

Raise women's issues on the floor



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Syed Miraz Ahmed 21 December 2016 13516 views

Experts called upon legislators in Assam to raise issues concerning women and children on the floor of the House, acquaint themselves with the existing provisions concerning their [rights](#) and engage in advocacy of matters concerning the [welfare](#) of women and children. The suggestions were made during the fifth phase of the ongoing Sabal Bidhayak held on Tuesday at Guwahati, a series of orientation programmes initiated by the Assam Legislative Assembly in collaboration with Guwahati-based research institute, Centre for [Development](#) and Peace Studies.

Addressing the MLAs and civil society representatives, Lok Sabha MP from Guwahati Bijoya Chakraborty said, “Legislators must also make it a point to champion the [rights](#) of women in the unorganised sector and raise issues concerning the [welfare](#) of children, besides using their resources [as](#) public representatives in the [fight against](#) crimes like molestation, rape and dowry”. She said, on the whole legislators must be able to give a sense of security to women and children by fighting for their privileges both within and outside the House.

Columnist and television commentator Maini Mahanta said legislators, the police, doctors and lawyers have to be extra-sensitive on issues concerning women and child [rights](#). “I know of a case where a woman was molested on a [city](#) road was asked by the police whether she had lost any of her belongings during the incident, thereby suggesting that it was not a major incident”, Mahanta said. She suggested that legislators have an important role to play in protecting the [rights](#) of women and children in the insurgency affected areas and called for induction of more women constables in the Assam Police. Mahanta reminded the legislators to press for a gender budget in the upcoming Budget Session of the Assam Assembly.

[Jatin Hazarika](#), IAS (retd.), who has the distinction of working closely

with six different Chief Ministers of Assam speaking on 'Executive Legislature Relations', said [as](#) per laid down rules, a minister has the power to take the final decision in a matter concerning his or her department but a bureaucrat of that department is expected to provide the minister the right counsel. [Hazarika](#) said a bureaucrat is expected to be impartial but if he or she decides to be neutral, then work cannot progress [as](#) desired.

Former Assam Chief Secretary P K Datta, currently Chairman of the Fifth Assam State Finance Commission, said the fundamental principle of parliamentary democracy is the rule of law. Mr Datta said that if the legislators and bureaucrats decide to [follow](#) the rule of law, the chances of conflict between the two can be minimal.

While noted academician Mahfuza Rahman presided [over](#) the session on 'Role of Legislators in Advancing Women and Child Rights', well-known sociologist and Director Research of CDPS Dr ANS Ahmed presided [over](#) the session on 'Executive Legislature Relations'.

Concluding the programme CDPS Executive Director Wasbir Hussain highlighted findings of a study conducted by the research centre on [Tribal](#) Women's Access to Representation and Justice. The study conducted in Assam, [Meghalaya](#) and [Nagaland](#) [found](#) that the primary reason of women in these three states not being part of the decision-making process is the denial of party tickets to women by political parties. He, however, pointed out that the interest [level](#) of women in Assam in politics is quite high [as](#) revealed by the study.

Sabal Bidhayak was formally inaugurated on October [2](#) by Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and Finance, [Health](#) and [Education](#) Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. Resource persons present during the last four orientation programmes include: Jaimini Bhagwati, IFS (retd.)

Economist and Former Indian Ambassador to [UK](#), Gautam Mukhopadhyaya, IFS, Former Ambassador to [Myanmar](#), renowned journalist [Arnab](#) Goswami, Prasenjit Bhattacharya, CEO, Great Place to Work Institute [India](#), Ravi Kota, IAS, Commissioner and Secretary, Finance, Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, Former Chief Minister, Assam, Gautam Barua, Director, IIIT Guwahati, [Prof](#) Dilip Kumar Barua, Former [Principal](#), Cotton College, Prasanta Rajguru, Editor, Amar [Asom](#), Abdul Muhib Majumdar, Former Minister, Phani Bhushan Choudhury, Keshab Mahanta, Minister, Water Resources, Samudra Gupta Kashyap, Lok Sabha MP Kamakhya Prasad Tasa, economist Amiya Sarma, John [Borgoyari](#), Regional Head, UNDP, N G Mahanta, Akhil [Ranjan](#) Dutta and few others.

Syed Miraz Ahmed

Writes, edits and researches. In 2013 he was conferred the Rotary International District 3240 Young Achiever Award for his work in the area of environment and digital journalism. In 2006 he was awarded first in the category of Wildlife Photography by the Department of Environment & Forests and Tourism, Government of Assam.

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