FRIDAY | NOVEMBER 10, 2023 Thangkhole Malcha A Daily Newsletter by KSO Media & Documentation Cell

Lanva TD Block RELEF CENTRE Lingsiphai, Lamka

Managed by Young Vaiphei Association, General Headquarters (YVA GHQ)

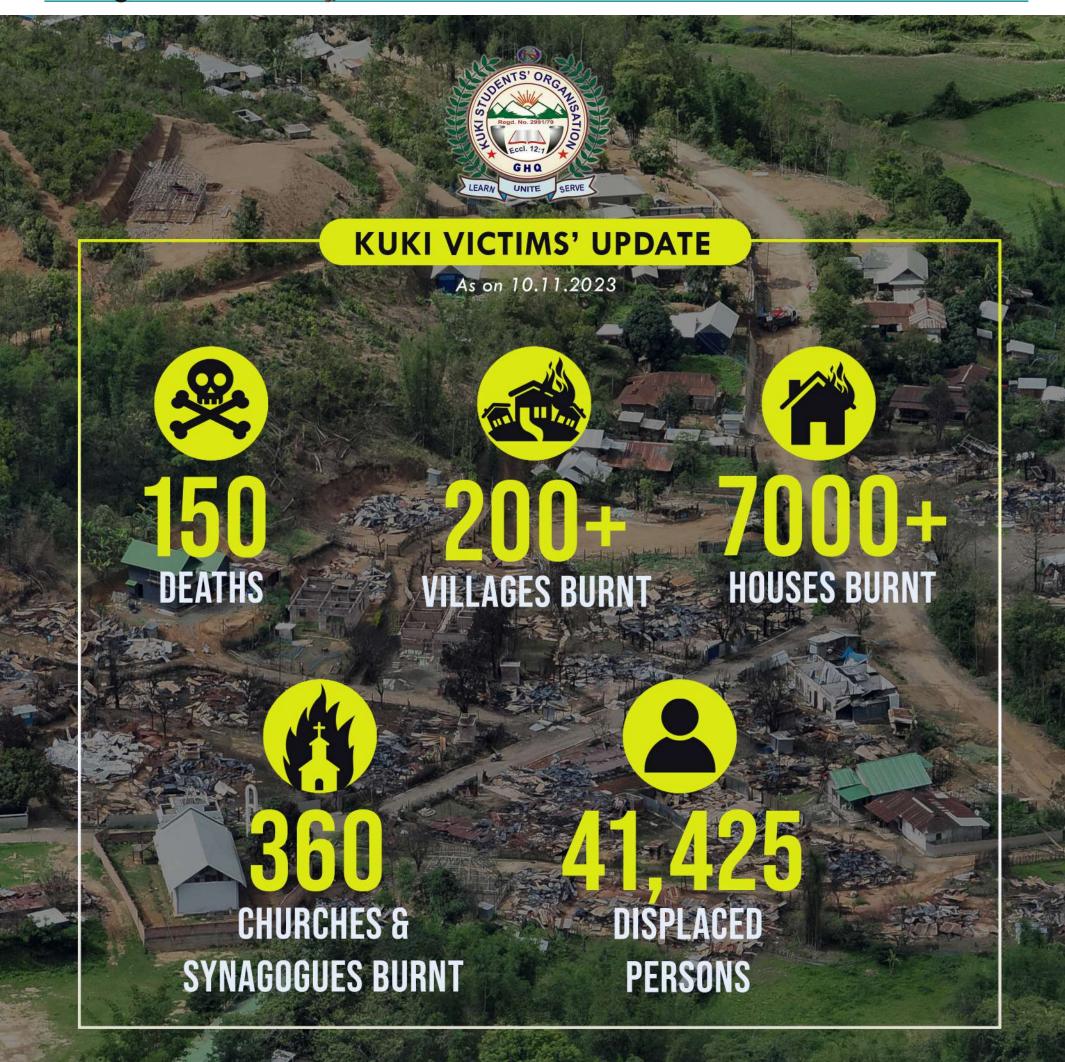


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Thingkho Le Malcha



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.





KUKI-ZO IN KANGGUI PROTESTS AGAINST GOVT'S SELECTIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT

Strife-torn Manipur's Kangpokpi district is back to a burning situation as the Kuki-Zo people intensified their mass movement protesting the alleged 'Selective injustice and selective enforcement of the law' by N. Biren Singh's led-Manipur Government while intensifying the demand for the release of the two Kuki-Zo individuals arrested by Manipur police.

Thousands of Kuki-Zo people congregated again this afternoon at Brig. M. Thomas ground and resolved to intensify the mass movement after a serious deliberation before holding another massive rally till the office of SP Kangpokpi via National Highway-2.

They chanted similar slogans such as, "Release the illegally detained two Kuki-Zo", "We want justice", "No more state forces power", "No selective injustice, No selective enforcement of the law", etc.

The protestors then held a sit-in protest in front of the SP Kangpokpi along the National Highway disrupting the movement of vehicles, while burning of tyres and wood, and putting up boulders along the highway were seen at various locations.

The protestors were also heard shouting, "We will not leave until our two innocent Kuki-Zo are brought down to Kangpokpi from Senapati and released without any condition".

Speaking to the media, CoTU's General Secretary, Lamminlun Singsit said that the public leaders could no longer control the public sentiment and they have started a mass/public movement protesting against the selective injustice and selective enforcement of the law.

He said that the Kuki-Zo people across Kangpokpi have decided that they will no longer tolerate the selective injustice and enforcement of the law only in the Kuki-Zo-dominated areas.

He also said that radicalized groups such as Arambai Tenggol volunteers roaming hassle-free with sophisticated weapons in the capital city, the unruly and uncontrolled mobs open murdering of innocent civilians, and the law enforcement agencies remaining mute spectators clearly demonstrate the lawlessness amongst the majority community.

He said that laws have been strictly enforced in the Kuki-Zo-dominated areas up to the extent of arresting innocent Kuki-Zo civilians with false accusations and allegations.



He also said that the Kuki-Zo people have decided to relaunch the mass movement and resolved that there will be no more state forces power in all the Kuki-Zo-dominated areas, he further added.

"Now, the people are the law and shall be the enforcing agencies while the state forces shall have no more authority to enforce or apply the law at their whims and fancy", he asserted.

The CoTU's Secretary also said that since the public leaders have no more control over the sentiment of the people, any untoward incident arising shall be the sole responsibility of the biased N. Biren Singh's communal Government.

He further conveyed that the public has decided not to leave the place or back off from their agitation until the two innocent Kuki-Zo arrested and detained at Senapati are brought down to Kangpokpi and released without any condition.

He also said that the Kuki-Zo people of Kangpokpi resolved to continue their demonstration in front of the SP Office until their demands are met, even if they were to spend their nights and days at the demonstration site.

In connection with the disruption of vehicular movement, and the closure of shops and schools, the CoTU's Secretary said that it is in the hands of the public and we have no say at all while adding that they [the public] are even prepared to close down all Government offices.

The protestors were seen demonstrating in front of the SP Kangpokpi office till the filing of this report, however, the highway has already been open temporarily so as not to trouble innocent commuters.

It is also reported that the decision intensifies the demonstration including imposition of total shut down, and picketing of offices will be taken up as per the response and action of the authority concerned.





MEITEI MILITANTS RENEW INTERMITTENT ATTACKS ON KUKI VILLAGES; ATLEAST 2 MEITEI MILITANTS NEUTRALIZED



The Meitei militants renewed indiscriminate firing in intervals occurred till today's afternoon. attacks on the Kuki-Zo villages in the fringe areas of Lamka, adjoining the Meitei dominated Bishnupur district on Friday.

Tension escalated at the villages of Leisan, G. (ITBP), and Assam Rifles rushed to the spot and made Songgel and Lailoiphai Kuki-Zo vilalges of Lamka (Churchandpur) district since this morning at around 6:20 AM due to heavy gun firings towards the village hilltops from the Meitei localities of Tangjeng, Chandrapokpi, Pombikhong and other areas by the Meitei armed groups including Arambai Tenggol and Meitei Leepun.

The tribal village volunteers retaliated with fires towards the Meitei areas and thus a heavy exchange of fires ensued for about three hours, resulting in atleast two Meitei militants reportedly shot dead and several others sustained serious injuries. However, there is no report of casualty from the Kuki-Zo village volunteers.

The Meitei militants not only attacked with a volley of bullets but even used bombs or mortars during the violent incident. As the tribal volunteers were guarding at the hilltops, the shelling of bombs hardly reached the village volunteers' position.

A joint team of the security forces and state police have reached the site to neutralize the situation. The

Following the sounds of traded gunfire between the two groups, the central security forces including Border Security Forces, Indo Tibetian Border Police cover fires. Later, the intermittent firing between the two warring parties was neutralised, the officials said.

The Manipur state has been up on the broil for seven months after the ethnic cleansing pogrom unleashed by the majority Meiteis on Kuki-Zo community began on May 3, 2023. The ongoing violence has cost the lives of over 150 Kuki-Zo individuals and more than 61,000 persons internally displaced. More than 200 villages, 360 Churches and Synagouges and 7000 houses belonging to the tribals were burnt to ashes.

Interestingly, indiscriminate attacks on the Kuki-Zo areas by the Meitei militants including the radicalised armed groups of Arambai Tenggol and Meitei Leepun usually occurred whenever the central leaders or officials from the Centre government visited the tribal areas. Their attacks in the last 24 hours coincided with the visit to the Kuki areas by officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs including A.K. Mishra, the interlocutor of Kuki insurgent groups.



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MEITEI SPECIAL FORCES IN MOREH NOW LOOTS HOSPITAL

The special commando personnel deputed at Kuki-Zo area of Moreh continued their high handedness today.

After looting private properties including missionary boxes, jewelries and other items in the name of combing operation, the Meitei Commandoes today looted and ransacked the Moreh Sub-District Hospital. The materials looted and destroyed included: Dressing Drum (2 Nos.), OPD Computer (1 No), Pharmacy Computer (1 No), Red Blankets (30 Nos), Bed Sheets (30 Nos), Weighing Machine (1 No), RO Water Purifier (1 No), MOT Dressing Materials, Almirah (destroyed), Covid room materials (destroyed) amongst others.

The Meitei forces in the name of special commando has become addicted to looting and ransacking Kuki-Zo properties since the initial days of the violence. After being escorted into Moreh town by central forces, the Meitei radicals in commando fatigues carried out combing operations to loot the properties of the locals. They did not stop there and went an extra mile to now loot government property from a government run sub-district hospital.

What is the limit for these supposedly oath-taking police force? What is the next target? Their looting hands have



now laid hands on government properties. What is there to suggest they will stop at this and not go beyond? Where is the guarantee that they will not loot weapons from the central forces or utilize their provisions to attack the Kuki-Zo inhabitants of Moreh? How long will it take for the central government to take control? How long will the Kuki-Zo tribal populace pin their hopes on the Central Government and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes to bring about peace and justice for the tribal minority?

KSO CCPUR APPEALS PUBLIC TO SUPPORT PROPOSED RALLY

The Kuki Students' Organisation, Churachandpur District today released a statement calling the support of the general public over the proposed "Rally Against Educational Negligence" to be organized by various student bodies of the district on Saturday, 11th November 2023. The proposed rally shall assemble at 11:00 AM and march from Lamka Public Ground to Mini Secretariat, Tuibong via IB Road.

The KSO appeals the general public to extend their full support and to actively participate in large number.



Unity is strength...when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved.

- Mattie Stepanek



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MNF WILL FORM GOVT IN MIZORAM FOR 2ND CONSECUTIVE TERM: CM ZORAMTHANGA

Mizoram Chief Minister Zoramthanga on Friday said that the Mizo National Front (MNF) would return to power for the second consecutive term and run the government in a more efficient manner and with renewed vigor.

Zoramthanga, who is also the President of the MNF, while addressing the party workers in Aizawl, said that the party would retain power with the help of God and people's support.

The former rebel leader turned politician said: "Mizoram had to face various challenges and problems in the past five years with Covid-19 pandemic, earthquakes, border disputes with Assam and refugees from neighbouring Myanmar and Bangladesh besides Manipur are some of the major challenges.

"Our government with the help of God has dealt with all the problems and challenges without much help from the Central government," the 79-year-old militant leader turned politician said.

Around 13,000 Zo-Kuki-Chin tribals took shelter in Mizoram after being displaced from the ethnic violence hit neighbouring Manipur, while around 35,000 Myanmar and 1,000 Bangladeshi nationals also took shelter in



the northeastern states following troubles in the neighbouring countries.

The Chief Minister, who earlier claimed that the MNF would secure at least 25 seats in the 40-member house, lauded the party leaders and workers for their efforts to strengthen the party.

The ruling MNF won 28 seats in the 2018 Assembly polls.

Mizoram went to polls on November 7 to elect 40 members of the Mizoram Assembly with around 80.62 per cent of 8.57 lakh voters exercising their franchise.

In all, 174 candidates, including 16 women contested the elections.

MIZORAM CHURCHES, PARTIES, NGOS APPEAL EC TO CHANGE POLL COUNTING DATE

A conglomerate of major churches, political parties and other organisations in Mizoram, on Thursday appealed to the Election Commission to reschedule the date of counting of votes casted in the November 7 state Assembly election.

Representatives of the bodies met the state's Chief Electoral Officer Madhup Vyas on Thursday and requested for the change in date for the third time.

They also requested him to take steps to change the date of counting, a leader of Mizoram Kohhran Hruaitute Committee (MKHC), the church conglomerate, said.

They also submitted a written appeal to the CEO requesting for a change in the date of counting from December 3, a Sunday, to either December 4 or 5, he said.

As per the Election Commission's schedule the counting of votes in Mizoram will be held along with four other states - Chhatisgarh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and

Telangana where Assembly elections are being held.

Vyas assured that he will inform the matter to the Election Commission for consideration, he said.

The CEO asked the political parties to re-submit representations to the EC seeking a change in the counting date, the MKHC leader said.

In October seven political parties, including the ruling Mizo National Front (MNF) and BJP, as well as civil society organisations and student bodies, including the influential Central Young Mizo Association had jointly written to the EC to reschedule the date of counting as Sunday is considered a sacred day for the majority Christian community of the north eastern state.

All political parties in the state, including the Congress and Zoram People's Movement had also separately written to the central poll panel before this urging it to change the counting date.







Biren Should First Introspect on His Inner Circles in His Pseudo "War on Drugs" Campaign

A joint team of Ukhrul Police, 35 Assam Rifles, Forest Department, 6th Manipur Rifles on Wednesday carried out destruction of poppy cultivation at Tora-Champhung hill range of Ukhrul, a Naga dominated hill district. Sadly for the cultivators and the hard working-dutiful security personnel, Biren made no mention of them on any of his social media handles. If it had been another community, rest assured it will get pinned on his profiles by this time. The news is only reported by Ukhrul Times, a news network.

It is no secret that poppy is cultivated in almost all the hill ranges of Manipur irrespective of the community residing therein. Poppy cultivation has been one of the sources of livelihood for the tribal populace in the state. The poppy cultivated in these hills are the source of supply for the drug lords based in Imphal valley. These drug lords are the real kingpins and power holders transacting in terms of crores. They are the real players controlling the flow of processed drugs from Myanmar and raw materials from the tribal hills. The brunt of Biren's war on drugs however has been born by the tribal cultivators. The real players or Imphal-based drug lords which include several top political leaders of the state have free passage and immunity from the "war".

If the government is so hell bent on the destruction of drug network within the state, it must start with the real players and the real power houses based out of Imphal of which Biren himself is accused, by a former MPS officer. The real drug which includes WY, Heroin, etc., etc. are granted free passage into India from neighbouring countries courtesy of the powerful ministers and top government officials controlling the trade route and Asian Highway which passes through Moreh. While the

raw material for the production of drugs, cultivated by tribals on tribal lands, on the demand of Imphal based drug lords are made to bear the brunt while the political classes carry on their free trade practices earning in terms of crores.

During the ongoing ethnic conflict, there were widespread allegations on a particular community that they are drug peddlers. Several people were killed due to this fake narrative whereas the figures reveal a different story altogether.

Although some people from Kuki-Zo community have been known to cultivate opium for the past few years but since opioid based drug business in Manipur is just 30% of the entire syndicate so what about the rest 70%? There is another aspect of it. As per the data revealed by the government of Manipur states that a total of 2,518 people were arrested between 2017 and 2023 under Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) act in Manipur out of which a whooping 1464 (More than 58%) were Meitei (1083 were Meitei Pangals & 381 were Meitei's), 873 were Kuki-Zo (35%) and 181 (7%) were from other communities. This puts the majority community itself under question. A large number of chemical drug factories were busted in Lilong and Sora (The areas dominated by Meitei Pangals) in the past and huge recoveries were made. The way drug business has increased manifold in the border state in last few years, there is a high possibility that Thounaojam Brinda is right. However if the central government is really serious about cracking down on drug business n Manipur, they need to target the organised cartels first.







Manipur CM today chaired a high-level meeting of top police officials, Assam Rifles officials and other key security personnel at his secretariat office. The officials discussed the emerging security situation of the state and strategies for further course of action.

It must be remembered that such security meetings have been held numerous times since the outbreak of the ethnic cleansing pogrom and have neither brought any remedial measures into picture nor alleviate the situation. The deteriorating security situation within the state continues to this day with the Meitei militants, alleged to be cadres of PLA attacking the Kuki-Zo inhabited Leisan and Lailoiphai areas of Lamka earlier today.

The meeting came a day after the CM announced a permanent housing scheme and financial assistance aimed at alleviating the harsh living conditions of the IDPs affected by the conflict. Under the scheme, the government promises to provide financial support to those whose homes were either damaged or burnt during the unfortunate incidents. The financial assistance has been categorized as follows: Rs. 10 lakh for the construction of pucca houses, Rs. 7 lakh for semi-pucca houses, and Rs. 5 lakh for kutcha houses. Over 4800 beneficiaries across the state are set to receive this aid, which will be distributed in two installments.

In his address, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh highlighted the government's commitment to helping those affected by the violence that erupted on May 3, 2023. He stated that the state government has already disbursed Rs. 399.82 crore for various relief measures which includes Rs. 11 crore for the Manipur IT Centre for various examinations, Rs. 4.5 crore for providing television set to relief camps, Rs. 150

crore for constructing prefabricated houses, Rs. 101 crore for managing relief camps for six months, and Rs. 89.22 crore for providing nutrition and winter preparedness, including breakfast for children in relief camps.

The numbers mentioned above are well and good but a few questions arise:

Which IT Exam centres have benefitted the 11 crores sanction? Certainly not the ones located in tribals areas. The Kuki-Zo students and aspirants have been travelling to the nearest exam centres in Mizoram & Nagaland some 200 to 400 kms away from the district headquarter of Lamka and Kangpokpi with extra expenditures and an extra day, all while the exam centres in Lamka are rendered defunct since early May and those in Imphal are a literal death call for the Kuki-Zo students. The future of thousands of aspirants has been greatly affected with no remedy to this day. The exam centres within the tribal areas still do not function due to obvious reasons while the CM claims to have spend 11 crores on them. Does it mean that tribal lands are out of the purview of the state and that the CM accepts the separation of the two communities?

People have lost their brethren, lost their houses and all their property, there is no amount sufficient enough for reparation of such losses, does a television-set fix that? Is a television-set the need of the hour for the IDPs? Who is the CM trying to fool with yet another cheap media stunt?

101 crores for management of relief camps for 6 months and 89.22 crores for providing nutrition and winter clothing







have been disbursed, according to Biren. The ground reality is that even the basic medical facilities and nutritional needs of infants are not taken care of. The relief camps are managed with minimal assistance (rice and dal) from the government and with heavy assistance from various philanthropic organizations rather. Rice and dal alone cannot be sufficient; there are various other requirements like clothing, sanitary pads, medical supplies, daily use items, etc. which are still the minimum requirement.

The beneficiaries for the housing scheme which is proposed to be distributed in two installments, are said to be about and over 4800 in number. This number could well be above the number of Meitei IDPs but makes up only half of the number of Kuki-Zo houses burnt (7000+) or just about 10 percent of Kuki-Zo IDPs (41,425). Why does the official government list of beneficiary intentional misappropriate the list? Why are Kuki-Zo IDPs not included in the said list? If the government so wish to alleviate the situation and have a good and non-biased intention, why is there no official proposal for the scheme and assistance? Will the government be so transparent as to provide a detailed allocation chart of the assistance, categorized into districts and community? Can the government release a white paper over the same if they so claim to be working for what they claim they are? Is the state mishandling government funds for the benefit of one community? Is the government whitewashing the IDPs' predicament in the name of schemes & financial assistances? Further the IDPs of the Kuki-Zo community are not appropriated in the state's list, as is evident from the discrepancy in number of beneficiaries.

This only points to the fact that the state with Biren at the helm has in practice accepted the separation of the Kuki-Zo tribals from the state of Manipur. Thus, separate administration is the only viable option for permanent peace.



The Tribal Herald 🔗

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No amount of water from Loktak lake will be able to cleanse the bloodied hands of the Meitei miscreants filled with the innocent bloods of Kuki-Zo tribals. The curse of the cries and moan of the dying Kuki-Zo women who were raped and murdered, will haunt them for generations. Truth will ultimately be triumphant. #ManipurViolence #ThisIsKuki_ZoStory #SeperateAdministrationOnlySolution



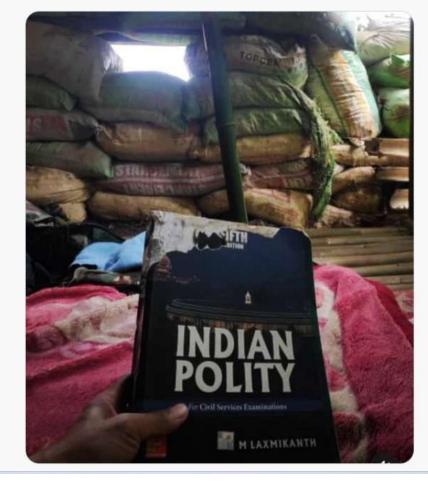


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Thangminlun Haokip @ThangminlunHk · 11h · · · A village volunteer while safeguarding his land inside bunker somewhere Zale'n-Gam continues his journey in pursuit of knowledge to build his future! Nothing can stop you when you're determined to do so, not even war!

If this doesn't inspire you, what will? #ThisIsKuki_ZoStory







Six months after they were stripped, paraded naked and allegedly gang raped by a mob in north-east India, two women, whose ordeal was made public in a viral video, talk to the BBC in their first face-to-face interview. They speak about living in hiding, their fight for justice and their call for a separate administration for their community.

Warning: This article includes descriptions of sexual violence.

At first, all I see is their lowered eyes.

Big black masks hide Glory and Mercy's faces and scarves cover their foreheads.

The two Kuki-Zomi women do not want to be seen. But they want to be heard.

Their ordeal was filmed and shared online. It is a disturbing watch. Less than a minute long, it shows a mob of men from the majority Meitei community in Manipur state walking around two naked women, pushing, groping them, and then dragging them into a field where they say they were gang raped.

"I was treated like an animal," says Glory, breaking down. "It was hard enough to live with that trauma, but then two months later when the video of the attack went viral, I almost lost all hope to continue living," she adds.

"You know how Indian society is, how they look at women after such an incident," says Mercy. "I find it hard to face other people, even in my own community. My pride is gone. I will never be the same again."

The video amplified their suffering but it also became evidence of injustice because it brought attention to the ethnic clashes between the Meitei and Kuki communities that broke out in Manipur in May. But while the video sparked outrage and spurred action, the spotlight made the women retreat further.

Before they were attacked, Glory was a student and Mercy filled her days taking care of her two young children, helping them with homework and going to church. But after the attack both women had to flee to a different town where they are now living in hiding.

They stay indoors now. Restricted to the walls of her temporary home, Mercy no longer goes to church or takes her children to school herself.

"I don't think I will ever be able to live like I lived before," she says. "I find it hard to step out of the house, I feel scared and ashamed of meeting people." Glory feels the same and tells me she is still "in a lot of

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trauma", scared to meet people and afraid of crowds.

Counselling has helped them but the anger and hate have seeped in deep.

Six months ago, Glory was studying in a mixed class of Meitei and Kuki students in college where she had lots of friends, but now she says she never wants to see another Meitei person again.

"I will never go back to my village. I grew up there, it was my home, but living there would mean interacting with neighbouring Meiteis and I never ever want to meet them again," she says. Mercy clenches her hands and she thumps the table as she agrees.

When their village was attacked and everyone ran for their life, Glory's father and younger brother were pulled away by the mob and killed.

"I saw them die in front of my eyes," she says softly. She describes how she had to leave their bodies in the field as she tried to defend herself.

She tells me she can't go to look for them even now. Since the violence erupted, there is no crossover between the Meitei and Kuki-Zomi communities in Manipur. People are divided by a de facto border, lined with checkpoints manned by the police, army and volunteers from the two communities.

"I don't even know which morgue their bodies have been kept in and I can't go and check," she says. "The government should hand them over to us."

Mercy's husband describes how houses and the village church were set on fire in the attack.

"I called the local police, but they said we cannot help, our police station is also under attack," he says. "I saw a police van on the road, but they didn't do anything either.

"I feel sad and angry at my inability to do anything. I could neither save my wife nor the villagers. That breaks my heart," he says. "Sometimes I get very upset thinking about everything that has happened, engulfed by grief and anger, I feel like killing someone."



Two weeks after the attack in May, he filed a complaint with the police, but no action was taken until the video surfaced in July. Police sources have told the BBC that they have now suspended the officer in charge and four others pending an inquiry.

The widespread outrage that followed the release of the video compelled Prime Minister Narendra Modi to make his first statement on the violence. That was followed by the arrest of seven men who have now been charged with gang rape and murder.

Glory, Mercy and her husband tell me they derive strength from the messages of support that have poured in since the video of the attack started circulating online.

"Without the video, no-one would have believed the truth, understood our pain," says Mercy's husband.

Mercy still gets nightmares and is terrified of thinking about the future, especially for her children. "It weighs me down so much, the thought that we have nothing to pass on to them, everything is gone," she says.

They have decided to speak up to try to make sure no other woman is ever treated like this again.

Glory explains that they want a separate administration for their community. "That is the only way to live safely and peacefully," she says.

The Kuki people have made this controversial demand many times but it is opposed by the Meitei community.

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The state's chief minister has repeatedly called for a unified Manipur.

Glory and Mercy have little faith in the state government and accuse it of being biased against their community.

Chief Minister N Biren Singh did not respond when the BBC put the allegations to him, but in a recent interview with the Indian Express newspaper he said: "There's no bias in my heart or my work."

The video also became the moment that the Supreme Court took note of the ethnic clashes and recommended that all cases of violence be handed to independent federal investigative agencies, such as the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The top court has asked the state government to identify the bodies of people who have been killed and return them to their next of The names of the two women have been changed kin.

Looking to the future, Glory hopes to resume her

studies at a different college so she can pursue her dream of becoming an army or police officer. "My resolve has strengthened to work for everyone in an unbiased manner," she tells me. "And I want justice, at all costs... It's also why I am speaking up, so no woman is harmed again the way I was."

Mercy tells me that "as tribal women we are strong, we do not give up" and as we get up to leave, she says she has a message.

"I want to tell all mothers of all communities to teach their children, no matter what happens, never disrespect women."

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for this article.









Whispers of Longing: A Village Lost to Flames

In a village, once so serene and fair, A place of love, where life was free from care. But Meitei Terrorists brought flames of despair, And left us with ashes, in the jungle we'd share.

No time for belongings, we fled in a haste, Leaving behind memories that couldn't be replaced. With just the clothes on our backs, we embraced, The cruel wilderness, our lives now a chase.

The echoes of laughter, the village's charm, Now lost in the darkness, an unbearable harm. Longing for home, with hearts full of alarm, In the jungle's embrace, we sought shelter from harm.

> The stars overhead, our guiding light, As we whispered our hopes into the night. The tears we shed, hidden from sight, For a village we longed, with all our might.

In our dreams, we walked those familiar streets, Where childhood memories and love still beats. But reality's grip, in the jungle, it meets, As we long for a village, where our heart still retreats.



With each passing day, the pain in our chest, For a home once lost, we can never rest. In the depths of longing, we try our best, To find solace in memories, to pass the test.

Though the village may be gone, our spirits remain, We'll rebuild our lives, and ease the pain. In the midst of longing, in the jungle's domain, We'll find our way back, and love will reign.

~Goulun Haokip

