Peace Practitioners' Research Conference 2013

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[LEARNING WORLD VIEWS AMONG ETHNIC GROUPS USING THE PEACE COUNTS ON TOUR FOR PEACE EDUCATION AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION – EXPERIENCES FROM FIELD AND ADVOCACY]

The research and conclusions in this paper are solely those belonging to the author, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of CPCS.

Glossary

ACT	Alliance for Conflict Transformation
AMCO	All Manipur Christian Organization
APPRA	Asia Pacific Peace Research Associate
CBCNEI	Council of Baptist Churches in Northeast India
CFPEM	Centre for Peace Education Manipur
CPCS	Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies
CTC	Clark Theological College
DONER	Development of the Northeast Region
ETC	Eastern Theological College
GCPE	Global Campaign for Peace Education
GPF	Gandhi Peace Foundation
GU	Gauhati University
HAP	Hague Appeal for Peace
HMI	Henry Martyn Institutie
IfT	Institute of Peace Education Tuebingen
IGNTU	Indira Gandhi National Tribal University
MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MLCU	Martin Luther Christian University
MU	Manipur University
NBCC	Nagaland Baptist Church Council
NEC	North East Council
NEDFI	Northeast Development of Financial Institute
NEI	Northeast India
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PCoT	Peace Counts on Tour
PGDPS	Post Graduate Diploma in Peace Studies
PPRC	Peace Practitioner Research Conference
SLORC	State Law and Order Restoration Council
STNBA	South Tangkhul Naga Baptist Association
TOT	Training of Trainers
TRI	Tribal Research Institute
UGC	University Grant Commission

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Abstract

Key words: Ethnicity, Peace Education, Worldview, Best practices, Conflict transformation

The unique method of learning for peace knowledge and skill using the Peace Counts on Tour has been experimented in the northeast Indian states. It was used to reach out to ethnic community leaders and educational institutions since 2009. The alternative to violent movement depicted in the stories of the Peace Counts provides an attractive alternative in the conflict torn and region of ethnicity; there are ghettoes of tribes and communities. Peace Counts is a best practice of work for Peace Education and Peace journalism. In the Northeast India, a series of workshops and advocacy was held across the region; it has also been taught as a course paper in the Peace Studies Department of the Martin Luther Christian University and has reached out widely to participants from countries as Myanmar; South Korea; Thailand; Hungary and some in Southeast Asia. One of the main focus is to make the ethnic leadership understand the narratives of the others, through use of the pictures and model of peace builders by various protagonist in the stories; this will help them learn how people across the world, use both traditional and modern methods of nonviolent conflict resolutions for transforming the violent conflicts in their own settings. This paper will share the stories of the Peace Counts workshop and trainings held in India and northeast region over the period from 2009 till date. This is a firsthand work and will also share the research project done with students from Northeast India along with the ethnic students of Myanmar (Burma) during the period from 2012 till November 2013. The importance of using the technique for learning skills and knowledge and competency for peacebuilding and conflict transformation and challenges will be the main emphasis in the paper.

Preface

The Peace Counts on Tour is a unique model of using narratives of the Peace builders and journalism skills to research and document about various stories from across the World in conflict zones. This project started by Micheal Glich from Germany. In March 2009, i was one of the participants for the Training of Trainers (TOT) in New Delhi , India. Ever since a multiplier i have also attended the TOT held in Cochin, 2012 and Guwahati, 2013 as co facilitator and local organiser

The reason for the appeal and attraction to Peace Counts is that the actors or protagonist actively adopts and use the nonviolence model in a violence situation. During the past from 2009 , having used teaching about this model and experimented in designing courses and writing papers for talks in various peace seminars, workshops has taken me to many places and countries. During the period from November 2013 till march 2014, it has taken me to conduct workshops and talks in Bangkok, Siem Reap, Yangoon, Imphal, (Manipur, India) , and Costa Rica.

This paper is about experiences on Peace Education and Peace Counts on Tour and with fields' outreach examples. The advocacy for Peace Education and Peace Counts is a continuous process; and this paper was presented during the Peace Practitioner Research Conference, PPRC on the 6th December 2013 at Siem Reap. During the last few months will some revision and reflections it is presented in the form of a complete paper for publication. I greatly appreciate the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, CPCS in Siem Ream , Cambodia for the encouragement and support for the research work and printing of this paper so that others can read and reflect on the various process adopted for peace building in various conflict region in Asia.

Leban Serto

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In the process of writing on this article, I have consulted a lot of people for whom I owe much; to mention a few of them would be my profound joy. The team at the Institute of Peace Education Tuebingen (Ift) ,Germany include Uli Jaeger, Anne Romund and Nadine Ritzi and Tilman Wortz . In India Willy D'Costa and active social worker . I like to mention the team at Centre for Peace Education Manipur (CFPEM), Prof Ksh Bimola Devi , Dr Leiren Singh and Chungsek Zeite. In Martin Luther Christian University(MLCU), the support of the Institution through the Registrar Rev Edwin Kharkongor has been profound in designing the course and for further academic program in future. The students participants of the Post Gradaute Diploma in Peace Studies (PGDPS) and many during the Training of trainers,(TOT) in workshops and community outreach , has made me to shape and reshape my work in this field. My profound appreciation to Inanna Boesch and team at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CPCS) with Emma Leslie and Ngarm for support and inviting me to present this paper during the Peace Practitioner Research Conference, (PPRC) 6-8th December in Siem Reap, Cambodia. My thanks to my wife and children for bearing with me the travels and projects to venture in the writing and working for Peace Counts on Tour (PCoT) in the Northeast India(NEI) and beyond.

Leban Serto

It is never too late to give up our prejudices – Henry David Thoreau

Introduction

Peace does not come freely. In order to have a sustainable vibrant flourishing community, it is important to sustain the efforts of Peacebuilding , which is now profoundly lacking in most states of the Northeast India[1] (NEI) and in many parts of the world affected and afflicted with intractable conflicts. Looking back to the historical situation we can understand why these societies are in deep violence or divided societies embroiled in their search for identity and dignity in the midst of transition from simple societies to modern or from tyrannical, monarchical or tribalistic system to democratic system of governance; the journey has never been smooth or easy.

This paper is an effort to talk about Peace Education advocacy using various methods such as the Peace Counts on Tour[2] (PCoT) and its related component the author has been involved for over a decade.

Peace Education

The author's involvement in the Peace Education movement started in preparation for the Hague Appeal for Peace (HAP) 1999, the Global Campaign for Peace Education[3] (GCPE) was launched during this period, which now maintains a monthly newsletter co-ordinated by Tony Jenkins[4]. The newsletter shares information and reports from the fields with an editorial from Peace Education Teachers and practitioners[5] .

Prof Betty Reardon[6], also known as the mother of Peace Education succinctly stated that, Violence in all forms is an assault on human dignity. She articulated that – "the conceptual core of peace education is violence; its control, reduction and elimination. The conceptual core of human rights education is human dignity, its recognition, fulfilment, and universalization. As I have argued elsewhere, human rights are most readily adaptable to the study of positive peace, the social, political and economic conditions most likely to provide the environment and process for social cohesion and non-violent conflict resolution." [7]

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[1] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northeast_India

[2] http://www.friedenspaedagogik.de/english/peace_counts_on_tour/station_india_march_2009/speech_at_opening_ceremony

[3] http://www.haguepeace.org

[4] http://nationalpeaceacademy.us/board-trustees-and-advisors/

[5] http://www.peace-ed-campaign.org/newsletter/archives/current.html

[6] http://www.utoledo.edu/library/canaday/HTML_findingaids/MSS-226.html

[7] Reardon A. B (1988), Comprehensive Peace Education: Educating for Global Responsibility (New York) Comprehensive Peace Education: Educating for Global Responsibility (New York Teachers College Press).

The Hague Appeal for Peace and Justice for the 21st Century brought out a 50 point Agenda which has become a UN document Ref A/54/98.[8] This was followed by the Tirana, Albania Conference, 20-23 October 2004[9] which was represented by ministries of education, inter governmental and civil society organization convened by the Hague Appeal for Peace made a working definition which stated that - "Peace Education is a holistic, participatory process that includes teaching for and about human rights, nonviolent responses to conflict, social and economic justice, gender equity, environmental sustainability, disarmament, traditional peace practices and human security". The methodology of peace education encourages reflection, critical thinking, cooperation and responsible action. It promotes multiculturalism, and is based on values of dignity, equality and respect. Peace education is intended to prepare students for democratic participation in schools and society. The Tirana calls states that- Peace education prevents violence and builds a culture of peace in the midst of injustice, war and all forms of terrorism.

Peace education is about learning skills to relate non-violently. Peace Education is a humanizing progress. The Peace Education movement have grown and spread wide and now is visible through the regular monthly newsletter. One of our efforts was in the editorial during December 2010 with focus and on the theme of *Embracing Peace Education – Empowering the Individual, Institutions and Communities, Special focus on India"* – to begin the journey to create a new system with a bold mission, helping families and communities raise and educate healthy, capable young people. This meeting was the result of more than a year's extensive consultation and planning, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. It was the locus of child advocacy and its loyalty will be to the well-being of children, families, women and men, communities, and the planet, rather than to administration, curriculum or political correctness. The systems will be an integral part of the community, not a separate entity. It was a meeting of hearts as much as of heads."[10]

In the recent book edited by Prof Ian M Harris,[11] the author along with many other peace education academicians and activist has contributed a paper.

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[8] http://www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/peace/link5.htm

[9] Peace and Disarmament Education (2005): Lessons from four countries, Albania, Niger, Peru and Cambodia a project jointly conducted by UN department of Disarmament Affairs and the Hague Appeal for Peace. www.haguepeace.org The Tirana Call page 106

[10] *www.peace-ed-campaign.org/newsletter/archives/78.html*

[11] Ian M Harris ed. (2013) Peace Education from the Grassroots. A volume in Peace Education. Printed by IAP – Information Age Publishing. PO Box 79049. Charlotte, NC 28271.

-This collection of essays tells how citizens at the grassroots level developed peace education initiatives in thirteen different nations (Belgium, Canada, El Salvador, Germany, India, Jamaica, Japan, Mexico, the Phillipines, South Korea, Spain, Uganda and the United States). A fourteenth article describes the efforts of the

Peace Counts on Tour (PCoT):

A unique way of learning and doing Peace Education is the Peace Counts on Tour model. It adopts various pedagogy including exhibition, DVDs, narratives from nonviolent peace protagonists most recent in the 21st century. Micheal Glich the founder of PCoT is also an Asoka Fellow. The Peace Counts project is an initiative of German journalist and photographers. They venture out to do research on role model for peace builders and document the activities to make it known to the wider public first in Germany and later bring it to the communities. The core of Peace Counts is - How to make peace. The journalists gather narratives from conflict regions worldwide. They then published them in well-known newspapers and reaching millions of readers. The first set of twelve reports are compiled in various exhibition titled- Peacebuilders around the world. They have been displayed in many countries. The second set of reports about ten is also available now. More stories are being collected as part of the growing project. The Institute of Peace Education Tuebingen (ift)[12] has designed learning arrangements setting for Peace Education. They include a Peace Education Package with posters, cd-roms, podcastes and didactical handbooks for the performance of workshops in conflict ridden and war torn regions. The package and the workshops have been carried out in the various regions and are constantly revised in dialogue with the participants. These experiences are being documented and the Peace Counts community is growing continuously.

In India, the first Peace Counts Training of Trainers was held during 2-6th March 2009. [13]

Ethnicity, Insurgency and Peace building in Northeast India (NEI)

In order to understand the NEI one needs to know and understand about ethnicity. The region has a history of armed conflict since the time of the India's independence in the mid 40s of the 20th century. Presently the region has a presence of large number of insurgents groups.[14]. Dutta (2009) has written and edited a book titled - Human Security in North-east India issues and Policies, discussing the wide range of issues dealing with human security in the region. It also examines the policies of the government vis-a-vis some burning issues and

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International Red Cross to implement a human rights curriculum to teachers on the ground in the Balkans, Iran, Senegal, and the United States. This chapter describes a variety of schools, colleges, peace movements' organizations, community-based organization and international nongovernmental organizations engaged in peace education. The author has also contributed a paper titled- Peace Education from the Grassroots in Northeast India.

[12] http://www.friedenspaedagogik.de/english

[13] http://www.friedenspaedagogik.de/english/peace_counts_on_tour/station_india_march_2009

[14] http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=aug2411/at09

shows with instances how lackadaisical approaches and poor governance have adversely affected the life of the people.

The transition of various groups, tribes and caste into the modern parliamentary democratic system is an ongoing process and we are seeing the effects, impact and outcome of the process in the NEI region today. As stated in the concept note of the Peace Practitioner Research Conference 2013 (PPRC) - Conflict dynamics and security threats in the region are historical, multi-layered and diverse in nature. Most conflict have identity based conflict; interstate, intra state; communal and armed violence struggles against the existing status quo. Because identity conflicts threaten people's basic and non negotiable needs and in many cases concern their survival, they are often intractable and extremely violent in nature. While challenging to overcome, identity conflict can be transformed constructively and non-violently. How this can be achieved is a difficult question. Well thought out peacebuilding initiatives can help to minimize the deep and often long lasting divisions between antagonized identity groups.[15]

Ethnographic profile, Administration, geographical position and linguistic

The region is extremely diverse in terms of ethnic, linguistic and cultural composition. These diverse communities have different historical and political experiences and many of those communities still perceive them as unique entities. Therefore it is very artificial and superficial to club the whole region into a single political states today. It is so diverse that out of the 635 tribal communities in India, more than 200 categories are found in this region. Of the 325 languages listed in the People of India[16], the highest number belongs to the Tibeto-Burman family and 175 communities are shown speaking them. These communities mostly live in this NEI region. The Northeast states are officially recognised under the Northeast Council (NEC)[17] which was constituted in 1971 as the Nodal Agency for the development of the eight states. The North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd (NEDFi)[18] was incorporated on 9th August 1995. In New Delhi, the Ministry of Development of Northeast Region (DoNER)[19] was established in September 2001. The issue of securities, insurgencies and peace talks are taken up under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)[20].

[15]Concept paper notes of the Peace Practitioner Research Conference to be held on the theme of Transforming Identity Conflicts, 6-8th December 2013, Siem Reap , Cambodia

[16] Singh, KS. and Manoharan, S, (1993) "Languages and Scripts", Vol. IX of People of India series New Delhi, Oxford.

[17] http://www.necouncil.nic.in/

[18] *www.nedfi.com*

[19] *www.mdoner.gov.in/*

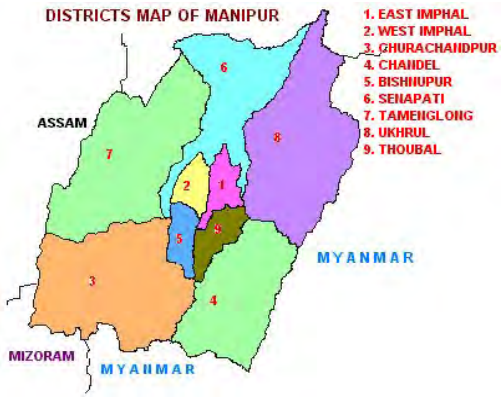
[20] http://mha.nic.in/northeast_new

The states of NEI consist of a population of about 40 million. The region spreads over an area of 262,179 square kilometres and consists of eight states: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim. It stretched between 89.46 degrees to 97.30 degrees east longitude and 21.57 degrees to 29.30 degrees north latitude. The region has a 4,500 kilometre long international border (about 90 percent of its border area) with five foreign countries namely Bangladesh (southwest), Bhutan (in the northwest), Myanmar (in the east) China (south Tibet in the north) and Nepal (north east). The Siliguri corridor in West Bengal, also known as the "chicken neck" with an average width of 21 km to 40 km connects the NEI with the mainland Indian sub- continent.[21] The Indian Institute of Technology at Guwahati has a Resource centre for study of Indian language technology in the region.[22].

Ethnographic profile of Tribes in Manipur

The author has developed a preliminary sketch to understand the ethnic profile and distribution of the communities in Manipur. This is given in the Annexure I. With a map indicating the districts inhibited by the various communities. More information about the tribes can be available in the Tribal Research Institute[23] (TRI) at Chingmeirong Imphal.

Ethnographic Profile of Manipur: Number of tribes and distribution.



[21] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northeast_India
[22] *www.iitg.ernet.in/rcilts/phaseI/n_e.html*
[23] http://www.trimanipur.com/aboutus.aspx

Name of District	Name of Communities and Tribes
Imphal East	Meiteis, Pangal,Kabuis/Sekmais, Andro (SC)
Imphal West	Meitei , Pangals,Kabuis
Churachandpur	Aimol, Chiru, Koms, Koireng, Hmar, Paite, Gangte,Vaiphei, Thadou, Kuki, Chin,Simte,Mate, Mizo
Chandel	Aimol,Anal, Tarao, Mayong, Mongsang, Maring, Kom.Lamkang, Kukis, Thadou, Zou ,Mate, Tangkhul
Bishenpur	Meitei, Muslim Kabui, Chothe
Senapati	Paomai,Liangmei, Aimol, Chiru, Kom,Thangal, Inpui. Rongmei , Maring, Thadou
Tamenglong	Liangmei, Inpui, Rongmei, Chiru, Kom, Viaphei, Hmar, Zou, Thadou, Gangte
Ukhrul	Any Kuki Tribes, Tangkhul,Vaiphei
Thoubal	Kabui, Kom, Meitei, Kakching Meitei(SC) , Maring

As of now there are 37 recognized tribes in Manipur, with the recent inclusion in the year 2010. Inpui, Liangmai,Rongmei,Thangal, Zeme and Mate. Some of the tribes are numerically lesser in numbers but are distributed fairly in all the districts. Some tribes are fairly distributed n one district. The majority Meitei population is mainly concentrated in the plain districts of Imphal East , Imphal West, Thoubal and Bishenpur. However a large majority of them are also settled in the district hill headquarters. A large number of tribes have also made settlement in the plain especially in and around the Imphal district headquarters. Prepared by Leban Serto

Ethnographic Profile of the NEI[24]

In the field of peacebuilding efforts the knowledge of the ethnographic distribution is important. Since the emergence of the various ethnic aspiration for identity and political reasons, the tribes in NEI have been categorised as Schedule tribes within the Indian constitution with special provision of administration and some forms of autonomy. However this various provisions have undergone series of critics and discontentment with the ethnic communities seeking for more concessions and asserting their grievances through violence and armed struggles. The emergence of Ethno nationalism is evident in the region and provide a fertile ground for growing insurgency[25], violence and state repression and human rights violation has also taken place. Some of the issue like the Nagas, Mizos, Tripuri, Meities, Karbi, Bodo, Kuki, Hmars, Achiks, Henniewthrep (Khasis), Pnar (Jiantias) are dominant and also there are many others smaller ethnic groups resurgences and alliances taking place among the Tribes in the region.

[24] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northeast_India
[25] *en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Insurgency_in_Northeast_India*

Ethnographic profile of Myanmar (Burma):

Burma is the earlier name, now known as Myanmar has a large number of Ethnic population spread over the country. The recent political development in Myanmar (Burma) is being seen as a great step towards Peace and ushering a new era of Democracy and reforms. The ramification is also being felt in the neighbouring countries like India and China. The increasing attention towards development in Burma will scale up more interventions in building systems and structures for democracy, development, tracks and infrastructures such as the Asian Highways and Trans Asian Railways along with International airways.

Myanmar is presently divided into 7 regions (formerly called divisions): Sagiang region, Taninthrayi region, Bago region, Magway region, Mandalay region, Yangoon region and Ayeyarwady region. There are seven Ethnic states; Arakan, Chin, Kachin, Karen, Karenni, Mon and Shan and seven self administrative zone. Myanmar is a country in South East Asia bordered by China, Laos, Thailand, Bangladesh and India. It has an area of 676,578 sq km with about 56 million people. Majority of the people are Buddhists (53.42 million) while others are Christian (2.28), Muslims (2.27), Hindus (0.3) and others of different indigenous beliefs.

It may be noted that with the signing of the "Panglong Agreement" on February 12, 1947, an essential document for Burma's independence , an agreement that guaranteed the establishment of a federal union and autonomy for the ethnic states , Burma (officially the Republic of the Union of Myanmar) gained independence from British on 4 January, 1948. Since independence in 1948, the country has been in one of the longest civil wars among the country's myriad ethnic groups that remain unresolved. From 1962 to 2011 the country was under military rule. The military junta was dissolved in 2011 following the general election in 2010 and a civilian government installed. The country is undergoing reforms and taking steps towards democracy and peace in the eyes and attention of the world community at large. The stalwart of democracy and peace who was instrumental to the bringing the phenomenal changes was provided by the Nobel laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who is now heading the opposition in the Government .[26]

Sakhong (2010) has given a vivid description on Identity and the aspiration of the Ethnic groups in Burma, tracing the historical roots and the movements from past to present.

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[26] Serto Leban (2013) paper presented on the titled- The search for peace in Burma and Beyond. During the National Seminar on India- Myanmar- China Relations, 27-30th April 2012. Organised by Centre for Myanmar Studies, Manipur University, Imphal, 795003. Manipur, India.

He has also shared his views and perspective of the emerging ethno nationalism of the Chin, Kachin and Naga. Sakhong has also given the definition of Ethnicity from the work of Hutchingson and Smith, (1986, 1989) stating that –in Ethnic symbolic theory of ethnicity, there are six main features to define ethnic nationality (i) Common proper name (ii) a myth of common descent (iii) a link with a homeland, (iv) collective historical memories, (v) one or more elements of common culture and (vi) a sense of solidarity.

Sakhong has made recommendations and concluded that – "if both governments and ethnic insurgents groups could find a political solution and create peace and harmony in the region then Northeast India, Chin State, Eastern Nagaland, Kachin State and all the western valley of Upper Chindwin could become not only the gateway between Northeast and Southeast Asia, but the region can also become a place where the value of unity and diversity is practiced and the beauty of pluralism can flourish." [27]

Thant Myint-U (2011) the grandson of U Thant, Secretary General of the UN in the 1960s in his recent book – 'Where China meets India', presents an extensive account of India's border issues with Burma and China. In one of the important news review it stated that – the central premise of Than Myint-U's new book is that it Myanmar deserves and is destined to play a much more crucial role in world economy, political and even military events. A note on the names; State Law and Order Restoration Council or SLORC which replaced the military regime of General Ne Win in the late 1980's and which still maintains control under a different title, changed the English version of the country's name to Myanmar. Some newspapers use that name, while many western governments, including the United States and the United Kingdom, have struck with Burma, as Thant does in his Book. What's not clear, Thant argues are the likely consequences of Myanmar's impending reintegration into the world- for its own people, for the nearby powers of India and China, and for other nations, notably the United States. Also sharply arguing that the American policy toward Myanmar is flawed in a way that is about to become more costly for all parties involved except the Chinese. Thant tries hard to emphasize the centrality of Myanmar's geographic, cultural and historic positioning between India and China, both of which have interacted with Burmese tribes and rulers over the years. The interesting part of the book for my papers is that – Thant gives a vivid description of the situation in Northeast India and ends with a positive tone of peace giving way. Thant concludes with his vision in his statement – "but there is another, happy scenario, one which sees real progress in Burma coupled with a quick end to Western sanctions. Development is more balanced, environmental destruction

[27] Lian H Sakhong (2010) In Defence of Identity. Orchid Press, Bangkok. Page 302.

is minimized, efforts at reducing poverty win international support, and a rising middle class lays the foundation of more democratic government. The ceasefires are transformed into a sustainable peace and ethnic minority grievances are addressed. Peace comes to Northeast India as well, for the very first time since independence. Yunnan benefits from a more prosperous Burma, but as part of a more equal relationship, and this leads to a renewal of long dormant cultural ties. Borders are opened and governments are able to cooperate and together address challenges the open borders present. In Burma, when China meets India, a unique meeting place of cultures and peoples is created, at this new centre of Asian world. Progress in Burma would be boon for the region. A peaceful prosperous and democratic Burma would be a game-changer for all Asia." [28]

Violence and Nonviolence

In the field of Peace Studies, Johan Galtung made the important distinction between what we normally call violence, physical violence and structural violence. Structural violence might not the victims directly. But the people are harmed, victimized and violated through institutional means and structures. Poverty, malnutrition and hunger are some results of structural violence.[29]*. Ngarm et el mentioned in their book, that Galtung has also added another list i.e Cultural violence.*[30] *Lisa Schirch*[31] *has done extensive research on the issue of secondary violence stating that – "Structural violence often leads to secondary violence which includes civil wars, crime, domestic violence, substance abusers and suicide".*

Academic debates on the concept and definition of violence have played a major part in the emergence of the field of peace and conflict research and its historical development from a "minimalist" focus on preventing war to a broader "maximalist" agenda encompassing direct, structural and cultural forms of violence (as defined by Johan Galtung). Nowadays, there is a general consensus that violence include much more then the use of physical force by persons to commit acts of destruction against others' bodies or property. Structural conditions such as unjust and oppressive political systems, social inequity or malnutrition, as well as their justification through culture or ideology, are seen as chief source of violence and war. An example of a comprehensive definition of violence is offered by the team of NGO Responding to conflict - "Violence consists of action, words, attitudes, structure or systems

[28] Thant Myint U (2011) Where China meets India: Burma and the New Crossroad of Asia. Farrar, Strauss & Giroux. London. Page 326

[29] Galtung,Johan(1969). Violence, Peace and Peace Research, in: Journal of Peace Research, Vol.6. No. 3, 167-191

[30] Soth Plai Ngarm, Tania Milectic (2006), Introduction to Peace Studies & Research Methods. published by The Alliance for Conflict Transformation (ACT), Cambodia, Pg. 33

[31] Schirch, Lisa. (2004). The little book of strategic peacebuilding . PA: Good Books

that cause physical, psychological, social or environmental damages and /or prevent people from reaching their full human potential". Peace and conflict research has tried to elucidate the origins of violence especially the phenomenon of escalation from latent to violence conflicts through ethnopolitical mobilisation by grievances group or "minorities at risk". Since 2006, Berghof Foundation (2012) has been conduction research on resistance and liberation movements in order to better understand the phenomenon of radicalisation and de-radicalisation, understood as the shifts from non-violent to violent strategies and vice-versa. The book further stated that – "Central to our understanding of the distinction between violence and conflict is our approach to conflict transformation as the transition from actual or potentially violent conflicts into non-violence processes or social change".[32]

Nonviolence as antithesis of violence in all its forms

Nonviolence might be described both as a philosophy, upholding the view that the use of force is both morally and politically illegitimate or counterproductive, and as a practice to achieve social change and express resistance to oppression. The basic principles of nonviolence rest on a commitment to oppose violence in all it forms, whether physical, cultural or structural. Hence, the term compasses not only an abstentions from the use of physical force to achieve an aim, but also a full engagement in resisting domination, inequality, racism and any other forms of injustice or "hidden" violence. The ultimate aim of its supporters is the dismantling of the power structures, military systems, and economic networks that make violence and war an option at all. Gandhi, whose ideas and actions have most crucially influenced the development of nonviolence in the twentieth century, described his moral philosophy through the religious precept of Ahimsa, a Sanskrit word meaning the complete renunciation of violence in though and action. The definition does not imply however, that all actions without violence are necessarily non-violent. Nonviolence involves conscious and deliberate restraint from expected violence, in a context of contention between two or more adversaries. For the purpose of clarity, scholars have established a distinction between the terms non-violence and nonviolence (without hyphen); while both refer to actions without violence, the latter also implies an explicit commitment to the strategy or philosophy peaceful resistance.[33]

[32] Berghof Glossary on Conflict Transformation 20 notions for theory and practice (2012) published by Berghof Foundation Operations GmbH, Berlin Pg 116- 120

[33] Berghof Glossary on Conflict Transformation 20 notions for theory and practice (2012) published by Berghof Foundation Operations GmbH, Berlin Pg 117-118.

Archbishop Thomas Menamanaparamparil (2011), a leading peacebuilder from the NEI has written on the issue of violence stating that “Violence is not about war only, but also about abusing people, reducing their self-esteem and their self confidence or self worth, leading them to an experience of powerlessness and subjugation e.g due to poverty. Violence can be physical, emotional, verbal, theological, cognitive, sexual, visual, institutional, structural, economic, political, social and ecological. Violence also include condoning violence, inaction during violence, passive acceptance of violence, considering violence as useful. We all contribute to violence when we take refuge in any of these forms of escapism. For example when government defend their military and law enforcing personnel and prevent international scrutiny of reported tortures (like in Iraq or Chechnya), they condone violence. When men of the police force stand with each other in mutual defence despite their inhuman treatment of prisoners, they condone violence. The same is true of members of a gang that defend each other though they know that their companion have gone to excess, of political leaders that overlook the violence of supporters, of ideologies that consider violence as self defence, professional who tolerate colleague in their dishonest and exploitative ways”. He cities some examples such as maligning others, culmination, spreading negative rumours and character assassination. For example Martin Luther King was accused of being a Communist and Archbishop Romero of leftist leanings. Stating that work of Arbuckle (2004) and further list of violent deeds; deceptive strategies used by corporate magnates, e.g. using euphemisms, like ‘downsizing’ to mean plain sacking; political manipulation, e.g. offering bribes, making unrealistic promises, using deceptive flattery, having recourse to untrue advertisements, glamorous display, boasting , being arrogant or jealous, intimidating, gossiping, hurting people with cynical humour, taunting , sneering, scorning, patriarchal or ethnic or racial jokes, ignoring conventional courtesies, being rude or ill-mannered, entering into inhuman competition, vandalism, scapegoatin, projecting on to others ones’ faults, football hooliganism (greatly aggravated by commercial sports), political with-hunting and oppression of minorities. He considers also political patronage, cronyism, family rule over society (Marco, Suharto) new forms of colonialism, imbalance in trade and economic relationships, place unbearable burdens or international debts on weaker nations, all as form of violence. There is , further violence done to future generations when the present generation leaves, debts behind to others unbearable burdens. By doing so, the present generation violates an unwritten contract of justice it has made with coming generation. There is violence planted also into those unhelpful philosophies that educate the rising generation to collective anger, cynicism exaggerated pragmatism, narcissism and nihilism. Then there are local variations of violence, caste unfairness in India, communal clash in South Asia, gender inequality in many

parts of the continent, unequal class structures in West Asia and elsewhere insidious consumer and media cultures in developed countries, violence sanctioned or sponsored by government, drug deals, street gang violence in urban centres, insurgency and secessionism, ethnic hatred, militant politics, mafia in Sicily and the US. If there are all forms of violence the longer the list of oppressors would include parents, husbands, fellow-citizens, politicians, business tycoons, trade unionists, ethnic leaders, slum lords, drug barons, arms traffickers, intellectual, and anyone who can hurt and anyone who condones violence or remain inactive and ourselves!! Those who suffer from violence include; the public in general e.g. that are harassed both by insurgents and the police in turn; the poor and the weak who are victims of local thugs, the homeless innocent prisoners (an estimate claim that 40 % of those in prison were innocent), the brutalised, the stigmatised, the sick, the illiterate and bonded labour. Arbuckle sees a tinge of human aggressiveness even in the recent legal and the media harshness against paedophile clergy. When we notice that the Olympic Games which were meant to bring nations together have often been marred by aggressive competitiveness and nationalist pride, we realize how deeply violence has planted itself into our public life.

Why and How Peace Counts

In India, since March 2009 a series of Training of Trainers (TOT) and activities has taken place. The author has taken part in all the major TOT since and has conducted series of training in the NEI and beyond. The uniqueness of the India Peace Counts from the earlier five stations (2006-2008) was the new concept designed to maintain sustainability. With the idea to train multipliers to distribute the contents and materials of the exhibition – "Peacebuilders Around the World" among the local experts and peacebuilder from different parts of India. The first TOT was held from 2-5 March, 2009 in New Delhi. In the 5 day peace education workshop the facilitators intensively worked with the same groups. The participants from Manipur, Mumbai, Orissa and New Delhi got to know the contents, methods and material of the Peace Counts on Tour. The motivational and inspiring project received the prestigious German award-Marburger Peter Becker Prize for Peace and Conflict Studies in 2009.[34] In August 2009 another workshop with evaluation was conducted in New Delhi. [35] Another TOT for south India was held in June 2012[36]. This was followed by Northeast India in Guwahati, July 2013[37]. The TOT in Guwahati on the 8th July with experts from the region met and discussed the possibilities of incorporation Peace Counts into the formal curriculum

[34] http://www.friedenspaedagogik.de/english/peace_counts_on_tour/station_india_march_2009
[35] http://www.friedenspaedagogik.de/english/peace_counts_on_tour/station_india_ii_august_2009
[36] http://www.berghof-foundation.org/en/news/186/peace-counts-on-tour-in-kerala-ind
[37] http://www.berghof-foundation.org/en/news/242/peace-education-in-northeast-india-with-peace-counts/

and for the training of community leaders in the region. Those participants represented Eastern Theological College, Jorhat, Manipur Univerisity, Gauhati University, Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, (Manipur), Martin Luther Christian University, Shillong, Henry Martyn International Institute (Hyderabad) and the Peace and Justice Department of the Council of Baptist Churches in Northeast India (CBCNEI). They all agreed on strengthening their efforts to implement essentials of Peace Counts contents and methods into their curricula. As a next common steps, options of organizing a summer school and advance training of trainers with the participating local institutions were discussed. Another key outcome of the meeting is the idea to produce local reports on peacebuilders from NEI, which will then be applied in further education programmes. The participants stressed the urgent need for such initiatives in light of the violent political and ethnic conflicts plaguing the people in the region.

In the 5-day TOR with teachers and researchers from the region, 22 qualified and certified participants completed the course. The feedback from the participants allow for the conclusion that Peace Counts can add new perspective , fresh impulses and creativity to the field of peace building and Peace Education in the region.

A press statement in one of the National English daily by the author reported that – "it is very important for schools in this region to have a curriculum based on peace studies. It is a unique learning method and can help the Northeast. We will be training people and will also organise an exhibition on the work being done in different conflict zones. The initiative will show the importance of being a peacebuilder, understanding conflicts, working for reconciliations and listening to stories of peacebuilding".[38]

Peace Counts in Northeast India

The author took the initiative to organise the first workshop and the local TOT and exhibition in Imphal from 14-18th May 2009 after the New Delhi. This was held at Imphal Hotel and Nupilal Memorial Complex[39]. In the same year during 21st – 23rd November 2009, a larger exhibition was held in Shillong[40]. After that smaller version of the exhibition was held in many places with workshop and consultations in far flung rural villages and districts of Manipur and some part of Northeast India.

[38] http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-10/guwahati/40491261_1_peace-education-training-programme-peace-projects

[39] http://www.epao.net/epSubPageExtractor.asp?src=news_section.Press_Release.Press_Release_2009.PR_Peace _Builders_20091121

[40] http://www.e-pao.net/epGallery.asp?id=1&src=Community_Org/Organization/HRA200905_1

It is pertinent to note that the Peace Counts on Tour stories of Peacebuilding will enhance and enlarge the world view of the Northeast leaders and peacebuilders and enriched the knowledge of the communities to understand the work for peace done in various parts of the world. The author in his advocacy believe that this is the right moment to bring hope and assurance of possibility and renewed in to all those who strongly believe that Peace is possible. With the main objectives to introduce the concepts of Peace Counts- the exhibition along with peace education ideals like – How to be a peacebuilder and to understand conflict and work for reconciliation and also listen to stories of peace building and peace education in Northeast India. The author as initiative and introduced it as a paper in the Post Graduate Diploma in Peace Studies (PGDPS) in the Peace Studies Department of Martin Luther Christian University (MLCU) Shillong since 2010.

In March 2011, the author visited the Institute for Peace Education Tuebingen, (ift) Stuttgart, Berlin in Germany. He received he received the new version of the Peace Counts addition and upon returned shared his experience and new stories of the Peace Counts project on 19th May , 2011 at MLCU with the Burmese student communities and students of the PGDPS. On the 23rd June with the youth of the Imphal Centre Church, Manipur Baptist Convention (MBC).

Local Initiatives in Northeast India and Beyond

PCoT workshop advocacy and smaller exhibition were conducted by the author since 2009 included reaching out to the communities, ethnic groups, faith based organisation and institutions some to mention are – Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC) in Dimapur, Nagaland 2010; Tangkhul tribes in Ukhrul district in Litan, 2010 with the Southern Tangkhul Naga Baptist Church (STNBA); Tarao tribe in Chandel District Manipur, 2011; Manipur University, Education Department, June 2011; All Manipur Christian Organisation (AMCO) April 2011; with the Glocal Volunteers December 2011 in Churachandpur district, Manipur; with the Holy Cross communities in Tripura, 2011; Manipur Baptist Youth, Imphal 2011; Adimjati ST/SC Boys and Girls Hostel, 2011; with the Teachers Tranining centre, DIET, Imphal, 2011; Clark Theological College, Aolijen, Makokchung, Nagaland, 2012; with Kom tribes in Sagang, Churachandpur district, Manipur 2012; With students of the PGDPS and Burmese students since 2009 till date. Presented series of talk at the University Grant Commission (UGC) refreshers course in 2012 and 2013 in Manipur University Staff College. During November 11th - 15th 2013, the author organised the Peace Counts on Tour in Manipur with the Berghof Foundation .

During March 2010, in New Delhi smaller exhibition was held in the Gandhi Peace Foundation (GPF); in December 2011, TOT was held in Kashmir jointly facilitated by Willy D Costa and Javed Naqi, and in June 2012, co facilitated the TOT in Cochin; and in Guwahati 2013, co facilitated and was local organiser for the TOT for Northeast India.

Asian Advocacy for PCoT

Advocacy campaign and materials were also distributed and shared by the author during his travels to Asian Pacific Peace Research Association Conference, Kyoto, Japan 2011; In Cagayan de Oro, Mindanao, Phillipines 2012; Chiangmai, Thailand 2012; Conducted a 3 day workshop on building skills for Peace Education at Bangkok with Burmese students November 2012; In Siem Reap, Peace Practitioner Research Conference (PPRC) 2012 December; Recently on 12th November 2013, in Asian Pacific Peace Research Association (APPRA) conference in Bangkok , the author conducted a workshop titled – Reaching out to the local communities and people using through Peace Counts on Tour .

Stories of the Peacebuilders in PCoT

The list of the protoganist in the PCoT, along with the theme and field of concern for peacebuilders are given in a tabular form (Annexure). These are also available in DVDs and booklets and in the websites of the Berghof foundation[41] .

Understanding Narratives and working for Peace with the others

In the words of Uli Jaeger and Gunther, [42] we can see peace in its best forms as an attempt to change individuals perception of the others collective narratives, as seen in the latter's point of view, and consequently about one's own social self, as well as come to practically relate less hatefully and more trustingly towards that collective other. More specifically peace education would be expected to yield four kinds of highly interrelated dispositional outcome;

i. Accepting as legitimate the others narratives and its specific implications
ii. A willingness to critically examine one's own groups action towards the other group.
iii. A willingness to experience and show empathy and trust towards the others;
iv. And a disposition to engage in nonviolent activities.

[41] http://www.berghof-foundation.org/en/expertise/peace-education/

[42] Taken from the module of the Trainer of Trainers (TOT), Peace Counts of Tour developed for New Delhi India, 2009 by the Institute of Peace Education, Tuebingen, Germany. More work of the writers are available at - Gunter Gugel/ Uli Jager: Gewalt muss nicht sein. Eine Einfuhrung in friedenspadagogisches Denken and Handeln , 3 Aufl., Tubingen 1997, S. 16-42; www.dadalos.org

In building and creating Peace education projects, we should take consideration the practical words of Salomon (2002)[43] – "Not all programme are created equal" he says that to understand Peace education programs, you have to distinguish between the political contexts in which they take place. Three specific context have been pointed out such as i) Where things are peace; ii) Where there is tension ; iii) intractable conflicts, which is of special interest to him and also this is where conflict is bloody, and is central and total in society's life which does not reach resolution despite the many years of efforts. In the third situation, Peace Education there, has to do with making peace with a real enemy with someone you really hate, who really threaten you. Citing cases of the Palestinians and Israelis; Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland; Albanian and Serbs in Kosovo. In these cases there is somebody to make peace with. This is also true for many Ethnic communities in Asian region. In the second context, it's not really making peace but still you have a tension, you have two sides. Salomon puts the first two cases together as similar contexts. On the other hand, in the first context of peace and tranquillity, harmony and love, he mentioned is entirely different for a simple reason; there's nobody to make peace with. It is about the whales and the environment and nuclear power. These are important things, but it is not the same as stretching out a hand and trying to make peace with the people who killed your brother. Salomon advocates that the Peace education is different in the context of tension and in the context of intractable conflict, thereby all Peace education programme cannot be created equally. This conceptual understanding should be provided to Policy makers and teachers who teach about Peace and more to the practitioners in designing and framing peace interventions, strategies and project program.

There are two sayings impressive worth nothing in the field of Peace building for inspiration and reflections, - Lederach (2004) talks about the need for "Moral Imagination – to imagine responses and initiatives that, while rooted in the challenges of the real world, are by their nature capable of rising above destructive patterns and given birth to that which does not yet exist. In reference to peacebuilding, this is the capacity to imagine and generate constructive responses and initiatives that, while, rooted in the day to day challenges of violent settings, transcend and ultimately break the grips of those destructive patterns and cycles.[44]

[43] Gavriel Salomon (2004) Does Peace Education makes a difference in the context of an intractable conflict (November 2003) - also taken from the email correspondence with Prof Gavriel S Oct 8, 2004.
[44] John Paul Lederach JP (2005) The Moral Imagination, Oxform University Press. Pg 182

In the book dedicated to – The Life and Teachings of Dekha Ibrahim Abdi[45] which is a compilation of peace epistles in her memory remarks a statement, "Thinking the unthinkable is often part of a peace process".

The protagonist of the Peace Counts narratives use of nonviolent strategies are unique important learning models and when leaders , teachers and communities are exposed to these methods, it would definitely increase their knowledge and capacities for peace action. The connection between the PCoT and the Peace Education concepts are also equally in sync with each other and provides a very useful model for learning and taking action for nonviolent interventions. The model would definitely benefit those who adopt it, both for individuals and communities that are already embroil and engulf in vicious cycle of violence and conflicts.

In conclusion the author advocates that the use of the Peace Counts on Tour and Peace Education projects in the Northeast India would enhance the world view build the knowledge and skills so required and create a robust peace building movements, which would eventually create the atmosphere of meeting the challenges of building a just and vibrant flourishing communities in the long run.

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[45] DeBoer Patricia (eds) (2012) – No failure in Peace Work: The Life and Teaching of Dekha Ibrahim Abdi. Pg 101.

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Leban Serto (1966) obtained his M.Sc, M.Phil and Ph.D from Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi . Have a wide experience of working with various student ethnic communities, NGOs, and interfaith organizations; Experienced in developing lesson plan for Peace Education. Certified trainer in the field of Reflection on Peace Practices (RPP) and Peace Counts on Tour(PCoT) ; After having been part of PPRC 2012, and developed a profound interest in the work of CPCS , Siem Reap and would like to continue his association with PPRC . He remarked on the PPRC, " It gives me a forum to learn and share with other practitioners and peacebuilding communities in Asia."

Annexure

1. The first report – Peace Counts on Tour

The various theme of the Exhibition with the protoganist are given in the tabular form in Table 2a. With the list of the first reports and details in Table 2b. In the second report given at Table 3a with details at the Table 3b.

Table 2a

Continent	Countries	Theme
Europe Eastern	Bosnia Herzegovina	Ethnic violence and Religious conflicts
	Macedonia	Religious ethnic conflicts between Albanian and Macedonians
	Ireland	Promoting Nonviolence ways with youth by ex – combatants of the IRA, Protestants paramilitary members.
Africa	Mali	Mediation with international assistance
	South Africa	Nonviolence trainings in Prisons
Asia	India	Education for Tolerance; communal harmony
	Sri Lanka	Economic program
	Philippines	Muslim separatist and Government
	Israel	Building camps for talking to each other among Israelis and Palestinian youths
	Japan	Peace Boats- visiting crisis zones and bringing them to the ship for understanding each other.
South America	Brazil	Sports Education and conflict resolution among gangs
	Colombia	Involvement of young people in sports

Table 2b

Sl.no	Country/ Theme	Protagonist/Peacebuilder	The conflict	Solution
1.	Bosnia-Herzegovina	The Mladi Most Youth Center (Young Brigade)	Muslim Bosnians, Christian Croatians	Shared Activities in a divided city
2.	Brazil	Viva Rio- Organization	Gang war in the poor parts of Rio de Janeiro	Sports, education, conflict resolution and an internet newspaper
3.	Colombia	John Jairo - Trainer	Youth gangs creating fear around the city	Involve young people in sports
4.	India	Jagdish Gandhi and his City Montessori School	Violence among Hindus, Muslims and Christians	Educate children in religious tolerance
5.	Israel	Nava Sonnenschein – The School for Peace	Between Israelis and Palestinians	Conversation between the two camps
6.	Japan	The Peace Boat based in Japan	Crisis zones around the World	The Ship unites people from crisis zones
7.	Macedonia	Elena Gulmadova, from the Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE)	Rift between Albanians and ethnical Macedonians	Mediation – Various cultures in one person
8.	Mali	Yehia Ag Mohammed Ali – mediates with foreign help	Nomadic Tuareg rebels against the government	Development money comes only with peace
9.	Northern Ireland	Joe Doherty and Peter Mc Guire (ex terrorists)	Catholic IRA, Protestants paramilitaries and British Government	Involvement of young people in nonviolence politics
10.	Philippines	Fr Burt Layson – A coalition of farmers, elders and religious leaders	Government Army against Muslim separatists	Peace Zone respected by each sides.
11.	South Africa	Victoria Maloka – Center for Conflict Resolution	Gang War in Cape Town prisons	Training in Nonviolence for prisoners and guards
12.	Sri Lanka	Singam, Social Economic and Ecological Developers (SEED)	Tamil Tigers against central Government	Economic Development in the Crisis zone

2. The Second Report Peace Counts on Tour

Table 3a

Continent	Countries	Theme
South America	Columbia	Violence- Gang war/drugs
Africa	Egypt	Innovation/ tradition
	Nigeria	Interfaith
	Rwanda	Reconciliation/trauma
	Dr Congo	Communication
	Kenya	Inter tribe rivalry
Asia	Afghanistan	Education
	Thailand	Mediation
	Israel	Occupational/Land
Euro Asia	Russia (Chechen)	Women and Peace

Table 3b

Sl.no	Country /Theme	Protagonist /Peacebuilder	The conflict	Solution
1.	New Life for an old tradition /Egypt	Attorney Tarek Ramadan	Muhakim	Mediation
2.	Breaking the silence / Isreal	Yehuda Saul	Israel occupation of the West Bank	Drawing Attention to Wartime Brutality
3.	Shared future – Thailand	Gotham Arya	Ongoing Struggle for Democracy and Self Determination	Informal talks and Publica Action – Walk from Bangkok to Pattani- 1000 km (Yellow shirt) royal to the King) Red (for more democracy)
4.	Choosing Life- Colombia	Mateo – and his new Eskalones	Drug war in Slums (Comuna -13- Medelin)	Respect of Jobs through HIP- HOP
5.	For Women's Sake- Russia (Grozny – Chechens)	Liphan Bassajewa	Traditional Values Vs Women's rights	Emphasis on Dignity of Women
6.	Raio Ushikara Makes Waves- Dr Congo	Jean Baptiste	Congolese Army VS Hutu Rebels	News Reporting and Warnings
7.	Shoot to Score, Not to Kill- Kenya	Attoney Fatuma Abdul Kadir Adan	Borana and Gabra Peoples fights over water and land	Football tournaments and women's council
8.	The future knows its ABC- Afghanistans	Peter and Anne Marie Schwittek of Germany	The Taliban stops girls from going to School	Mosque based schools for boys and girls
9.	Reconciliation after the Genocide- RWANDA	Dieu Donne Munyankiko and his org AMI (Association Modeste et Innocent)	Genocide	Delicate balance between Justice and Peace
10.	Peace is Divine – Nigeria	Pastor James Wuye and Imam Muhamed Asaafa	Revenge killing by Christians and Muslim militia (Kaduna – central Nigeria)	Interfaith dialogue and early warning systems (IME) Interfaith Mediation Centre.