

# Thingkho Le Malcha

FRIDAY | OCTOBER 20, 2023



## SSPP Residential School RELIEF CENTRE

Ngathal, New Lamka

Managed by Young Paite Association (New Lamka Relief Committee)

**Total Inmates Registered: 154\***

■ Male: 75

■ Female: 79

**VILLAGE COVERED**

**H. Champhai Village**

\*As on 6th September, 2023



## KUKI VICTIMS' UPDATE

As on 16.10.2023



**146**  
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.

# MANIPUR HIGH COURT ALLOWS TRIBAL BODIES TO APPEAL AGAINST ORDER ON ST STATUS FOR MEITEIS

The Manipur High Court has allowed the tribal bodies in the State to appeal against the controversial March 27 order which had directed the State government to send a recommendation on Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for Meiteis.

A Division Bench comprising Justices Ahanthem Bimol Singh and A. Guneshwar Sharma, in its October 19 order, allowed the tribal bodies to appeal against the order, noting the nature of the grievances raised by them and the arguments advanced by various parties. This order has now paved the way for the tribal bodies' appeal to be taken up for hearing.

A single judge Bench of erstwhile Acting Chief Justice M.V. Muralidharan had passed the controversial order on a petition filed by members of the Meitei Tribes Union, seeking that the State government be directed to act on their pleas for inclusion in the ST list.

Soon after the March 27 order was made public, tribal bodies across the State started vigorous protests, one of which became the immediate trigger for the ethnic violence that began on May 3, killing at least 180 people in the five months since.

Within days of the violence beginning, various tribal bodies of Manipur, led by the All Manipur Tribal Union, approached the Manipur High Court, seeking leave to file a third-party appeal against the aforementioned order as an aggrieved party.

In the order allowing the leave to appeal, the court said, "Taking into consideration the nature of the arguments advanced by the learned counsel appearing for the parties which needs to be examined and decided on the basis of the materials available in the connected writ appeal and writ petition and taking into consideration the nature of the grievances raised by the applicants, we are inclined to grant leave sought by the applicants in the present application."

'No merit in claim'

Advocate Colin Gonsalves, on behalf of the tribal bodies, had noted that the Meiteis' claim to the ST status did not have merit and that the community had nowhere claimed to be



*Senior Advocate Colin Gonsalves representing All Manipur Tribal Union (AMTU)*

backward — a prerequisite to be an ST. The tribal bodies also argued that because Meiteis were the dominant community, giving them ST status would affect the gamut of rights and benefits existing STs are entitled to.

Mr. Gonsalves added that the tribal bodies were not arraigned as respondents in the initial petition and that their rights would be affected if they are not allowed a chance to appeal the concerned order.

The Union government had told the High Court that it would not be objecting to the tribal bodies' plea to file an appeal.

However, the Manipur government opposed their right to appeal, arguing that the tribal bodies cannot be an "aggrieved party" in the instant case — the same argument advanced by members of the Meitei Tribes Union.

In addition to this, a review petition filed by members of the Meitei Tribes Union is pending in the High Court, where tribal bodies have also been made parties. This matter was being heard by the Bench of the erstwhile Acting Chief Justice Muralidharan.

With the Centre now notifying Justice Muralidharan's transfer to the Calcutta High Court, the Manipur High Court's new Chief Justice, Justice Siddharth Mridul is now expected to look into the matter.

## SECURITY FORCES RECOVER ARMS, AMMUNITION LOOTED IN ETHNIC VIOLENCE-HIT MANIPUR

Security forces involved in combing operations in ethnic violence-hit Manipur have in three operations over the last month recovered arms and ammunition, including 1085 bombs, looted from police stations and armouries, a defence ministry spokesperson said on Friday.

“...three major successful operations [were conducted] in Khamenlok-Gwalthabi, Wakan and Shantipur ridges,” said the Kohima (Nagaland)-based spokesperson in a statement. It added 18 automatic weapons, 1085 bombs, 14 improvised mortars/rocket launchers, six rifles/pistols, one mortar, 530 assorted ammunition, and 132 other war-like stores recovered were handed over to Manipur Police on Thursday.

The statement said Khamenlok-Gwalthabi, Wakan and Shantipur ridges separate villages of Meitei and tribal Kuki communities in Imphal East district. Intelligence reports indicated a build-up of weapons, ammunition and other war-like store caches on either side of the ridges.

“The caches were probably being built up by inimical



elements for attempting misadventure in each other's area. The security forces took note of the intelligence inputs and carried out extensive surveillance and launched multiple search operations to recover maximum war-like stores with an aim to thwart any attempts of firing or arson by miscreants,” the statement said.

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## BARISH WILL BE ARRESTED SOON, ASSURES BIREN SINGH TO JAC

The Joint Action Committee (JAC) in connection with the firing incident at Sega Road Khwairakpam leikai, Imphal, has stated that the Chief Minister, N. Biren Singh has given assurance to arrest the main culprit Barish Sharma at the earliest.

The JAC on Friday met the Chief Minister and placed their demands before him to realise at the earliest.

After meeting Biren Singh, the Convenor of JAC, Iboyaima, told the media that they had requested the Chief Minister's Office to arrest Bairsh Sharm at the earliest or else the JAC and Meira Paibis would take their own initiative for his arrest.

The JAC Convener said that the Chief Minister had responded that Barish would be soon arrested to show that there is rule of law in the State since he has been involved in crimes even in the past.

N. Biren Singh also assured the JAC that the State government would also extend all possible helps to the people who were injured in the firing.



“If the state government fails to keep its assurance to arrest Barish, the JAC along with other civil voluntary organizations will hold a public meeting and take up extreme forms of agitations,” said the Convenor.

## JUSTICE SIDDHARTH MRIDUL TAKES OATH AS CHIEF JUSTICE OF MANIPUR HIGH COURT



Justice Siddharth Mridul today took oath as the 7th Chief Justice of the Manipur High Court. Manipur Governor Ms. Anusuiya Uikey administered the oath of office to the new Chief Justice, at a ceremony held at Raj Bhavan in Imphal.

In February 2023, the office of the Chief Justice of Manipur High Court fell vacant with elevation of Justice PV Sanjay Kumar to the Supreme Court of India. Subsequently, on July 5, the Supreme Court Collegium proposed appointment of Justice Mridul as the next CJ. Justice

MV Muralidaran was serving as the Acting Chief Justice meanwhile.

On September 27, the Supreme Court expressed concerns at the collegium recommendations remaining pending with the Centre. The bench led by Justice SK Kaul told Attorney General for India that the proposal for appointment of Chief Justice of a “sensitive” High Court (alluding to the Manipur High Court) is also among the pending resolutions. The Centre then notified Justice Mridul’s appointment as aforesaid on October 16.

### About Justice Siddharth Mridul

Justice Siddharth Mridul completed his LL.B. from Campus Law Centre, Faculty of Law, University of Delhi, in 1986. He enrolled with the Bar Council of Delhi the same year.

Throughout his career, he practiced law in various jurisdictions, including the Delhi High Court, as well as other renowned courts and tribunals.

He was appointed as an Additional Judge of the Delhi High Court in 2008 and later became a Permanent Judge in 2009.

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## COMMUNITY MARKET SHED INAUGURATED

As a part of the Kuki Students’ Organization, General Headquarter’s Social Service program, the KSO Churachandpur today inaugurated a Community Market Shed at Peace Ground, Tuibong.

Letpu Haokip, President of the Kuki Inpi Churachandpur, inaugurated the newly constructed Market Shed while Rev. Dr. J Lamboi Haokip, Chairman KCLF Steering Committee invoked dedicatory prayer.

DJ Haokip, the General Secretary of KSO Churachandpur said the main idea behind the setting-up of a community market is to boost the economy of the marginalized women roadside vendors in a holistic approach for a self-sustained livelihood with special preference to the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

The complex will house 256 rooms of different varieties.



# MANIPUR GOVT ORDER BANNING SHARING OF MEDIA RELATED TO VIOLENCE POTENTIALLY UNCONSTITUTIONAL

-Radhika Roy and Gayatri Malhotra



#MRNORIGINALS

## MANIPUR: BAN ON SHARING VIOLENT CLIPS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The Manipur Home Department notified Order No. H-3608/2/2023-HD-HD on October 11, 2023, which restrains the sharing of videos/images depicting acts of violence in Manipur. Internet Freedom Foundation (IFF) believes this order infringes fundamental rights, limits journalistic freedom and hampers the public's access to essential information. We wrote to the Manipur Home Department to reconsider these restrictions, citing constitutional violations and potential dangers to citizens' safety.

### Why Should You Care?

Manipur has been under an information blockade since May 2023. This order strengthens the blockade by severely restricting the essential journalistic freedoms of media and news professionals, as well as the freedom of expression of all residents of Manipur. Further, the circulation of information via visual media equips people to assess their immediate surroundings better and travel safely in their vicinity for access to resources. This order virtually impedes the capacity of a person to receive information pertaining to the violence taking place in their vicinity, and thereby places them in potential danger.

Amidst the ongoing internet blackout, there comes a new restriction

Owing to the ongoing violence in Manipur between communities, the state has been subjected to multiple internet shutdowns in the year 2023. The first shutdown was imposed on May 3, 2023, and the latest internet shutdown order was issued on October 1, 2023, which is still ongoing. Amidst the communication challenges already existing as a result of the blackout, the Government of Manipur decided to issue yet another order that explicitly bars the sharing of videos/images portraying violent incidents in the state which aims to curb violence. IFF argues that this order oversteps constitutional boundaries and jeopardises essential freedoms.

The order prohibits the circulation of any images/videos that depict violent activities, such as causing injury to the body and/or damaging public or private property, via social media platforms, explicitly mentioning WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc. Though the stated intention of this order is to bring "normalcy" in the State, the order states that the circulation of the above via electronic equipment like mobile phones, computers, tablets etc. or even the possession of such material will result in "appropriate legal action".

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The order mandates that the violation of its provisions will result in the person being “booked and prosecuted”; thereby severely limiting the freedom of expression and by way of not making other citizens aware of a potentially hostile environment, directly contravening the right to life by putting the people in harm’s way.

### **The order is potentially unconstitutional:**

We sent a letter to the Commissioner of Manipur (Home) enlisting our concerns and the impact it could have on people’s lives, rights and digital liberties. We highlighted the following, among other, concerns:

**Suppression of Legitimate Journalism:** This measure could significantly suppress legitimate journalism. By restricting the dissemination of information, it has the potential to severely limit the public’s access to pertinent news and crucial insights. Consequently, it could hinder the public’s ability to gain a comprehensive understanding of the current situation and make informed decisions. Moreover, this restriction could have broader implications for communal violence investigations, where the availability of crucial evidence may be stifled due to limited investigative resources.

### **Violation of the Right to Free Speech:**

Beyond its effect on journalism, this measure has serious implications for free speech. It imposes prior restraint by engaging in pre-censorship and effectively prohibiting the sharing of videos or images before these events transpire. This act contradicts Article 19(1)(a) of the Indian Constitution, which safeguards the right to freedom of speech and expression. This was affirmed by the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India in the case of Brij Bhushan vs The State Of Delhi, which found that prior restraint on speech based on presumption is fundamentally unconstitutional. Furthermore, this measure stifles the marketplace of ideas, as limiting discourse can undermine the very foundations of a democratic society.

### **Overbreadth:**

The measure’s overbroad language adds another layer of concern. It prohibits the sharing of media content “which may aggravate the law and order situation in the State.”



This is notably vague and, when scrutinised, does not fall within the ambit of specific legal provisions under the Indian Penal Code or the Information Technology Act. Further, the Supreme Court, in Shreya Singhal vs Union of India, rectified a pre-existing provision that was overbroad and impermissibly restricted free speech, aligning it more closely with constitutional standards.

### **Violation of Article 21:**

Finally, the measure is violative of Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. The punitive consequences listed in this measure serve as a deterrent for the public to share information and be aware, consequently compromising their ability to protect their own lives. The sharing of media content mentioned in the order can be vital for the citizens of Manipur to exercise vigilance in terms of location, time, and the general ambience of areas, thus enabling them to safeguard themselves. In essence, this measure not only hinders access to information but also endangers the lives of the citizens of Manipur.

In conclusion, the Internet Freedom Foundation’s concern over the Manipur government’s recent order reflects a broader debate on balancing security measures with citizens’ constitutional rights. As digital rights become increasingly vital in our society, it is essential to navigate these complexities with careful consideration for individual freedoms.

We have advocated for the rights of the residents of Manipur since the beginning of the internet shutdowns and will continue to do so.

This [article](#) was originally published on [Internet Freedom Foundation](#).

## Stakeholders of Manipur Violence: Part-4

### AGENTS OF MANIPUR VIOLENCE: THE HANDS, LEGS AND BRAIN



According to some experts, riots can be contained within 24 hours if those in power wish to. The 2002 Gujarat riot was contained after three long days. The Manipur violence is however another dimension. Even after the passage of more than 5 months, the violence remains unabated and there is still no signs of it stopping anytime soon. A violence cannot continue this long without clear and proper plan beforehand. Behind the Manipur violence are well co-ordinated agents playing different roles functioning together like parts of a well-oiled engine. If the agents of Manipur violence - those planning, instigating, executing and sustaining the ongoing pogrom against the Kukis can be personified, the Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren Singh hailing from Cachar in Assam will certainly be the brain. He has been largely held to be the Chief Agent behind the ongoing pogrom. His role has been well documented and widely reported even in national and international platforms. As the Chief Minister and Home Minister of the State, he commands the state forces who spearheaded the attack on the Kukis. The central forces answered to him as leader of the Unified Command. The leader of Meitei Leepun confessed on national TV that he worships him. The Arambai Tenggols are under his patronage. The Meira Paibis teared his resignation letter in a staged drama. Nongthombam Biren Singh undoubtedly controls all the agents of the Manipur violence. The first ever clash between the Kuki and Meitei community, with the later conducting a pogrom towards the former, happening during the tenure of Biren after the two communities had co-existed together in all spheres

of life for more than a millennium is no co-incidence and speaks volumes. Nongthombam Biren Singh is therefore the brain controlling and directing the hands, the legs and the mouth of the personified agents of Manipur violence.

The “two hands” committing the violence will be the combined militias of the Arambai Tenggols, the Meitei Leepuns, the State forces, the MHA designated “terrorist” groups and the Meitei mobs. These groups are the agents in whose hands the murders and the arsons are committed. The “right hand” holding the gun inflicting maximum damage will be the State forces and the Myanmar based MHA designated “terrorist” groups. These Meitei terrorist groups, suspected to be both their active personnels and the more than 500 surrendered terrorists during tenure of Biren, blended in with the State police forces by using police uniforms and fake police IDs. These agents spearheaded the attacks on Kuki villages according to multiple eyewitness and video evidences. The “left hand” supporting the gun will be the Arambai Tenggols and the Meitei Leepun reported by eyewitnesses to be behind the State forces and terrorists during attacks on Kuki villages yet still contributing to the maximum casualty lists on the attackers’ side. They are the ones beheading David, parading naked the two Kuki women and burning the churches to cite a few examples.

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In the African Sahara, whenever a flock of vultures swarm around an area, it can never be sign of a good thing; it only signals death or an imminent death happening nearby. To the East, far from the African Sahara, a similar phenomenon has been observed in the Indian State of Manipur since May 3rd. The Meitei women folk, called the Meira Paibis, gather in large numbers and whenever these women group gather, it can never be a sign of anything good similar to the gathering of the vultures. The gathering of these women group indicates an impending attack on Kuki villages. Like the two legs carrying the human body, this women group take the violence everywhere. So, these Meitei women folk are the legs for the personified agents of Manipur violence. They assemble in numbers before an impending attack on Kuki villages to block the movement of the army. By preventing the army from moving out, this Meitei women group is helping their militia mobs to freely attack Kuki villages. Instead of a mother reprimanding a wayward child, they also instigate and encourage their men to commit such violence and by justifying their barbaric acts, they make their men feel that such inhumanity towards the Kukis is nothing out of the ordinary but a duty even. They force the army to release even those caught perpetuating the violence. The legs can kick sometimes causing more damage than the hand does. While the “hands” beheaded David Thiek, these demonic women folk, the “legs”, burnt alive a Kuki mother & her son in an ambulance. They even encouraged their sons to rape the two Kuki women whose lifeless body now lie in a morgue in Imphal.

In the wake of the Israel-Hamas war, social media was flooded with narratives from both sides. The pro-Israeli handles flooded posts of the unparadonable terrorist acts committed by the Hamas on Israeli citizens. Unlike previous episodes of violence between the two, most nations did not call for restraint this time but instead declared their recognition of the rights of Israel to defend itself. The unprecedented and unpardonable terror acts committed by Hamas is a reason. The role of pro-Israeli narratives in social medias in shaping such decision cannot be entirely dismissed. Netizens sympathising with Israel call for retribution and Israel did send heavy retribution. The casualties of the retribution are however the ordinary Palestinian civilians. The pro-Palestinian posts are found in no less volume. Muslims and Palestinian sympathisers

in cities across the world took to the streets in celebration following the terrorist Hamas butchering defenceless Israeli citizens. These pro-Palestinian handles mostly spread posts of the Israeli occupation of Palestine and the atrocities of the IDF during the preceding years. From such posts, the narrative was built intending to justify or divert the attention from the terror acts of the Hamas and place the blame on Israel. Narratives therefore, is truly a weapon of war. It is a double-edged sword. In the hands of the oppressor, the weapon that is ‘narrative’ paves way for the oppressor to continually inflict damages to the victims by providing planted reasons and justifications. This is happening in the Indian state of Manipur where the majority and dominant Meitei community inflicted immeasurable terror acts on the minority Kukis but still remain justified among themselves by controlling the narrative of the violence.

In the context of Manipur violence and the agents of the violence being personified, the vile mouth spewing out lies and controlling the narrative is the Imphal based Meitei news outlets, their activists and public personalities. The Imphal based news outlets are propaganda machines. They are akin to the press in Germany during their heydays of the Nazis. These Imphal news outlet have no ethics expected of their profession. In most of the attacks on Kuki villages, armed persons in Manipur Police attires, police or not, will spearhead the attack followed closely by the Arambai Tenggols and the other Meitei militia mobs while their mothers, the Meira Paibis, will block the road preventing the army from containing the violence. These Meitei news outlets will flip the narrative and report the incident on Kuki villages as attacks by the Kukis on Meities. These false reports provides justification for their attacks even to a right thinking Meitei. Fabricated and distorted news as such fueled more anger and participation of more Meitei mobs and led to more attacks on Kuki villages. The Army eventually saw the role these false reports have on spread of violence and the failure to contain it. They requested the Editor Guild of India (EGI) who reported a damning case of the misuse of press in Manipur violence.

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The roles played by Meitei activists, influencers and public personalities in Manipur violence are no less. There is one fake environmentalist called Licypriya put to international limelight by her father through lies and dubious means. She has garnered thousands of followers across the world across multiple social media platforms. Her followers are certainly unaware of her deceitful means of rising to fame. She posted in her account her support of Arambai Tenggols during the initial outbreak of the violence. She once posted picture of a charred body of a woman claiming her to be a Meitei woman burnt by the Kukis. The woman was later identified by her Kuki family and that she had been burnt in her village. Their influencers and public alike took to social medias to spread news of rape of Meitei medical students in Kuki dominated areas which was later proven to be fake. Such misleading posts and fake news had caused outrage among the Meiteis who called for revenge and thereby furthering the violence. Then they have their Christian imposter Rohan Philem cycling lies and victimhood. He has made a preposterous claim of more than 200 Meitei churches being burnt by Kukis. It was the Arambai Tenggols, a Meitei militant group following the Sanamahi religion who burnt the Meitei churches in Meitei dominated areas. No church or temple was touched in Kuki dominated areas. Rohan Philem initially occupied a unique and privileged position. Being a quite reknown personality from the Meitei community and also a Christian, he could have taken a role in brokering peace between the Meiteis and the predominantly Christian Kukis. Sadly, he chose to be a peddler of lies, furthering the divide instead. He has chosen to be a Meitei over being disciple of the Prince of Peace. Rohan's agenda is different from the other activists. His claim was in response to the condemnation given by

Christians leaders and communities across the world on the atrocities perpetuated by his community towards the predominantly Christian Kukis. In doing so, he attempted to project the Meiteis Christians as victims in the hands of Kukis which in reality was committed by his own people.

Songs, anthems and poems are powerful tools and widely used in a movement. These songs can help plant and arouse patriotism among the masses. However, this too is a double edged sword. During the Indian Independence movement, patriotic songs such as the "Vande Mataram" played a significant role in awakening the masses. In the ongoing Manipur violence too, songs are used to arouse the sentiments of the meiteis but they are songs of a different kind. The Meiteis have one bald singer called Tapta elsewhere unknown but rising to fame during the ongoing violence after he released multiples songs openly calling for complete annihilation of the Kukis. However, Tapta and the other agents of Manipur violence starting from Biren Singh have so far enjoyed impunity from the "long arm of the law". Regardless of whether these agents are brought to justice or not, these agents of Manipur violence have already caused irreparable damages. These agents of violence have already committed terrors of a kind never seen before and not even committed by terrorists such as the ISIS and Hamas. The Kukis will surely get justice in one form or another. It could be making official the already completed separation between the Kuki and Meitei areas. It could be a retribution of equal measure or a divine delivered Justice. Manipur will never return to its former self.



**The true soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him.**

— G.K. Chesterton



তন্ময় I Tanmoy I @tanmoyofc · Oct 15  
Know Your Prime Minister

He Managed Time to Write Garba Songs.  
But He Still could not Managed Time for #Manipur.

#ManipurViolence



Kamalika Ganguly and 7 others

11 130 147 2,605

**Post  
MORTEM**

MANIPUR'S  
LAW  
&  
ORDER  
SITUATION



## “A healing incantation”

Everyone of us dies a little death every night  
We sleep with the sting of death and fear  
And we are born again every morning,  
Putting on a clean bedsheet to make us forget the previous night.  
In between, we have hope dangling by a thin thread.  
Strange is the case of the believer  
There is good for him in everything.  
If joy visits him, he is grateful.  
If trouble befalls him, he is faithful and patient  
And so, patient we must be...  
how do you sleep at night?  
“I dream of seeing my mother and eating bread”  
“I dream of my brother coming back to life”  
“I dream of my father returning”  
“I dream of playing with my friends”  
Dry those tears from those beautiful eyes  
As we lay our heads back down  
And lift our hands and pray,  
“I will live in the hope that everything will be beautiful  
As long as we have a Lord who says Be, and it is.”  
The world is accompanied with pain and calamity  
And so we should not wander in anger with the facts of life  
And be patient instead  
The fog will clear and we shall see the light again...

~ *Jacquelyn Laltanpuii Suantak*

