

## LATEST NEWS

# Archbishop, Academicians, Activists join forces to promote peace



**CM Paul** · 12:05, 24 Oct 2021 · 15768 views · 3 min read



Guwahati, 22 October 2021: A group of academicians and social activists came together under the leadership of the archbishop emeritus of Guwahati to promote peace at a time when the whole of Brahmaputra Valley is “in search of peace”.

The occasion was the release of an Assamese language book entitled Hanti Bisari (In Search of Peace) written by Archbishop Thomas Menamparampil.

The original work in the English language was translated into Assamese by a civil society leader, Mr. Paresh Malakar.

The book-release turned out to be a social-discussion session in which the need for mutual understanding between communities was emphasised. A reputed intellectual of Assam, Mr. Hiren Gohain released the book at Guwahati Press Club on 22 October 2021.

Archbishop Thomas says, “Prof. Satyakam Borthakur of the University of Dibrugarh had helped in the compilation of texts from original Assamese authors. So, the book turns out the product many hands, coming out precisely at a time when the whole of Brahmaputra Valley is ‘in search of peace’”.

The compilation of the book was initiated with the encouragement of Mr. Nagen Saikia, the most respected living Assamese author in the state, with whom Archbishop Menampampil has always maintained intellectual closeness.

Civil society leader Dr. Indrani Dutta appreciated the timeliness and relevance of the publication, just when mutual fear and suspicion between communities are being promoted by self-interested groups.

Another social activist Dr. M. P. Bezbarua urged a secular outlook in society in these troubled times saying, “religion was being misused by motivated people in the Northeastern region where tolerance and collaboration always prevailed.”

Smti. Kusum Mokasi referred to an instance when perfect peace was maintained in her neighbourhood soon after the fall of Babri Masjid because of the initiative of individuals who were committed to social harmony. “Peace.” she says, “is a gift that we offer to each other.”

Activist Mr. Santanu Borthakur emphasized the importance of cultivating values that assist communities in times of crisis.

Mr. Promode Doley, a social activist, insisted that attention should be paid to the issue of justice as well, while working for peace, lest pacifism turns out to be mere coverup of evident unfairness.

Archbishop Menamparampil pointed out that “someone who differs from you is not an enemy or even an opponent; he/she is merely inviting you to rethink and to revise your ideas; he only stimulates your thought. And no matter how different we are among ourselves by culture, religion or political vision, we still BELONG to each other. An awareness of our co-belongingness is the door to peace.”

While Mr. Amrit Goldsmith of the Baptist Church summarised some of the important points, Mr. Paresh Malakar called for a continued discussion on the issues that were raised during the session, so that this book-release does not end up as a passing event, but rather the beginning of a healthy debate on inter-community relationships.



### **C.M. Paul**

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