



Zubaan's Cultures of Peace: Festival of the Northeast 2021

Feminist Lab on Women and Ecology in the Northeast

Conversations on feminist responses to ecology and crisis in the Northeast

5-7 pm every Friday
24 September –12 November 2021

The Northeastern region of India is one of the most biodiverse regions of the country, home to thousands of endangered flora and fauna, some of them found only in the eight states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura and adjoining areas. The indigenous communities here share a deep, self-sustaining and multi-layered relationship with the natural resources, environment and ecology of the region. However, this relationship is threatened by various man-made and natural causes such as capitalist greed, climate change, rapid urbanisation, developmental projects, etc.

In view of this rapid breakdown of both the ecological environment as well as the human-ecological relationship, there is a need for conversations to understand and rediscover this relationship, build on existing and emerging solidarities and contribute to the growing body of knowledge carefully curated, preserved and shared by indigenous people, students, activists, collectives, etc.

Building solidarities and strengthening partnerships have gained more importance in view of the global pandemic which has put the world on lockdown since last year. While the pandemic has put the health crisis and resultant economic breakdown and human loss in focus, important issues related to livelihood and sustainability, conservation efforts, climate change and crisis, developmental projects and their impact, etc., have been side lined. Examples of this is the introduction of the new Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) amendment draft in June 2020, in the middle of a global pandemic and nationwide lockdown, plans to convert large tracts of the Northeast into palm oil plantation sites and the invisibilization of continuing resistance from local communities in the face of neoliberal expansion projects.

Zubaan's *Cultures of Peace* 2021 programme attempts to contribute to this ongoing dialogue through a gendered lens on ecology focusing on the stories, journeys and achievements of feminist thinkers/collectives including conservationists, filmmakers, performance-based artists, women's rights activists, journalists, etc.

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About Feminist Lab

The Feminist Lab comprises of eight structured interlinked workshop sessions on indigenous women's rights and ecology, recent reforms in environmental law and their future impact, outstanding conservation efforts and varied creative documentation processes to rediscover and recover our relationship with the ecology around us.

Through these live sessions we will engage in conversations with college and university students based on the pre-recorded talks as well as on additional materials that are part of the resource person's journey, and which will be provided to the participants beforehand.

The workshops will be offered with no fee, as a sustained two-month long engagement with a session being held once a week, every Friday evening. At the end of the workshop, Zubaan will provide participation certificates on successful completion, provided the participants will have attended at least seven out of the eight sessions.

Zubaan will be adding these recorded sessions to its Media Archive in the future, and hopes to make these resources available to a wider audience as well as to students seeking to be informed around these issues. All the sessions are planned through a gendered perspective, keeping in mind the impact on local and indigenous concerns, representation, usage and permissions. Please find below a list of the resource persons and topics to be covered (the final agenda with the dates and the order of the scheduled talks will be made available to you after the confirmation of participation).

Resource Persons/Facilitators & Topics :

- **Chandrani Sinha** on *Songs Along the River Brahmaputra*
- **Jennifer Liang** on *Health, Disasters, Conflict, Weaving, and Women's Rights as Unconscious Interventions on the Question of Ecology in the Region*
- **Lapdiang Syiem** on *Memory in the Performing Body and it's Response to the Environment.*
- **Minket Lepcha** on *Women. Water. Expressions*
- **Nandini Ramchandran** on *Sixth Schedule, Land and Resources*
- **Purnima Devi Barman** on *Women and Conservation: The Hargila Story*
- **Rita Banerji** on *Green interventions — Changes, Challenges and the Journey so far*

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Who can apply :

Applicants must be

- College or University students who are 18 years and above
- From the eight northeastern states (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura), or the hill regions of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong.
- Prior experience/engagement/interest in feminist movements, ecology, performative arts, etc. is preferable, but not mandatory

How To Apply

Please apply through the google form [here](#).

Submission deadline: Tuesday, 16 September, 2021

All selected candidates are required to attend all workshop sessions. Participatory certificate will be given only after full participation in at least seven out of eight sessions.

Shortlisted candidates will be informed through email.

Cultures of Peace: Festival of the Northeast (CoP) is a collaborative project run by [Zubaan](#) and the Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Regional Office, New Delhi aimed at creating spaces for dialogue within civil societies in the eight Northeastern states (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura & Sikkim) and contiguous regions.

Through diverse forms of cultural production — writing, music, film, theatre, media, art and more — this ever-evolving festival attempts to foreground many key issues that concern the region and its relationship with the rest of India or the ‘mainland’, against a broader framework of gender, identities, indigenous rights and peacebuilding.

Ten years and more

In 2020, as part of the tenth year celebrations of CoP, a multimedia resource, Media Archive was created to bring together the learnings from the past decade and to house video interviews, podcasts, essays and artwork that showcase the work of artists, writers, musicians and other cultural practitioners we have engaged with over the last decade.

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The building of the archive was supplemented by a series of online engagements centred around two themes: *Food Cultures of the Northeast* and *Women in Music in the Northeast*. Five webinars and a film release were organized which can be viewed [here](#), while the production of materials such as video interviews, podcasts, essays, etc. are underway. Activities for the two themes - music & food - were curated by two different curators, Xonzoi Barbora for food cultures and Anungla Zoe Longkumer for music.

In our 2021 edition, the CoP festival looks at feminist responses to ecology through the themes of activism, academia and performing arts, and lists a series of webinars, podcasts, video interviews, etc on various aspects of ecology, climate crisis and ecology in performing and creative arts in the Northeast. The programme is curated by Angela Rangad and Thingnam Anjulika Samom.

Registered in 2003, Zubaan is a charitable trust based in Delhi. It follows in the footsteps of its parent NGO, Kali for Women, and has been an active participant, chronicler and publisher of the women's movement since 1984. It works to increase the body of knowledge on women with a special focus on South Asia and India. Zubaan's work in the past few years has been to achieve this goal through the publication of books and pamphlets, creation of archives (www.posterwomen.org), organizing literary festivals and encouraging the exchange of authors, activists, collectives from under-represented regions and communities, meetings and workshops to bring together multiple feminist perspectives. Zubaan has often brought forward the voices of marginalized communities through its publishing work, focusing on women, queer and trans experiences and in the recent past, has also shifted its focus to research and action work. With prior work chronicling the women's movement through Poster Women, Zubaan is also currently engaged in developing a plan to expand on it and attempt to create a museum of women's history in India. For more information visit: <https://zubaanprojects.org>.

The Heinrich Böll Stiftung is a German foundation and part of the Green movement that has developed worldwide as a response to the traditional politics of socialism, liberalism, and conservatism. They are a green think-tank and an international policy network, their main tenets are ecology and sustainability, democracy and human rights, self-determination and justice. They place particular emphasis on gender democracy, meaning social emancipation and equal rights for women and men. They are also committed to equal rights for cultural and ethnic minorities. Finally, they promote non-violence and proactive peace policies. Their India Liaison Office was established in 2002 in New Delhi. For more information visit: www.boell.de, www.in.boell.org.

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