The Future is Indigenous

AIPP

ASIA INDIGENOUS OBSERVER

CONTENT

AIPP PRESENTS

INDIGENOUS WOMEN IN MEKONG REGIONAL EXCHANGE

Earlier last month, at the Indigenous Women in Mekong Regional Exchange in Chiang Mai which aimed to unpack indigenous women's roles in Customary Forest Tenure and Water Governance, the key takeaways were:

-To improve the inclusion of gender in human rights and environmental issues;
-To strengthen Indigenous women's capacity to control their life and over forest and water resources;
-To increase solidarity and build alliances within and beyond Indigenous communities;
- To increase the value of IP knowledge and wisdom;
- To encourage physical meetings and forums for Indigenous women.

The success of this forum is only the beginning of the path that has yet to be accomplished for Indigenous women to have complete control over their lives, their communities, and natural resources. Moreover, it is important to consider the different conditions and different needs of Indigenous women in the Mekong countries. It is fundamental for the future to keep working together and organize more discussion meetings on these issues, as spaces to build capacities and confidence of Indigenous women and to create a stronger movement with the power to act, grow at different levels, and achieve concrete results.

THE SECRETARIAT

We gave thanks and prayers as a family of indigenous sentient beings brought together to continue our aim for recognition of our rights as Indigenous Peoples with the goal of self determination.

And though we belong to different clans and cultures, spirituality lies at the core of our existence. AIPP will continue to stand together in worship and thanksgiving, while playing host to various religious and spiritual leaders and guides in the community 🙏🏾

Media Advocacy Training

PHOTO: HPUJI NAWNG/AIPP

This month AIPP's Communications Programme Coordinator Ms. Nina Sangma conducted a media advocacy training on the use of social media as a tool for advocacy and campaigning while examining the media landscape in the delegates' countries, namely, Vietnam, Lao PDR, Thailand, India, Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Nepal.

Amidst growing concerns of authoritarianism resulting in shrinking civic spaces and erasure of democratic rights, frontline defenders and journalists are under increasing attack as they both speak truth to power. The lines between activism and journalism are getting blurred as external factors such as big tech, big media, and governments control narratives and seek to polarize society thereby impacting their work directly and indirectly.

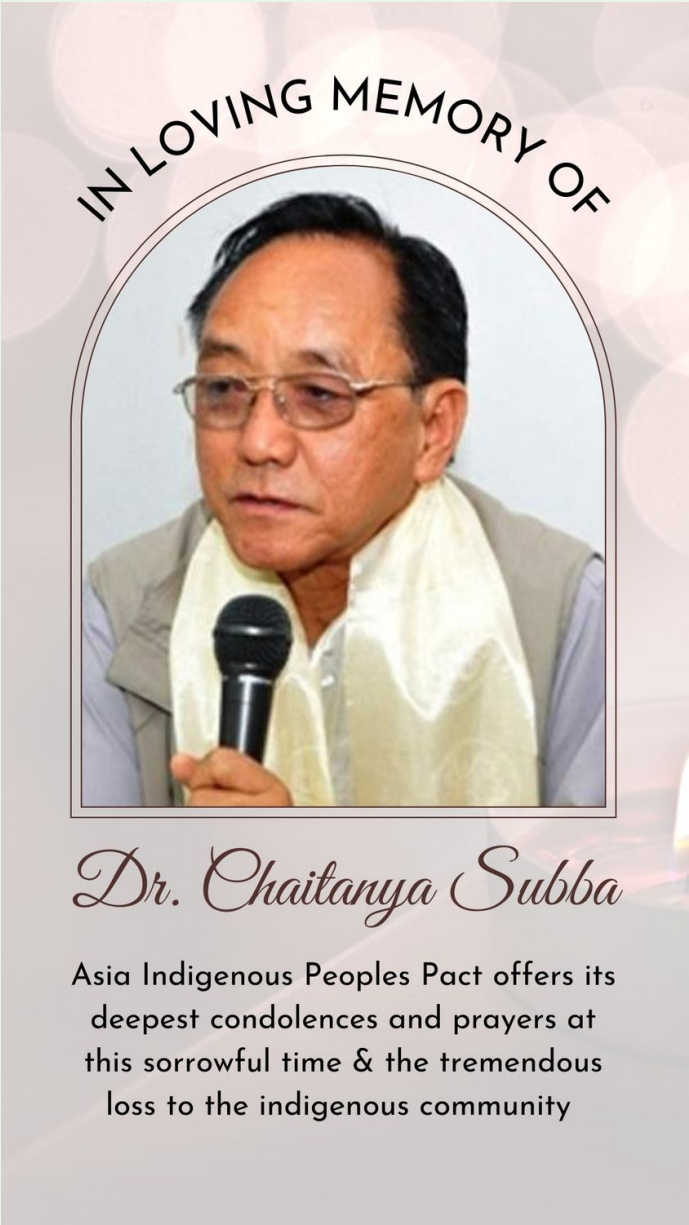
How do we consume news both online and offline? How does online presence affect offline spaces? What are digital rights? How to connect the dots of our digital footprints to stay vigilant?

These were some of the questions raised in the session which ended with fun reporting assignments, brand personification exercises and visual storytelling methods. The stories presented by the groups were in keeping with the tradition of Indigenous Peoples as master storytellers and truth seekers.

OBITUARY

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Dr. Chaitanya Subba, an eminent academic, leader, and guide who dedicated his life to the development of the Indigenous Peoples of Nepal in his distinguished career in UNDP, ILO, USAID, DEFID, and various other international organizations as a chief researcher. He had worked tirelessly towards the protection and promotion of Indigenous Peoples' language, economic development, socio-economic, political, and cultural rights.

In solidary with his family and community and everyone whose life he touched. May his soul rest in peace 🙏



POINT OF VIEW

Land Rights Defenders Prepare for Global Land Forum!

Hear what delegates from AIPP's networks had to say in preparation for the three days plenary as they geared up to table the key issues of Indigenous People's land rights and the struggles faced by frontline defenders across the region at the Global Land Forum in Jordan
https://www.facebook.com/AIPPnet.org/videos/737933023906668/

AIPP Secretary-General Gam A. Shimray delivered a speech titled, "Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, and Their Critical Role in Protected and Conserved Areas" during the plenary of the Second Asia Parks Congress: Parks for Nature and People held in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia on the 26th of May 2022

You can read the full text of the speech in the link below

https://bit.ly/3NRAYj7

GLOBAL REACH

Cybersecurity in the Mekong

The 11th edition of RightsCon will take place from Monday, June 6 to Friday, June 10, 2022 online and across all timezones. The RightsCon platform is now open and tickets – both paid and free – are available until June 3.

Together with Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact we are hosting a panel:
Cybersecurity in the Mekong region
June 9, 2022 | 10:30 - 11:30am CEST

Download the report and join us at RightsCon!

📘 https://bit.ly/2VH3Tkg
Register: https://bit.ly/3LESYf3

Using WISE Principles to Build Movements For Indigenous Data Sovereignty

An Asian perspective on Indigenous Data Sovereignty (IDSov) is imperative given the unique challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples, specifically in terms of obstacles in asserting their right to self-determination and their inherent rights over their land, territories, and resources. Patchy legal recognition of their identities and jurisdiction further exacerbates these conditions. The lack of protection mechanisms available to indigenous peoples amidst growing insecurity, militarisation, and threat to their resources and the cumulative pressures on their way of life has led to consistent erosion of traditional knowledge systems.

📅 June 8, 2022

⏰ 11:30am - 12:30pm +07

REGISTRATION: https://rightscon.summit.tc/

Digital Technology to Enhance Language and Literacy Skills for Indigenous Peoples

The session explores the importance of digital platforms, challenges in accessing information and communication technologies especially for Indigenous Peoples in this 'digital age'. It also explores the available opportunities and challenges including digital skills for Indigenous Peoples having access and digital inclusion to make use of digital platforms to have their say, participation. The focus of the session will be on initiatives that entails Indigenous Peoples engaging with digital world to amplify their human rights.

June 10, 2022 | 5:15 - 6:15pm +07
REGISTRATION: https://rightscon.summit.tc/

Watch: Global Land Forum

Jordan opened its doors to the Global Land Forum with a focus on engaging young people in the country and region in building a sustainable future.
It will be the first time in the event's history that it is hosted by a country in the Middle East, part of an important and newly expanding region for the International Land Coalition.

In case you missed the event, you can click on the link below

https://www.facebook.com/AIPPnet.org/posts/pfbid0XiHKntUMHfVNMxEq9AxA2th9EMG3VZy6FW5uZjh2uMZVwkYTJnPwBd5SDsQrzLVml

GENDER LENS

GENDER LENS is a photo series where stories of Indigenous Women will be shared from an engendered perspective. Today we bring you Asame Tapee's story, one that is a symbol of indomitable spirit despite personal and structural hurdles and the State's brutality, one that no doubt has resonance with many indigenous women on the ground.

While the world celebrated Mother's Day, Asame, a mother of three, of which the youngest is mentally disabled and entirely dependent on her, had her lands seized by the Thai government leaving her without the meager livelihood she culled from selling farm produce. Now totally dependent on the community of Tun Din Dam village for her subsistence, she suffers from acute depression, often breaking down while telling us her story as a result of the systemic oppression and triple discrimination that underlines the lived experience of most indigenous women.

Conservation policies are often in direct conflict with the interests of Indigenous Peoples. The arbitrary declaration of national parks means that indigenous communities not only have no access to their lands but are at the mercy of park rangers who act as informants, often brutally suppressing the indigenous through arrests and criminalization.

Thailand's forest reclamation policy is aimed at increasing forest cover to 40% of the country's terrestrial area. A move that affects people like Asame who are in the frontlines of this heavy-handedness.

We launch the Ⓖⓔⓝⓓⓔⓡ Ⓛⓔⓝⓢ photo series where stories of Indigenous Women will be shared from an engendered perspective. Often, the stories of women get hidden in marginalized communities where the bigger resistance movements overlook the daily struggles of indigenous women and girls. This is an attempt to tell those stories from the ground, whether domestic or professional, rural, or urban covering the entire spectrum of the lived realities of women including the wisdom of the elders and the fire of the young.

Meet Orathai, 22, who like many young indigenous women of her generation is confronted with few options to leave the Lisu community and village she belongs to in search of lucrative job opportunities. COVID-19 has spurred an exodus of indigenous youth from cities and urban spaces to their homelands.

Orathai is one of many who has adapted to the new normal by preferring to stay in the village of Tung Din Dam in northern Thailand and help with the cultivation of crops while also helping her mother look after her younger siblings.

NIWA Speaks

There should be an internal development of potential: empowering Karen women internally to build self-esteem, encouraging women who dare to think & express themselves, and empowering from outside to learn their rights. Learning about laws relating to women and the opening up of women to have the opportunity to learn to exchange in different levels of arenas also allows women to access developments such as languages so that women can fully exchange.

AMPORN PRIPANASUMPUN
INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S NETWORK THAILAND

One of the most common problems faced by Phouthai ethnic women from my community in Lao PDR is the issue of domestic violence.
COVID-19 has affected women in my indigenous community by limiting access to information and support. To empower indigenous women & create internalized change at the community level, we need to first try to get buy-in from high-level leaders.

SILIPHAITHOUN XAYAMOUNGKHOUN
GENDER DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, LAO PDR

The impact of COVID-19 has negatively impacted Ao Naga women who have lost access to livelihood. All regions of North East India have been affected differently in terms of economy, health, and education.
To combat this, livelihood skills training and implementation are required urgently. We need to focus on the immediate needs of indigenous women and empower them economically in order to ensure sustained empowered change in the community.

DR. ELIZABETH IMTI
EXECUTIVE MEMBER, IWFNEI
NORTH EAST INDIA

The sustained and heightening attacks against us (our communities, our members, our leaders) which have been happening even before the pandemic reached our country have resulted in a climate of fear in our communities and the weakening of our organizations, especially at the local level. What we need right now is to collectively regain our strength as an organization so that we may overcome the fear that has somewhat paralyzed some of us; to gain inspiration and motivation from the bravery and sacrifices of our forebears who were steadfast in speaking truth to power even in the face of intense state fascism/tryanny.

AUDREY CORCE
SECRETARY-GENERAL, INNABUYOG
PHILIPPINES

In this series Gender Lens, indigenous women leaders from AIPP's Network of Indigenous Women in Asia speak about various aspects of the needs and challenges at the community level. The emancipation of women lies at the foundation of all progress and movement building and it starts with an internalized change in homes and communities on the ground because the personal is political ✊

NIWA Speaks

I belong to the Oraon indigenous community. While ongoing problems of domestic violence, lack of economic inclusion for women, no representation in decision-making positions, lack of encouragement from male members, internalized misogyny, and limited or no access to education exist, COVID-19 increased the workload of women and increased violence against women and girls.
We need to empower indigenous women through mass mobilization, education, and creating awareness of their rights, while also creating unity and solidarity.

ALMA GRACE BARLA

COUNTRY FOCAL PERSON, ISAWN MAINLAND INDIA

I belong to the Chakma community from Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. Despite no representation in decision-making positions, we have to continue to empower indigenous women economically, politically, and socially. I want to change the role of indigenous women; we have to create a platform within our community and also ensure indigenous women have access to higher education leading to meaningful participation and decision-making at all levels.

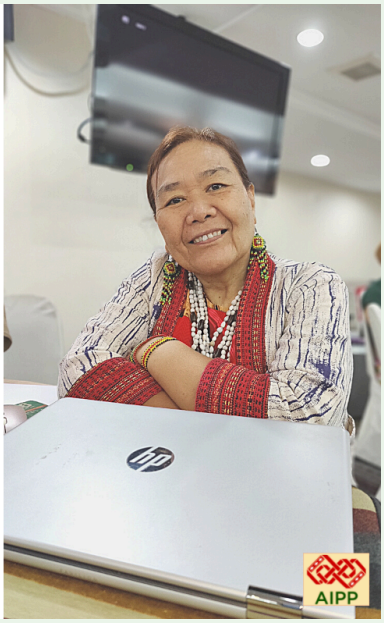
CHANCHANA CHAKMA

, MEMBER SECRETARY, BIWN BANGLADESH

The consistent problem for indigenous Dumagat in the Philippines is the lack of representation in decision-making positions. COVID-19 affected the whole human aspect of mental, social, economic, and cultural aspects of our lives.
The way forward to empower indigenous women & create internalized change at the community level is by creating safe spaces, areas of learning, and sharing indigenous knowledge and building capacity and skills.

KAKAY TOLENTINO,

NATIONAL COORDINATOR
BAI INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S NETWORK
PHILIPPINES



The pandemic response was the exodus of indigenous youth from urban areas to their homelands which brought about a realization of the importance of ancestral lands which have always been the source of sustenance.
Internalized change at the community level will happen when members are exposed to a deeper understanding of their rights followed by a plan to show them what they can do. Indigenous leaders at all levels need to inspire them.

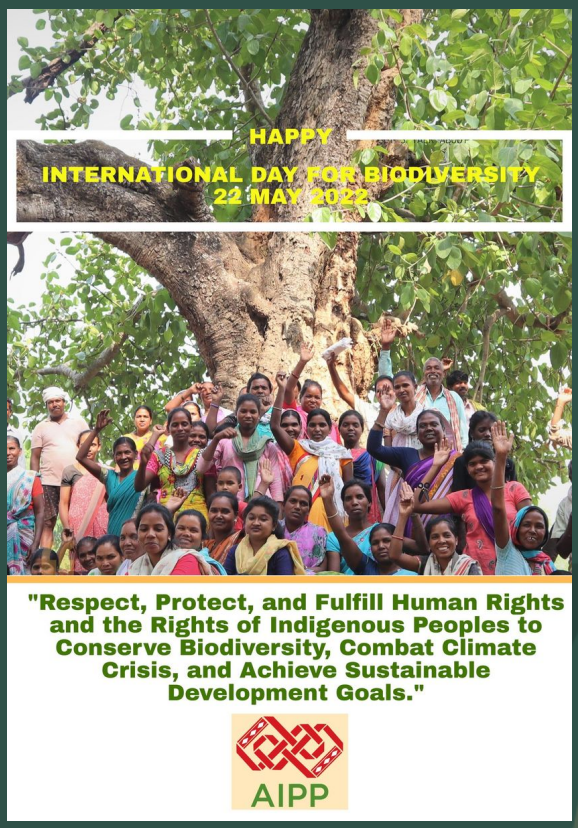
MASLAH ROMPADO

CHAIRPERSON, IWNM
MALAYSIA

In this ongoing series called Gender Lens, indigenous women leaders from AIPP's Network of Indigenous Women in Asia get vocal about the core aspects from a community perspective and the gaps identified, along with the ways to address them. As usual, indigenous women are a fount of practical wisdom

CLIMATE WATCH

International Day for Biodiversity to all the Defenders of our Land, Territories, and Resources



The land, territories, and resources of Indigenous Peoples are home to 80% of the Planet's biodiversity and, at least 24% of the total carbon stored aboveground in the world's tropical forests. 56 percent of all terrestrial key biodiversity areas including protected areas, parks, critical watersheds, etc. overlap with Indigenous Peoples' ancestral domain titles in the Philippines. Approximately 90% of the remaining forest cover of the Philippines is situated within ancestral domains of Indigenous Peoples.

The recent research has revealed that Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and Afro-descendants already "make investments equal to a quarter of global investment in conservation", a contribution that is under-recognized, under-valued, under-supported, and under-reported.

There is increasing evidence that Indigenous Peoples are the best guardians of the world's last remaining biodiversity and provide solutions to combat climate crisis. Without respecting, protecting, and fulfilling human rights and the rights of Indigenous Peoples, it is not possible to conserve biodiversity, fight against climate crisis and achieve sustainable development goals effectively.

We will continue our fight to ensure human rights-based approach throughout the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

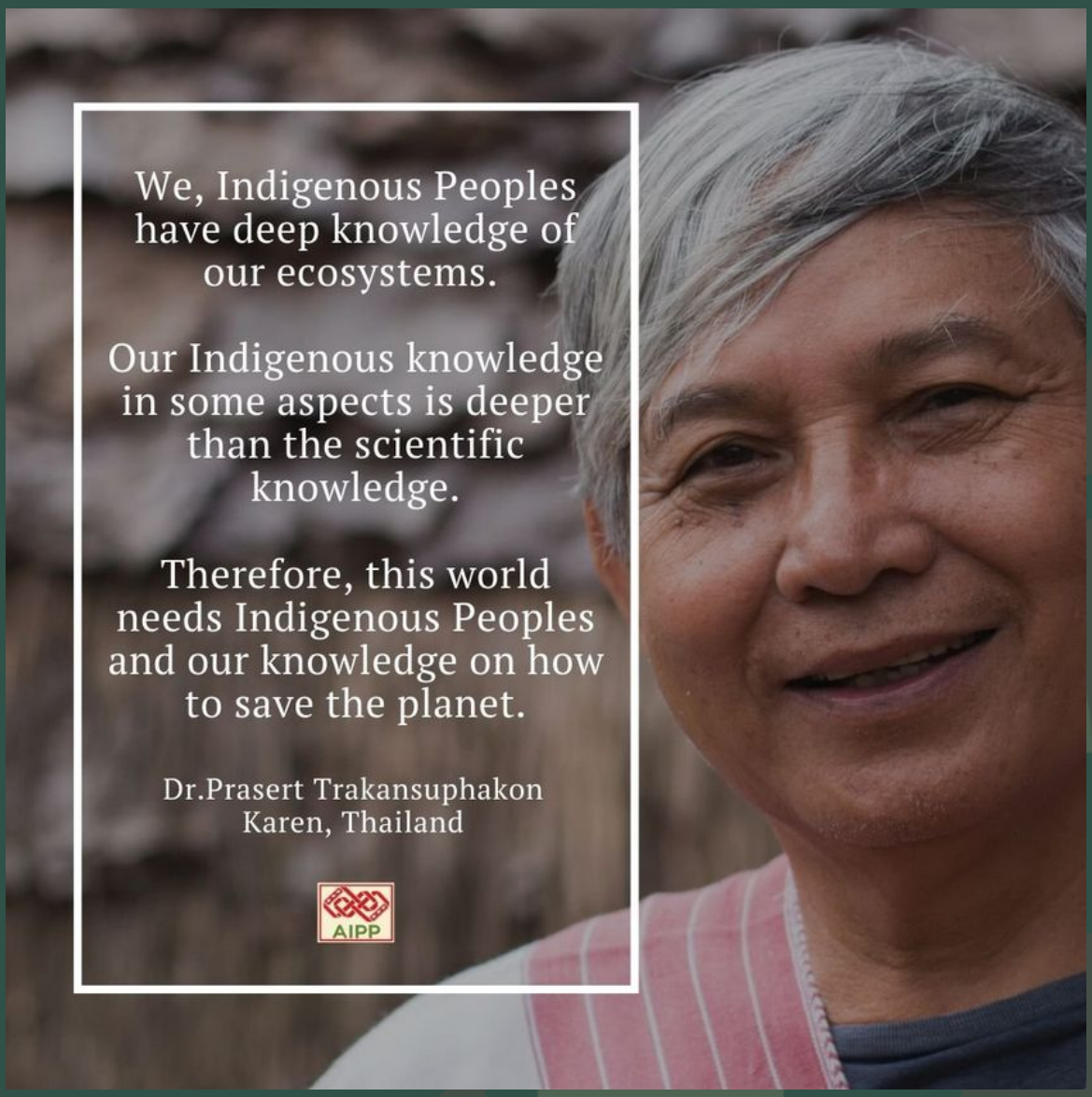
"The name given to any places of Indigenous Peoples has a certain meaning that can be explained in our respective indigenous languages. These meanings establish the connection between us and our ancestral domains, and it plays a crucial role in the belongingness of our community members. We are trying to bring back the name of our villages."

Mrs. Luong Thi Truong, Executive Director of the Centre for Sustainable Development in Mountainous Areas (CSDM)

Mrs. Truong belongs to the Thai Indigenous Peoples in Vietnam. She has more than two decades of experience working on Indigenous Knowledge, climate change, biodiversity, and the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and above all, empowering Indigenous Women at the local level in Vietnam.

Mrs. Truong has played an instrumental role in the establishment of the Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples of Asia (IKPA), the regional network that aims to advance the recognition, respect, and visibility of Indigenous Knowledge and community lead initiatives at all levels.

Read more about the background of IKPA at https://aippnet.org/indigenous-knowledge-and-peoples.../2/



"We, Indigenous Peoples have deep knowledge of our ecosystems. Our Indigenous Knowledge in some aspects is deeper than scientific knowledge. Therefore, World needs Indigenous Peoples and our knowledge on how to save the Planet."

Dr. Prasert Trakansuphakon

Dr. Prasert is the Director of the Pgakenyaw Association for Sustainable Development (PASD). Dr. Prasert belongs to Karen Indigenous Peoples and has worked with Indigenous Peoples for over 20 years. He is an expert in Indigenous Knowledge, education, and in natural resource management. He is also involved in natural resource management policies such as on rotational farming, biodiversity, Indigenous Peoples' rights, food security, climate change, and sustainable development.

PASD is a member of the Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples of Asia (IKPA). Read more information about the work of PASD and IKPA at
https://aippnet.org/lets-go-back-home-revisiting.../
#WeAreIndigenous #BiodiversityDay