

## **Intervention of Mr. P. Pradhan, Chairperson, GSIPF**

Representation to the United Nations working Group on Indigenous Population 23rd Session, 18-22, July, Geneva

Agenda item 4 (b), Principal theme "Indigenous Peoples and the International and domestic Protection of Traditional Knowledge".

### **Mr. Chairperson,**

Distinguished Members of the working Group, Govt. Representatives, UN Agencies, Fellow Indigenous Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

The Greater Sylhet Indigenous Peoples Form (GSIPF) is pleased that the UNWGIP have this year chosen "Indigenous Peoples and the International and domestic Protection of Traditional Knowledge" as its principal theme.

The Traditional knowledge of the Indigenous Peoples we are talking about is a much discussed subject. As it is known, Indigenous Peoples have a vast and deep-rooted knowledge of their environment and bio-diversity.

'A large part of the worlds population depends on indigenous knowledge to meet their medical needs and that at least half depends on their knowledge and cultivation for their food supply'

"This detailed knowledge is being exploited again and again by external economic interests. The exploitation and commercialization of Traditional Knowledge is happening without the consent of the Indigenous Peoples.'

"The Indigenous communities receive no profits or royalties o any kind for giving their knowledge to pople and companies, who profit from the theft of their wisdom.'

"They are losing out through other people selling out traditional knowledge on industrial market.'

'Plants, which Indigenous peoples have discovered, cultivated and used for food, medicine and sacred rituals are already patented in different countries, e.g. Turmeric and neem in Asia.

"The Traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples is taken as a mere commercial product in all international instrument, not as knowledge, the spiritual part of the knowledge is completely ignored. It is not taken as the real knowledge but as a commercial product.

"The control of indigenous peoples over traditional knowledge is threatened by the "TRINDIGENOUS PEOPLES ' (Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) agreement which allows the 'Patenting of life form'. Besides, deforestation, logging, mining, conversion of forests to commercial plantations,

monocultures promoted by the Multinational Development Banks and agencies are also threats to Traditional knowledge.

So, to step up for the protection of traditional knowledge, we need to be very critical of the processes.

Thus, we would like to put the following recommendations :

m Counties that have ratified the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) have to fulfill their obligations to protect traditional knowledge.

Recognition of traditional knowledge, rights of local indigenous community related to resources and knowledge by the state.

Documentation and compilation by the state, to prevent patenting of Traditional Knowledge

Bring and pass as bill of 'Community Intellectual Act' in Legislative ssembly.

Programs and project by the state to protect and promote traditional knowledge.

And, internationally we demand the review and amendments of the "TRIndigenous Peoples ' agreement (regarding the article 27.3).

Thank you sir, for your kind attention.