

**AN  
APPROACH PAPER  
For  
A Convention on  
KARBI NATIONAL INTEGRITY  
Venue :-Diphu Indoor Stadium  
Date:- 4th -5th June, 2005.**

*Respected delegates, guests, intellectuals and friends —*

At the very outset, I on behalf of the organising committee, take this opportunity to welcome you to this august gathering and at the same time wish to express my sincere thanks and heartfelt gratitude for your wholehearted participation in today's convention, Kardonm !

As we all know, we Karbis are one of the oldest and major hills tribes in the North-East India. The Karbis were referred to as the Columbus of Assam by historians and sociologists. However, unlike Columbus who initiated the colonisation and exploitation of the Americas, the Karbis never colonised this land but today find themselves colonised, marginalised and increasingly dispossessed in return. The Karbis are dispersed all over the vast North Eastern states — from Nagaland to Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya to even in fringes of Bangladesh besides the hills districts of Karbi Anglong and N.C Hills to the plain districts of Nagaon, Marigaon, Sonitpur, Sivasagar, North Lakhimpur, Darrang, Golaghat, Cachar and Kamrup. The geo-political divide notwithstanding, the Karbis of both the plains and the hills share common cultural root, linguistic tradition, heritage and aspire for a common identity.

We feel fortunate to be able to host this Convention in Karbi Anglong— home to the majority of Karbis, thanks to the dedication, struggles and visionary efforts of the late Semsonsing Ingti, Khorsing Terang and the founder stalwarts of the 'Karbi Adorbar' who bequeathed us this land. We pay them our deepest respects while recalling their immeasurable contribution towards building a foundation for a Karbi nationality beyond the boundaries of the present Karbi Anglong. The seeds of Karbi identity implanted by the founding fathers of Karbi Adorbar in the early 50s, beginning with the creation of Karbi Anglong District later empowered with the 6th Schedule, have however failed to capitalise on the foundation and wasted away opportunities to progress on an equal footing with the other hill brethren. As we retrospect, the opportunity given to us in the wake of the creation of Meghalaya in the 70s for redemarcating the Karbi inhabited areas to create a separate political entity, independent of both Assam and Meghalaya, has remained a distant dream — due mainly to the lack of the imagination and political farsightedness of the Karbi leaders then. Our nationalist vision, in convening this deliberation, has given us the courage to dream for a Karbi National Integrity against the forces of division and disaster.

#### The Crisis within

The quirk played by history on the Karbis and the centuries of geo-political divide have left a seemingly irreversible fate—that of having to perpetually live apart and live on the edges. And within the greater Karbi society —fashioned by the histories of decades of dispossession and geo-political divide—a Karbi psyche has come to characterise with division within divisions as manifested by the deep rooted socio-political divisions of the present day Karbi organisations and leadership—whether political, cultural or social. The intellectual poverty is evidenced by the lack of leadership. Petty-politicking is creating as much chaos and confusions as the ideologies that are dividing and destroying the common Karbis everyday. The disastrous result is — the degradation of the national organisations into mere political appendages, particularly the student and cultural organisations like the KSA and KCS. The multiplicity of organisations demanding Autonomous State has unfortunately failed to serve the desired purpose as ideological differences are pulling us apart seems to have become redundant while the breakthrough is still a far cry. Of late the demand for Separate State under Article-3 is gaining support from various intellectuals, students and youths with the signing of the ceasefire agreement between the UPDS and the Central Govt. But factionalism within the KSA



and the KCS is seen by the common people as most unfortunate and unless a serious reconciliation effort is made by all nationalist forces to shed all our differences, sever all ties with electoral politics to stand under one roof — our aspirations for a Karbi national integrity will remain captive as ever.

Disunity has taken its toll on the faction ridden Karbi society as seen during the recent Karbi-Kuki clash, Karbi-Khasi clash along the Meghalaya border and the recent exodus of Karbis from NC Hills on the aftermath of the DHD attacks. Besides, the ever increasing influx is threatening the demographic pattern and the apprehension of Karbis becoming a minority is staring in our face today. Beside these, the Karbis residing in other districts and states are being treated as second class citizens and even their basic rights are perpetually denied by the majority tribes as exemplified by the plights of the Karbis living in the plains and neighbouring states. The State Govt. and others with vested interest are openly engaged in taking away the traditional Karbi lands in Kamrup, Sonitpur, Sibsagar, Darrang, Golaghat, North Lakhimpur, Nowgaon and Morigaon in the name of 'development'. Sport complexes, Oil installations, Paper mills, Capital complex, Army Cantonments and State Zoo to just name a few — have displaced the defenceless Karbis from their traditional habitat. In the tribal belts & blocks, the Karbi population is fast dwindling in the 'census politics' as part of the conspiracy to de-tribalise these Karbi homes.

In Karbi Anglong, the division within the various Karbi camps — petty-politics has taken the upper hand that are fuelling an atmosphere of mutual distrust and creating more distance among the Karbis while the political parties are indulging in mudslinging and rampant corruption. Hence the core issues of Karbi autonomy, border problems coupled with intermittent influx, joblessness, development standstill etc. are not addressed with any sincerity.

#### **The quest for Karbi National Integrity —**

Karbi history is replete with countless instances of divisions even to the point of fratricidal wars, blame it on the geo-political divide or the legacy of political blunders committed by our leaders, both past and present. In our own present day experiences — the multiplicity of political parties and organisations seem to have added only to more complexity of the Karbi situation where we are continually overwhelmed by the dark realities of divisions along political, cultural and social lines. The core issue of Karbi re-union or socio-political integrity — beyond geographical boundaries and political disposition — has however not found place in the agenda of any of these formations. The present Convention must endeavour to seek practical answers to this issue — how to evolve a consensus to create a foundation for Karbi National Integrity? If we look into the contemporary history of tribal situation in the North East — in spite of the strong current of forces acting against tribal nationalism — the Nagas, Mizos, Khasis, Boros and of late even the Dimasas have all explored their own situations to evolve a Common Nationalist Forum to advance their national causes and issues. Can't we take lessons from their experiences? We believe, Karbi nationalist aspiration only complements and strengthens the overall regional aspirations of various nationalities and tribes for common betterment and that is where the unavoidable issue of Karbi National Integration lies. Issues affecting the Karbis in Karbi Anglong or NC Hills, where they enjoy a semblance of 'autonomy' under the Autonomous Councils, must consider themselves fortunate in comparison to the other less fortunate brethren living in Arunachal Pradesh who have been denied the ST (H) status in 1985. So are the 'Bhoi Mynris' (Karbhis) of Meghalaya's Ri-bhoi district who are under constant threat of being evicted from their traditional habitat on the slightest pretext. Morigaon Karbis are undergoing a complex process of 'assimilation' beyond recognition. In Kamrup and Dimoria — Karbis are constantly deprived of their lands and treated as 'foreigners' in their own homes where some obscure by-lane and street names in Guwahati remind us of the past. In Nowgaon, the Karbis despite their geographical proximity to Karbi Anglong and sharing the same cultural and linguistic tradition are forced to live in isolation as a victim of geo-political divide. The Cachar Karbis are a lot — forgotten and forsaken and on the fringe of existence. In the NC Hills, the thousands of acres of virgin Karbi lands are not only eaten up by the NEEPCO project that has destabilised the tribal demography but also are destroying the ecology beyond redemption.

As we gather here to address the crisis — what is ideal before us may not necessarily be practical in the election-oriented political parlance but a beginning has to be made — it is now or never. We realise that in the present juncture, where we are shackled to our past and haunted by the paradoxes of petty-politics, it is



nevertheless an easy task. As much as we are pained seeking a Karbi National Integrity, so must the political parties and their formations and demonstrate their wisdom to reorient their priorities to overcome the Karbi National Crisis. This is the time when the centuries of separation creating a mind-set inimical to our common existence and common fate must be buried in the past and not rake it up today.

**On Autonomy Issue —**

The divergence on the concept of autonomy needs not baffle us. It is a matter to be resolved through the spirit of Karbi national reconciliations. We believe that the present mindset of confining our attention only to the problems of Karbis of Assam Hills needs to be redefined. Any solution must come as a package benefitting the Karbis in other areas as well while putting up a common effort for expediting any negotiation efforts for lasting understanding, peace and progress.

For us, Karbi National Integration calls for a common non political platform to take up the issues confronting the Karbis from all corners taking lessons from the past mistakes and differences of opinions. We invite your valued opinions and critical views on the nomenclature of the common platform so that we can go all out and engage ourselves in the historic task of Karbi integration shedding all our political, ideological and religious or geographical peculiarities.

Respected friends,

Our common realisation that the issue of Karbi National Integrity is not the issue confronting Karbi Anglong alone, it is our common aspiration for greater Karbi nationality. We are aware, the expansion of this concept entails sacrifices and hard work. During our journey ahead, we are bound to come face to face with social, economic and political issues. And issues of our own crumbling national values and traditions that have weakened our community life, the basic tenets of being a Karbi — that demand our positive intervention. It is a crusade and a test of our determination. Let us all make this happen. Let us begin a new chapter of Karbi awakening.

In conclusion, let me thank you all members of the respected Presidium, delegates, intellectuals and friends from far and near, for bearing with us and I invite you all to participate in the deliberations with your thoughtful insights on issues and problems — in order to enrich and develop upon the brief the Approach Paper placed before you.

Kardom and Thank You all —

On behalf of the  
Organising Committee of  
Karbi National Convention

(Bikram Teron)  
Convenor

**ARISE ALL KARBIS  
RISE IN UNITY!**

**NO MORE ENMITY  
ALL FOR UNITY**

**AWAKE ALL KARBIS  
ARISE WITH HEAD HELD HIGH**

**LONG LIVE KARBI UNITY**



**RESOLUTION ADOPTED AT THE MEETING OF ALL THE ELECTED LEADERS OF  
KARBI ANGLONG AT THE INGLONG CHEROP COMMUNITY HALL, DIPHU, ON  
THE 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2003 .**

TAKING NOTE of the determination of the indigenous people of Karbi Anglong to achieve self-rule(Hemprek) as manifested through the three decades long movement of varied form and intensity —

RECOGNISING that the first phase of the movement for Hemprek began along with the Hill State movement of the APHLC and albeit its failure to evoke popular support, had successfully articulated the need for Hemprek; that the second phase of the movement which had begun immediately after the re-organisation of the North East in 1971 till the formation of the ASDC on 17th May 1986, and KAASDCOM /KANCHASDCOM later on in the same year, though limited to petitioning and occasional public meeting, had its share of historical importance having provided continuity to the movement; that the third phase of the movement led by the ASDC, KSA and KNCA had received unprecedented mass support and had been successful in drawing the attention of the government and the intelligentsia although the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between them and the government on the 1st April, 1995 fell far short of the expectation of the people of Karbi Anglong; that the KAASDCOM-led movement which ran parallel to the ASDC-led movement, in spite of its failure to evoke mass support, had played the crucial role of an opposition and had successfully kept the ASDC-led movement on its toes; and that responding to the need of the hour the UPDS which initially came into existence as KNV and KPF had taken the movement to a new height through armed struggle and had successfully brought a sense of urgency to the resolution of the Hemprek demand movement —

REALISING that there are differences in the nature of the demands— like higher autonomy within the Sixth Schedule, Autonomous State under Art.244(A), full-fledged State under Article-3, et al — which have not only created avoidable confusions but have also provided the government with the opportunity to turn down the demand for Hemprek Kangthim and hence a restructuring of the demand into a single acceptable demand is urgently called for —

REALISING ALSO that organisational discords of the demand groups have fractured every section of the people of Karbi Anglong on political lines and have not only weakened the movement for Hemprek, but have exposed our contradictions to the trickery of anti-Hemprek forces; and hence the unity of the people through the unity of the leaders concerned is urgently called for—

NOTING that whatever be the political compulsions of the various demand groups in floating their respective brands of Hemprek, the fact remains that Karbi Anglong is a piece of the erstwhile Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas and deserve to be granted at least the status and concessions being enjoyed by the other pieces of the same area, namely Meghalaya, Nagaland and Mizoram, i.e.Hemprek Kangthim, even just for the sake of natural justice—

RECALLING that the first opportunity for Hemprek was provided by the Central government in the wake of the re-organisation of Assam in 1970 in the form of a call for exercise of option but the leaders of Assam, with the motive of preserving geographical contiguity with the Barak Valley, had politically bulldozed the free will of the leaders of Karbi Anglong and tactfully scuttled the right of option; that the second opportunity was earned through the sweat and toil of the mass people in the early 1990s which led to the signing of the MoU on 1st April 1995 but the unreasonable and unrealistically stubborn stand of the government not to grant statehood to the hill areas of Assam had sabotaged the final resolution of the issue—



RECOGNISING that the interest of the people of Karbi Anglong is paramount and the realization of Hemptrek Kangthim precedes all other issues in importance—

RECOGNISING FURTHER that a third opportunity to resolve the demand for Hemptrek Kangthim has been earned through the blood and sacrifices of the people under the leadership of the UPDS and the opportunity calls for the goodwill and active support of all sections of the people of Karbi Anglong, more so of the elected leaders—

HENCE, THE UNDERSIGNED ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE OF KARBI ANGLONG in the true spirit of national unity, patriotism and moral responsibility, on this the Thirtieth day of September 2003 agree and resolve —

1. With the understanding not to pursue vested political agenda in the forum, to launch a joint parliamentary forum to be known as KARBI ANGLONG PARLIAMENTARY FRONT (KAPF) with a 9(nine)-member Standing Committee comprising of a Convenor and a Spokesman. The purpose of the forum shall be to act unitedly on issues of Karbi Anglong people's common interests namely—the demand for Hemptrek Kangthim, and issues involving human rights violations, influx problem and border disputes.
2. To elect Sri Dhansing Kro, EM, KAAC and Sri Elwin Teron, MAC, KAAC as the Convenor and the Spokesman of the front respectively. It is further resolved to elect Sri Dharamsing Teron, MLA, Sri Jotson Bey, MAC, KAAC and Sri Chomang Kro, MAC, KAAC as the members of the Standing Committee while four other seats of the Standing Committee have been reserved for future induction. The KAPF shall start functioning with immediate effect.
3. To extend moral, physical and political support to the on-going peace talks between the UPDS and the government
4. To offer the services of any member(s) of the Karbi Anglong Parliamentary Front (KAPF) to the UPDS in whatever capacity that may be required in the effort to make the peace talks successful.
5. That a Consultative Body comprising of the representatives of all political parties and demand organisations active in Karbi Anglong to aid and advise the KAPF shall also be constituted as soon as convenient.

Adopted.

*R. Jaiso* 30/09/03  
(Chairman of the meeting)

Duly endorsed.

1. Dharamsing Teron, MLA — *(Signature)*  
30/09/03
2. Elwin Teron, MAC — *(Signature)*  
30/09/03
3. Jagat Sing Engli, MLA — *(Signature)*  
30/09/03
4. Dipendra Rongpi, MAC — *(Signature)*  
30/09/03



5. Shui, Jotson Bay, M.A.C.

30/9/03

6. Chomang Kuo, MAC

30/9/03

7. Riso Singnar MAC Riso  
30/9

8. Rausing Jorki MAC - Kunkh

9. Pradeep Romgpi MAC - 30/09/03  
Romgpi

10. Singnoth Koro - MAC

30/9/03

11. Chandindip Rousang - MAC

30/9/03

R. Riso  
30/09/03



**Memorandum to**  
**Sri BJ Reddy (Retrd Justice),**  
**Hon'ble Chairman of the**  
**Review Committee on the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958**  
**Submitted jointly by the**  
**the Karbi Students' Association (KSA),**  
**Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC),**  
**Karbi Technical Unemployed Youths' Association (KTUYA),**  
**Karbi Youth Organisation (KYO)**

*Date : 10th February, 2005 : Camp : Guwahati*

Hon'ble Sir,

We, on behalf of the the Karbi Students' Association (KSA), Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC), Karbi Technical Unemployed Youths' Association (KTUYA), Karbi Youth Organisation (KYO), representing various sections of the people in the two hills districts of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills in central Assam, welcome you in our midst with a deep sense of anguish. We thank you for giving us the opportunity to present before you our views to the Committee headed by you and pray that you will recommend for totally scrapping the "Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958" considering the following facts —

Hon'ble Sir,

The two hills districts of Karbi Anglong and NC Hills in Assam, once recognised as the bastion of peace and communal harmony in the north east of India, with the lowest conviction rate in the entire country, today boast of a host of ethnic insurgencies.

As you are aware sir, the AFSPA traces its legacy to the "Armed Forces (Special Powers) Ordinance, 1942", promulgated by the colonial rulers to suppress the rising tide of the Quit India Movement against the British Raj. The colonial British felt the necessity of giving extraordinary (martial) powers to the British army to brutally contain the militancy and insurgency of Indians. Five years latter, the British left. Six years later, the "Assam Maintenance of Public Order (Autonomous Districts) Act" was enacted and legislated to contain the militancy and insurgency of Nagas. In 1955, the "Assam Disturbed Areas Act" was legislated, which latter became "Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act of 1958". The 1972 and 1986 Amendments enlarged the operational areas of the 1958 Act to the whole of "north-east India" and it thereafter became entitled AFSPA.

Since then, the two hills districts of Karbi Anglong and NC Hills in Assam have been perpetually under the continuing spell of Assam Disturbed Areas Act, 1955— the only ridiculous reason being the two districts' proximity to the Naga inhabited areas then declared 'distured' 'to meet the exigencies of the Naga insurgency. The Assam Disturbed Areas Act, 1955, is still operative in the state of Assam with the required notifications designating the 'disturbed areas' (previously the reserve forests on the Assam-Nagaland border in Karbi Anglong and NC Hills) renewed every six months and duly published in the Assam Gazette.

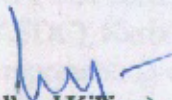
There are scores of unrecorded cases of violations of human rights and civil liberties in these two hills doistricts. On the flimsiest grounds, ordinary villagers, students, portestors and picketers have been subjected to routine and random arrests, detention, torture and harrassments by dragging on the litigations in various courts by the whimsical application of this Act. Peaceful public assemblies are never allowed in

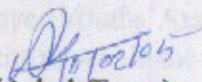



the hills without going through the rigmarole of so-called official procedures thereby denying the hill people their democratic rights and the continued application of the Act is still a major source of human rights abuses. But the recorded and unrecorded human rights and civil liberties abuses by the various agencies of the law-enforcing agencies since the early 1955 in the hills have, by and large, remained unnoticed due to the slow mobilisation of indigenous protest movements and the overall backwardness of the people in the areas. The Assam Disturbed Areas Act, 1955 that was 'designed' to stop and counter the infiltration of Naga insurgencies into the hills of Karbi Anglong and NC Hills has not only failed to achieve its objectives, but the thoroughly oppressive Act has only created more protests and 'disturbances' in recent times. The recent events in Manipur demonstrate the intentional 'misuse' of the Act by the security forces in its most crude and cruel form. The state legislation of 1955 that has been in operation in the whole of Karbi Anglong and NC Hills — and from which the Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act, 1958, a piece of central legislation, both identical in their oppressive nature, must therefore be scrapped to free the hill people from bondage.

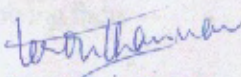
We, therefore appeal to you to recommend the scrapping of both the AFSPA, 1958 and the Assam Disturbed Areas Act, 1955, in the same manner as the scrapping of POTA.

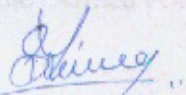
Thanking you Sir,

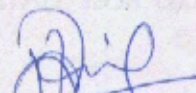
  
(Rolland Killing)  
President, KSA

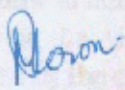
  
(Ashok Teron)  
Vice President, KSA

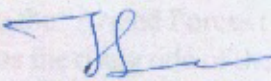
  
(Rajen Enghet)  
Advisor, KSA

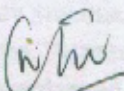
  
(Thanuram Teron)  
President, KTUYA

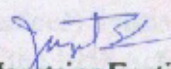
  
(Suresh Timung)  
General Secretary, KTUYA

  
(Horsing Timung)  
Advisor, KTUYA

  
(Mrinoy Teron)  
President, KYO

  
(Tennyson Teron)  
Cherap Seroi (NGO)

  
(Dharamsing Teron)  
MLA, ASDC

  
(Jagatsing Engti)  
MLA, ASDC

Encl : Chronology of atrocities committed by various security agencies on innocent people in Karbi areas



**A MEMORANDUM  
SUBMITTED TO  
THE UNION HOME MINISTER OF INDIA  
BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF  
THE UNITED PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY (UPDS)  
OF KARBI ANGLONG AND NORTH CACHAR HILLS**

**Dated the      January 2005.**

Respected Sir,

The undersigned on behalf of the United Peoples Democratic Solidarity (UPDS) respectfully greet you on your assumption of office as the Home Minister of India. We are deeply grateful for your magnanimity to grant us an audience regardless of your heavy schedule. Kindly allow us to seize this opportunity to present hereunder the adversities and aspirations of the people of the remaining two hill districts of Assam, namely Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills:

1. We recall with reverence the historic call of the first Prime Minister of Independent India, the Late Jawaharlal Nehru during his meeting with the All Party Hill Leaders Conference (APHLC) in the Conference Room of the MEA on the 4th October, 1963, that the hill people of Assam should be given the "highest autonomy" possible in order to remove the sense of "alien treatment" being felt by them under the administration of the Government of Assam. It was aimed at resolving the problems of centuries of incompatible co-existence between the people of the hills and the plains who, according to Sir Robert N Reid, Governor of Assam (1939-42) in his *A Note on the Future of the Present Excluded, Partially Excluded and Tribal Areas of Assam*, were "ethnologically, linguistically and culturally different" and had "conflicting interests". The remaining two hills were very much a part of the APHLC movement. In fact it was the Third Conference of the APHLC held at Haflong in North Cachar Hills under the Chaimanship of a Dimasa leader Jayabhadra Hagjer on the 16th November, 1960, which for the first time demanded separation of the hills areas from Assam.

2. The wish of the First Prime Minister of this great Nation ultimately found expression in the creation of Meghalaya and Mizoram but the destiny of the remaining two hills, namely Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills, has remained trapped in the insistence of the Assamese leadership to maintain geographical contiguity with the Barak Valley, thus in the attempt to gratify the Assamese interest only a partial political emancipation of the hill people was effected. As a result the remaining hill people being stranded in Assam are today neglected, abused and weighed down.

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3. Over three decades of peaceful petitioning by various organizations representing the two hill areas demanding political emancipation from Assam had evoked little sympathy from the government forcing us to take up arms against our will. But the decision of the Government of India to pay attention to our plea leading to the Ceasefire agreement with us since the 1st August 2002 has brought a new ray of hope for peace, emancipation and prosperity in the region. In the meantime we have submitted our Charter of Demands to the Government of India.

4. In pursuance of the Ceasefire Agreement two rounds of official talks with the representatives of the Union Government and the State Government have been held – the First on the 11th June 2003 and the Second on the 29th March 2004. In the First round talks, the Charter of Demands was accepted as the basis for further discussion.

Hon'ble Sir,

Our hope is raised further by the return of the Congress Party to the Union Government because it was the Congress governments both at the State and the Center, which took the bold step to politically rehabilitate our fellow hill tribal brethren through the Assam Re-organization Act, 1969 and subsequently the North-East Re-organization Act, 1971. We respectfully submit that the immediate resumption of talks to find a lasting political solution of the people of the remaining two hill areas will go along way in the restoration of peace and socio-economic stability of the North-Eastern region. It is our humble request to your kind authority to pursue the peace process vigorously and grant justice to the people of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills, which is long overdue. May the Almighty grant you long life so that the Nation is blessed by your service for many more years.

Respectfully submitted.

(Ke-ap Tisso)

Vice-Chairman

United Peoples' Democratic Solidarity

(Wojaru Mukrang)

Joint Secretary

United Peoples' Democratic Solidarity



MEMORANDUM  
SUBMITTED TO  
SRI SHIVRAJ PATIL  
THE HONOURABLE THE MINISTER OF INDIA  
JOINTLY BY  
KSA/KY/KTUYA/KLA/HIMA/KLDC/KNCA/KRAA/KAAU

## MEMORANDUM

Dated Diphu March 28th 2005

Submitted to  
**SRI SHIVRAJ PATIL**  
THE HONOURABLE HOME MINISTER  
OF INDIA

Through the Deputy Commissioner, Karbi Anglong

JOINTLY BY  
KYO/KSA/KTUYA/KLA/HIMA/KLDC/KNCA/KRAA/KAAU

Dated Diphu March 28th 2005



MEMORANDUM  
SUBMITTED TO  
SRI SHIVRAJ PATIL  
THE HONOURABLE HOME MINISTER OF INDIA  
JOINTLY BY  
KSA/KYO/KTUYA/KLĀ/HIMA/KLDC/KNCA/KRAA/KAAU

Through the Deputy Commissioner, Karbi Anglong, Assam

Dated Diphu March 28th 2005

Hon'ble Sir,

With deep respect and sincere hope, the undersigned organisations, in the presence of Lakhs of the deprived and neglected people of Karbi Anglong in a Solidarity Rally today at the KASA Stadium, Diphu, humbly take the opportunity to convey to you the plea of the hill people as a whole:

On the on-going peace talks between the Government of India and the UPDS

The sight of the awesome convergence of people from all walks of life and from every nook and corner of Karbi Anglong under very difficult conditions to the KASA Stadium, Diphu today, testifies to the profound desire of the people for the early successful conclusion of the on-going peace talks between the government and the UPDS. The Karbis along with the indigenous communities of this rich, but much abused hill area, have immensely suffered in the past from all fronts keeping them a century behind the other hill tribes in terms of socio-economic development. The area — is virtually exposed to the relentless onslaught of outsiders threatening the very existence of the indigenous communities, is perpetually shackled to backwardness, deprivation and hopelessness, is enslaved to Assam's need to preserve its territorial integrity with the Barak Valley and is forced to bear the brunt of unmitigated series of political unrest and violence since the 1960s when insurgents first detonated a bomb at the Diphu Railway Station. Insurgency and counter-insurgency violence have both claimed their agonising toll and the common man have had their cupful of woes and have been forced to lead painful existence. In such pathetic situation, the aspiration of the hill people remain the right to self determine their socio-political destiny, safeguards for the protection of their geo-political space, freedom from exploitation and domination in every field, freedom from abuse of human rights, justice and the need to preserve self-respect. The peace-talks between the UPDS and the government is therefore the opportunity, we the people of Karbi Anglong, are pinning our hope and aspirations on.

The indigenous people of Karbi Anglong have converged on Diphu today and hereby register their support for the peace talks. This Solidarity Rally appeal to both the UPDS and the Government not to backtrack on their commitment for peace. We note with despair the fact that imprudent and belligerent police disposition towards the UPDS functionaries at the ground level and the failure of the State government to instill confidence are constantly threatening the peace process. It will be a sad day if the opportunity for peace is squandered due to mere indiscretion and bickering



Our Stand on Greater Nagalim

We protest with all the seriousness at our command the move to include certain portions of Karbi Anglong in the proposed Nagalim. The move is nothing but a dangerous attempt to rescue the NSCN(IM) leaders in their attempt to bring about an honourable end to their six decades old movement at the cost of making Karbi Anglong the unfortunate scapegoat. The undersigned appeal to you to appreciate the fact that the Nagas have no valid claims whatsoever, historical or otherwise, to lay claim on the territorial areas of Karbi Anglong. This Solidarity Rally once again reiterates the vehement opposition of all sections of the people of Karbi Anglong against the Nagalim plan and hereby demand its immediate abandonment.

Respectfully Submitted.

Yours Sincerely,

*Mr. M. Teron*

(MRINOY TERON)

Karbi Youth Organisation (KYO)

*Upendra*

Karbi Students' Association (KSA)

*Thanuram Teron*  
(THANURAM TERON)

Karbi Technical Unemployed Youth Association (KTUYA)

*President (Khausing Tokhi)*

Karbi Lamet Amai (KLA)

*P.S.D.*  
(Baidar Sing Ronghai)  
Hemphu Mukrang Asong (HMA)

*Chairman (Khausing Tokhi)*  
Karbi Langpi Development Committee (KLDC)

*Sika Killiangpi*  
Karbi Nimso Chingthur Asong (KNCA)

*Sukumar Nagma Meyna*  
Karbi Anglong A'chik Union (KAAU)  
*Secretary (Khausing Tokhi)*  
Karbi Rong Asar Asong (KRAA)





GOVERNMENT OF  
**K/ANGLONG - N. C. HILLS SELF RULE TERRITORY  
(GKNSRT)**

ADMINISTERED BY  
**THE UNITED PEOPLES' DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY (UPDS)**

Ref. No. 52/CEC/GKNSRT/UPDS

Date 27-11-03

A

**Memorandum**

**Submitted by the United Peoples' Democratic Solidarity (UPDS)**

**To**

**His Excellency Lt Gen.(Retd) Ajay Sing, PVSM AVSM**

**The Hon'ble Governor of Assam**

**On his august visit to Karbi Anglong on the 27th November, 2003.**

**May it please Your Excellency —**

The Karbi people, the humble citizens of India, respectfully welcome Your Excellency's gracious visit to our humble abode with our traditional **KARDOM**. We hope this august visit, at a time when Mother Karbi Anglong is reeling under the weight of her existence in a hostile milieu, will generate optimism in the otherwise grim atmosphere.

Let it be known that the Karbi people are legendary in their love for peace and the might of arms that have been thrust upon us by the caprices of our national destiny is alien to our nature. But peaceful petitioning and democratic movements during the past thirty years have failed to impress our national leadership about the discriminations that the Karbis have been subjected to as compared with their fellow tribal of the erstwhile Excluded and Partially Excluded areas in Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram who have been preferred and pampered; while Karbi Anglong has been left at the mercy of infiltrators, exploiters and invaders. The recent ethnic conflicts are the consequences of the neglect and apathy of the successive governments towards the problems faced by the Karbis.

Therefore, peace at the cost of the interest of the Karbi people is unacceptable. For so long in our history we have been subservient to the wishes of the State and National leaders, only to find ourselves neglected, deprived, traumatized and betrayed, so that the indigenous people have been reduced to a minority, their rights encroached upon and are condemned to be refugees in the land of their ancestors.

Contd.....

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*Self - Determination is our basic Human Right.  
Self - Rule is our Legitimate Right, We shall have it.*

**- UPDS**





GOVERNMENT OF  
**K/ANGLONG - N. C. HILLS SELF RULE TERRITORY  
(GKNSRT)**

ADMINISTERED BY  
**THE UNITED PEOPLES' DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY (UPDS)**

Ref. No. 52/CEC/GKNSRT/UPDS

- 2 -

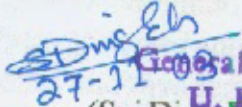
Date 27-11-03

The aggression on our economy, our rights, our habitat and our polity must end, so that we also may, with pride and dignity, be a part of the Indian Union to steer our destiny through our own genius. To achieve that objective we have decided to co-operate with the government in the search for a peaceful solution to our problems.

Peace in Karbi Anglong will, however, depend on the sincerity of the government, and all eyes are focussed on the progress of our on-going talks with the government. It is therefore our ardent hope that Your Excellency will bless our humble effort to find peace and sustenance for the Karbi people and also gracefully be pleased to impress upon both the Government of Assam and the Union Government not to slacken the pace of the sincere search for a comprehensive and sustainable solution to our demand for Hemptek Kangthim (genuine autonomy).

**Kardom.**

Yours faithfully,

  
27-11-03  
**General Secretary,**  
**U. P. D. S.**  
(Sai Ding-Chh)  
General Secretary, UPDS.

*Self - Determination is our basic Human Right.  
Self - Rule is our Legitimate Right, We shall have it.*

**- UPDS**



To,

**Shri Rajiv Agarwal,**  
Jt. Secretary (NE)  
Ministry of Home Affairs &  
Chairman,  
Joint Monitoring Group

Dated

Hon'ble Sir,

The undersigned on behalf of United Peoples' Democratic Solidarity (UPDS) would like to make you known our dismay and concern for your kind attention and immediate perusal.

That sir, the political process for negotiation with Union govt. has been leading to nowhere since the last informal talks held on 29th April 2004. At that meeting it was decided the next round of talk will be held tentatively in the first week of June 2004, but 6 month had gone past since but it never materialize. By this delayed and stagnant, we are made to understand that the govt. has abandon the negotiation process with UPDS and left us in lurk. Therefore without moving forward with the agenda of political negotiation on the issues placed before the govt. we believe there is no other issue preceding more important than this to discuss.

That sir, the decision taken at the JMG meeting were never implemented and complied with by various security forces at the ground, although high officials of the security agency were parts of meeting and decisions. The last JMG meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2004, has taken a decision that all UPDS arms seize by security forces will be return within 15 days but it was never implemented in the last 9 months. We even sent you remainders through fax in this regard, dated 20<sup>th</sup> April 2004 and dated 6<sup>th</sup> September 2004 but no favourable action has come from your end. If the decisions of the meeting cannot be implemented then we believe, the ritual JMG meeting has no any significance and we have no point to attend.

That sir, while we going hard after the KLNLF the security forces- especially the State police and CRPF are going after us by seizing our arms and firing at our cadres. The CRPF patrol party led by DSP has seized arrested two of our cadres with one AK-56 with 3 magazine and one 9mm pistol from Chokihola in October though the boys were release the arms were not return. In this incident, the local police from Santipur Police Out-post has identify the boys as UPDS cadres and the need to release them with arms but the CRPF never listen to it. Then on 7<sup>th</sup> December CRPF personals from Jengkha ambushed our cadres



injuring one and seizing one AK-56, knowingly without any rhymes and reason. Besides this, in our last meeting with Jt. Director, SIB the JD had also inform us of the govt. displeasure over UPDS on the issue of KLNLF indefinite blockade. One hand we are pursued by security forces on our back while on the other hand we are accused of not doing enough to neutralize KLNLF. All this development has made us to think, what the real intention of the govt. is in regard to the peace process with UPDS.

We now look forward to your kind initiatives to immediately find solutions to the above mention points and the initiatives from your end will restore our confidence and the chances of advancing towards a meaningful solution of our demands.

With regards.

Yours sincerely,

*W. Mulerang*  
(*Wajid Swakrang*)  
Jt. Secretary,  
UPDS.



To

Hon'ble Sri L.K. Advani,  
The Deputy Prime Minister &  
Union Minister for Home Affairs etc.,  
Government of India,  
North Block, New Delhi.

Attention :

Sri Rajiv Agarwall  
Joint Secretary, North East,  
Ministry of Home Affairs,  
Government of India, New Delhi.

Dated 16th December, 2003

Hon'ble Sir,

With deep sense of anguish and outrage, we, the undersigned, on behalf of the United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS), beg to bring to your kind and immediate notice some disturbing developments taking place at the behest of the army personnels.

That Sir, we had entered into peace dialogues with the Union Government with the hope that the issues raised by us will receive favourable responses in the greater interest of peace and progress. But we are deeply anguished to inform you that the army has chosen to conduct unprovoked raids, confiscate documents, cash, arrest our leaders and even kill some of our cadres as the following incidents reveal :

**23 July, 2003 :**

The native house of Sri Ke-ap Tisso, Vice Chairman of UPDS at 6th Mile Diphu, was raided where a cadre named Anong Teron (23) was shot dead point blank at his sleep. The cadre assigned the task of a PSO to the Vice Chairman was in possession of a Pass issued by the IGP (SB), Govt. of Assam. The arms confiscated from the cadre had not been returned and no any plausible explanation to the incident was given.

**15th December, 2003 :**

> An army column raided the native house of Sri Thong Teron (35), Defence Secretary of the UPDS at Satgaon Main Bazar under Baithalangso Police Station at around 3:00 in the wee hours. The army arrested Sri Teron, his PSO and three civilians from the house. He is still under army custody at Shankar Nagar, Nowgaon District. One AK-47 and .38 mm pistol alongwith ammunitions were confiscated. The army has refused any meeting of the leader even with his



family members so far.

> The army again raided the native house of Sri Longsodar Senar (40), Chairman of UPDS at Loringthepe (Jengkha) under Kheroni Police Station at around 6-30 to 7:00 pm. The house was ransacked as Sri Senar was then not in the house.

> The same army personnels then raided the native house of Capt. Akar Teron (28) of UPDS at Kolonga under Baithalangso Police Station. The army shot dead his brother-in-law, Rasing Kro, a 22 year old student, after taking him in custody at around 8-30 pm.

Regarding all these incidents, when we contacted the Karbi Anglong District Administration, they feigned ignorance. So far, we are yet to get any clue as to why the army had resorted to such unprovoked raids, detention of leaders, killing of cadres and civilians in cold-blooded manner and confiscation of documents etc.

Now Sir, in view of these disturbing incidents, we deserve to get clarifications from the Union Home Ministry as to why the army is resorting to such unprovoked actions against us. We are deeply anguished to inform the Union Home Ministry that under these conditions, the cease-fire agreement between the UDPS and the Union Government is becoming unworkable and meaningless. We condemn these unprovoked raids, detentions and killings by the army in the harshest terms. Under these circumstances, we are at the dark whether the truce is still in place and whether the truce is meant to create conditions conducive to a permanent solution for which we had all along been cooperating with the Union Government. The behaviour of the army and district administration is bound to create more misunderstanding and tension and if it is continued, we are afraid, our faith in the commitments of the Union Government will erode. We now look forward to your kind initiatives to immediately stop these sorts of unprovoked raids, detentions, killings and return all the confiscated cash, authorised arms and ammunitions and documents to us. We believe, these initiatives from your end will restore our confidence in the truce and the chances of advancing towards a meaningful solution of our demands.

With regards,

Yours Sincerely,

*Sai Ding-eh*  
16/12/83  
(Sai Ding-eh)  
General Secretary, UPDS

General Secretary,

U. P. D. S.



**CONSULTATIVE MEETING  
TO ASSESS THE OFFICIAL LEVEL TRIPARTITE TALKS  
INVOLVING THE GOVT. OF INDIA, THE GOVT. OF ASSAM  
AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
UNITED PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY (UPDS)**

Held at the Inglongcherop Community Hall  
22<sup>nd</sup> April 2007

**ADDRESS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY UPDS**

Dear friends, well-wishers and sympathizers,

On behalf of the UPDS I take this privilege to extend a warm KARDOM to every one present here today. Your kind presence today is a great encouragement for us at a time when we are facing a testing time ahead.

In the Consultative meeting held at this venue on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2005, we had presented our brief appraisal of the first four rounds of official talks held with the government and I remember that meeting was concluded with a positive note of hope. Since then the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Rounds of the talks were held on the 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2006 and 26<sup>th</sup> July, 2006 respectively.

Earlier in the 4<sup>th</sup> Round of the Talks, the Central Government had expressed their willingness to resolve all the outstanding issues raised by the UPDS in an acceptable framework, except the granting of statehood under Article 3 of the Constitution of India. The UPDS expressed their unwillingness to accept solutions within the framework of the Sixth Schedule, but was inclined to consider accepting the provision of Article 244(A) of the Constitution if all the power required for resolving the problems faced by the Karbis could be included in its framework including Inner Line regulations. To this the State Government vehemently opposed and it was proposed that if they were opposed to Article 244(A), the State Government should give their counter proposal for an alternative framework in place of the provisions of Article 244(A) in the next round of talk. The State Government had taken its time but was unable to propose alternative framework in the 5<sup>th</sup> round of Official Level Talk.

During this period several rounds of informal consultations with the representatives of the Government of India at various levels were also held to find acceptable solutions to the core political issues raised by the UPDS. In these informal meetings exclusively with a particular Central Government representative, views were exchanged on parameters acceptable to both the UPDS and the Government. As the talks was crystallizing to probable solutions, the representatives of both the Union and State governments started to raise strange objections during formal meetings- like the presence of non-UPDS members with the UPDS delegation, the purported violation of ceasefire ground rules by the UPDS cadres, the failure of all the UPDS cadres to remain in designated camps, etc. Whereas in reality, the issue of the presence of non-UPDS members in the UPDS delegation was resolved as early as the Second round of the talks on the principle that while it was the right of the governments to decide on the composition of their respective delegations it was also the right of the UPDS to decide on



the composition of its own delegation and the government should not dictate and there had been no objection thereafter; the Cease-fire Monitoring Group (CMG) meeting is the appropriate and competent forum to deal with issues of cease-fire ground rules violations and not the Official Level Talks meeting as concerned officials are not present in such meetings; and as for the designated camp issue the problem has been the failure of the government to provide suitable and safe accommodation. The objections, therefore, seem a deliberate ploy of the government to scuttle the fulfillment of the political aspiration of the people of Karbi Anglong with mundane issues. It was becoming increasingly apparent that the talks was not a serious attempt on the part of the government to search for a lasting political solution to the problems being faced by the people of Karbi Anglong but just a perfunctory exercise to deal with insurgency problem.

Under such attitude of the government representatives, the talk's process was becoming a futile exercise and the UPDS submitted a letter of Ultimatum to the Central government on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2006, and exactly 15 days latter after having no response from the Central Govt. the UPDS has withdrawn from the talks unilaterally. But even after that an informal meeting with the Union Home Ministry official was held just before Christmas; then the stance of the government was made absolute – that there was no question of granting statehood to the Karbi Anglong people, neither under the provision of Article 3 nor under Article 244(A) of the Constitution of India. Thereafter the matter stand at it and no informal or official talk was held since.

Since the 5<sup>th</sup> Round of the Talks this absolute stance of the government has been expected and the UPDS collective leadership has strongly felt the need to pressurize the government to agree to its demand for statehood. That is why the UPDS leadership has attempted to proactively bring in the issue of UPDS-Government Talks in the electoral agenda of political parties in the two elections that were held in Karbi Anglong during the last two years. But political parties as well as the voters have preferred to give precedence to their party agenda. Thus, democratic process seems closed to the peace process. The UPDS now finds itself in a peculiar situation – either to resort to extra democratic means to pressurize the government or to revise its demands within the parameters acceptable to the government. The first option will obviously break ceasefire with the government and bring to an end our quest for peace; the second option will surely shatter the people's aspiration for statehood. We will now require the collective wisdom of the people to carry on.

Hence, this Consultative Meeting is convened to elicit the valuable opinion of community leaders, eminent persons, political personalities, students, NGOs and the public at large. I urge everyone present here today to offer your free, frank and fearless opinion about the course the UPDS may take in its search for a peaceful solution to the problems of the Karbis and other communities living in Karbi Anglong.

**KARDOM**

Sai Ding-eh  
General Secretary  
UPDS



**AN APPRAISAL  
OF THE LAST FOUR ROUNDS OF THE TRIPARTITE TALKS HELD BETWEEN THE  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, THE GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED PEOPLES' DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY (UPDS).**

**29th June, 2005.**

Dear friends,

The peace process that started with the ceasefire declaration on the 1st August, 2002 has yielded four rounds of tripartite talks so far. In the peace process the UPDS has traversed through periods of disappointment and hope. There were trying times when the top leaders have had to face humiliations and even threat to their lives. There were instances when the Chairman and the Vice Chairman themselves came under direct physical attacks provoking adverse re-actions from the rank and file of the UPDS. The UPDS cadres have also the misfortune of facing severe military and propaganda aggression of the KLNLF inspite of the UPDS explicit call for co-operation and unity of efforts. But as a whole our commitment to peace has been remarkable in that against all odds, the UPDS has remained focussed to the objective of peaceful settlement of the Karbi political question.

The First Round of talks which was held on the 11th June, 2003 was dedicated to submission of the UPDS Charter of Demand. The UPDS team comprised of Vice Chairman Ke-ap Tisso, Jt. Secy Wojaru Mukrang, Foreign Secy Klirdap Kathar, Dr Mansing Rongpi, Surjya Rongphar. In the meantime the Charter of Demand was forwarded to the Government of Assam eliciting its opinion on the matter.

The Second Round which was held on the 28th May, 2004 was attended by Jt. Secy W. Mukrang, Foreign Secy Klirdap Kathar, Surjya Rongphar, Dharamsing Teron and George Millik. As the date was very close to Parliamentary elections, the talks could not proceed as desired. The Government of Assam could not present its views on the matter on the ground that it could interfere with the election codes of conduct.

In the Third Round which was held on the 19th January 2005, the UPDS team comprised of Vice Chairman Ke-ap Tisso, Jt. Secretary W. Mukrang, Jt Secretary Nanda Terang, Publicity Secretary T. Nongloda, with George Millick and Elwin Teron as spokesmen. The Government of Assam had failed to present its views in the talks and as the UPDS team refused to proceed further without discussion on the core political issue, that is the creation of statehood under the provision of Article 3 of the Constitution of India, that round of talks was sought to be abandoned. The Government of India wanted to proceed with talks on the economic demands, but the UPDS team stood its ground. The Government of Assam was then given the dateline of 31st March 2005 within which it would be required to convey its views to the Central government on the matter. Meanwhile the Government of India sought clarifications from the UPDS on why the provisions of the Sixth Schedule as amended upto date were not sufficient to fulfil the aspirations of the Karbi people. A detailed presentation on the matter was then made to the satisfaction of the Central government team.

In the evening, a meeting was arranged with the Hon'ble Union Home Minister Sri Shivraj Patil where the Minister reviewed the progress of the peace process so far. It was informed to the Home Minister that the delay of the Government of Assam to give its views on the political demands of the UPDS was creating hurdles in the peace process. The Home Minister reiterated the need for the Government of Assam to consider the matter urgently and send its view points within a period of one month.

The impression of the UPDS team in the Third Round was that it was necessary for the Karbi people as a whole to put pressure on the Assam government through a demonstration of public resolve so that the peace process remained on tract. The public rally held at Diphu on the 28th March 2005 was



therefore a timely demonstration of the collective will and resolve of the people that immensely helped in pushing forward the peace process.

The delegation for the Fourth Round comprised of Jt Secy W. Mukrang, Jt Secy Lindok Ronghang, Publicity Secy T. Nongloda with Elwin Teron, Upen Engti and Barnard Rongphar as spokesmen. The first impression in the meeting was that the government both of the State and the Centre were at last coming round to trying to tackle the issues raised by the UPDS. Unlike the Third round when the Government of Assam was represented by the Resident Commissioner, the Fourth Round was attended by the Home and Political Commissioner which was the right Ministry for the purpose. The Central government representative Sri Ajit Choudhary, Special Home Secretary, had in the beginning of the talks announced that the Union Government had considered the matter of disparity of fund allocation for Karbi Anglong and other tribal states of the North East, particularly the huge disparity in the per capita fund allocation for Mizoram and Karbi Anglong, and admitted that it was unjustified and needed to be rectified. The talks then considered the official views of the Government of Assam on the political demands of the UPDS which was submitted to the Centre earlier. The UPDS team requested for a copy of the State's official stand which was denied and the matter was presented at the meeting verbatim. Commenting on the Charter of Demands, Assam said that except for Demand No. 1, it was prepared to accept the rest of the demands. The UPDS team then asked Assam to justify their negative stand on the creation of a state for the Karbis. It was reminded that on earlier occasions the UPDS had justified their stand how Karbis should be separated from Assam in order to be able to prosper through their own genius; Assam was therefore required to justify why Karbis should continue to remain within Assam. The representatives from Assam failed to justify their stand. The Centre then said that the problems raised by the UPDS should be resolved within the state of Assam as at present the Government does not have any policy to create new states. The UPDS team reiterated that any settlement within Assam was unacceptable as it had demonstrated time and again that it could backtrack and betray and therefore unreliable. The most recent of such demonstration was the withdrawal of four divisional and ten sub-divisional offices of the PWD from Karbi Anglong. It was done unilaterally without any regard for the MoU signed in 1995. The Centre said that it should not have happened that way and asked the State to look into the matter immediately to which the State representatives promised to do so. The Centre then announced that it would fully support the issues raised by the UPDS team that day, namely,— **1. to ensure safety of Karbi Anglong from influx and preserve the ethnic identity of the Karbis, 2. to ensure employment guarantee for the tribal people in Karbi Anglong, 3. ensure the all-round development of the Karbis and other tribal people, and 4. to ensure the proper utilisation of the natural resources for the development of the Karbis and other tribal people.** The Centre suggested that except for the declaration of statehood, a proper political mechanism should be found to achieve the objectives. On that note the meeting ended and decided that the next round of talks would be held tentatively in the second week of August 2005.

Friends,

The talks are in an early stage and nothing can be predicted what the outcome would be. We believe that a beginning has been made and on this foundation we will have to build the future of the Karbi people and other tribal people living with us. We welcome you to our midst today and sincerely express our gratitude for your support which you have rendered to us one way or the other since the beginning. We draw our courage from you and continue to struggle with the hope that you will continue to render your valuable supports through thick and thin. It will be our duty to keep you informed about the progress of the talks from time to time and seek your valuable suggestions on the matter.

**KARDOM**

**(Sai Ding-Eh)  
General Secretary,  
UPDS.**



## **WHY KARBIS CAN NOT REMAIN IN ASSAM**

The Karbis became a part of the Assam state in Independent India without their knowledge and therefore without their consent. It is true that the opinion of the Karbi people was not sought at the time the decision was taken. The departing British rulers were against the inclusion of the hill areas in Assam. They held the view that the people of the plain and the hills were socially and economically incompatible; and the hill people being vulnerable from all sides, needed proper protection. In a note to the Simon Commission, the Provincial Government of Assam had said that "the backward tracts should be excluded from the Province of Assam as those areas had nothing in common with the rest of the province". It went on to say that "there was no sympathy on either side and the union of the hills and the plains was artificial resented by both parties; and hence in the interest of both the hills and the plains, the present artificial union should be ended".

In less than 30 years of Independent India the State of Assam disintegrated after unnecessarily creating bad blood between the people of the hills and the plains because the political leadership refused to acknowledge that reality. Till today the Karbis are forced to suffer humiliation, discrimination and neglect because successive governments have chosen to serve Assamese interest rather than pay attention to the plight of the Karbi people. Why is Assamese interest considered infallible while the interests of the Karbi people remained inconsequential in the eye of the government? It is time for the Karbi people to count their adversities under Assam and to name them one by one !

### **Karbis suffer political insubordination in Assam:**

Under Assam the Karbis have no scope to self-determine their future. They, more often than not, remain unrepresented in the Government. In the Legislature only 4 Karbis can sit in a house of 126. There is therefore no scope to influence the proceeding of the House being a bloc of insignificant minority. The problems of Karbi Anglong hardly get the attention of the Legislature. The four members have, therefore, no choice but to remain subservient to the wish of the Assamese majority in order to win whatever sympathy is possible. In the legislature of the size of say Meghalaya or Nagaland or Mizoram (which were formerly mere tribal hills districts in the state of Assam like Karbi Anglong and NC Hills), the Karbis would be always having atleast half a dozen ministers and atleast twenty legislators. In that situation the Karbis also would be determining their own destiny.

The autonomy under the Autonomous Council is a sham. The CEM can not even appoint his colleagues without the approval of the state government. There is nothing the Council can do without the pleasure of the State Government because it has retained the sole authority to advice the Governor and to act on his behalf. Karbi Anglong is rice rich, mineral rich and water resources rich with poor and backward tribal population. Assam will never let go off its lucrative political hold over the Karbis. Under Assam the Karbis will never gain freedom from centuries of political insubordination.

### **Karbis face job discrimination in Assam:**

Assam has 25 lakhs job seekers, which is three times the population of Karbi Anglong or Mizoram. The few Karbi educated youths have to compete with the most advanced and the most desperate group of educated youths of the North East. No doubt, the hill tribals, which include the Karbis, are elbowed out and even the jobs reserved for them (5%) are usurped by the majority communities of the plain districts resulting in their dismal share of just 1.6% (as on 31st March 1994). Over the years a backlog of over 18,500 posts have accumulated in respect of ST(H) which testifies the discrimination the hill tribes face under Assam. The tribal youths of Mizoram, Nagaland and Meghalaya only compete among themselves and 90% of the job is reserved for them exclusively ! Will the Karbi youths ever escape discrimination under Assam?

### **Karbis face threat of being displaced from their own land:**

Assam has failed to protect Karbi Anglong from the onslaught of outsiders. Empty spaces meant



for the future generations are all occupied by outsiders. New Karbi homemakers are now forced to migrate to the reserve forest areas where they face direct eviction from the government. The decadal decline of hill tribes in Karbi Anglong is alarming.— in 1951 they were 74.59% which came down to 51.56% in 1991. Their numbers have declined further since then. Outsiders have not only encroached into the land, dominated trade and business but have also made a dangerous impact on the political life of the hill people. In the ongoing trend, the time is not far when the chief political executive of Assam's hills would be an outsider. Fellow tribes who have their own states like Mizoram, Meghalaya and Nagaland have successfully defended their geo-political spaces showing a healthy and stable demographic trend. For instance, in 1951 tribal population in Meghalaya was 83.5% and Mizoram 98.1%. In 1991, tribal population was 85.53% in Meghalaya and 94.75% in Mizoram. Under Assam we can never protect our land !

#### **Karbis face constant fear and repression in Assam:**

Assam police and magistrates in Karbi Anglong are like colonial agents at best. While tribal magistrates and policemen in Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland maintain friendly disposition towards their fellow tribesmen, ever willing to help and protect their life and property, Assam police look at the pockets of the Karbis and treat them with contempt. Their singular aim is to instill fear so that they can extort at will. Assam police officers are generally contemptuous and disrespectful even to the Karbi leaders. Under Assam no Karbi can escape from the clutch of policemen without paying money irrespective of his innocence. Police arrest is like an industry where most are arrested on trump up charges under the pretext of arresting suspects. Crime statistics of 1998 in respect of Karbi Anglong reflects this— Murder: reported 32, convicted 1, Rape: reported 7, convicted 0, Kidnapping: reported 62, convicted 0, Dacoity: reported 39, convicted 0, Robbery: reported 40, convicted 0, Burglary: reported 57, convicted 5, Riot: reported 40, convicted 5, Criminal breach of trust: reported 5, convicted 1, Cheating: reported 4, convicted 3, Theft: reported 149, convicted 16, Counterfeiting: reported 0, convicted 0, Others: reported 339, convicted 20. **Conviction rate: 8%** This testifies that over 90% of the arrests were whimsical and unprovable in the court of law. Under Assam the Karbis can never gain self-respect and will be in constant fear of humiliation in the hands of policemen.

#### **Karbis remain the most neglected because of Assam:**

Although Karbis are the most backward of all major hill tribes in the North-East, their problems do not get the attention of the Central Government they deserve. They and the Dimasas are the only 'Excluded and Partially Excluded' tribes of Pre-Independent Assam who are yet to be conferred the benefits of statchood. The others, namely the Meghalayans, the Mizos and the Nagas, as federal entities of the Union, are today receiving the full attention and help of the Central Government and have been transformed into modern developed societies. Assam has failed to plead for the Karbis before the Central Government which resulted in huge disparity in the government expenditure between Karbi Anglong and its politico-historical siblings— namely Meghalaya, Nagaland and Mizoram. For instance, in 1999, the per capita government expenditure in Meghalaya was Rs 5016.34, in Nagaland Rs 8298.35 and in Mizoram Rs 9872.46. During the year 1999-2000, the per capita government expenditure in Karbi Anglong was only Rs 2558.11. These tribal states are entitled to receive their respective share of the Central Taxes ranging from 300 Crores to 500 Crores annually, but Karbi Anglong, by not being a federal entity is deprived of the central taxes. Why this partiality against the Karbis who share the same geo-political history with the tribes of Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland ? Why this neglect and discrimination ?

**Karbi Anglong needs to wrench itself free from the parasitic clutch of Assam to gain freedom, self-respect and justice. Only as a federal entity of the the Indian Union like that of Mizoram or Meghalaya will the Karbis become the proud and vibrant citizens of India. It is time to bid farewell to Assam !**



## **KARBIS MUST LEAVE ASSAM OR PERISH**

The Karbis became a part of the Assam state in Independent India without their knowledge and therefore without their consent. It is true that the opinion of the Karbi people was not sought at the time the decision was taken. The departing British rulers were against the inclusion of the hill areas in Assam. They held the view that the people of the plain and the hills were socially and economically incompatible; and the hill people being vulnerable from all sides, needed proper protection. In a note to the Simon Commission, the Provincial Government of Assam had said that "the backward tracts should be excluded from the Province of Assam as those areas had nothing in common with the rest of the province". It went on to say that "there was no sympathy on either side and the union of the hills and the plains was artificial resented by both parties; and hence in the interest of both the hills and the plains, the present artificial union should be ended".

In less than 30 years of Independent India the State of Assam disintegrated after unnecessarily creating bad blood between the people of the hills and the plains because the political leadership refused to acknowledge that reality. Till today the Karbis are forced to suffer humiliation, discrimination and neglect because successive governments have chosen to serve Assamese interest rather than pay attention to the plight of the Karbi people. Why is Assamese interest considered infallible while the interests of the Karbi people remained inconsequential in the eye of the government? It is time for the Karbi people to count their adversities under Assam and to name them one by one !

### **Karbis suffer political insubordination in Assam:**

Under Assam the Karbis have no scope to self-determine their future. They, more often than not, remain unrepresented in the Government. In the Legislature only 4 Karbis can sit in a house of 126. There is therefore no scope to influence the proceeding of the House being a bloc of insignificant minority. The problems of Karbi Anglong hardly get the attention of the Legislature. The four members have, therefore, no choice but to remain subservient to the wish of the Assamese majority in order to win whatever sympathy is possible. In the legislature of the size of say Meghalaya or Nagaland or Mizoram (which were formerly mere tribal hills districts in the state of Assam like Karbi Anglong and NC Hills), the Karbis would be always having atleast half a dozen ministers and atleast twenty legislators. In that situation the Karbis also would be determining their own destiny.

The autonomy under the Autonomous Council is a sham. The CEM can not even appoint his colleagues without the approval of the state government. There is nothing the Council can do without the pleasure of the State Government because it has retained the sole authority to advice the Governor and to act on his behalf. Karbi Anglong is rice rich, mineral rich and water resources rich with poor and backward tribal population. Assam will never let go off its lucrative political hold over the Karbis. Under Assam the Karbis will never gain freedom from centuries of political insubordination.

### **Karbis face job discrimination in Assam:**

Assam has 25 lakhs job seekers, which is three times the population of Karbi Anglong or Mizoram. The few Karbi educated youths have to compete with the most advanced and the most desperate group of educated youths of the North East. No doubt, the hill tribals, which include the Karbis, are elbowed out and even the jobs reserved for them (5%) are usurped by the majority communities of the plain districts resulting in their dismal share of just 1.6% (as on 31st March 1994). Over the years a backlog of over 16,500 posts have accumulated in respect of ST(II) which testifies the discrimination the hill tribes face under Assam. The tribal youths of Mizoram, Nagaland and Meghalaya only compete among themselves and 90% of the job is reserved for them exclusively ! Will the Karbi youths ever escape discrimination under Assam?

### **Karbis face threat of being displaced from their own land:**

Assam has failed to protect Karbi Anglong from the onslaught of outsiders. Empty spaces meant



## How the Brahmaputra Valley people victimise and betray the hillmen

1. The Assamese policemen have the tendency to be communal and prejudiced — The Parliamentary delegation led by Ajit Prasad Jain to study the political upsurge following the Assam Official Language issue which submitted its report to the GOI on 29th August, 1960 indicted the Assamese policemen thus — Para 11 — “The real weakness of the Assam Administration, however, lay at the lower level of the police hierarchy viz the SI, the ASI and Constables. These are the persons who physically enforce order, deal with crowds and extinguish fires etc. An overwhelming proportion of the lower rank police officers and policemen in the Brahmaputra valley are Assamese. The few Bengalis, who formed parts of the police force were demoralised and most of the Assamese policemen were carried away by the passions and the Assamese upsurge. A large number of cases were reported to us when the police just stood by and the miscreants indulged in arson and loot. We also received complaints that on occasions the policemen had themselves participated in arson and loot, but when feelings are high, it is difficult to give credence to such reports without enquiry. Nevertheless, it is a fact that that the Bihpuria Thana in Lakhimpur District was used for organising a procession which later became violent”. Biased and prejudiced attitude of the Assamese policemen against the hillmen is a continuing reality in the hill areas.

> They are deeply prejudiced against the hillmen thinking themselves to be the masters and the hillmen as serfs. They also harbour a social prejudice of a higher class and consider the tribals as lowly undeserving of allowing them entry into their sacred domain. It is normal for an Assamese to serve meal to a hillmen on the verandah of the house. This trait shows in the administration of an Assamese officer.

> They also get the scope because judicial and executive magistracy is yet to be separated in the twin hills. The judicial system is therefore devoid of the essence of natural justice and devoid of the scope for proper legal defence.

> Yet it is ironic that the twin hill areas record the lowest conviction rate (below 15%) indicative of the fact that most arrests are whimsical acts of policemen and most are put behind bars on trumped up charges that can not be proved in a proper court. So after sucking the accused dry in the course of several years of sham trials that constituted only court attendance every month or so and paying cash to the court officials on each date, the accused is let off citing lack of evidence.

> The twin hills is like the colony of the Assamese people, the hill people and their resources are meant to be exploited. So although there are now five police officers of the rank of DSP, none is posted in KA so that there is no undue interference in the colonialist designs. The bureaucrats and technocrats do the same. Important, sensitive and lucrative tables and files are handled exclusively by handpicked plainmen brethren of the DDOs.

2. The Patashkar Commission's main scope of enquiry was on the Nehru Plan

— Para 10 of the Commission report under the heading SCOPE OF THE ENQUIRY —

“Before our appointment the general pattern of the reorganisation of the administration set up was discussed by the prime minister (the late sri Nehru) with some of the hill leaders. We are required to draw up a scheme of the reorganisation on the basis of these discussion and conclusions. We have therefore not considered it necessary to examine the basic problem de novo and have restricted our enquiry to working out the details of the scheme whose broad framework had already been indicated”.

What did the Nehru Plan envisage ?



In his historic meeting with the hill leaders of Assam on the 4th December, 1962, the late Prime Minister, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru had expressed his keen desire to resolve the age-old socio-political incompatibility between the people of the hills and the plains, by advocating "highest possible autonomy" for the hill people within the territory of Assam. He had taken immense effort to convey his desire that a convention be established whereby the hill areas would be looked after by the MLAs from the hills as Ministers and that everything about the hill area would be decided by all the MLAs from the hill area together irrespective of party affiliations. The recommendations of the Patashkar Commission and the Ashoka Mehta Commission formed the embodiment of Mr Nehru's visions.

The Garo, Khasi and Mizo leaders rejected the idea as impracticable, but the Government of Assam had imposed the idea on "the good boys" among the tribals — the Karbis and the Dimasas. So while Meghalaya and Mizoram were created for the rest of the hill areas, HAD Ministry and the Hill Planning Board were created for Karbi Anglong and NC Hills, keeping the implementation of Article 244(A) for the two hill areas on hold.

It has seemed now that the move was just a ploy to retain the two hills within Assam so that the territorial contiguity of the State with the Barak Valley is maintained. The reality has been that it was only during the heat of the re-organisation of the State in 1969 that Assam had three Ministers from the two hills — Chatra Sing Teron as TAD Minister, Jaybhadra Hagier as Education Minister and SoiSoi Terang as Dy. Minister, TAD — after which the so called convention was forgotten. Appointments of Ministers from the hills has later on become a party affair; if there was no MLA belonging to the Ruling Party, there was no Minister from the hill areas. There were times when the HAD Ministry was held by Ministers from the plain districts.

The fate of the Hill Planning Board has not been different. It has been the wishes of the Chief Ministers that decide the planning for the hills, the wishes of the hill people through the MLAs are not reflected. Unless approached, the Chief Ministers on their own have no inclination to invite the MLAs from the hills to discuss matters concerning the hill areas. The Hill Planning Board therefore has seemed to exist just as an avenue for conferring political rewards to political surrogates of the Ruling party.

The deviation from the intended convention has reduced the MLAs from the hills as mere pawns, being hopelessly a minority block in the House. In the circumstances, there remains very little scope to represent the interest of the hill people. The results have been disastrous — whimsical release of funds to the Autonomous Councils by different government departments leading to confusion and failure in implementation of development schemes, system failure to check anti-hill tribal trend in government appointments leading to accumulation of more than 18,389 posts as back-log against the reserved quota of ST(H), helplessness in ensuring the safety and security of the life and property of the hill people.

The fact of life must therefore be admitted that while written laws are broken every other day, conventions do not stand a chance to survive. The fears of the hill leaders have been vindicated that the convention sought to be established by India's first Prime Minister for the administration of the hill areas of Assam has failed to take root. Now there remains no alternative after over three decades of trying to come to terms with Assam, but to invoke the provisions of Article 244(A) of the Constitution of India, if Assam's territorial integrity is to be preserved.

As the elected representatives from Karbi Anglong, irrespective of our party affiliations, we the undersigned MLAs jointly appeal to you to recommend the creation of Autonomous State for the two hill areas of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills by implementing Article 244(A) of the Constitution of India.



## Questions about autonomy demand in Karbi Anglong

Assam could not remain together because it was not natural born but an entity deliberately created by the colonial British for their administrative convenience. The people of the hills and the plains, with contrasting socio-economic milieu, were socially and emotionally divided and they had a long history of distrust and prejudice. The people of the plains being more advanced and more numerous, dominated the hill people in all sphere, and they were thus economically suffocated and emotionally offended.

There has been the inability of the Central Government to understand the principal obstacles to the devolution of powers to the KAAC — why even after constitutionally granting so much legislative and executive powers under the Sixth Schedule, autonomy demand movements, both armed and unarmed, continue unabated. The crux of the problems lies in the following:

1. Due to age-old social prejudice of the Assam valley people against the hill people, there are psychological inhibitions continuously at work and it is not possible to establish a cordial, mutually trusted, and mutually respected working relationship. The plains leaders did not, have not and will never accept the hill people as their equals and howsoever resentful the hill people may be, they will accept peace only if the hillmen tolerated their unjust lordship. Therefore no legislative or executive steps can be taken without the pleasure of the Assam valley leaders who dominate the Assam government.
2. The interest of the Assam valley leaders in the hill areas is colonial exploitation. With the help of the law and order authority, the police force, the State officers and the power to regulate funds, they make personal fortunes in the name of the hill people. That is why transfer and posting as well as release of funds for the hill areas is such a big industry in the corridors of power at Dispur.
3. The Assam valley leaders have no interest to protect the hill people from the onslaught of outsiders.

### Musings about the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution

Sixth Schedule was originally aimed at geopolitically rehabilitating the hill areas which were under the Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas in Assam. Except for the Naga hill, the rest of the Areas were brought under the system. Basically the provisions of the Schedule were meant to resolve the age-old **incompatibility factors** that existed between the people of the plain and the hill areas of composite British Assam. To authenticate the matter, it is worthwhile to look back in history:

Incompatibility was a major factor in the relations of the people of the hills and the plains. The then government of Assam in its submission to the Simon Commission had said,  
{In the end — the Assamese and the Karbis should follow a give-and-take approach towards each other. Unless the Karbis agree to remain in Assam, it can not maintain its territorial contiguity with the Barak Valley in the south. Assam valley people should concede what it had conceded to Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland. *The question of incompatibility should be politically and legally resolved.* The question of economic exploitation of the hill people must end. The hill people are not naturally taken to learning the Assamese language and imposition leading to blockade of opportunity, particularly in the Union Civil Services examinations must be cleared. The hill people must be allowed to develop through their own genius without interference ... unfortunately, the mindset of the Assam valley people have not changed much since Kanak Lal Baruah}



### Reference notes for discussion:

1. The fact that Karbi Anglong and NC Hills have inherited certain historical legacies that have disabled them to grow at par with the rest of the country and therefore need special consideration of their problems have been established beyond doubt. This aspect need not be discussed further:

a) PM Nehru recognised this fact when he said in his reply to a starred question No 431 on May 4, 1962 — We recognised their grievances, they are legitimate and we tried in our proposal to suggest something which would lead to the removal of those grievances.

The grievances referred to was the inability of the hill people to grow satisfactorily having greatly suffered in history. This was clearly summarised by the full Commission headed by H.V.Pataskar (appointed by the GOI to enquire into the demand for separate state in the hill areas of Assam), in Paras 27 to 31 of its report submitted to the GOI on 31st March 1966. Our case is therefore different from the other plain tribals of Assam.

Mr Nehru's proposals which formed the basis of the Commission were (according to Home Secretary V. Vishvanathan's note) — a) preservation of the unity of the State of Assam, b) maximum possible autonomy to the Hill districts.

The objective that was sought to achieve was — as rightly noted by the Commission "the removal of controversy (?) between the people of the Assam valley and the hill areas and provide full opportunity to the hill people to run their own administration without being directly or indirectly dominated by others"

2. Only the Karbis and the Dimasas respected the views and sentiments of the PM, the then national leadership and state leadership, and have till now remained within the HAD set up proposed by the Pataskar Commission. We have been greatly disadvantaged by that even though the powers under the Sixth Schedule have been enhanced over and over again — the rein of control over the hill people have continued to be firmly held by the people of the Assam Valley.

### How the provisions of the Sixth Schedule (even post-MoU) continue to fail us ?

1. The Autonomous Councils (ACs) have always found the HAD as agent of the state ruling party who arm-twist them so that the state ruling bosses can run the ACs by proxy.. with the HAD functioning as the channelling agent to the Governor this is easily done. For the democratic wish of the people to take control of the system the ACs must be given direct access to the Governor.

2. The AC can not give jobs to our youth. They have the right to fight for only 5% of the jobs available in the districts. The authority to give jobs is being usurped by the State government causing a backlog of over 16,000 posts already. In other districts our youths can not even dream of getting jobs. Being in Assam our case for certain concessions being enjoyed by other hill tribes of the NE (in UPSC exams) is not even seriously considered, as a result our youths have stopped dreaming of ever getting a central government job.

3. The 6S in Assam can not remove the disparity of financial grants, aids and other special helps that our tribal brethren in Meghalaya and Mizoram are currently enjoying, as mere ACs, they are not a federal entity in the consciousness of the Centre.

4. As we are only allowed to borrow officers and can not take disciplinary actions against such officers, they gratify themselves before serving our command. As a result money is spent but works are hardly done.

5. Our people live in perpetual fear of police and magistrates..the DC/SP dont care for our leaders.

6. Without suitably amending the laws governing DRDA, Excise, Food & CS, the ACs are mere managers.