

Thingkho Le Malcha

TUESDAY | OCTOBER 10, 2023



Tuaitengphai RELIEF CENTRE

Tuaitengphai Village, Lamka

Managed by Zou Youth Organisation/ United Zou Organisation

Total Inmates Registered: 96

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ■ Male: 45 | ■ Female: 51 |
| ■ Children (0-10 years): 41 | ■ Adolescent (11-17 years): 21 |
| ■ Adult (18-59 years): 31 | ■ Old age (60 above): 03 |
| ■ Pregnant Mother: 02 | ■ Lactating Mother: 15 |
| ■ Person with Disability: 00 | |

VILLAGES COVERED

- P. Salem, Chakpikarong
- Phoikon, Chakpikarong
- Walku, Chakpikarong
- Kathuang, Chakpikarong



KUKI VICTIMS' UPDATE

As on 05.10.2023



143
DEATHS



200+
VILLAGES BURNT



7000+
HOUSES BURNT



360
CHURCHES &
SYNAGOGUES BURNT



41,425
DISPLACED
PERSONS

Thingkho Le Malcha (charred wood tied with chilli): A war symbol; a pre-arranged secret code agreed upon by the Kukis to inform the people about the commencement of war and on receiving this, one has to remain alert and be ready for the battle.

CoTU to Claim Dead Bodies Lying at Mortuaries in Imphal



In a big development amidst the ongoing unrest in Manipur, the Committee on Tribal Unity, or the CoTU Sadar Hills, Kangpokpi District decided to claim the Kuki-Zo dead bodies lying at the mortuary in Imphal as well after lifting the almost two-month long economic blockade.

The Committee on Tribal Unity Sadar Hills Kangpokpi had on October 4 lifted the almost two-month long Economic Blockade along the two important National Highway No.2 (Imphal-Dimapur road), and No.37 (Imphal - Jiribam road) as it considered the political dialogue between Government of India and UPF and KNO has reached an advanced crossroads.

A week after lifting the economic blockade, CoTU now decided to claim the Kuki-Zo unclaimed dead bodies lying at the mortuary in Imphal for almost six months.

However, CoTU makes it very clear that the decision to claim the dead bodies is not in any way related or a step towards the peace and normalcy initiative of the Government.

“But, it is definitely another step taken for the centre to pave the “fastest way” for a political solution under the political dialogue between the Government of India and the UPF and KNO which is in a very advanced stage that has already reached a crossroads.

Speaking to the media, CoTU’s Media Cell Coordinator, Ng Lun Kipgen, flanked by the Committee’s General Secretary, Lamminlun Singsit said that we appreciated the concerned authorities to facilitate the dead bodies of Kuki-Zo to be finally buried with dignity in our homeland.

He continued that we had a consultative meeting with all the victim’s families from Kangpokpi district

in the presence of the district authorities and unanimously decided to give our loved ones the highest dignity in the place of rest at the Martyr’s Cemetery at Phaijang village in Kangpokpi district.

However, Ng Lun Kipgen said that at the moment we cannot say when the dead bodies shall be claimed and buried.

In case of any unidentified dead bodies, CoTU appealed to the concerned authorities not to take hasty decisions in disposing of the dead bodies and urged the concerned authorities to ensure a mechanism by which all unidentified bodies can be re-verified and claimed.

CoTU also appealed to the concerned authorities to ensure safe transportation of the dead bodies and urged various civil society organizations based at Imphal to let the dead bodies be brought home and refrain from political mileage over the dead bodies.

CoTU’s Media Cell Coordinator, Ng Lun Kipgen further said that the decision to claim the dead bodies of our loved ones has nothing to do with the peace initiative or dialogue rather it is a step and trust towards the centre government to pave the “fastest way” in finding a political solution.

He said that we know the Centre Government is very much serious about the aged old Kuki-Zo political issue by carrying forward the political dialogue with the UPF and KNO in a very advanced stage that has already reached a crossroads, so, we the Kuki-Zo people also considered we so take a step forward to facilitate the political dialogue for the centre to expedite the talks by finding a political solution at the earliest.

SC Allows Dr. Hausing to File Petition Virtually Before Manipur High Court

The Supreme Court of India on Monday allowed Dr. Kham Khan Suan Hausing, a Professor of Political Science at the University of Hyderabad, to file a petition before the Manipur High Court virtually and allowed his counsel to appear via the online mode.

A division Bench of the Supreme Court comprising Justice Aniruddha Bose and Justice Bela M. Trivedi was hearing a transfer petition praying to transfer a criminal petition, instituted under Articles 226 and 482 of the Constitution, in the Manipur High Court to the Delhi High Court.

The court took notice of the Order dated September 22, where the Bench had directed the petitioner to seek remedy before the High Court under Article 482 of the Constitution. In the Order, the Bench had directed the High Court to permit the counsel for the petitioner to appear through a video conferencing platform

An FIR was lodged under Sections 153A, 200, 295A, 298, 505(i) and 120B of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 (IPC) against Dr. Hausing for giving an interview to The Wire.

Seized 'Poppy Seed' in Manipur Turns Out To Be Cooking Ingredient

In their attempt to malign the image of Assam Rifles, an Imphal based media outlet has reported that a parcel containing around 950 grams of poppy seeds from Imphal Head Post Office, Babupura, Imphal West was seized by a team of Narcotic Affairs of Border (NAB) on Monday. The parcel was sent from one Arif Hussain from Bandipara of Jammu and Kashmir to one Ritukumari HQ, Coy, 19 AR, Noney. However, as per news agency PTI, the seized item turns out to be a cooking ingredient.

A packet containing a little over 800 grams of harmless poppy seeds seized by Manipur Police from Imphal post office turned out to be the viral topic of the day here on Monday, officials said. With most officials in the dark about the culinary usage of poppy seeds, the issue soon turned serious with most of them linking it to illegal poppy cultivation in the hill areas of the ethnic strife-torn state. The seeds were found neatly packed with dry fruits in a parcel addressed to an Assam Rifles official in Noney district, they said. The security official also further noted that it was a misleading claim.

Do MLAs Take Oath to Uphold Integrity of a Particular State?

The Manipur Democratic Alliance (MDA) on Monday announced that a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) would be filed against the 10 Kuki-Zo MLAs who are demanding for a separate administration from Manipur.

Speaking to the media at the office of MDA located at Babupara, Chairman of the Alliance, Bijoy said all the MLAs while taking the charge, they took oath for the protection of the territorial integrity of Manipur and abstaining from doing any activity which is against Indian constitution.

The demand of 10 Kuki-Zo MLAs for a separate administration from the state of Manipur is not legitimate, he said, questioning why the Manipur Legislative Assembly is not taking any action against those who are trying to disintegrate Manipur.

“In connection with the issue, a PIL will be filed against them,” he said, adding that the process of filing the PIL has been already started.

Here, the misgiving question is: Does a state legislature take an oath to uphold and protect the integrity of a particular state?

Threatening a state legislature with PIL for putting-up legitimate demand is really absurd. Is the Democratic Alliance Chairman ignorant of the provisions laid down by the Constitution of India?

The Chairman in his press briefing stated that the 10 Kuki MLAs while taking charge took the oath for protection of the territorial integrity of Manipur. However, the fact of the matter is that state legislators do not take oaths to uphold the territorial integrity of any particular state. Rather, all the MLAs of the state took oath to bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India as by law established and that they will uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India only, not that of a particular state. The Third Schedule of Indian Constitution also clearly defines this.

Moreover, Article 3 of the Constitution of India gives, defines and further authorises the Indian Parliament the power to form new states; alter the area, boundaries or names of existing states by legislation.

Kuki Students Meet Kerala CM, Extend Gratitude



The displaced students of Kuki community who are now currently in Kerala for continuation of their studies meet the Chief Minister of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan, at Kannur, today. The team led by Goulungmon Haokip, a Law student at Kannur University, meet the chief minister who was there on a visit to Kannur district, also handed out a 'Letter of Gratitude' to the Chief Minister.

The Kuki Students' Organisation General Headquarters, an apex students' body of the Kukis, would like to convey our sincere gratitude to your government of Kerala state for the continued support rendered to our displaced students from Manipur by providing them the best avenue for continuation of educational career, KSO said in a letter addressed to the Chief Minister of Kerala.

"That, on the fateful day of May 3, 2023, our state Manipur was plagued with ethnic violence where the majority Meitei community unleashed an ethnic cleansing pogrom against the minority Kuki-Zo community. The violence has greatly affected the student community as most of the educational institutions in the state of Manipur are mainly concentrated in Imphal – the capital of Manipur.

Since the outbreak of violence in Manipur, many Kuki-Zo students have fled the Imphal valley fearing persecution from the Meitei mob, leaving them with no gleam of

hope for resuming their studies. Many students have traumatic experiences of being haunted, chased and their educational documents burnt to ashes. The fate of many of our students remained in a grim situation. That's when God's Own Country – Kerala comes to our rescue."

"...Sir, because of your benevolent and sympathetic action, sliced with your humanity approach, the KSO-GHQ can now be able to send more than a hundred displaced students to your state for continuing their studies. The warm reception and hospitality our students received is delectable for us as an apex student body, for which we are highly indebted to your government and the people of Kerala. We would also like to earnestly seek the support of the state government and the people of Kerala in the coming days too", the KSO's letter to the CM added.

Maintaining that the current violence in Manipur is a state sponsored ethnic cleansing pogrom against Kuki people, the KSO-GHQ said that the Kuki community has been suppressed politically, economically and culturally for the past many decades and as such the fight here is for survival, On-behalf of the Kuki-Zo community, the KSO-GHQ also seeks the support of Kerala government and his party in the fight for their political solution.

ARE KUKIS SECESSIONISTS?

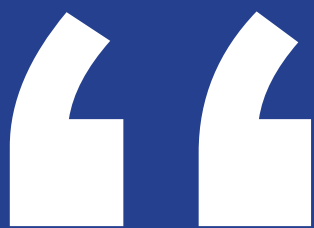
Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren Singh, in one of his speeches, alleged that the Kukis are trying to break (away from) India. It was a serious allegation to be made by a chief minister of a state, a head of a state who is supposed to make only responsible statements. To fact-check his allegation we need to trace the root of the Kukis' demand for separate administration. Kukis' movement for self-determination can be traced back to the Anglo-Kuki War (1917-1919) or so-called Kuki Rebellion or Kuki Rising. It was purely a war to defend the ancestral land and the freedom of the Kukis from British colonialism, and was not "secessionism" in any sense of the term.

Post Indian Independence, Kukis, in the name of Kuki National Assembly, submitted a memorandum to the then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, in 1960 demanding for a separate state within the India Union. Then came an era when the neighbors of the Kukis, even the meiteis, started taking up arms to attain independence from India. The waves of self-determination prevailing in that era forced the hands of the Kukis to take up arms for their self-defence. Hence, the first Kuki armed group (KNF) came into being in 1987. The first leader of KNF (L) Shri Nehlun Kipgen, had envisaged a Kuki homeland within the Union of India, in his memorandum to the Govt of India.

This was followed by the formations of more Kuki armed groups fighting for protection of its people and also for self-determination. The different groups were finally clubbed under two umbrellas viz., KNO and UPF. The KNO and UPF entered into Suspension of Operation (SoO) with Govt. of India and Govt. of Manipur in 2005 and 2008 respectively. The basis of the tripartite agreement was a separate Kukiland under the Union of India and not at all infringing on the territorial integrity of Manipur. With this agreement in mind, the Kukis have been hoping for some autonomy within Manipur.



Then came a sudden onslaught on the Kukis by the majority Meiteis, backed by Chief Minister N. Biren Singh. The 'ethnic cleansing' upon the minority Kukis was so severe and brutal that the Kukis had no other option, but to be separated from the Meiteis, geographically and politically. The historical loyalty of the Kukis with Manipur has been repaid in the vilest manner. The wound is now too deep for any 'glue' to join the two communities back together again. Kuki armed groups had been forced to remove the "protecting the territorial integrity of Manipur" clause in the SoO agreement, and the tripartite agreement turned into a bipartite, where the Govt. of Manipur removed itself from the SoO picture. Even after the exclusion of Govt. of Manipur in the SoO agreement, Kukis' demand for separate administration still remains within the ambit of the Union of India. There has never been a demand for secession from India and there never will be. Everyone, including the meitei Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, should be clear of this fact.



A patriot must always be ready to defend his country against his government.

-Edward Abbey

MEITEIS' EXCLUSION FROM THE ST LIST IS BY THEIR OWN CHOICE; KALELKAR COMMISSION REPORT OF 1956

-NGARANMI SHIMRAY

1. KaKa Kalelkar Backward Classes Commission report of 1956, also known as the Second Backward Classes Commission report states that the Meiteis, when given an opportunity to be ST, did not include themselves. This is a startling and undeniable fact!

2. The first Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 were notified Presidential Orders under Article 342(1) of the Constitution. These Orders were based on the list of depressed classes framed by Dr. J.H. Hutton in his Census Report 1931. The list of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the State of Manipur was first notified through the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) (Part C States) Order, 1951. The Meiteis claimed that they were left out in the ST notification under President's Constitution (STs) Order, 1950. This was found to be not true by the KaKa Kalelkar Commission of 1956.

3. A Backward Classes Commission (BCC) was constituted on 29th January 1953 with KaKa Kalelkar as the Chairman. The Commission was directed to determine the criteria to be adopted in considering whether any section of people should be treated as socially and educationally backward. The Commission was also directed to investigate the conditions of all such socially and educationally backward classes and the difficulties which they encountered in carrying out their work and prepare a list of such classes. It was asked to make recommendations on the following matters: (a) As to the steps that should be taken by the Union or any State to remove such difficulties or to improve their conditions (b) As to the grants that should be made available.

4. The Commission took two years to complete its work, and prepared a list of 2,399 castes and communities and suggested several measures for their social and economic development. About 70 per cent of India's population was considered backward.

5. The following criteria were suggested for determining backwardness: Low social position in the caste hierarchy Lack of educational progress Inadequate representation in government service Inadequate representation in the fields of trade, commerce and industry. Caste was taken as the key factor in making a list of backward classes. The Commission thought that the problems of a caste-ridden society could be minimised by promotion of the socially and educationally backward classes.



6. A questionnaire was sent by the BCC to all the states and union territories and it included questions like: "Do you think that the lists of SCs and STs issued under the President's s order need any revisions? If so, what castes or communities do you suggest for inclusion or exclusion from the above mentioned two lists (SCs & STs list)? Please state reasons... Have your state government recommended the inclusion in or exclusion from the existing lists of any tribe, caste, or community?" The report of Kalelkar Commission indicates that the Meiteis were not denied or left out from the STs List as they claim in 1950. Rather, it was the Meitei who chose not to be included. When the BCC requested a list of tribes to be included in the Scheduled Tribes (modification) list from each state and union territory including Manipur, the Meiteis did not include themselves. Given these facts, it is indeed sad that the Schedule Tribe Demand Committee of Manipur did not carry out a serious study of available information for their ST tag demand. Had they done so the existence of the Kalelkar Commission report would have made them understand what had transpired in the past and that the Meitei community was not included as no one asked for becoming a ST. The news item in the local dailies that Shri KK Sethi IAS(Rtd), a former Chief Secretary of Manipur favours the demand of Meitei community to become ST as they were left out by the KaKa Kalelkar Commission. This is total falsehood as may be seen from the preceding discourse. The Meitei community left themselves out from the 1950 Order. They were afforded an opportunity by the Kalelkar Committee but again they chose to opt out in 1956 from the modification list too. No one is to blame but the Meiteis themselves who may have

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considered, at that point of time, which it was denigrating for caste Hindus like the Meiteis to be termed as Scheduled Tribe.

7. The Kaka Kalelkar report mentioned about advanced communities in each State who it stated do not require any positive discrimination. It stated that along with their educational advancement they have also begun sharing effectively in politics, governmental posts and other spheres of life and do not suffer any more from the inferiority complex common to the Shudras and the Meiteis were designated as an advanced community.

8. Schedule Tribe implies a nomadic descent, with distinct customary code of conduct, mode of worship and cultural ethos, shaped in accordance with the given traditional moorings and customary beliefs and practices, and generally inhabiting hilly or intractable regions or forests, which results in seclusion from the mainstream of national life leading to severe historical deprivation thereto. In stark contrast, Meiteis constitute more than half of the total population of Manipur and being the dominant majority, there is conscious historical process of marginalization of ethnic minorities in the State. Historically, Meiteis constitute the ruling "caste" and the hill tribals are considered as social and cultural outcastes. Their socio-economic and political dominance within this casteist-conceived hierarchy is prevailing even today. Thus, the claim of the Scheduled Tribe Demand Committee of Manipur based on the aspect of socio-educational deprivation has no legs to stand on.

9. It is also important to understand the extend of OBC coverage as far as Meiteis are concerned. As per the Central List of OBCs for the State of Manipur, 1995, the Meitei Pangals, Meiteis and Meeteis, including Meitei Brahmins, Meitei/Meetei Sanamahis and Rajkumars are recognized as OBCs. The aspect of job creation, social and educational advancement, if any, is sufficiently taken care of by the OBC reservation. Over and above this, some Meiteis have been notified as SC under Article 241 in 1950 and they also enjoy the reservation benefits. The extend of reservation facility under SC and OBC available to Meiteis is more than 90% of their population.

10. The question about the Constitutional legality of a single community being allowed to enjoy all three categories namely SC, ST and OBC need to be answered by Constitutional pundits. Answering this question would be the first priority and would eliminate all misinformation circulating among the Meitei society regarding their objective to become ST. There is also the quagmire the Meitei SC of Manipur would be faced as to whether they would still be SC or will become ST too like the rest of

the Meiteis if the ST demand of Meitei community is given. This would need an answer too. The irresponsible approach of dragging in the lumpen masses into the fight for ST tag by the valley CSOs causing loss of lives, properties and irreparably tearing up the delicate fabric of Manipur society would need accountability. The intellectuals of Manipur are complicit by their silence of not informing the correct position to the valley CSOs who are misleading the people with untenable hope based on false and erroneous assumptions.

11. On the demand for ST status by the Meiteis it is important to understand that there is now an elaborate process laid down by the Central government to declare a community as SC or ST. Socio-economic survey of the Meitei community vis a vis the STs of Manipur would need to be carried out. Further an ethnographic study of the Meitei community to establish their claims of being a tribe will need to be carried out too. The criteria to be considered has already been laid down by the Lokur Committee. The reports will then be examined and considered and specific recommendations would be made by the State government for sending the proposal to the RGI (Registrar General of India). The reports, recommendations of state government etc will be examined, analysed by the RGI and its conclusions will be sent to the Central government for consideration. Thereafter there will be an inter-ministerial consideration of the proposal for comments and placing it before the Union cabinet. Finally it will be sent to the parliament to make it into law. When all these processes are completed favourably the President of India will notify it under a Presidential Order.

12. The Meitei claimed that they were left out of the President's Constitution (STs) Order, 1950. This is not true as stated in the report of the Backward Classes Commission chaired by KaKa Kalelkar. When the first BCC requested a list of tribes to be included in the Scheduled Tribes (modification) list from each state and union territory, Meiteis did not include themselves. The Meitei were not denied or left out from the STs List as they claim – they chose not to be included both in 1950 and 1956.

Ngaranmi Shimray is an activist and political observer based in New Delhi. Views are personal.

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'MHA Has a List of Manipur Terrorists'

As violence continues in Manipur between the Meiteis and Kukis, a Kuki MLA, speaking on condition of anonymity, tells Prasanna D Zore/Rediff.com,

"Meiteis kill Kukis, Kukis kill Meiteis. The hatred and fear that the two communities have for each other has reached the maximum height."

Who is responsible for this new round of violence in Manipur?

You see it's a continuation of the riot. It's a continuation (of the violence that started on May 3, 2023).

Did the violence not subside for some time? Did the violence resume after the photographs of the two Meitei youth who were allegedly killed by the Kukis surfaced?

No, this is a narration (that the Kukis killed the two youth) set by the Meiteis.

(If they were killed), then where are their bodies? Where are their bodies?

I am told that they (the Meitei youth) eloped somewhere near the periphery (of areas that demarcate Kuki territories from those dominated by the Meiteis) and that they are hiding.

They say their phones were snapped by someone else. That is why they (the CBI officers investigating the murders) have tracked their mobiles and caught them (those who snatched their phones).

But the CBI couldn't find their bodies.

Are you saying that till their bodies are not found they cannot be considered as dead?

Yes.

But the Meiteis are already blaming Kukis. They are also blaming outsiders, the insurgents from Myanmar.

No, let me give you one tip. Who are these terrorists? Who are these militants? Check the list from the Ministry of Home Affairs. There is a list.

There is a list with the Ministry of Home Affairs that has the details and names of the terrorist organisations that



attack the Indian Army. Everything will be clear. Just check that list and see.

This is their (Meiteis') made up story (that Kuki militants from across the border in Myanmar enter India and launch attacks on the Indian Army).

The CM (Chief Minister N Biren Singh) saying that these (Kuki) militants are coming from elsewhere is not true.

Do you have that list? The list that you are talking about...

No. The best is you (the media) get that list yourself from the MHA and then you will believe me.

If I give you that list you may say that I have made up that list. Let someone from the MHA give you that list.

But you believe that the Ministry of Home Affairs has a list of those who attack the Indian Army?

Yes.

Would these terrorists have something to do with the Kukis as the Meiteis allege?

I don't know. Now everybody is fighting. Don't know who is right, who is wrong.

But UNLF (United National Liberation Front), PLA (People's Liberation Army of Manipur), KYKL (Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup) (all militant organisations founded and led by the Meiteis)... everybody were inside Burma and waging war against India for the past 30 years. MHA has a list.

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Why are the Meiteis blaming Kukis as the terrorists?

It's a war type situation. Everybody has that narration. But the truth will reveal itself someday. You can't blame one community against other. They are fighting a war with each other. That is why they have their own narration to make Indians think that Kukis are militants and coming from somewhere else (Myanmar). It's not true; if you guys (the media) can go there, you can check for yourself.

During Burma unrest, hundreds of refugees (from Myanmar) would cross over to our side, but when they stopped fighting, these migrants would go back. It's not fair to say Kukis are Burmese.

What's the situation in Manipur right now?

The situation is not too good; they have buffer zones between the hills and the valley (territories dominated by the Kukis and Meiteis respectively) but at some places there is no proper separation.

Today, in Manipur supporters of both the groups defend their territories from attacks by the other group. Sometimes, this works, sometimes it doesn't.

Do you stick to your demand that the hills should have a separate administration, which is unacceptable to

the Meiteis, or do you think there is a way out? Can a new formula be worked out for peace to prevail in the state?

I don't know. The hatred between the two communities has reached its maximum height. Both the communities are reluctant to go areas dominated by each other's communities.

Meiteis don't want to go to hills and tribals don't want to go to the valley.

The ball is in the court of the Government of India.

Do you see any chance of peace returning to the valley as well as hills?

They fight each other. Meiteis kill Kukis, Kukis kill Meiteis.

The hatred and fear that the two communities have for each other has reached the maximum height. So it will take time.

I don't know what the central government is doing, but they will think of the way ahead.

(First published by: Rediff.com)



MAYBE AND PERHAPS

Maybe we are a little stubborn and, seeming, a foolhardy lot about our demand for separate administration Perhaps that's how the excruciating affliction that bedevilled 'manipulated' us into thinking

Possibly, we will seem like people who don't wish for 'peace' in the eyes of others Whose 'peace' are we talking about anyway? 'Peace' as defined by the oppressors or the oppressed?

Maybe our 'peace' entails the idea of the creation of an 'exclusivist and communal ghetto' as their 'progressives' and 'liberal' intellectuals self-righteously scorned Perhaps that 'project' is anathema and even inimical to the ideals of liberal democratic principles like 'co-existence', 'diversity' and 'multi-culturalism' in contemporary societies

Perhaps it's wishful thinking that cannot co-exist with constitutional democracy like ours

Maybe our devious 'agenda' is to sever the umbilical cord of the 'territorial integrity' of the state

Isn't the idea of 'territorial integrity' a fictional notion?

Perhaps we are 'partitionists' daydreaming about some distant, utopian 'homeland.'

Aren't we sneered and mocked that way? Maybe all these instincts make us seem like people irredeemably fixated on parochialism and tribalism, bordering on becoming uncivilized savages with human civilizational values having no bearing on us

Perhaps we don't seem enlightened enough and lack the swagger they exhibit with all these medieval aspirations and 'myopic' vision of separate existence

Maybe all these tendencies have been given birth by what we have gone through in the preceding dark months that left a blood trail wrought by unprecedented violence in our quiet villages and homes

Maybe these are the inarticulate expressions of deeply anxious and tormented voices looking for eager listeners crying for justice

Perhaps it's a voice that wants to break free from the shackles of exploitation, of being derided with names like narco-terrorists, illegal immigrants and poppy planters

Maybe it's a voice from the wilderness that has now found a warmth embrace on the alleys of the streets amongst the mourners

Perhaps it's already too dehumanizing an experience to carry on living together with people who see you that way

Perhaps it is a voice that cries out in angst and asks, 'What humans can carry themselves with dignity and self-respect with such derision and mockery?'

Maybe it's the fear of life itself that stalks us every moment with the existing status quo ante

Perhaps our attitude will sometimes appear obstinate and even inconceivable at times with the fence-sitters

Maybe they have not seen what our eyes have seen, heard what our ears have listened to and spoken what our mouths have spoken Perhaps if they could only have comprehended our existential crisis, they would have opened their eyes to our agony and listened to our cries with empathy

Maybe the voice from the wilderness of history that laments, 'the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing,' still echoes amid this unravelling story of suffering

Maybe that still and calm voice of yore will eventually triumph.

-Biakthang Zou

