. A number of indigenous houses of many villages, such as Sannasipara, Patlaban, Buruakona, Kandaban, and Jagirpara, etc. are being damaged due to this extraction. The environment and people's livelihood of that area are affecting badly by this illegal activity!

Source: IPHRDs, Bangladesh

GLOBAL REPORT

Data: Leaving No Indigenous Peoples Behind in the Achievement of the SDGs



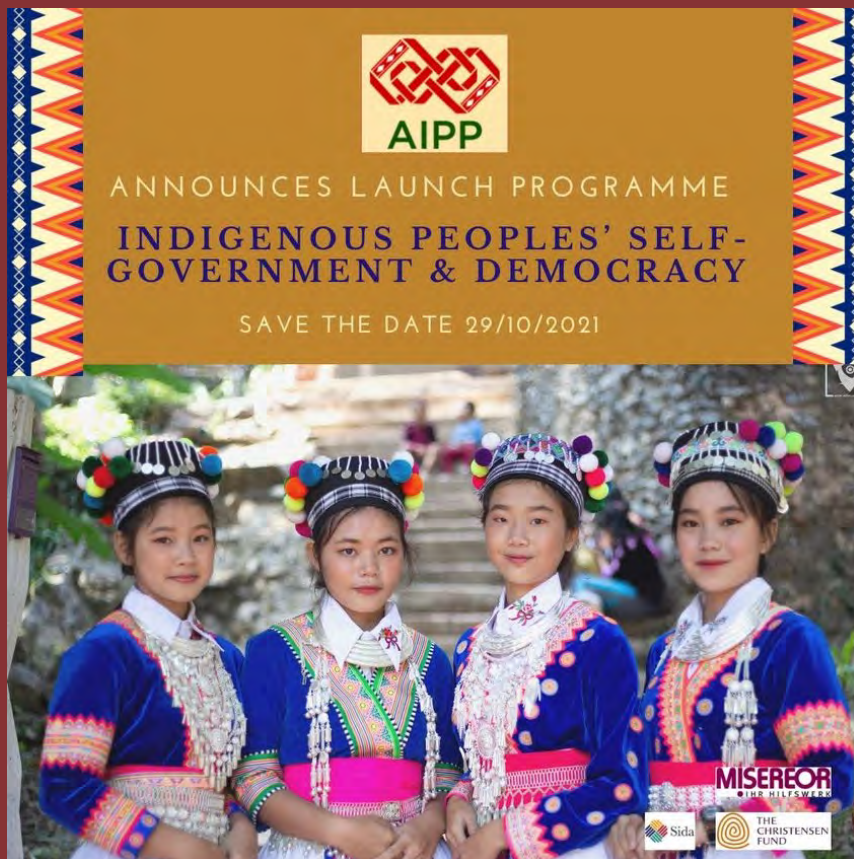
The population of indigenous peoples in the Philippines has not been reliably established until now. With the inclusion of an ethnicity variable in the 15th Census on Population and Housing in September 2020, we hope to finally see a close estimate of the number of indigenous peoples in the country and where they are with the inclusion of an ethnicity variable. Indigenous peoples have not been adequately and properly reflected in any census because of the lack of the proper ethnicity variable in the census tool, the questionable conduct of the census, and the lack of study on how best to make the census, or any national survey for that matter. In other words, indigenous peoples have been left behind.

Under the mantra of “Nothing about us, without us”, indigenous peoples the whole world over, together with partners, came out with the Indigenous Navigator Initiative to develop a tool to monitor the gaps in the enjoyment of indigenous peoples of both their individual and collective rights and make duty-bearers accountable, and also to help them devise implementation strategies for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The UNDRIP does not have a monitoring mechanism and thus violations of indigenous peoples rights are often hidden under other categories and are not addressed properly, and often excluded from development efforts.

Read the article here https://indigenousnavigator.org/news/data-leaving-no-indigenous-peoples-behind-in-the-achievement-of-the-sdgs?fbclid=IwAR1UciQ2V2o5xkCZs4gLApsK182oeSCenleoEGQyP_oEisaeVJWiSVjCMgY

CONNECTIONS

AIPP Launches Regional Course on Indigenous Peoples' Self-government and Democracy



Recognizing the right to self-determination entails democratization and strengthening of democracy in Asia. This could provide an opportunity for the state to revisit its institutional architecture for accommodating and protecting our autonomy and right to self-determination that is based on the self-governance of Indigenous Peoples. This also places Indigenous Peoples in a new context with its own challenges that require urgent attention and build our capacity to face the scenario that has emerged. Not only are Indigenous Peoples struggling and reclaiming their right to self-determination, but several Indigenous Peoples are currently involved in peace negotiations for different forms of self-determination or for the implementation of negotiated agreements on autonomy.

It is in this context that Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) is launching its first Regional Course on Indigenous Peoples' Self-government and Democracy from 27 October 2021 to 14 November 2021, to engage in reflective conversation and build the capacity of indigenous leaders, scholars, and organizations in Asia.

You can register for the launching ceremony [here](#)

eBorneo Knowledge Fair Goes Virtual!



The pioneering eBorneo Knowledge Fair initiated by Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) in the remote indigenous Borneo village of Bario in 2007 is holding its eighth version on-line. Whilst Malaysia's pandemic travel restrictions present a challenge, the internet connectivity that is rapidly moving into Borneo's interior offers an opportunity, so the organisers have decided to make the eighth event virtual. The Knowledge Fair showcases the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for development in isolated and rural areas, especially those inhabited by indigenous peoples. It brings together researchers, development practitioners, policy makers, technology scientists, community leaders and residents to identify the challenges faced by isolated rural communities, and at the same time map available opportunities for sustainable development using ICTs, and other relevant technologies.

Going on-line has the added advantage of allowing global participation without requiring contributors to travel into the remote locations, such as Bario and Ba'Kelalan, in which it has previously been held. Although removing some of the authenticity of the immersive experience that has been provided in the past, it means that remote communities can still participate in this unique event. This year's theme is Indigenous People and the Sustainable Development Goals, acknowledging the emphasis on development that is sustainable. It also recognizes the emerging relevance of the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples for a better understanding of the impacts of a changing climate on the vulnerable environments that they occupy as well as the adaptations that they have made to mitigating those impacts.

According to the event chairman, Professor Dr. Narayanan Kulathuramaiyer, Director of the Institute of Social Informatics and Technological Innovations at UNIMAS, "the Knowledge Fair has served as a platform for the exchange of knowledge between the various and diverse stakeholders, becoming a powerful avenue for transferring community initiated best-practices and acting as a channel for feedback that helps to identify concerns and potential ideas through direct engagement and partnership with the participating indigenous communities".

This year's agenda covers a wide range of issues, including; Responsible Rural Tourism; Community Crafts for Sustainable Development; Covid-19 Impacts, Adaptations and Post Covid responses; Community Service Learning; and the Reality of Climate Change for Highland Communities in Borneo. As UNIMAS Vice-Chancellor, Professor Datuk Dr Mohamad Kadim Suaidi stated, "It is through close collaborations with local indigenous communities that the world can bear witness to the importance of partnering researchers with relevant communities, to bridge the gap between theoretical understanding and issues in the real world."

The eighth eBorneo Knowledge Fair will be held on 26th - 28th October 2021. More information and registration are available the event's website; <http://www.conference.unimas.my/2021/eBKF2021/index.php>.

Asia Land Forum: 27 to 29 October 2021



#LandRights are a crucial element to build back better in a post #COVID19 world. From envisioning a stronger food system to exploring the role of #indigenouspeoples, find #asialandforumsia members will advocate in the #AsiaLandForum!

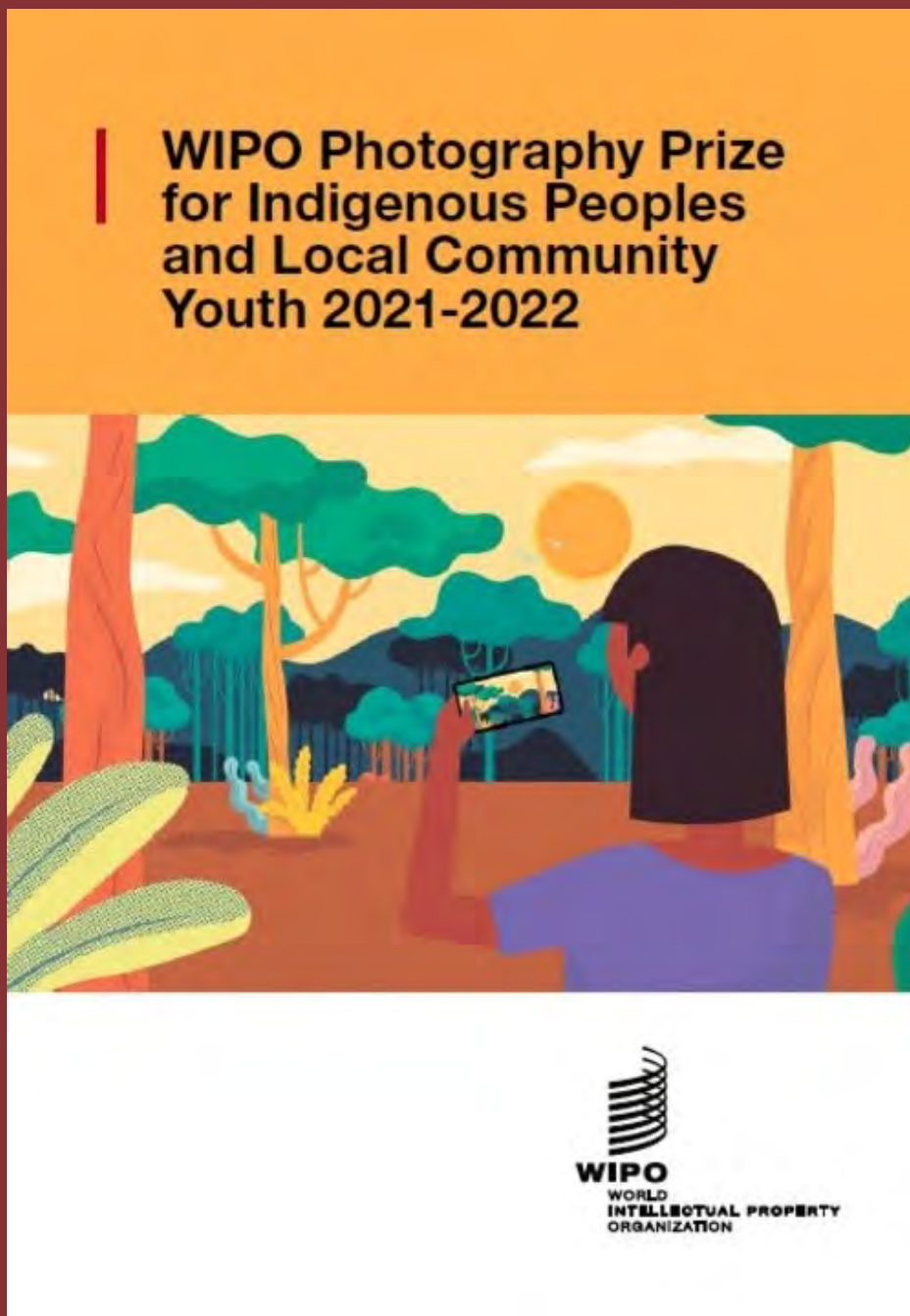
Visit #ALF2021 webpage to register <https://tinyurl.com/2021asialandforum>

This year, the annual Asia Land Forum will take place from 27 to 29 October 2021 with the theme of Securing Land Rights and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This year's Forum will further explore the challenges and opportunities to acknowledge the centrality of land rights in the 2030 Agenda.

#ALF2021 #United4landrights #SDGs #indigenousrights

Call for submissions: WIPO Photography Prize for Indigenous Peoples and Local Community Youth 2021-2022



Photographs should illustrate:
the impact of climate change on your communities, biodiversity and environment (land, air, water, flora and fauna, etc.); and/or practices, including ones based on Indigenous and traditional knowledge, or climate actions that allow your community to adapt to or mitigate the impact of climate change.

Submission deadline: January 22, 2022

For details visit https://www.wipo.int/tk/en/youth_prize.html

Calling Community Organizers!





APPLY TO JOIN THE GLOBAL ADVOCACY TEAM ON COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

APPLICATION DUE DATE: NOVEMBER 10, 2021

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS CALL, PLEASE VISIT [HTTPS://BIT.LY/GAT_CALLFORAPPLICATION](https://bit.ly/GAT_CALLFORAPPLICATION)

INTERNATIONAL
ACCOUNTABILITYPROJECT

 www.accountabilityproject.org


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 [@4accountability](https://twitter.com/4accountability)

The Global Advocacy Team initiative is looking for 8 amazing community organizers and activists from around the world to form the Global Advocacy Team on Community-Led Development Planning! Join this amazing initiative and share your expertise! Check out detailed information and the application form in English, Russian, Arabic, Spanish, and French and learn more about the application process, please visit https://bit.ly/GAT_CallForApplication Application due date: November 10, 2021

Mobile Journalism Training for Indigenous Youth in Tripura

LEARN




photography, videography, article writing and social media

#AniKhorangAniSinimung #मोरगोठमोरचिन्हारी
#என்குரல்என்அடையாளம் #MyVoiceMyIdentity

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After the 7-day training in Chhattisgarh, it's time for Tripura! Adivasi Awaaz Academy is accepting applications for young Tiprasa, who want to share their indigenous stories through mobile journalism. The training is from 28th October 2021 to 3rd November 2021. For more details, go to www.adivasilivesmatter.com/adivasiawaaz

GENDER LENS

When Biodiversity, Gender, and Indigenous Rights Intersect



In a one on one with Yarrow Global, AIPP's Indigenous Women's Programme Coordinator Pragyaa Rai sat down to talk about biodiversity viewed from the indigenous lens and the intersections of gender. What it means to be an indigenous woman in the post Covid world. The impact of global policy and whether it is truly inclusive of Indigenous Peoples.

You can read the full interview [here](#)

Do You Know About This Festival in Tripura Where Gender Bender is a Norm?

#AdivasiAwaz



You Won't Believe Why Men Dress Up As Women During A Festival In Tripura

Written by: Kamal Jamatiaa

Translated from Kokborok by: Hamari Jamatia

ADIVASI
LIVES
MATTER

To read the full article head over to [Adivasilivesmatter.com](https://www.adivasilivesmatter.com)

Garia Festival in Tripura starts a month before the date of the actual puja. It is a time when the idol of Garia made of the gold face and the bamboo body is carried to every Jamatia village. The idol is accompanied by a coterie of followers and worshippers. These followers are people who have made a vow to Garia and Ama Hakwchar to follow them for a month in return of their blessings be it in the form of children for a childless couple, or wealth for a poor person. Among this coterie of people is a sect called the “boglas” who represent the fluidity of gender. Read this interesting article by Kamal Jamatia from Tripura.

<https://www.adivasilivesmatter.com/post/this-ancient-custom-allows-for-gender-fluidity-among-members-of-an-indigenous-community-of-tripura>

CLIMATE WATCH

States must act urgently to adopt a legally binding instrument to regulate corporate power

Human rights and the environment cannot wait any longer



Ahead of the seventh session of the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group to elaborate a legally Binding Instrument on Transnational Corporations and other Business Enterprises with respect to human rights (IGWG), civil society organizations and social movements call upon States to act urgently for human rights and move boldly towards a swift adoption of a legally binding instrument (LBI) that can help stop human rights violations in the context of business activities and protect the people and our planet by stopping corporate impunity. After seven years on this process, we ask the question - if not now, when? Now is the time to act. Human rights and the environment cannot wait any longer and we cannot allow corporate capture of our government decision making processes to continue delaying the realization of our demands.

Read the full statement:

https://www.escr-net.org/news/2021/statement-states-must-act-urgently-adopt-legally-binding-instrument-regulate-corporate?fbclid=IwAR2WCN2a7jl5n44wSRECBuuUJXIHkZSyyDr3UM7S2JG5rln6gQyAZ_YHXs0

UN Environment Programme #COP15 : 150 civil society organisations call on World Leaders to include #HumanRights in Environmental policy & practice



In the lead-up to historic agreements on climate and nature being made in the next month, more than 150 civil society and indigenous organisations including AIPP, and academics, from more than 50 countries, have today published an open letter calling on world leaders to put human rights at the centre of environmental policy.

"The science is unequivocal about the climate crisis, loss of biodiversity, and pervasive pollution," said Dr David R. Boyd, UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and environment. "And so too is the evidence that a human rights-based approach to these environmental challenges is the best way to achieve just, healthy and sustainable solutions for people and planet."

Last week, the UN Human Rights Council adopted a resolution recognising the Right to a Healthy Environment. On the heels of that, today, Oct 11th, world leaders will gather online and in person in Kunming, China, for the UN Convention on Biological Diversity's COP15 meeting.

At COP15 – which will highlight the urgent, transformative action required to save the planet's nature and biodiversity – rights groups and their allies are battling to gain proper recognition for the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities in the global biodiversity framework.

"International negotiations coming up in the next few months represent a crucial opportunity to halt both global warming and the loss of biodiversity," said Andrew Norton, Director of the International Institute for Environment and Development.

Read the full statement [here](#)

