

Imphal / 1 November 2019

To,
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Manipur

Subject: Demilitarize educational institutions of Manipur

Hon'ble Sir,

We, the undersigned human rights defender and civil society groups, are deeply concerned with the report of a large number of Central Paramilitary Forces (CMPFs) and regular Army being transported and airlifted to Manipur. Such a sudden spike in the number of military presence in the already militarized Manipur is highly alarming.

It is distressing that the Central Para-Military Forces are recently stationed inside the campuses of Modern College, Maharaja Bodhachandra College, D.M. University etc. This is happening in the background of the on-going student agitation against the stationing of Army camp inside the Manipur University premise. It is highly alarming to learn that the district administrations have further authorized the stationing of CMPF and Army in various other educational institutions and public premises.

We, the undersigned human rights defender and civil society groups, would like remind your good office that such an act of militarization of educational institutions is a violation of national law¹ and the international law².

In the context of a case pertaining to children from Assam and Manipur the Supreme Court of India directed the Centre, in September 2010, to ensure that all schools and hostel of educational institutions occupied by army and paramilitary be vacated.

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child under Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict recommend the Government of India in 2014 as follows:

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¹ Article 21 A of the Constitution, as elaborated by the relevant Supreme Court judgements

² United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child, Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military use during Armed Conflict etc.

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The Committee urges the State party to take all necessary measures to prevent the occupation and use of as well as attacks on places with a significant presence of children, such as schools, in line with international humanitarian law. It also urges the State party to ensure that schools are vacated expeditiously, as appropriate, and to take concrete measures to ensure that cases of unlawful attacks on and/or occupation of schools are promptly investigated and that perpetrators are prosecuted and punished.³

We, the undersigned human rights defender and civil society groups, therefore, strongly urge the Government of Manipur to vacate all the para-military and military forces from all the educational institutions at the earliest and initiate necessary legal action against the authorities responsible.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

(Phulindro Konsam)

Co-convenor

Civil Society Coalition for Human Rights in Manipur and the UN (CSCHR)

(Okram Nutankumar)

Secretary

Committee on Human Rights (COHR), Manipur

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³ Concluding observations on the report submitted by India under article 8, paragraph 1, of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, CRC/C/OPAC/IND/CO/1, July 7, 2014, paras. 28-29.

(Renu Takhellambam)

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