

Thingkho Le Malcha

A Daily Newsletter by KSO Media & Documentation Cell



KSO COMMUNITY SCHOOL Tuibong, Lamka

Managed by
Kuki Students' Organisation
Churachandpur District

No. of Students Enrolled: 250



KUKI VICTIMS' UPDATE

As on 28.02.2024



165
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.

KUKI MLAS SLAM MANIPUR ASSEMBLY'S BIASED RESOLUTION ON SOO PACT ABROGATION

In response to the Manipur Legislative Assembly's recent resolution seeking the abrogation of the Tripartite Agreement for Suspension of Operations with Kuki National Organisation (KNO) and United People's Front (UPF), Kuki MLAs have voiced strong dissent, citing prejudice and bias against their community.

A joint statement issued by the 10 Kuki MLAs said the resolution was one sided, emanating from prejudice, bias and hatred for Kuki community that reflects a myopic view on the issue.

The resolution, passed on February 29th, by the Manipur Legislative Assembly attributes responsibility to the SoO Groups for the ongoing ethnic conflict in Manipur, a move vehemently opposed by the Kuki representatives.

The Tripartite Agreement, initially signed on August 22, 2008, and periodically renewed, established clear Ground Rules, including the formation of a Joint Monitoring Group (JMG) comprising of Central agencies, State Government agencies and the KNO & UPF representatives to oversee adherence. However, the MLAs questioned whether the resolution adopted by the august House was based on any report or observations of the JMG, which is the only official mechanism to determine whether any violation of the Ground Rules have taken place or not. This obviously is not the case as the resolution is based on an overwhelming sense of animosity and hatred for a particular community.

Highlighting the Agreement's role in significantly reducing violence since its inception, the MLAs argue that recent unrest cannot solely be attributed to the SoO Groups, pointing to valley based militant factions involved in recent violence. They assert that the resolution unfairly targets the KNO and UPF, exacerbating tensions and alienating the Kuki community.

The Tripartite Agreement was lauded as the harbinger of peace and security in the state when it was signed in 2008, and truly so Manipur particularly the Hill



Districts have witnessed a sea change in the security scenario as the level of violence came down drastically in the years that followed.

The statement continued that successive governments have been taking their share of credit over improvement in the law and order situation in the state owing to signing of the Tripartite Agreement.

“The recent signing of a Peace Accord with an UNLF Faction was initiated by the State Government, and the role played by this outfit during this short period in the current violence is widely known to one and all. The august House resolution would have evinced fairness and peace objective if the role played by the valley based outfit cited above too was highlighted as it is a clear case for seeking termination of the pact too.”

“This resolution was adopted to defame the KNO and UPF and further alienate the Kuki community as part of the continuing hate campaign,” it alleged.

The MLAs urged the Home Ministry, Government of India, to impartially consider all aspects of the issue to prevent further discrimination and alienation of the Kuki people, emphasizing the need for a fair and just approach to address the complexities of the situation.

MANIPUR REAFFIRMS STAND TO IMPLEMENT NRC IN STATE, CONGRESS MLAS ABSTAIN ON DISCUSSION

Without the participation of 5 Congress MLAs and 10 Kuki MLAs, the Manipur Legislative Assembly has reaffirmed the resolution passed by the House on August 5, 2022 for the implementation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in the state.

The resolution was adopted on Friday in the ongoing session of the Assembly session in connection with the Private Member Resolution motion moved by the Naga People's Front (NPF) MLA, Leishiyo Keishing.

Participating in the discussion, Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh said the 2022 Assembly resolution was sent to Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalat. Subsequently, in 2023 the Deputy Registrar General, Jaspal Singh, officially intimated the state Home Commissioner informing that the Centre was actively considering taking a call on the resolution to implement the NRC in Manipur. Biren said, "It is better to resign from politics if the commitment to protect and safeguard the people of Manipur is not realized."

Taking to his official X account, Biren wrote, "NRC is crucial for safeguarding the interests of our state and contributing to the greater good of our nation".

"The decision to urge the Government of India to expedite the implementation of the NRC reflects our commitment to ensuring the security and integrity of Manipur," he said and urged all the citizens to support such endeavor as the State strives to build a stronger, more prosperous Manipur for generations to come.

Moving his motion, Leishiyo said the current crisis has opened a Pandora's box of issues ranging from border fencing, the influx of illegal immigrants and FRM among others. One of the crucial issues taking centrestage is the influx of illegal immigrants from Myanmar, he said.

Leishiyo also said that while the implementation of



the NRC has unfolded many debates, maintaining such a record would be in favour of the indigenous communities residing in the state. There will be merit and demerit in the exercise, but maintaining a proper record will help the state in better policymaking and streamlining administration. The MLA then suggested that the Private Member Resolution be converted to a government resolution.

Expressing their resentment over not admitting private members' resolution on Kangla Resolution by the Speaker of Manipur Legislative Assembly, the Congress MLAs abstained from participating in a discussion on re-affirmation concerning the implementation of the National Registrar of Citizens (NRC). They walked out of the floor of the house and favoured not to take part in the discussion yet the opposition MLAs stayed inside their lobby room until the session was adjourned.

Addressing the media after session, the leader of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) and former Chief Minister, Okram Ibobi, said, "The present crisis is about to complete 10 months but the state is unable to restore peace. Congress party observed that it would pave the way for peace if the house

Contd.

Contd.

took similar resolutions at Kangla on January 24 in the presence of all Meitei MLAs and MPs.”

Ibobi said that the ongoing Manipur Legislative Assembly session was just conducted for namesake. “MLAs have the privilege to seek private members’ resolutions only on Friday in a week. There is no more day to move for private member resolution as the session is too short. At least five private member resolutions can be moved in a single day as per the norm. But in today’s session, only one private member resolution was moved. The speaker not admitting Congress MLAs’ private members’ resolution is very unfortunate. It is just like suppressing our rights,” he expressed.

Mention may be made that a resolution was taken by the Meitei MLAs and MPs on January 24 at Kangla under the initiative of Arambai Tengol, a militia outfit. CM N. Biren Singh did not personally attend the Kangla meeting, however he later appended his signature to the resolutions. The resolutions contained abrogation of SoO, implementation of NRC, and removal of illegal Kuki immigrants amongst others.

The Private Members Resolution discussion was also participated by JD(U) MLA Abdul Nasir, NPF MLA Awangbow Newmai, NPP MLA Noorul Hassan, NPP MLA Th Santi, BJP MLA L Rameshwor.

IMPHAL VALLEY A TERRORISTS’ HOT SPOT: THREE CADRES OF BANNED KCP(N) ARRESTED WITH LOOTED ARMS

In the wake of the state-sponsored ethnic cleansing pogrom on the Kuki community by the majority Meiteis, the Meitei dominated valley of Imphal has become a happy hunting ground for the proscribed terrorists’ cadres for carrying out their mischievous, illegal or anti-social activities.

On Friday, the Manipur Police arrested three members of the banned KCP (N) from Imphal West district and recovered arms and ammunition from their possession.

As per an official statement, five mobile handsets and Rs. 4 lakh in cash were also seized from their possession. The arms and ammunition recovered from them are suspected to have been looted from security forces earlier, a police officer said.

The capital of the state has been witnessing complete breakdown of law and order with enormous extortion cases, looting of arms from police arms cortes and several unlawful activities. The private militia group of Arambai Tenggol and the militant outfit of UNLF (Pambei) faction are seen brandishing their sophisticated weapons and roaming freely under the nose of the state’s law enforcing agency.



As per reports, the involvement of UNLF (P) faction and other proscribed terror groups in looting of a police armoury has also been found. Post the signing of the peace pact, the cadres were observed indulging in violence against security forces, officials said.

The Manipur Police has confirmed that the cadres of Arambai Tenggol, a militia group patronised by the Meitei CM Biren Singh and Rajya Sabha MP, Leisemba Sanajaoba, are engaging in many anti-social activities like assaulting civilians, snatching of vehicles from public/ govt officials. They are also indulging in extortion from the common public and businessmen.

KSO COMMUNITY SCHOOL BEGINS ITS ACADEMIC SESSION WITH CURRENT ENROLMENT OF 250 STUDENTS FROM NURSERY TO CLASS VI

A community school which is an initiative of the Kuki Students' Organisation(KSO), Churachandpur district, to provide education especially to the Kuki-Zo displaced students, has begun its academic session on Friday at Tuibuong, Churachandpur district of Manipur.

The community school was inaugurated by Saikot assembly constituency MLA, Paolenlal Haokip, in presence of Church leaders, civil society organisations, student organisations and families of the students and well wishers.

While speaking at the inaugural function, Paolenlal Haokip lauded the KSO team for their initiative to run the school amidst the crisis. He stressed on the role and importance of teachers in a society and said that there could be no progress or development in society when the teachers who are guiding the future pillar of nations fail to perform their duties as required.

Paolenlal also said that the traditional knowledge of our forefathers in different fields such as agriculture, medicines must be passed on to the students through the teachers so that the Kuki-Zo communities can have self-sufficient human resources. He suggested that the traditional knowledge of our forefathers could be passed on to the students even through the medium of songs so that the childrens could easily learn and grasp the knowledge.

The MLA requested the teachers in the school to impart the qualities of honesty and of being affectionate to the students.

The General Secretary of Kuki Inpi Churachandpur, Lalkhohao Chongloi, said the initiative of the KSO Churachandpur to start the community school was commendable and it was done as the organisation have concern for the education sector. He sought the support and cooperation of the parents so that the school can function without any hindrances.

Speaking to The Hills Journal, the Vice President of Kuki Students' Organisation Churachandpur district, Thenkhosei Haokip, who is also Headmaster-in-charge,



said the school will be managed under the initiative of KSO Churachandpur while focusing on the displaced people from different parts of the State.

“Because of the violence, many people have fled and settled in Churachandpur district. However, those displaced families could not get admission for their childrens in the private schools. As such, KSO has taken the initiative to set up the school with support from well wishers and donations coming from the churches,” he said.

Thenkhosei mentioned that the KSO has not such a plan of setting up community school in the past but the initiative began after parents of displaced students put forward their grievances to the organisation, considering zero drop out rate of children attending school as the main motto. He informed that 250 students from Nursery to Class VI have currently enrolled in the schools.

KSO Vice-President expressed gratitude to all those concerns who contributed different things which are necessary for functioning of the school.

Source: **The Hills Journal**

NAGALAND ASSEMBLY UNITES AGAINST CENTRE'S PROPOSAL TO REPEAL FMR

The Nagaland Assembly is ready to pass a resolution denouncing the recent decision by the center to abolish the Free Movement Regime (FMR) and construct a fence along the Indo-Myanmar border.

Reiterating the state government's commitment to challenge this decision, Nagaland chief minister Neiphiu Rio highlighted the need for thorough consultations with all the stakeholders.

Rio acknowledged the valid concerns voiced by the assembly members, especially from eastern Nagaland regarding the matter.

NPF Legislator Kuzholuzo (Azo) Neinu vehemently criticized the decision to terminate the Free Movement Regime condemning it as illogical and harmful to the interest of Nagas.

Meanwhile, deputy chief minister TR Zeliang urged the center to reconsider its decision and stressed the historical and cultural importance of the Indo-Myanmar border for the Naga people.

He also underscored the significance of maintaining the principles of unrestricted movement and promoting cross-border exchanges for the mutual benefit of both countries.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on January announced that the government would terminate the free movement of people along the India-Myanmar border and fully fence it, aiming to secure it similar to the country's boundary with Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, Several Naga civil society organizations,



along with the NSCN-IM, have voiced opposition to the Centre's decision, arguing that it would "divide" the Nagas residing on both sides of the border.

Almost all tribal bodies and civil society organizations in Nagaland, have strongly opposed the Centre's recent announcement to fence the border and scrap the FMR.

The Ministers, politicians, and tribal and civil society leaders argued that the same ethnic tribal people are leaving both sides of the border while many people living along the bordering areas have farmlands on either side or the proposed fencing and the scrapping of FMR would create huge problems for the Naga people.

Four northeastern states -- Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh -- share a 1,643-km-long border with Myanmar.

Source: [The Sentinel](#)

CHAPCHAR KUT FESTIVAL CELEBRATED ACROSS MIZORAM WITH FULL TRADITIONAL FERVOR

Chapchar Kut - the biggest festival of Mizoram was celebrated across the state with full traditional fervor and festivities on Friday. The festival has attracted thousands of people who thronged the Assam Rifles Ground - Lammual - in the heart of Aizawl city with full capacity. Showcasing of traditional and cultural riches of the Mizo community, punctuated by songs and performances of cultural dances marked the day-long celebration.

Gracing the state-level celebration, Chief Minister Lalduhoma exhorted the people of the state to celebrate the festival with zeal and enthusiasm, festering the spirit of unity and oneness. He said that the aged-old tradition of rendering selfless service for others - "Mizo Tlawmngaihna" - is the cornerstone of Mizo society. He urged the gathering to uphold the tradition of "Tlawmngaihna" for the overall welfare of the state and the people.

Chapchar Kut has been celebrated since time immemorial. In the olden days, it was celebrated



for days and weeks. But in modern times, the celebration has been shortened to a day or two. In recent times, the festival is celebrated on the first Friday of March every year. Chapchar Kut is being celebrated to thank God after completion of their most arduous task of jhum operation - jungle clearing (clearing of the remnants of burning) at the beginning of a year.



Vijaita Singh
@vijaita



In a first, Manipur Police accuses Arambai Tenggol of extortion, assault; attack on police officer "unprecedented", valley and hill districts requisition additional forces of Assam Rifles amid possibility of breach of peace due to movement of armed civilians and underground outfits. Earlier, Manipur civil society groups and BJP legislators had demanded the removal of AR from Manipur, accusing it of partisan conduct.

thehindu.com/news/national/...

8:36 am · 01 Mar 24 · 7,812 Views



Sushant Singh
@SushantSin

Follow

Running with the hares and hunting with the hounds. Why is the political leadership not getting behind the state police? And instead making a demand which is supportive of AT's call.

[Btw an assembly session where all Kuki-Zo MLAs can't go to Imphal to participate says it all.]

ce accuse radical outfit of extor End pact with Kuki-Zo groups, Manipur Assembly tells Centre



Manipur Police accuses Arambai Tenggol of extortion, assault; attack on police officer "unprecedented", valley and hill districts requisition additional forces of Assam Rifles amid possibility of breach of peace due to movement of armed civilians and underground outfits. Earlier, Manipur civil society groups and BJP legislators had demanded the removal of AR from Manipur, accusing it of partisan conduct.

Manipur Assembly tells Centre to end pact with Kuki-Zo groups. The assembly session was held in Imphal on Thursday.



Manipur Assembly tells Centre to end pact with Kuki-Zo groups. The assembly session was held in Imphal on Thursday.

8:59 am · 01 Mar 24 · 4,242 Views



Click to Follow

**OPINION**

Manipur Assembly Session Exposes Government's Blind Eye to Atrocities of Meitei Militants, Radical Groups

The partial blindness of the Manipur government and all Meitei MLAs from all parties representing their people in the State Legislative assembly towards the violence and atrocities committed by Meitei militia like Arambai Tenggol and other militant groups like UNLF(P) is proof that there exists no space for Justice, Equality, Liberty, Democracy, and Rule of Law for Kukis in the future like it has been since 3rd of May, 2023.

The ongoing Assembly session sends out the message to the entire politico-administrative set-up which is dominated by the Meiteis that they stand behind the ideology and ethos of Arambai Tenggol and radicalized Meiteis. The unfolding of the events prior to and since the commencement of the Assembly is rather funny, the attempt to fool the world through their well-thought-out script just so they could implement the unaddressed demands of Arambai Tenggol at Ultra Kangla Fort meet is too perfect that they deserve an academy award had it been made as a movie.

The scripted drama includes staged attacks on security forces and counter-activism from the state security forces against Arambai Tenggol. One might mistakenly think how patriotic and efficient the state security forces are in protecting the spirit of unity in diversity and law and order. The only loophole was the numerous evidence of active participation of state government security forces as an enabler

and active participant in committing crimes and atrocities against the Kukis in the ongoing government sponsored ethnic genocide pogrom.

Scripted counter activism and efficiency on Arambai Tenggol at the cost of the public purse is a drama directed to protect them from discussion in the Assembly so as to protect them from their inclusion as a terrorist group under Indian law. With the humongous criminal and illegal activities committed by the Arambai Tenggol, they cannot brazenly blindside their act in the Assembly discussion without some action outside at least during the commencement of the Assembly. Another reason for the counter activism is to serve the greater cause of Arambai Tenggol and Meitei interest. They have to at least appear less partial and bias explicitly although there exists tacit understand inside.

With the assurance of implementation of border fencing and NRC by the Central government, the other discriminatory demands like deportation of illegal immigrants from Myanmar to Mizoram and abrogation of SoO becomes the responsibility of oath takers in Kangla fort viz the MLAs. As the fact remains, inclusion of illegal immigrants

Contd.



Contd.

deportation to illegal is to defame more of Indian Kukis than the threat it possesses, since there exists no real threat security wise or demographic wise, the state government understanding the hatred of Indian Kukis by Arambai Tenggol and radicalized Meiteis, appeased them by summoning the Assembly session, discarding the democratic and Constitutional rights of 30 percent of Manipur population and muted their voice undemocratically.

The hatred for SoO by the Meitei populace and the state government stems up from their own insecurity. SoO as we know, it is a platform through which the Kukis negotiated their political demands. SoO groups' illegal activities are comparatively dormant as compared with their activities prior to SoO. Demanding the abrogation of a mechanism that works effectively for the country's national security interest is equivalent to demanding threat and challenges for the national security. Why a solution for a problem is sought in the first place is a question the general public and the government must ponder upon before demanding these irrational demands. Had it not been a problem that threatened the national security, would a solution be sought?

The abrogation of SoO serves manifold purposes for the Meiteis, deprivation of the Kuki from their political demands, extension of their oppression, giving a free hand to state security forces to attack anyone belonging to the Kukis to be branded as Militants later among others. Thus, the demand by the public and the complicity by the government.

The Meitei MLAs, blinded by their self interest, demean the dignity that the State Assembly hall represents, it downgraded the house from a symbol that represents a Temple of democracy to a House that legally legalizes Hypocrisy. On the one hand, they unanimously passed the resolution for the abrogation of SoO, on the other hand they made the illegal, atrocious and criminal activities of Meitei terrorist organizations like Arambai Tenggol and the likes non-existent, unworthy of even discussing. Do they want their victims to hypnotize themselves that their traumatic experiences as a nightmare shall pass? As the saying goes, silence in the face of injustice is complicity with the oppressor. The ongoing Manipur Assembly session through its conduct boldly exposes itself of their complicity in the ongoing ethnic genocide violence against the Kuki.

Thus, through its conduct and discussion, it can be concluded that the ongoing assembly session has been asked by the Manipur government to the Governor to be summoned to implement the oaths the Meitei MLAs undertook at Kangla Fort and to appease the Meitei populace and garner votes from them for the upcoming 2024 general election. One can also conclude that REDRESSAL OF INJUSTICES AND the grievances of Kukis and peace is never the agenda for both Meitei leaders and the public alike which thus legitimizes the demand for Separate Administration for the Kukis.



**Dictators free themselves,
but they enslave the people.**

– Charlie Chaplin



FEATURED ARTICLE

Too Little Too Late | On Manipur HC's Deletion of Contentious Para in 2023 Order

Patricia Mukhim

One wrong ruling of the Manipur High Court's single judge bench has led to an ongoing catastrophe in the state where thousands are still languishing in relief camps and the studies of the children and youth are completely disrupted. Above all, the lives of the tribal Kuki-Zo people are disjointed because government employees and others working in the Imphal Valley cannot return out of fear for their lives.

With the Arambai Tenggol, an armed outfit, being given a free hand by Chief Minister Biren Singh, there is no sign that overtures for peace are even being contemplated. The CM has taken an overt stance that his people – the Meiteis are the ones wronged and that the wrongdoers are the Kuki-Zo tribes in the Hills.

Dogged attempts to paint all the Kuki-Zo people as illegal migrants have further fuelled the animosity between the two groups, even while the Nagas are in a wait-and-watch mode.

What has now come to light (on the ST status demand by the Meiteis) from the Office of the Registrar General, Ministry of Home Affairs, is that since the 1980s, this demand has always been summarily rejected because the Meiteis exhibit no tribal characteristics. Some citizens had decided to go deep into this matter and ferret out the documents and communication

between the government of Manipur and the Central government and have found out that this demand had been repeatedly rejected on the plea that Meiteis have adopted Hinduism (and do not display any tribal characteristics). It was one such appeal that led to a series of actions thereafter.

A Look At Demand for ST Status

On 23 February this year, the Manipur High Court ordered the deletion of a paragraph from the order from March 2023 which had urged the State Government to do the needful and pursue the inclusion of Meiteis in the ST list. Chief Justice DY Chandrachud had earlier stated that the Manipur High Court order was wrong since the apex court bench had clarified that it would not deal with legal issues arising out of the Manipur High Court's decision on the granting of reservations to the majority Meiteis, as the pleas challenging the order were pending with the larger division bench there. The Chief Justice had stated that the contentious paragraph of the Manipur High Court conflicted with the Supreme Court's constitution bench stance – a matter still pending before it.

The series of communications between the Manipur government and the Ministry of Social Justice and

Contd.

Contd.

Empowerment date back to January 2001, where it was stated that the Sema Nagas should no longer feature in the list of STs in Manipur because they constitute only about 20 speakers at the time (1991) and they are permanent residents of Nagaland. The letter from the Tribal Development Department states about the Meiteis thus:

“The State Government did not specifically recommend the case of Meitei for inclusion in the scheduled list. The opinion of the Registrar General of India on the Meitei that they possess no characteristics of the tribes is correct. Meitei was formed by seven tribes in the long past. They are Hindus assuming the status of Kshatriya caste in the ladder of Hindu caste. They are the dominant group in Manipur. They have now been included in the list of Other Backward Classes. There is no need to list them in the list of Scheduled Tribes now.”

In 1982, the contention of the Office of the Registrar General of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, was that “from published literature, it is seen that the term Meiteis generally written as Meitheis. This term however is used to refer to the non-tribal population in Manipur Valley who have been more under the Hindu influence. According to available information, this community does not appear to possess tribal characteristics. There this office is not in favour of inclusion of Meiteis in the list of Schedule Tribes.”

What is unfortunate is that it was the High Court order of 27 March 2023 directing the state to pursue the matter of inclusion of Meiteis in the ST list triggered a series of killings. It is impossible to describe the plight of people in the hills of Kangpokpi, Churachandpur, and other areas adjoining the Imphal valley. The number of Kuki-Zo people who have lost all their life savings after the only home they know went up in flames cannot be adequately represented in an article such as this.

For now, the injudicious ruling which did not take into account the official correspondence between the government of Manipur and the Central government,

can only be considered mischievous.

That order, which was the tinder box leading to the conflagration of Manipur, and has shattered so many lives and continues to cause immense hardship to the people there, was rescinded by Justice Golmei Gaiphulshillu during a review petition. The contentious paragraph from last year’s verdict, instructing the state to expedite consideration of Meitei community inclusion, was deemed for deletion. This paragraph stated the state government “shall consider the case of the petitioners for inclusion of Meitei/Meitei community in the Scheduled Tribes list, expeditiously, preferably within a period of four weeks” from the date of receipt of the order.

Justice Gaiphulshillu’s ruling on 21 February emphasised the necessity of removing the directive, pointing to the Government of India’s stipulated procedure for Scheduled Tribe list amendments. Justice Gaiphulshillu referred to the constitutional protocol detailed in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs’ 2013-14 report and highlighted the need to align with the Supreme Court’s constitutional interpretation as was earlier stated by Chief Justice Chandrachud. Besides, it is not within the realm of courts to deal with the question of deciding on castes and tribes as those are within the ambit of Parliament.

However, it would appear that the demand for ST status for Meiteis was the trigger for many underlying issues that remain subsumed and unspoken. The disinterest of the Central government in the fact that a militant outfit had summoned the MLAs and made them take a vow to protect and promote the interests of the Meiteis would appear as if things had been left to an incompetent State government to handle.

Contd.

Contd.

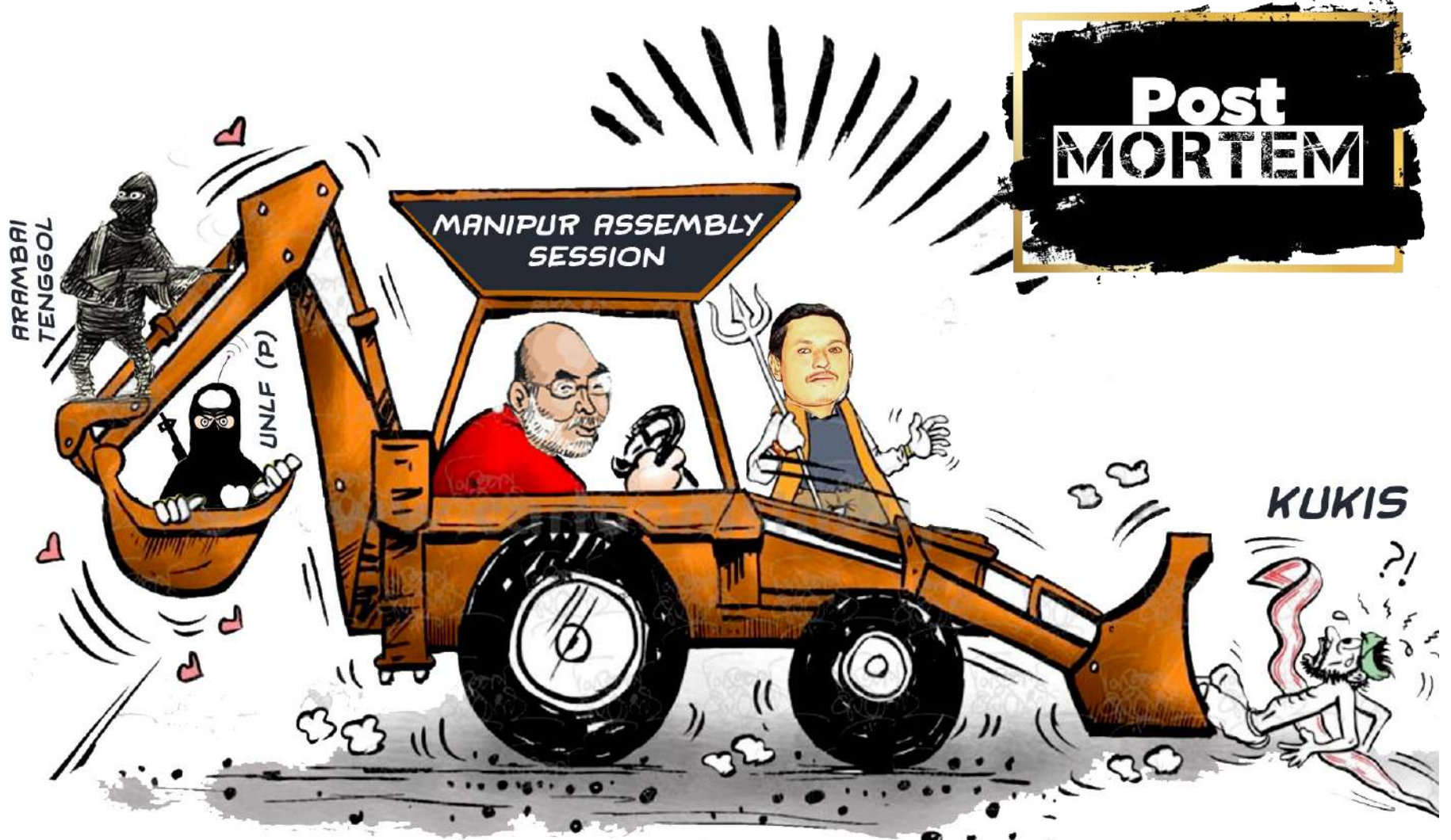
And now with elections around the corner, the BJP could not be bothered about the northeast, a region that sends only 25 MPs in total. It's also a region that is so heavily dependent on the Centre that MLAs and MPs can be induced to change their political preferences at the drop of a hat.

Many are surprised that Nagaland and Meghalaya, which have a substantial Christian population, would be aligned with the BJP government at the Centre despite its overt attempts at curbing religious freedom (now getting even more strident). But as they say, money is everything and fighting elections in India today is not a joyride. With the Congress Party unable to gather its flock and so many MLAs from different states ready to jump ship to the BJP, things can only get murky even as the saffron party embraces all those it accused of corruption and practising dynastic politics.

Politics has become a cruel game of cards where the elected make sure they retain their seats and their power, no matter how many lives are lost in the bargain. Manipur is an example of the meticulous destruction of truth, the collapse of trust, and the rise of animosity. There is no longer a shared narrative in the state. It's about their narrative and ours and the twain will never meet because it takes statesmanship for that to happen. We have no statesmen/women worth their salt today.

First published by [The Quint](#)

(The writer is the Editor of The Shillong Times and former member of NSAB.)



THE ASSEMBLY SESSION AGAINST KUKIS



The Assurance of God - The Ultimate *Protector*

-Thongminthang Lhungdim

This poem seeks to convey gratitude and admiration for the bravery and dedication of frontline Warriors, who are Tahchapas-Tahchanus, reminding them that they are not alone in their fight for our Ancestral land. They can find strength in the assurance that the Divine stands with them, fighting alongside, even in the silence of their hearts.

In silence, let your worries rest,
For God, the Lord, is ever near,
In every trial, every test,
His voice of strength, His words of cheer.

The battles rage, the tempests roar,
Yet still, God's promise stands secure,
No need for fear, for evermore,
His steadfast love will endure.

Though foes surround on every side,
And shadows loom, and fears rush,
In God, our refuge, we abide,
His mighty arm shall never fail.

The Lord will fight, oh, trust God's hand,
His justice swift, His mercy true,
In silence, let His peace expand,
His victory, our breakthrough.

So quiet now, and hear God's voice,
In silence, find your strength anew,
In His embrace, let fears rejoice,
For God will fight, and see you through.

[Based on Old Testament Scripture, Exodus 14:14]

