

Thingkho Le Malcha

A Daily Newsletter by KSO Media & Documentation Cell



St. Mary's Higher Secondary School RELIEF CENTRE

Tuibong, Lamka

Managed by
Kuki Khanglai Lawmpi
General Headquarters(KKL-GHQ)

Total Inmates Registered: 181*

■ Male: 88

■ Female: 93

*As on 28th July, 2023



KUKI VICTIMS' UPDATE

As on 16.12.2023



158
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 INPI TENGNOUNPAL ACCUSES MANIPUR'S CM BIREN SINGH OF ENGAGING IN 'INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY'

Kuki's top body, the Kuki Inpi Manipur, Tengnoupal Chapter accused Manipur's Chief Minister N. Biren Singh of engaging in an 'International Conspiracy' as it hit hard on the CM's effort to sustain foreigners' narrative with particular reference to the border town, Moreh.

The Kuki Inpi Tengnoupal stated, "It is common knowledge that the Chief Minister of Manipur N. Biren Singh is duly credited for forming CoRCOM, a conglomeration of valley-based secessionists Meitei insurgent groups and the recently surrendered UNLF-P, which is a part of the conglomeration and who is now running amok in the valley, brandishing automatic weapons, and heavily engaging in extortions".

It also pointed out that the Valley-Based Insurgent Groups (VBIGS) are based in Myanmar, fighting alongside the Myanmar Army against the Pro-Democracy groups, the People's Defence Force (PDF), and the Kuki National Army-Burma (KNA-B).

It further pointed out that, in Moreh, the surrendered UNLF-P cadres donning Manipur police commando uniforms are "legitimized" as state forces to attack the Village Volunteers of Moreh.

Manipur's Chief Minister N. Biren Singh is clearly engaged in an "International Conspiracy" but wishes to alter the fact by alleging KNA-B is involved in the current crossfire, it added.

It is stated that the Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh's manipulative streak to use Meitei forces from across the international border to legitimize the state's Constitutional prerogative of law and order is astounding.

"Biren Singh's reference to KNA-B is clutching at the last straw to divert the Centre's attention to keep afloat his International Conspiracy", stated the Kuki Inpi Tengnoupal Chapter.

"Manipur CM hopes he can pull the wool over people's eyes and justify against the will of the public the presence

of Manipur Police Commandos at Moreh, which is violently against the grain of peace", it further stated.

The Kuki top body also stated that amid the ongoing radicalized Meitei ethnic cleansing of tribal Kuki-Zo since May 3 at Imphal, the CM of Manipur N. Biren Singh has sustained the rhetoric of labeling the victims as 'foreigner', illegal immigrants, Narco Terrorists', etc.

It also stated that at the close of eight months since the eruption of the communally motivated onslaught by the State forces, allegedly combined with Arambai Tenggol, and the recently surrendered faction UNLF (P), all donning Manipur Police Commando uniforms, are at the year's end, engaged in crossfire against Kuki-Zo Village Volunteers at Moreh.

Predictably, the Chief Minister has started belting out the same old rhetoric, which he uses to justify the air-dropping of Commandos at Moreh, purportedly to prevent illegal immigrants who are actually refugees from Myanmar fleeing the atrocities of the Military Junta, it stated.

The Kuki Inpi Tengnoupal also stated that following the two ethnic entities, Meitei and Kuki-Zo demographic transfer of populations, the former from hill to valley and vice versa, at Kangpokpi district and Lamka (Churachandpur) district while adding that there is palpable peace as no police personnel from the opposing ethnic group are present.

Ironically, contradicting the Union Home Minister's will for peace to prevail at Moreh, the international border town in the hill district of Tengnoupal, over two hundred Manipur Police Commandos were dropped by helicopter!

Consequently, given the atrocities committed on the civilian population by Arambai Tenggols in police uniform and the rest of the outfits of the 'state forces', and following firing at the Village Volunteers camp, peace has become a distant dream, it stated.

CoTU DECRIES TORCHING OF KUKI-ZO RESIDENCE IN MANIPUR'S CAPITAL, SHARPENS DEMAND FOR REIMPOSITION OF AFSPA IN MANIPUR VALLEY

The Kuki-Zo top tribal body in Kangpokpi District, the Committee on Tribal Unity, or the CoTU, Sadar Hills decried emphatically the arsoning of Kuki-Zo residence in the heart of Manipur's capital Imphal on January 4 evening as it heightened the demand for reimposition of Armed Forces Special Power Act in the valley districts.

Expressing deep resentment against the latest terror perpetrated by the Meitei mob in the heart of Imphal city, a stone's throw away from the CM's residence, the Committee on Tribal Unity pointed out that around five houses belonging to the Kuki-Zo located at New Lambulane, one of Kuki-Zo's oldest settlements in Imphal, Manipur was burned to the ground last night at around 9:30 p.m. in what appears to be a cynical attempt by the rebellious Meitei mob.

The incinerated houses belong to Khaikholam Haokip, Haomang Vaiphei, Lengpao Vaiphei, Ronald Sitlhou, and Thanglenmang Kipgen.

Lamminlun Singsit, General Secretary of CoTU said that the committee is puzzled as to why the central paramilitary forces deployed there let loose the antagonistic mob to freely commit such horrendous acts under their control.

He said that although the Central Paramilitary personnel have sealed off every inch of the New Lambulane-Checkon in the aftermath of the ethnic pogrom against the minority Kuki-Zo groups, the Meitei terrorists and mobs have managed to overwhelm them somehow while adding that the vulnerability of the world's second-largest military has been exposed once again, raising concerns about whether they have aided the mob to carry out the arson.

"Such brazen disregard for the central authorities by the warmongering Meitei community is a threat to internal security and a direct confrontation with the Union government", he added.

Taking a serious note of the Armed Forces Special Power Act, the committee questioned the rationale behind its abrogation in the valley districts of Manipur considering the warlike situation in these districts.

"The revocation of AFSPA in the valley districts has catalyzed radical Meitei terror groups with sophisticated arms to move freely, causing a law and order issue while cases of looting, kidnapping, killing, and extortion are rampant", asserted CoTU's Secretary.

Hence, we appeal to the Union Home Ministry to reimpose AFSPA in the valley districts as well for long-lasting peace, he added.

He also said that the committee is lost for words to describe the lawlessness in Imphal and the perpetual destruction and arson carried out every now and then by the majority Meitei on properties and houses belonging to the Kuki-Zo community.

He said that the lackadaisical approach of the state as well as the Central government to safeguard lives and properties belonging to the minority community is extremely deplorable at this vital crossroads.

The Kuki-Zo top tribal body then sought the intervention of the Union Home Ministry to deploy enthusiastic and dedicated army personnel to take strict preventive measures to safeguard and protect the remaining pockets of Kuki-Zo settlements from destruction, illegal occupation, and theft.

It also cautioned that the state machinery and the Centre will be held responsible should pyromania and wanton destruction of lives and properties in Imphal take their toll in the future.

ST GEORGE CATHOLIC SCHOOL, MOREH AND MOREH YOUTH CLUB CONDEMN ATROCITIES TOWARDS KUKI-ZO CIVILIANS IN MOREH

St George Catholic School Moreh and Moreh Youth Club(MYC) condemns commandos' atrocities towards Kuki-Zo civilians in Moreh . MYC warns of serious law and order problems due to the provoking nature of meitei commandos, stated the release.

St George Catholic School Moreh, St George Parish has urged the concerned authority to award fitting punishment to the Moreh Police Commandos who are involved in torturing Peter Holkolal Mate on December 30.

A release issued by the St George Catholic School Moreh on Friday stated that the Moreh Catholic community views the matter as a new design of atrocity towards Christians of Manipur.

The Moreh catholic community called for the immediate attention of the state and central government to look into the matter seriously.

As per the release, Holkholal Mate is the incumbent General Secretary of Catholic Youth Action (CYA) of the Church and he also serves the society as an assistant teacher in Bethel High School, Moreh.

On 30th Dec. 2023, while returning home from the school, he was arrested by Moreh Police Commandos and they dragged him to their complex. After removing his dresses, he was thrashed and tortured beyond third degree until he was unconscious, stated the release.

At early dawn he was dropped off at Dharamsala (Moreh Bazar) alone with their evil motive to let him die there so that the matter would not be known to the public. Besides, he was also warned not to disclose the matter to central forces or CSOs and the Commandos snatched his mobile phone and scooty which are with them till date, stated the release.

The release added that the victim is undergoing treatment at Lamka District Hospital and is diagnosed to suffer from multiple bone fractures besides multiple bruises all over his body.

Meanwhile, Moreh Youth Club, Moreh has also vehemently condemned the attempted murder of an assistant teacher

by Meitei commandos on December 30 at Bethel High School.

In a release, Moreh Youth Club stated that Peter was abducted by the Meitei commandos in front of the Meitei Council Moreh office while he was on his way home from Bethel High School.

After finding no incriminating documents/arms/illegal items and knowing that he was an innocent and a teacher by profession, the meitei commandos tied his hand behind, seized his mobile phone and scooty and locked him inside a room at Hotel Luxmi Moreh bazar.

The commandos asked him to stay quiet and threatened him with dire consequences if he made any attempt to contact his family. Luckily, some locals who saw the act informed the family following which the meitei commandos dragged him inside the commando complex and tortured him the whole night until he fell unconscious.

Taking advantage of the curfew, the Meitei commandos threw away his unconscious body at Dharamsala in the wee hours of December 31. He gained consciousness and crawled to his home.

The Moreh Youth Club stated that such an act clearly shows the presence of communal elements in the name of state forces in Moreh town.

"Torturing innocent civilians, burning civilian houses, and unleashing terror are the routine practices of the so-called state police commandos. Provoking Kuki-Zo people by inflicting unbearable atrocities compelled many people to fight against these communal forces", stated the release.

The release stated that it was high time to remove the meitei commandos from Moreh town and also urged the recently posted district superintendent of police to address the sentiments of the people in Moreh town and take action against those involved persons.

MEITEIS PEEVISH OVER NH BLOCKADE, JUSTIFY BLOCKING ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES FOR KUKIS



The Meiteis who have been crying foul over the National Highway Blockade in Manipur has been justifying blocking of essential commodities for Kuki areas, exposing their hypocrisy and double standard nature.

The notorious Arambai Tenggol in cohort with the Meira Paibis blocked essential commodities meant for the people of Lamka midway in Bishnupur district on Friday. They also pulled up the auto drivers – one Meitei and 3 Meitei Pangals, and reprimanded him for transporting goods.

The Meiteis' double standard nature and hypocrisy has been time and again exposed by themselves on many occasions during this ethnic crisis. They have been repeatedly crying foul over the National Highway blockade, calling it illegal and inhumane. However, their action itself is also far from humanistic values.

The Kukis, on the other hand, released goods carrier and medicine supply passing through National Highway 2, which passes through Kuki dominated

areas, considering the humanitarian needs. Even at times of war, the international community and various organizations also strongly advocate for preserving humanity during wars and conflicts. The Kukis on many occasions preserved this, showing their humanity and care for the common civilians.

On the contrary, the Meiteis who considered themselves as peace loving and law abiding citizens have acted otherwise. During the present conflict, there have been several instances where the Meitei public led by the Meira Paibis blocked essential commodities medicine and Oxygen supply meant for the Kuki areas.

The Meiteis crying foul over the Highway Blockade is as hypocritical as “The pot calling the kettle black.” What is more intriguing is that the concerned authority does not bat an eye on this. The Meiteis should practice what they preach and should ensure at least essential commodities reach the target destination.

CENTRAL SECURITY HAND IN GLOVE WITH ARAMBAI TENGGOL?

A photo of Arambai Tenggol Chief Korounganba Khuman and AT Sekmai Unit chief Robin Mangang Khwairakpam along with DK Gurung, Major, 22 Assam Rifles has been doing the round on the internet since earlier today, sparking a matter of concern for many observers of the Manipur violence as the Meitei militia group Arambai Tenggol are accused of carrying out ethnic cleansing against the Kukis.

The viral picture depicts Major DK Gurung, 22 AR Commander, attending an event with Arambai Tenggol chief somewhere in Kangleipak valley. The apparent collaboration between a Major of Assam Rifles and a group linked to such atrocities demands urgent investigation.

The Guardians of the Hills especially the Kukis lose trust in the Central Security Forces due to compromised individuals like Major DK Gurung of 22 Assam Rifles being seen taking sides and dining with the Chief of a terrorist group that plotted against the Hill people.

Is it not deeply unsettling, if not outright alarming, that an Assam Rifles officer, entrusted with upholding peace, neutrality and security, would choose to dine with members of the Arambai Tenggol - an openly radicalized Meitei group with deep ties to proscribed Meitei insurgent outfits like the PLA and UNLF who have been seen running around the valley openly with arms like the Taliban did??

The Assam Rifles, entrusted with maintaining security in the region, cannot afford to have their



personnel fraternize with known extremist elements. This incident raises concerns about potential infiltration, compromised security, and even active support for these insurgent groups.

A few days ago, the Central Security Forces who are stationed in the buffer areas also deployed an active cadre of Arambai Tenggol as their carrier driver which almost led to scuffle between the BSF and public in Lamka district. This has led to a series of doubts and mistrust upon the central security forces by the Kukis.

When the state law enforcing agency has compromised their power to the Arambai Tenggol in Imphal valley, the only hope being vested in the central security forces has also started to dwindle now. Has the Central Security Forces, like the state police, compromised their power to the private armed militia group?



**Religion isn't the cause of wars, it's
the excuse.**

— Japser Fforde

BODIES OF 5 LILONG VICTIMS LAID TO REST IN MANIPUR AMID TIGHT SECURITY

Five people who were killed during a firing incident that took place on January 1 in the Lilong Chingjao area of Manipur's Thoubal District were buried on Thursday as per Islamic burial rituals and traditions.

The people who were killed in the firing incident were identified as Mohammed Sirajuddin Makak (55), Mohammed Azad Khan alias Apikpa (35), Mohammed Hussain Makakmayum (25), Mohammed Dawood Khan Pundreimayum (40) and Abdur Rajaque Meraimayum (37).

The bodies were buried after conducting their post-mortem at JNIMS Hospital in Imphal.

While speaking to the media, Islam Makakcha, co-convenor of the Joint Action Committee formed by the

government, refused the reports of communal clashes between the people of the Muslim and the Meitei communities. He also appealed to people to refrain from posting any communal comments on social media platforms.

Notably, the banned insurgent group People's Liberation Army (PLA) has claimed responsibility for gunning down five members of the Pangal community on January 1.

The outfit said its members had fired in self-defence after the residents of Lilong Chingjao in Thoubal district attacked them for trying to take away a drug trafficker.

MAKING CONCERTED EFFORTS TO BRING BACK PEACE TO MANIPUR: BSF ADG EASTERN COMMAND SONALI MISHRA

At a time when the government as well as other stakeholders are making concerted efforts to restore peace in Manipur, the BSF too is playing a vital role to make sure that permanent peace prevails in the state that has seen violence since May 3 last year.

In an exclusive conversation with Northeast Live, BSF ADG Eastern Command Sonali Mishra hoped that normalcy will come back to the state soon. Presently, the BSF is deployed in 9 districts of Manipur for maintaining law and order.

The Eastern Command BSF ADG said, "We as a border guarding force was given a mandate by the GoI and we were deployed for the law and duties here (in Manipur). We are working under the overall supervision of the Unified Command headed by the Adviser. Right now the BSF is deployed in 9 districts, there are 79 companies. So the strength has increased."

Eastern Commander BSF ADG Sonali Misra maintained that the BSF has always helped people who sought assistance during times of trouble.



Misra said, "And we ensure that we maintain peace and harmony in places where the BSF is deployed in a very fair manner. Not only that wherever the help is required by the local people wherever the BSF is deployed, we provide that also. Our aim is that peace and law and order should come back soon in Manipur."

MANIPUR LOK SABHA MP URGES HOME MINISTER TO CREATE ADDITIONAL LS SEAT IN MANIPUR

Union Minister of State for External Affairs and Education Rajkumar Ranjan Singh on Thursday put forward several suggestions regarding the impending delimitation process for Parliamentary and Assembly constituencies in Manipur and also proposed establishment of an additional unreserved Lok Sabha constituency in the state.

In a formal communication to Union Home Minister Amit Shah, he stressed the crucial need for the delimitation process to be based on the latest census figures, highlighting the importance of fairness and impartiality without any bias towards particular communities or ethnic groups.

Emphasising transparency as a cornerstone, he urged for an unbiased approach to ensure an equitable and just conclusion.

Among the proposals, Singh, the MP from Inner Manipur seat, recommended the creation of an additional unreserved Lok Sabha constituency. This proposed

constituency, according to him, would encompass the eight unreserved Assembly constituencies currently part of the Outer Manipur Lok Sabha constituency, which presently stands as Scheduled Tribe reserved seat.

Anticipating a potential increase in Assembly seats from the existing 60 to 70, he advocated for a balanced distribution or creation of both reserved (for SC/ST) and unreserved seats.

Looking ahead to the lifting of the moratorium in 2026 and the subsequent changes, the Union Minister emphasised the necessity for a comprehensive delimitation exercise based on the latest census data, incorporating biometrics and Aadhar linkage for accuracy and authenticity.

Singh highlighted the potential of his recommendations to contribute to a more balanced and fair political representation in Manipur.

 **Christian Emergency Alliance**
@ChristianEmerg1

Manipur, India: A fresh wave of attacks have been unleashed against indigenous Christians. Over Christmas and New Years, homes were torched and families displaced. Some were even killed. All this follows months of religious and ethnic violence targeting the Kuki community.

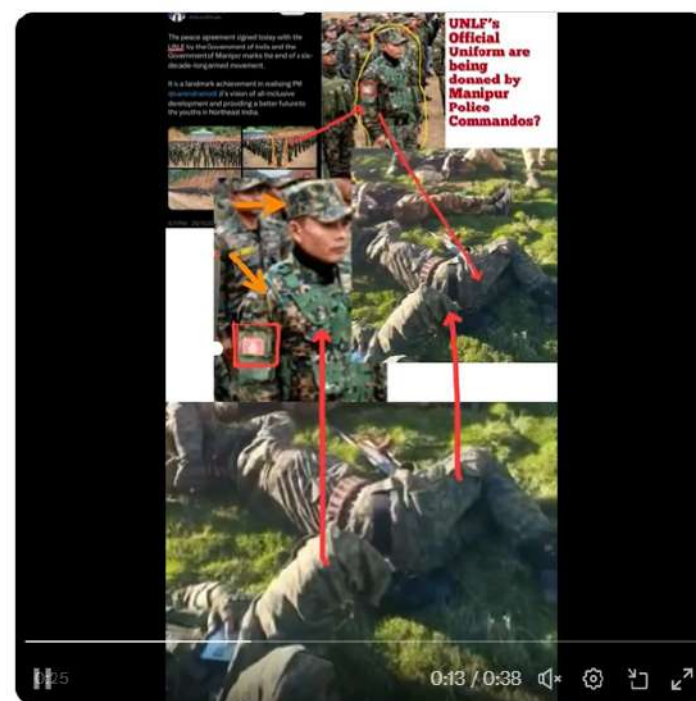


7:37 AM · Jan 5, 2024 · 4,586 Views

 **Arijit nobody**
@phoenixpaul2023

The chief minister of Manipur, Mr N.Biren Singh is the architect of this genocide against the tribals. Mass petition should be flooded to the Supreme court and demand his legal trial.

#Manipur
#Birenmustbetried



3:43 AM · Jan 5, 2024 · 795 Views

THE BUZZ SOCIAL MEDIA



**ANALYSIS****CONNECTING THE DOTS: IS THERE NEXUS BETWEEN COL. NECTAR, MEITEI MILITIAS AND POLICE COMMANDOS?**

Moreh is a tiny border town in Tengenoupal district and is strategically located along the Indo-Myanmar international boundary. The town is inhabited largely by the Kuki-Zo communities along with the Muslims (Meitei Pangals), Meiteis, Nagas, Tamils, Nepalis, and others. For decades, all these communities have been living together peacefully. Whenever there is misunderstanding between any two parties, all the major civil society organisations would come together and find a solution. However, the dynamics of inter-community relationship between the Kuki-Zo and Meitei in this cosmopolitan border town changed abruptly since the beginning of the state-sponsored violence on May 3, 2023.

When the ongoing ethnic pogrom began, the Kuki-Zo communities were caught unaware. Even after the violence began, they still thought that the state government and its law enforcing agencies would take everything in its hand to contain the spread of the riots. With this in mind, the Kuki-Zo people in Moreh, as in other Kuki-Zo dominated areas, did not attack any of the Meitei civilians even though some of their tribesmen had already been killed and many had been injured in the hands of state police forces under the command of a Meitei officer, Mr. Chingtham Anand, MPS, SDPO Moreh.

However, in contrast to what the Kuki-Zo had expected, the atrocities perpetrated by the state forces continued unabated. After the initial rampages, the town somehow limped back to normalcy. But slowly, as the state police commandos along with Arambai Tengol and VBIGs including those surrenderees were airlifted, Moreh once again became a violent-laden town.

In fact what we saw in the last one week, since 30th December 2023, is not something which occurred out of the blue but is rather a well-orchestrated plan initiated months ago. The whole process began since the 'communal' state government appointed a retired Meitei Army officer, Col. Nectar Sanjenbam, as a Senior Superintendent of Police (Combat) in Tengenoupal, a position never heard of before, purportedly to oversee the law and order situation in the district.

The logic behind the creation and posting of a Meitei officer in Tengenoupal, one of the most sensitive districts yet witnessing much lesser violence in the ongoing ethnic conflict speaks volumes.

Contd.

Contd.

Ever since the said appointment was made, the Kuki-Zo civil society organisations and the public denounced the sinister design of the state government for fear of their lives and properties since the SSP, apart from being a Meitei, is known for his deep connection with the VBIGs.

The appointment of Col. Nectar abruptly changed the manner in which the Meitei terrorists carried out attacks on the Kuki-Zo from commandos and Meitei militias leading large mobs to selective target and ambushes by small squads. The brutal murder of three village guards at Thowai Kuki village in Kamjong, a Tangkhul dominated district, on August 18; the killing of three civilians in an ambush along Kangchup road in Kangpokpi district on September 12; the brutal murder of two individuals between Haoraothel and Konsha (Liangmei-Naga) villages on November 20; and the attack and murder of one village volunteer at Zoupi village in Kangpokpi district on November 25, are few incidents which shows the change of tactics following the appointment of Col. Nectar.

Despite the repeated appeals to repatriate the Meitei commandos and militias to Imphal, the state administration remains adamant and continues with its devilish project. The intention behind the reinforcement of state police personnel and Meitei militias in Moreh is nothing but to terrorize the local populace and forcefully occupy the town which is the traditional home of the Kuki-Zo tribes. Unlike the Naga dominated hill districts, where no Meitei is allowed to settled, the Kuki-Zo's sense of community feeling, Khankho/Tlawmngaihna, allowed every community including the Meiteis to settle in their dominated areas including Lamka, Moreh, Kanggui, etc. Yet taking advantage of the accommodative nature of the Kuki-Zo, the radicalised Meiteis began the current ethnic pogrom to snatch and occupy their lands. This exemplified the Manipuri maxim which goes as: Lepfam chaladi fampham challe// Phamfam challadi hipfam challe (Free Translation: If there's a space to stand, there'll be a space to sit//If

there's a space to sit, there'll be a space to sleep).

In its attempt to push forward the narrative spearheaded by the dominant Meitei community, the Central Forces are often pressurized to ignore the presence of non-state actors in the midst of the state forces, thereby adding fuel to the fire. However, in an ethnic conflict situation such as this, the logic behind Meitei state forces being considered as "security forces" is irrelevant as their intention is purely to annihilate the minority Kuki-Zo community.

It may be noted that the peace loving Kuki-Zo people have never initiated any attack on the Meiteis in Tengnoupal district. One example worth mentioning is Kwatha, a Meitei village near Moreh in Tengnoupal district which is still standing however susceptible and vulnerable the village is. On the contrary, over 200 Kuki-Zo villages and localities in Imphal and its adjoining areas have been burnt, 158 killed, and 360 churches torched.

Now, as the state government did not pay heed to the demand of the Kuki-Zo to remove the Meitei police personnel and militias from Moreh, the town is likely to witness more clam in the near future. However, if the Union Home Ministry considers replacing the Meitei militias in police uniforms with neutral central forces, as done in other districts, normalcy will return in no time. Alternately, police personnel belonging to the Kuki-Zo may be posted instead of the Meitei police personnel.

If the central government had listened to the genuine appeals of the Kuki-Zo community to remove the state forces who were sent to Moreh to create trouble in the border town, the series of unwanted violence and destruction of properties witnessed so far could have been avoided.

Contd.

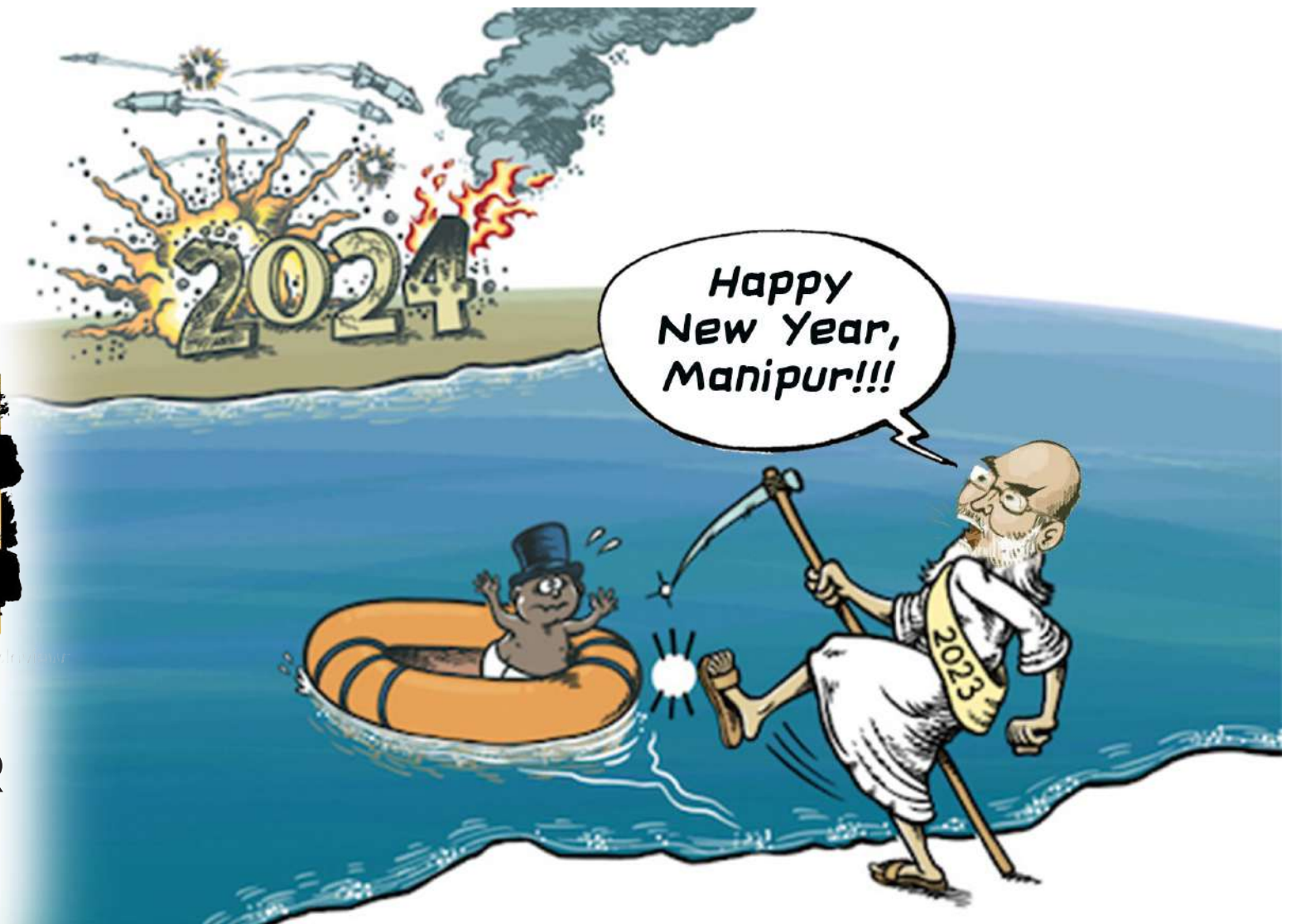
As the chain of events speaks for itself, the Kuki-Zo community won't stop until all these disguised state forces are withdrawn from Moreh town. The Kuki-Zo community may be weak, but will not easily give up their lands out of fear. Here it is pertinent to remember what William Shaw had written a century ago, soon after the Kukis were defeated in the hands of the mighty British after fighting nearly three years in the Anglo-Kuki War, 1917-1919. According to him, the Kukis believed they were destined to be rulers of their earth and not to be submissive to any one and therefore were "sometimes carried away by their ambitions". He also said: "They [Kukis] do not consider themselves beaten yet and still brood over the future ahead... [though] their prestige among other hill tribes has been much shaken." So, the Kuki-Zo had never given up in their fight against injustice in the past, and will never do so

in the present too.

Therefore, it is imperative on the part of the Union Home Ministry to intervene and remove all the Meitei forces, and cancel the appointment order of Col. Nectar in order to restore peace and normalcy in the Kuki-Zo areas as Shri Amit Shah, the Hon'ble Union Home Minister, had promised in his maiden visit to Moreh in May 2023. This is the only way out to avoid further escalation of violence including gunfight and anti-human activities which otherwise is soon to cover the clouds of this border town Moreh.



BIREN'S NEW YEAR





I'm a child of the hills, my people are dying

They said that the people from the hills are beautiful and were writing about us
Seconds before they turned our houses to ashes.
I wish my poems could sound happier everytime you see my name at the end of the lines
But i'm a child of the hills and my people are dying.
Their screams from the valley of death will live with me
And i must find ways to interpret them for the world to understand.
I'll have to tell them about "the burning ambulance". "the head on the fence", "the naked parade",
"Olivia and Florence", "158 deaths, 11 missing bodies" and more
I'm afraid i'm running out of words because no alphabets will ever feel the piercings and the
stitchings my people had to go through.
On sundays, when the road is clear and the sky gets a little sad,
We would pick flowers for a dead father, a dead mother, a dead daughter and a dead son.
I wish my friend would stop sending me Happy Birthday,
I know she meant well but i'm a child of the hills and my people are dying.
I cannot use a better metaphor for death than death
Because death makes no sound.
The poets across the ocean said that the moon was beautiful last night
But here, we can't see the moon from shut windows and gated compounds.
I want to be like those poets who care about the moon
But i'm a child of the hills and my people are dying.

- Jacquelyn Laltanpuii Suantak

Photo : Joe Haokip
Location : Saheibung Peak, Kanggui Dist.