



## **NEWS FROM THE CENTRE FOR NORTH EAST STUDIES AND POLICY RESEARCH, JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA**

The Centre for North East Studies and Policy Research (CNESPR) announces the following programmes/events for the next two months.

**16 &17 August 2013** – *'First Cut'* a two day North East Film Festival in collaboration with A.J.K. Mass Communication and Research Centre screening films by Maulee Senapati, Prof. Sanjoy Hazarika, Merajur Rahman Baruah, Wangphrang Diengdoh, Neikolie Kuotsu and Yirmiyan Arthur followed by a Panel Discussion: *'Our Films, Their Films'*.

**Venue:** Tagore Hall

**Time:** 10:00 am onwards

Inauguration by Prof. S.M. Sajid, Officiating Vice Chancellor

***Registration required.***

**Films to be Screened:**

**Where There Are No Roads**

**Director:** Maulee Senapati

**Duration:** 37 mins

**Children of the River: The Xihus of Assam**

**Director:** Maulee Senapati

**Duration:** 26 mins

**A Measure of Impunity**

**Director:** Maulee Senapati

**Duration:** 50 mins

**19/87**

**Director:** Wanphrang Diengdoh

**Duration:** 36 mins

**The Green Army: Saviour of the Sylvan**

**Director:** Merajur Rahman Baruah

**Duration:** 26 mins

**The Nine Months**

**Director:** Merajur Rahman Baruah

**Duration:** 77 mins

**The Macabre Dance**

**Director:** Merajur Rahman Baruah

**Duration:** 52 mins

**Mayong**

**Director:** Utpal Borpujari

**Duration:** 53 mins

**My Lament, My Plea**

**Directed by:** Yirmiyan Arthur, Irene Phunthsog and Salma

**Duration:** 20 mins

**Revelation**

**Directed by:** Neikolie Kuotsu, Lalboi Haokip, Mustaquim Ali

**Duration:** 20 mins

For details please click <https://www.facebook.com/events/563342030396095/>

**Background:**

The cinematic history of India's North East began in 1935 with the launch of *Joymoti*, the first Assamese film made by the author-nationalist-poet-playwright-tea-planter-lyricist-composer-and-much-more, Jyotiprasad Agarwalla, four years after *Alam Ara* (1931), the first Indian talkie. *Joymoti* is the story of a princess of the Ahom dynasty who sacrificed her life for the sake of democracy. Since then, a few hundred movies have come about that are representative of the heterogeneous region of their origin. Though Assamese and Manipuri films are better known, and have a semblance of an organized film industry, films continue to be made in languages that unfortunately many times have no avenue for theatrical release such as, Karbi, Mishing, Bodo, Monpa, Zeliang, Kokborok, Sadri and a couple of other regional languages and dialects.

With the advent of digital filmmaking in recent years, the region has come to experience a process of ‘democratization’ of cinema with films now paving its way from a niche audience to the larger masses. The North East now produces films in a variety of languages and dialects, like Khasi (in which a single celluloid film titled *Manik Raitong* was made in the 1980s), Rabha, Jaintia and Garo, apart from the languages earlier mentioned. The majority of these films reach the people either through the format of ‘mobile cinema’, whereby people gain access to films through screenings in community halls, tents and even open spaces, entrance to which is gained via the medium of tickets. The films are projected through a set of LCD projectors, screens and DVD players, thereby ensuring the mobility of the films from one place to another.

The advent of low cost digital movie making cameras has made filmmaking a less tedious exercise, and more and more talented youngsters are now found experimenting with this medium. Manipur is the first state in India that has come up with a fully digital film industry, with around 50 digital films being produced every year within an approximate budget of Rs. 6-15 lac. This is in fact the direct result of the ban on the screening of Hindi films in the Imphal Valley by insurgent groups in 2000.

But it is perhaps the state of Assam that has seen the largest number of films in recent years. The film industry that had experienced an ebb in the last decade, appears to have rejuvenated itself with a fresh breath of life in recent years with enterprising filmmakers like Jahnu Barua, Monju Borah, Bidyut Kakoty. *Koyad*, a film depicting the river-man relationship so crucial in Assam, *Ekhon Nedekha Nodir Xhipare* (As The River Flows) and *Raag Birag* which went on to be screened in many international film festivals.

Even Sikkim, the eighth North Eastern state is now seeking to put itself on the cinematic map of the region through Pradip Rasaily’s *Katha* which is an effort at serious storytelling about the history of the region. The cinema of the region has come of age in recent years.

*Derived from abstracts of Mr. Utpal Borpujari’s articles. Mr. Borpujari is a filmmaker and critic.*

**21 August 2013** – Prof. Sanjoy Hazarika, Director, CNESPR to visit Tripura University to deliver a lecture ***“Impunity, Inequality and Injustice: Special Laws, Special People, Special Areas - Reviewing Security, Legislation and Failure of Governance in the North East India”***.

**3 September 2013- *Manipur in World War II*** a presentation by Hemanth Katoch, Visiting Fellow, CNESPR and Coordinator, Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH)

**Venue:** Seminar Room of the Centre

**Time:** 3:00 pm.

The Battle of Imphal/Kohima took place in 1944 when the Japanese troops pored over the Burmese border to strike in India. Fought over a vast area of jungle and mountain, it was marked by vicious hand-to-hand fighting. The Battle of Imphal/ Kohima, with the British troops fighting in horrendous jungle conditions turned the tide against the Japanese Army in World War II, has been chosen as Britain's greatest battle. Mr. Katoch in his presentation will highlight the details of the battle.

**16 September 2013 – *From the Frontlines: Stories from the Field  
Confronting Life and Death in the North East***

**Venue:** Mir-Taqi-Mir

**Time:** 10:00 am onwards

***Registration required***

The talk will seek to bring to the forefront the stories and experiences of reporting from a conflict area, and will elucidate the challenges faced by both the people of the region and the journalists in narrating their every day experiences. This will be followed by a panel discussion on extra judicial killings.

**Speakers:**

1. Kishalay Bhattacharjee, Editor (East), New Generation Media Pvt. Ltd.
2. Pradip Phanjoubam, Editor, Imphal Free Press and Fellow, IIAS
3. Esha Roy, Principal Correspondent, The Indian Express
4. Subir Bhaumick, veteran journalist
5. Babloo Loithamgan, Director, Human Rights Alert, Manipur
6. Prof. Sanjoy Hazarika, Director, CNESPR will chair the session.
7. Dr. M. Amarjeet Singh, Associate Professor, CNESPR
8. K. Kokho, Assistant Professor, CNESPR