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# Property Rights vis-à-vis Domestic Violence Woman and her Fights for Change

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KARBI ETE<sup>1</sup> AND PROF. O.P. SHARMA<sup>2</sup>

## ABSTRACT

*Women constitute near half of the total population in India but they were vindicated within the symbiosis of cultural chauvinism where man supra-power rigidly controls the social and family system. Even in the case of tribal society in Northeast India the status of women are indifferent to that of mainland India. In Arunachal Pradesh, the government has set up legal institution to adjudicate laws including justice system on the violation of women's rights and dignity. An attempt has been made to understand the implications of rights and claims of the women section in relation to property vis-à-vis domestic violence, with special reference to three tribes: Khampti, Singpho and Mishmi of Namsai district of Arunachal Pradesh. The paper specifically focused on three major tribes in Namsai districts in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. A total sample of 450 women respondents 150 from three tribes namely Khampti, Singpho and Mishmi Based on the data collected from 150 women respondents of three tribes each, a total of 450 women respondents were interviewed using interview schedule from the study area. The method such as observation and interview were used to collect first hand information from the women respondents. from the study it was found that the Mishmi, and Khampti women respondents reported of not having any unwanted behaviour in of the co-workers at the workplace except Singpho women who reported (10%) of having unwanted behaviour like eve teasing, indecent comments, battering, physical and mental torture. The Mishmi women always experience physical act, mental torture and verbal abuse. The Mishmi respondents had a slight idea about dowry to be punishable under the law but among the tribes dowry is not practiced. It was found that all the women of three tribes have no right over any inherited property either movable or immovable according to the customary law. Among the Singpho society based on the data collected extramarital relationship, sexual exploitation, neglecting primary needs, etc. is rarely found in their society. The women respondents are aware of law related to sexual exploitation, human rights, dowry, violence, etc. The women respondents prefer the Indian law more than the customary law, as the customary law is not relevant in equal distribution of property and the property is always (100%) given to the son.*

**Keywords:** *Women, Domestic Violence, Khampti, Mishmi, Singpho, Property rights*

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<sup>1</sup> Author is a Research Scholar at Department of Legal Studies, Arunachal University of Studies, Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh, India.

<sup>2</sup> Author is a Professor at Arunachal University of Studies Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh, India.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In India there are overwhelming Women deities and astonishingly overwhelming distraught women. Women section forms the largest minority who are denied of their rights to basic liberties. This is an attribute of the male chauvinistic society, where the females are deemed as tangible properties. The women are denied the rights of inheritance, education, properties, equality of status and their consent in marriages. Essentially, the man born off woman don't deem woman, if not above, equal. The women are privy of being raped, kidnapped, molested and murdered amongst many other crimes. This crimes are based usually upon trifle matters such as food cooked by the women, mismanagement of chores, etc.

Despite the protection guaranteed by the Constitution of India and various other laws, the women section always witness growing numbers of crimes every day; some crimes witnessed, while others are strangled into oblivion. Issues relating to woman can be addressed better by woman, but then the call for the political representation falls to deaf ears; the education of the girl child is still not given its due; the safety of women in services and at home is unsafeguarded. The women turns expectedly towards menfolk; menfolk seeks repentance for crimes.

In these prevailing circumstances, it becomes more appropriate and pertinent to look at the condition of the women section in one of the most rarely visited and rarely crime acknowledged part of the country *i.e.*, Arunachal Pradesh. Unlike, other states in India where religious beliefs, dowry, marriage dependency, and caste based inequality pervade the society; women in the northeast are not subjected to many of these ingrained societal inequalities that are associated with increased levels of violence against women. Rather, many of the factors associated with reducing the risks of violence against women are found in the northeast region. Statistics reveal that women are more educated, literate, and participate in the workforce. However, despite this, the levels of violence against women in the area are extremely high.

As per the Arunachal Pradesh State Commission for Women (APSCW) report, 33 per cent of women in the age group of 15- 49 years have experienced physical violence in Arunachal Pradesh, 10 per cent have experienced sexual violence and 36 per cent have experienced both physical and sexual violence. The APSCW often receives variety of cases relating to violence against women, most of which involves to battery, emotional abuse in the form of insults, physical abuse such as torture, and deprivation due to multiple marriages, rape, and other forms of gender discrimination.

### (A) Objectives

The crime rate against woman is shown as minimal, as the crimes are witnessed within the four

corners of the house. It goes unreported, unwitnessed, while there flows the silent tears. An endeavor therefore herein is made to understand the implications of rights and claims of the women section in relation to property vis-à-vis domestic violence, with special reference to three tribes: Khampti, Singpho and Mishmi of Namsai district of Arunachal Pradesh. An attempt has been made to analyze and reformulate the condition of the women section of this tribal societies in context of modern civilized society inter-se-conditions, practices, processes, trends, effects, attitudes, beliefs, etc. so as to understand the circumstantial situation better.

### **(B) Methodology**

The paper specifically focused on three major tribes in Namsai districts in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. A total sample of 450 women respondents 150 from three tribes namely Khampti, Singpho and Mishmi. As there is lack of data in the matters of recent happenings therefore an attempt has been made in this research to collect data from both the primary and secondary sources. The primary data is collected from women respondents of the three selected tribes i.e., Khampti, Singpho and Mishmi of Namsai district of Arunachal Pradesh. The *secondary data includes books, journals, newspapers, reports and other published materials. Based on the data collected from 150 women respondents of three tribes each, a total of 450 women respondents were interviewed using interview schedule from the study area. The method such as observation and interview were used to collect first hand information from the women respondents.*

### **(C) Literature Review**

Dutta and Duarah (1997) mentions as to various tribes inhabiting Arunachal Pradesh having unwritten customary laws of their own which are applied for maintaining peace and harmony in the given society. These laws are enforced through village councils who are named differently amongst the many tribes such as *Kebang* of Adis, *Mele* of the Hrussos, *Buliang* of the Apatani, *Khapong* of the Tangsas, *Ngothun* of the Noctes, *Wangsu-Wangsa* of the Wanchos, *Bang-Nyele* of the Bagnis etc. The village councils are supposed to be well versed with the laws and to deal with the situation accordingly. The crimes and disputes are generally related with marriage, adultery, theft, murder, assault and bodily injury, divorce, disputes about land and fishing sites. Meanwhile Roy (1929) emphasizes towards the necessity for women to work outside the home, to be economically independent and not to regard marriage as a profession. He opines that that the economic bondage of women is the root cause of the troubles that haunt the female sections of many societies. De'Souza (1975) sums up from his study that nearly 80 percent of the female workforce still remains in the fields doing the agriculture related works. This he states is particularly disenchanting as last decades of planning has failed the woman workforce. The

economic and employment opportunities of the woman remain as static and as idle as was in the past with little development. Bhatti and George (2001) from his study concluded that 88 per cent of women in lower class were the victims of physical and verbal violence in contrast to 43 per cent from the middle class. With regard to emotional and intellectual violence, he found that representation of the upper and middle classes were more as compared to the lower class.

Kapur and Cossman (1996) believes that despite the statutory enactments, nothing much has altered due to failure to bring about change in the patriarchal structure and mind-set to the concept of the family. Essentially it is because, he opines, the belief that 'women's roles as wives and mothers as natural and immutable' has deep intruded the chambers of societal perspective. Venkateswarlu and Rao (2007) reported that approximately 90 per cent of the women workers are engaged in the unorganized sector. Of these over 80 per cent of the women are in agriculture and allied occupations. In the organized sector women constitute only 13.3 per cent of all employees. Apart from their domestic duties, women are engaged in agricultural operations. Despite this, their access to ownership of land, credit and other productive resources remain negligible.

## **II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **(A) Mishmi Woman**

Mishmi's are endogamous and are divided by sect rather than clan. The smallest village are seen in the Mishmi community where a village is a home of the single family. The Mishmi have as many rooms as the number of wives of the master of the house. The Mishmi society is patrilineal, and counts their descent from paternal line.

Traditionally there they follow polygamy but the current trend is towards monogamy. There is no caste system in the society or stratified to any class. Traditionally there was slavery in the society that does not exist now but those people are considered as lower in status. The society is divided into clans and sub clans. They have patrilineal descent and the father is the head of the family and inheritance of property is through male members. The Mishmi practice polygamy and each wife has separate apartment within the same homestead. Sometimes, two or more lineally related kinsmen, their wives and children occupy a single homestead and are jointly subjected to the same authority.

#### **(i) Age**

Table (i): Distribution of Respondents by Age

| Age          | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------------|--------------------|------------|
| 14-17        | 20                 | 13.3       |
| 18-25        | 40                 | 26.7       |
| 26-30        | 65                 | 43.3       |
| 31 and above | 25                 | 16.7       |
| Total        | 150                | 100.00     |

Table (i) shows the age-wise distribution of the respondents. It shows that out of 150 respondents, 13.3 per cent of the respondents belong to the age group between 14-17 years, 26.7 per cent respondents to the age group between 18-25 years followed by 43.3 per cent respondents of the age group 26-30 years and 16.7 per cent of the respondents are 31 above.

Table (a): Distribution of Respondents by Age at Marriage

| Age at Marriage | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------|
| 14-17           | 15                 | 25         |
| 18-25           | 33                 | 55         |
| 26-30           | 12                 | 20         |
| Total           | 60                 | 100.00     |

Table (a) shows that 25 per cent of the respondents are married at the age of 14-17 years followed by 55 per cent of the respondents married at the age of 18-25 years 20 per cent respondents are married at the age of 26-30 years. All the respondents are married according to religious rites and bride price is in practice but a customary fined is paid by the groom's family who did love marriage. The respondents had slight idea about dowry to be punishable under the law but among the tribes dowry is not practiced.

## (ii) Income

Table (ii): Distribution of Respondents by Income

| Income Group    | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------|
| Upto Rs. 10,000 | 105                | 70.0       |

|                      |     |        |
|----------------------|-----|--------|
| Rs. 10,001 to 30,000 | 40  | 26.7   |
| Rs. 30,001 and Above | 5   | 3.3    |
| Total                | 150 | 100.00 |

The table (ii) shows that 70 per cent respondent are earning up to Rs. 10,000 while 26.7 per cent of the respondent had their annual income between Rs. 10,001 to 30,000 and only 3.3 per cent respondents have been earning between Rs. 30,001 and above as their annual income. This shows that majority of the respondents had low income.

### 1. Level of Violence against Women in Family and Workplace among the Mishmi

#### (i) Violence at Workplace:

Almost all the women (100%) responded that there is no unwanted behaviour in the workplace.

#### (ii) Family Violence

The table (ii) shows that 56.7 per cent of the respondents reported that they always experience physical act and mental torture (50%) followed by 36.7 per cent of the responded rarely and 13.3 per cent had never experienced any physical act and mental torture in the family. About 50 per cent of the respondent always experience verbal abuse, 50 per cent reported rarely. From the data it is found that the respondents always get criticism (100%) from the family members. All the respondents (100%) reported of facing any kind of immoral attitude from the community and an act against human rights towards them. About 60 per cent of the respondents have extramarital relationship followed by 40 per cent respondent that reported rarely. Sexual exploitation is found to be 66.7 per cent, 26.6 per cent respondent rarely and 6.6 per cent never had sexual exploitation. About 26.7 per cent of the respondents always face the negligence of primary needs, rarely (66.7%) and never (6.6%) experience by the respondents. neglecting primary needs and threatening is reported as always by 10 per cent, rarely by 23.3 per cent and never by 66.7 per cent. Almost all the respondents (100%) reported that they is no restriction on going outside and not allowed in visiting parent's home.

Table (ii): Distribution of Respondents by Occurrence of violence in family

| Violence Against Women      | Always | %    | Rarely | %    | Never | %    |
|-----------------------------|--------|------|--------|------|-------|------|
| Physical act                | 85     | 56.7 | 45     | 30.0 | 20    | 13.3 |
| Physical and mental torture | 75     | 50.0 | 55     | 36.7 | 20    | 13.3 |

|                                     |     |            |     |      |     |            |
|-------------------------------------|-----|------------|-----|------|-----|------------|
| Verbal abuse                        | 75  | 50.0       | 75  | 50.0 | -   | -          |
| Criticism                           | 150 | 100.0<br>0 | -   | -    | -   | -          |
| Immoral attitude of community       | -   | -          | -   | -    | 150 | 100.0<br>0 |
| An act against human rights         | -   | -          | -   | -    | 150 | 100.0<br>0 |
| Extramarital relationship           | 90  | 60.0       | 60  | 40.0 | -   | -          |
| Sexual exploitation                 | 100 | 66.7       | 40  | 26.7 | 10  | 6.6        |
| Neglecting primary needs            | 40  | 26.7       | 100 | 66.7 | 10  | 6.6        |
| Threatening                         | 15  | 10.0       | 35  | 23.3 | 100 | 66.7       |
| Restriction on going outside        | -   | -          | -   | -    | 150 | 100.0<br>0 |
| Not allowing to visit parent's home | -   | -          | -   | -    | 150 | 100.0<br>0 |

Almost all the respondents (100%) reported that there is no prevalence of violence against women in their society like eve teasing, indecent comments, battering, physical abuse and mental torture. Besides this there is no immoral attitude of community like denial of food sexual exploitation, an act against human rights, demand for dowry, adequacy of laws to abolish violence but they know that violence is punishable under law.

## 2. Traditional Property Rights of Mishmi

About 60 per cent of the respondents reported that they know that both men and women have the right to get property from their parents under the constitution of India but due to the traditional customary law in their society that prohibits the women to owned any immovable property. The respondents stated that they do not consider the customary law to be relevant in distribution of property among men and women rather they prefer the Indian law. The property is always inherited by the men (100%) and women don't have any right over movable and immovable property according to the customary law.



### (B) Khamti Women

Khamti are inhabited in the Lohit district and Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh and are socially and economically considered to be one of the most developed tribe of Arunachal Pradesh. Among some tribes like the Khamptis and Singphos the chief of the tribe or clan is hereditary and possesses more power and influence over their tribesmen. Inheritance system is patrilineal. Only the male issues can inherit. When the father dies, all his sons inherit in equal shares. There is no custom of primogeniture, nor even of preferential share to the eldest. Nor is there any pre-condition (*e.g.* performing the death ceremonies) to inheriting the property of the deceased. Widows and daughters cannot inherit landed property. In absence of a male issue of the deceased the property passes on to the nearest male kinsman. Sometimes, even during the life-time of the father, he gives away the share of the son as soon as he is married. Such a son does not get a share again of the remainder when the father dies.

#### (i) Age

Table (i): Distribution of Respondents by Age

| Age          | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------------|--------------------|------------|
| 14-17        | 28                 | 18.70      |
| 18-25        | 45                 | 30.00      |
| 26-30        | 32                 | 21.30      |
| 31 and above | 45                 | 30.00      |
| Total        | 150                | 100.00     |

Table (i) shows the age-wise distribution of the respondents. It shows that out of 150 respondents, 18.7 per cent respondents belong to the age group between 14-17 years. While 30 per cent respondents belonged to the age group between 18-25 years followed by 21.3 per cent respondents of the age group 26-30 years and 30 per cent of the respondents are 31 and above.

Table (a): Distribution of Respondents by Age at Marriage

| Age at Marriage | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------|
| 14-17           | 24                 | 30.0       |
| 18-25           | 38                 | 47.5       |

|       |    |        |
|-------|----|--------|
| 26-30 | 18 | 22.5   |
| Total | 80 | 100.00 |

Table (a) shows that 30 per cent of the respondents are married at the age of 14-17 years, 47.5 per cent of the respondents which is the highest are married at the age of 18-25 years followed by 22.5 per cent respondents are married at the age of 26-30 years. All the respondents are married according to religious rites and bride price is in practice but a customary fine is paid by the groom's family who did love marriage. The respondents are also aware that dowry is punishable under the law but among the tribes dowry is not practiced.

## (ii) Income

Income is another very important variable that has a bearing on the life of an individual as well as family. Those who are poor are depending on all basic necessities of life like proper food, health, education etc. The income level or the total earnings of the family which decides the overall life style, standard of living, life chances, access to education, health care, facilities and ultimate placement in the social order. We are aware of the fact that it is difficult to get accurate information.

Table (ii): Distribution of Respondents by Income

| Income Group         | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Upto Rs. 10,000      | 85                 | 56.7       |
| Rs. 10,001 to 30,000 | 53                 | 35.3       |
| Rs. 30,001 and Above | 12                 | 8.0        |
| Total                | 150                | 100.00     |

The table 5.1 (vi) shows that 56.7 per cent respondent are earning up to Rs. 10,000 while 35.3 per cent of the respondents had their annual income between Rs. 10,001 to 30,000 and only 8 per cent respondents have been earning between Rs. 30,001 and above as their annual income. This shows that majority of the respondents had low income.

## 1. Level of violence against women in family and workplace among the Khampti

### (i) Violence at Workplace:

Almost all the women (100%) responded that there is no unwanted behaviour from the co-workers in the workplace.

**(ii) Family Violence**

Almost all the respondents (100%) reported that there is no immoral attitude of community like denial of food sexual exploitation, an act against human rights, demand for dowry, adequacy of laws to abolish violence, restriction on going outside, criticism and not allowing visiting parent's home. Physical act and mental torture is responded as always (10%), rarely (70%) and never (20%); verbal abuse as always (46.7%) and rarely (53.3%); extra marital affairs to be always (40%) and rarely (60%); sexual exploitation always (13.3%) and 86.7 as never; neglecting primary needs and threatening is found to be rarely (6.7%) and never (93.3%). Besides this but they know that violence is punishable under law, shown in table (ii):

Table (ii): Distribution of Respondents by Occurrence of violence in family

| Violence Against Women              | Always | %      | Rarely | %     | Never | %      |
|-------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| Physical act                        | 15     | 10.00  | 105    | 70.00 | 30    | 20.00  |
| Physical and mental torture         | 15     | 10.00  | 105    | 70.00 | 30    | 20.00  |
| Verbal abuse                        | 70     | 46.7   | 80     | 53.3  | -     | -      |
| Criticism                           | 150    | 100.00 | -      | -     | -     | -      |
| Immoral attitude of community       | -      | -      | -      | -     | 150   | 100.00 |
| An act against human rights         | -      | -      | -      | -     | 150   | 100.00 |
| Extramarital relationship           | 60     | 40.00  | 90     | 60.00 | -     | -      |
| Sexual exploitation                 | 20     | 13.3   | -      | -     | 130   | 86.7   |
| Neglecting primary needs            | -      | -      | 10     | 6.7   | 140   | 93.3   |
| Threatening                         | -      | -      | 10     | 6.7   | 140   | 93.3   |
| Restriction on going outside        | -      | -      | -      | -     | 150   | 100.00 |
| Not allowing to visit parent's home | -      | -      | -      | -     | 150   | 100.00 |

From the data it is found that about 60 percent respondents reported that they know that both men and women have the right to get property from their parents under the constitution of India

customary law prevails in their society in distribution of property but 40 percent respondents did not know if any law prevails regarding property rights to women. The respondents stated that they do not consider the customary law to be relevant in distribution of property rather they prefer the Indian law. The property is always (80%) given to the son and rarely (20%) the daughter gets any share of the property. About 20 percent respondents reported that the form of property they get is moveable property like utensils and clothing. The widow owns the property of the deceased husband.

### (C) Singpho Women

#### (i) Age

Table (i): Distribution of Respondents by Age

| Age          | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------------|--------------------|------------|
| 14-17        | 7                  | 4.7        |
| 18-25        | 43                 | 28.7       |
| 26-30        | 65                 | 43.3       |
| 31 and above | 35                 | 23.3       |
| Total        | 150                | 100.00     |

Table (i) shows the age-wise distribution of the respondents. It shows that out of 150 respondents, 4.7 per cent respondents belong to the age group between 14-17 years. While 28.7 per cent respondents belonged to the age group between 18-25 years followed by 43.3 per cent respondents of the age group 26-30 years and 23.3 per cent of the respondents are 31 above.

Table (a): Distribution of Respondents by Age at Marriage:

| Age at Marriage | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------|
| 14-17           | 49                 | 54.4       |
| 18-25           | 26                 | 28.9       |
| 26-30           | 15                 | 16.7       |
| Total           | 90                 | 100.00     |

Table (a) shows that 54.4 per cent of the respondents are married at the age of 14-17 years which is the highest, 28.9 per cent of the respondents are married at the age of 18-25 years followed by 16.7 per cent respondents are married at the age of 26-30 years. A customary fine in the form of money and domestic animals given by the groom's family who opt for love marriage.

## (ii) Income

Table (ii): Distribution of Respondents by Income

| Income Group         | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Upto Rs. 10,000      | 60                 | 40.0       |
| Rs. 10,001 to 30,000 | 85                 | 56.7       |
| Rs. 30,001 and Above | 5                  | 3.3        |
| Total                | 150                | 100.00     |

The table (ii) shows that 40 per cent of the respondent are earning up to Rs. 10,000, 56.7 per cent of the respondents had their annual income between Rs. 10,001 to 30,000 and only 3.3 per cent respondents have been earning between Rs. 30,001 and above as their annual income. This shows that majority of the respondents had low income.

## 1. Level of Violence against Women in Family and Workplace among the Singpho

### (i) Violence at Workplace

About 90 per cent of the women responded that there is no unwanted behaviour from their co-workers in the workplace but 10 per cent women responded that there is unwanted behaviour like eve teasing, indecent comments, battering, physical and mental torture.

### (ii) Family Violence

Table (ii): Distribution of Respondents by occurrence of violence in family

| Violence Against Women | Always | %     | Rarely | % | Never | % |
|------------------------|--------|-------|--------|---|-------|---|
| Physical act           | 150    | 100.0 | -      | - | -     | - |
|                        |        | 0     |        |   |       |   |

|                                     |     |            |     |            |     |            |
|-------------------------------------|-----|------------|-----|------------|-----|------------|
| Physical and mental torture         | 150 | 100.0<br>0 | -   | -          | -   | -          |
| Verbal abuse                        | 150 | 100.0<br>0 | -   | -          | -   | -          |
| Criticism                           | 150 | 100.0<br>0 | -   | -          | -   | -          |
| Immoral attitude of community       | -   | -          | -   | -          | 150 | 100.0<br>0 |
| An act against human rights         | -   | -          | -   | -          | 150 | 100.0<br>0 |
| Extramarital relationship           | -   | -          | 150 | 100.0<br>0 | -   | -          |
| Sexual exploitation                 | -   | -          | 150 | 100.0<br>0 | -   | -          |
| Neglecting primary needs            | -   | -          | 110 | 90.00      | 40  | 10.00      |
| Neglecting primary needs            | -   | -          | 110 | 90.00      | 40  | 10.00      |
| Threatening                         | -   | -          | 110 | 90.00      | 40  | 10.00      |
| Restriction on going outside        | -   | -          | -   | -          | 150 | 100.0<br>0 |
| Not allowing to visit parent's home | -   | -          | -   | -          | 150 | 100.0<br>0 |

The table (ii) shows that 100 per cent of the respondents always experience physical act and mental torture; verbal abuse and criticism. All the respondents (100%) reported of never having any immoral attitude of community and an act against human rights towards them. About 100 per cent of the respondents reported rarely of extramarital relationship, sexual exploitation, neglecting primary needs and threatening is reported as rarely (90%) and never (10%). Almost all the respondents (100%) reported that there is no restriction on going outside and not allowed in visiting parent's home. Almost all the respondents (90%) reported that there is no prevalence of violence against women in their society while 10 per cent of the respondents stated there are

eve teasing, indecent comments, battering, physical abuse and mental torture. Among the Singpho women respondents (100%) it is found that there is no immoral attitude of community like denial of food sexual exploitation, an act against human rights, demand for dowry, adequacy of laws to abolish violence but they know that violence is punishable under law.

## **2. Traditional Property Rights of Singpho**

All the respondents reported that they know that both men and women have the right to get property from their parents under the constitution of India but customary law prevails in their society which does not allow the women to inherit any property. The respondents stated that they prefer the Indian law as the customary law is not relevant in distribution of property. Singpho society is also patrilineal and so the property is always inherited by men according to the customary law reported by 100 percent women respondents. All the respondents (100%) stated that the Singpho woman doesn't inherit any family property either movable or immovable. Though she can use the property as long she is living with the family. The widow inherits the property of the deceased husband. The widow if she marries the younger brother of the deceased then the property goes to the brother but if the widow marries outside the family then she can't inherit any property.

## **III. CONCLUSION**

It is noteworthy that the Gaon Bura, with its long history, has established deep roots within the community and remains the favored course of accessing justice. The representation of women in such institution is normally not there due to the practice of patriarchal system. In most of the tribal socio-cultural setup, women are also barred from inheriting paternal property even in case of inheriting the matrimonial property. In some cases, widows with no male offspring are barred from inheriting any property of deceased husband, which renders them not only homeless and socially insignificant but also in pitiable situation. The only succor that is available to those women was through modern legal system. There is a high incidence of petty crimes across the region, but the available reports indicated that the women approach before the police only on major crimes such as homicide and sexual assault. Others, such as theft, are preferably resolved by the traditional courts. Thus, in order to settle petty offences the traditional courts remain the most preferred option for dispute resolution. Even in the case of property, most tribal groups follow a patriarchal system with succession and inheritance largely controlled by and flow through the male member of the family. Without doubt, the overwhelming norm among the tribal and other caste groups in India are of patriarchal in nature but the form and nature differs among different groups depending upon the economic and social factors which affect their

growth.

Among most patrilineal tribes, inheritance only flows in the male line and different traditions on rights for daughters can be observed. For instance, all the Arunachal tribes are patrilineal. Property ownership and inheritance are by a son and in his absence, the nearest male relative. No woman can inherit immovable property. Most of these tribes are depended on jhum cultivators so inheritance of property is in certain way bound to inherit by the male members of the family but that does not limit the rights of women either. If one looks insightfully on the women of three community i.e., Khampti, Singpho and Mishmi of Namsai and Lohit districts of Arunachal Pradesh, it is found that women have considerably enjoys the freedom and rights as men in their society. The women involves in decision-making process of many matters in the family and society. They are also, unlike mainland women, actively engage in buying and selling of properties both movable and immovable one. Even they are involved in forming or joining with association that dwells in social, economic or cultural development. In this sense, the women of Khampti, Singpho and Mishmi considerably shared the equal platform or enjoys the roles not less than men. The most significant of all found in this research is the disadvantage position of women in term of property rights face by the three communities' women. They have no rights to claim of any property from the family if the girl is married away, and it is more worse when the women is married with outside the community. Community generally feels that land is the inherent rights of men in the society and this practice is discriminating the space of women in claiming property rights.

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