

# Thingkho Le Malcha

A Daily Newsletter by KSO Media & Documentation Cell



## JNV RELIEF CENTRE

Tuinom, Lamka

Managed by  
Kuki Khanglai Lawmpi  
General Headquarters (KKL GHQ)

**Total Inmates Registered: 181\***

Male: 89

Female: 92

\*As on 21<sup>st</sup> 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.

# MANIPUR'S KANGPOKPI TOP TRIBAL BODIES OPPOSE THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO DEPLOY ADDITIONAL FORCES ALONG HIGHWAYS

The top tribal bodies of Kuki-Zo in Manipur have vehemently opposed the Manipur state Government's decision to deploy additional security forces for the convenience and security of the people using the highways.

On December 21, the Home Department of the Government of Manipur issued a public notice for the deployment of additional forces along the Imphal-Kangpokpi-Mao highway and Imphal-Bishnupur-Churachandpur highway for the convenience and security of the people.

The Government also appointed two senior police officers to monitor the two routes wherein the convoy (trucks/vehicles) will start moving from 9:00 am onwards.

Movement of the convoy (trucks/vehicles) with the deployment of additional forces under the command of the two appointed senior police officers will be effective from December 23.

Alleging the Government's decision as partisan and in favor of only one community, the Committee on Tribal Unity Sadar Hills condemned and opposed the move in the strongest terms.

The CoTU's Information Secretary, who also heads the Committee's Media Cell said that the top Kuki-Zo tribal body consider the Manipur Government's Home Department notice as to portray normalization in a violence-hit state so that the invidious affairs of the state is concealed.

He pointed out that it is a well-known fact that sporadic frisking to identify Kuki-Zo in the Imphal Valley continues unabated and even a fool would not make the mistake of traveling to the Imphal valley.

He also said that the Kuki-Zo populace is emotionally separated from the valley of death i.e. Imphal and we are pursuing our political separation from the state of Manipur.

"The intentional conjecture of the home department, which is headed by the Chief Minister instantly exposed its authoritarian disposition and partisan administration", he asserted.

The Kuki-Zo community does not accept any kind of tyrannical policies detrimental to our survival and well-being, he added.

While appealing to the state government to withdraw its order in toto, the Committee on Tribal Unity cautioned



that any untoward incidents arising out of it will be the sole responsibility of the concerned authorities.

Meanwhile, the Kuki Inpi Sadar Hills, or KISH also conveyed its vehement opposition to the Manipur Government's Home Department Public Notice.

Paojalal Hangshing, Assistant Secretary of KISH said that the Kuki Inpi Sadar Hills is appalled by the state government's Public Notice regarding opening the "never closed" Imphal-Kangpokpi-Mao highway for free passage of Meitei civilians while the movement of the Kuki-Zo community continued to be neglected even for the safe retrieval of their properties and for their safe passage to Imphal airport since the outbreak of the ethnic pogrom on May 3 by the Meiteis.

He said that the Manipur Government was not able to protect the Kuki-Zo communities while we were hunted and murdered in broad daylight in Imphal and they have not been able to ensure the safe passage of life saving medicines and essential commodities for the Kuki-Zo community yet they are trying to prioritize the needs of Meitei while neglecting the needs of Kuki-Zo community.

While strongly condemning the Manipur Government for their alleged discrimination against the Kuki-Zo community, the Kuki Inpi Sadar Hills clarified that any untoward incidences meted out to Meitei civilians in their movement along the highway will solely be the responsibility of the state government.

It also cautioned the Meitei civilians to tread with care when tensions are high and not to be misled by the sugar-coated policies of the Manipur state government.

# LAMKA – BISHNUPUR BORDER TO BE SEALED FROM DEC 23 TILL JAN 5

The Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum (ITLF) on Friday notified the general public that all the borders between Churachandpur district and Bishnupur district will be sealed for security reasons from December 23, 2023 to January 5, 2024

A public notice issued by the ITLF stated that they have received intelligence input about an imminent threat from the Meiteis to disrupt the Christmas season.

ITLF stated that all non-tribals within the district will not be allowed to move out of the district and those non-tribals from outside will not be permitted to move in to the district from December 23, 2023 till January 5, 2024.

Notably, on December 21, the Home Department of the government of Manipur had issued a public notice for the deployment of additional forces along Imphal-Kangpokpi-Mao highway and Imphal-Bishnupur-Churachandpur highway for the convenience and security of the people.

The government also appointed two senior police officers to monitor the two routes wherein the convoy (trucks/vehicles) will start moving from 9:00 am onwards.

Movement of the convoy (trucks/vehicles) with the deployment of additional forces under the command of the two appointed senior police officers will be effective from December 23.



Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF)  
Conglomerate of Recognised Tribes in Lamka, Outer Manipur

File No: ITLF-PN-202358

Friday, 22 December 2023

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) would like to inform the general public that all the borders within the Lamka district and Manipur (Bishenpur) will be sealed for security reasons. We have received intelligent input about an imminent threat by the Meitei to disrupt the Christmas season.

From the 23rd of December 2023 till the 5th of January 2024, all non-tribals within the district are not allowed to move out of the district and those non-tribal from outside are not permitted to move inside the district.

  
Ngulmang Haokip,  
Convenor,  
United Tribals Volunteers,  
Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF)  
Website: <https://www.itlfmediacell.com/>

## COPY TO:

1. The Chairman/Secretary, ITLF
2. ITLF Media Cell
3. All check posts in the border areas.



To authenticate ITLF's press releases, please refer to our website <https://itlfmediacell.com>



Where there is oppression, there will be resistance.

– Assata Shakur

# ETHICS COMMITTEE FAILS TO FIND 'UNETHICAL CONDUCT' OF 10 KUKI MLAS; LEGITIMACY OF SEPARATE ADMINISTRATION DEMAND VALIDATED



The Ethics Committee of Manipur Legislative Assembly seemed to have found no unethical conduct of the 10 Kuki MLAs who are demanding separate administration for the Kuki-Zo community in the wake of the ethnic cleansing pogrom perpetrated by the Meiteis in complicity with state machineries.

Except for Chairman Sapam Nishikant, MLA from Keishamthong A/C, all other Members of the Committee on Privileges and Ethics did not turn up at a meeting convened by the Committee on Wednesday to discuss a complaint filed by veteran politician Okram Joy against the 10 Kuki MLAs.

The MLAs/Members who did not turn up at the meeting scheduled at 11 am on Wednesday are: Rajkumar Imo Singh (Sagolband AC), Mohd Abdul Nasir (Lilong AC), Md Achab Uddin (Jiribam AC), Surjakumar Okram (Khangabok AC) LM Khaute (Churachandpur AC) and Sanasam Premchandra (Kumbi AC).

The 10 MLAs against whom O Joy lodged a complaint to the Manipur Legislative Assembly Speaker for unethical conduct are Haokholet Kipgen (Saitu AC), Ngursanglur Sanate (Tipaimukh AC), Kimneo Haokip Hangshing (Saikul AC), Letpao Haokip (Tengnoupal AC), LM Khaute (Churachandpur AC), Letzamang Haokip (Henglep AC), Chinlunthang (Singhat

AC), Paolienlal Haokip (Saikot AC), Nemcha Kipgen (Kangpokpi AC) and Vungzagin Valte (Thanlon AC).

Soon after the violent conflict erupted on May 3, 2023, 10 Kuki MLAs including two Ministers and BJP MLAs submitted a letter to Union Home Minister Amit Shah demanding a separate administration, thereby directly challenging the integrity of Manipur, Joy remarked.

Here, the veteran politician must know that the territorial integrity is not paramount but rather the integrity of India, which is the basic feature of Indian Constitution. Having sworn an oath to uphold and defend the integrity of India, there is nothing unethical on the part of the Kuki MLAs in demanding the disintegration of Manipur.

The veteran politician, however, clarified that he was not demanding disqualification of the 10 Kuki MLAs but he petitioned the Speaker to take up appropriate action against the 10 Kuki MLAs including two Ministers.

As the Committee failed to deliberate on the unethicality of the conduct of the 10 Kuki MLAs, the status quo remains and the legitimacy of separate administration demand has been validated.

# MANIPUR GOVERNOR, CM AND CS DISCUSS ABOUT RESTORATION OF PEACE AND NORMALCY, RESETTLEMENT OF DISPLACED PERSONS

Manipur Governor Anusuiya Uikey met Chief Minister N. Biren Singh and Chief Secretary Dr. Vineet Joshi at Raj Bhavan on Friday and discussed about restoration of peace and normalcy, re-settlement of displaced people to their own places and distribution of compensation to families who have lost their houses and properties etc.

As per reports, it is learnt that during the meeting, the Governor enquired about the progress of final assessment of the damages due to violence being conducted by the government so that the interim relief amount can be distributed immediately.

The trio discussed the request made by the Committee on Protection of Meitei Victim Moreh for giving immediate relief to those who have lost their houses, shops and properties and the Governor asked the Chief Minister to take up steps for extending relief to them, it added.

As per the report, demands made by the political parties of Manipur to meet the Prime Minister to solve the problems of the state, JD(U)'s demand for providing immediate relief to the artist community and labourers and subsidized air fare for people of Manipur were also discussed in the meeting.

Forum for Restoration of Peace's appeal to stop illegal extortion by armed organizations from vehicles, goods and shops was discussed stated the report.

It was also reported that recovery of weapons, sealing of Indo-Myanmar border, initiation of dialogue process, free movement on the national highways was also discussed in the meeting.

Further the meeting discussed the representation submitted by the Joint Administrative Council of State Government employees associations urging for timely disbursement of salaries and pensions.

Meckle Tea India Private Limited, Manipur's proposal for large scale tea plantation in the State as an alternative



*Pic: Manipur Governor Anusuiya Uikey*

to poppy plantation was discussed in the meeting stated the report.

The report added that Director General, Assam Rifles, Lt. General P. C. Nair's proposal for naming the Singhat-Behiang Road in the name of (Late) Col Viplav Tripathy, who was killed in an ambush by militants in 2021, exemption of income tax to those who want to donate to Governor's Relief Fund and awarding security personnel who have contributed distinguished service on War on Drugs, issues of Autonomous District Councils and the request made by All Manipur Working Journalists Union were also discussed in the meeting.

As stated in report, the Chief Minister assured the Governor that the Government will take up steps to the issues that were discussed and he directed the Chief Secretary to take up all necessary steps to implement the proposals made in the discussion.

The chief minister appreciated the Governor for her efforts and assured that the government will consider the proposal made by Meckle Tea India Private Limited, Manipur for large scale tea plantation as an alternative to poppy cultivation in the State, it stated.

# “WARM HEARTS” PROJECT TO PROVIDE WINTER CLOTHES TO DISPLACED PERSONS, FRONTLINE VOLUNTEERS BEGINS IN LAMKA



‘Warm Hearts’, an initiative of the Kuki Students’ Organisation, Lamka, to provide winter clothes to the displaced persons in relief centres in and around Lamka district and to the frontline volunteers began on Friday.

The KSO team along with its well wishers and volunteers transported the clothes in vehicles to the various relief centres and handed it over to the respective relief centres’ incharge.

Speaking to media persons at one of the relief centres, President of Kuki Students’ Organisation, Lamka Letminlen Haokip said the project called ‘Warm Hearts’, a charity drive for the displaced persons, had been initiated and run by the Organisation for the past one month and its basic aim is to help the displaced persons in relief centres and the village volunteers who are guarding the frontlines by providing them with warm clothes during this winter.

For the first day today, KSO and its supporters visited

around 116 relief centres in and around Lamka town wherein used clothes and even new ones were distributed to the relief centres, he said.

Letminlen also informed that the “Warm Hearts” team will be visiting the frontline volunteers on Saturday for distribution of donated relief materials.

The KSO president also extended his heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to all the people in Lamka and those from Aizawl and Meghalaya who have willingly donated blankets, new and used clothes for the relief centres and for the volunteers in the frontlines.

In the near future, he added, the Kuki Students’ Organisation would continue to take initiative in any manner deemed fit to help the relief centres and the frontline volunteers.

# HOW A MONTH-OLD CHILD DIED IN THE CROSSFIRE

A total of 87 people who died after violence broke out in Manipur in May were finally laid to rest during a mass burial ceremony on Wednesday in Churachandpur district amid tight security.

The youngest among those buried on December 20 was a month-old child named Issac who reportedly died on May 11. Issac was born on April 10 at Senvon village in Pherzawl district, near the border with Mizoram.

Since the child had difficulty in passing urine and stool, needing surgery, the child was referred to the RIMS hospital in Imphal. After a fresh round of investigation in Imphal, doctors had declared the need to perform surgery in May.

As violence engulfed Imphal, the chaos spread to the hospital and the child could not receive proper medical attention. On the evening of May 5, security personnel came to the hospital and informed patients and attendants that all the Kuki-Zomi tribals had to be evacuated to the 2nd Manipur Rifles Camp. As the baby's condition deteriorated, doctors in the camp suggested that the baby should be sent to a hospital. Security personnel then took the family to Mother Care Hospital on May 6, and returned to camp along with the parents, leaving the baby behind. This was the last time Issac's parents Ruolneithang and Remruotzo saw their son.

On May 11, the parents received a phone call from the hospital informing them that the baby had died.



Issac was among the 41 people whose bodies were flown in to Churachandpur on December 14 to have a decent and honourable burial.

Source: [East Mojo](#)



**Whoever refuses to remember the inhumanity is prone to new risks of infection.**

- Richard von Weizsaecker



# READING THE LINES BETWEEN CM BIREN'S FRESH APPEALS TO AVOID MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN COMMUNITIES

Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh today made a fresh appeal to the people to avoid any misunderstanding between communities. Singh said that peace is slowly being restored in the state and it was time to maintain patience.

“You are here and everybody has seen that peace is restoring slowly. In the meantime, I want to appeal to everyone not to create any misunderstanding between the communities. Everyone has to keep silence. We have to wait and watch what the government is doing because the need of the hour is peace,” said CM N. Biren Singh.

However, the ground situation here tells otherwise. Buffer Zones and Line of Control between the hills and valley is still enforced strictly which only manifests the absence of peace and normalcy in the state. The claim of CM N. Biren Singh that peace is being restored slowly in the state seems a mere illusion as no one from the Kuki areas can enter the valley district and vice-versa.

Peace in Manipur is still a distant dream as the valley itself is still devoid of normalcy. His private militia gangs are still running the show. Numerous cases of looting, abduction, kidnapping, torture and threats have been reported on a daily basis from the valley. The hills, too are always under constant threat from Meitei militant attacks. His definition of ‘peace’ is incomprehensible.

It is to be noted here that, whenever the chief minister makes an appeal publicly, attacks on Kukis follow the very next day. This pattern has been witnessed since the violence broke out in the state of Manipur on the 3rd of May. So, the chief minister’s public appeal could only mean to signify that an imminent attack against the Kukis is just round the corner.

Stating that the valley and the hill people are inseparable, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh also informed that the guest house for tribal chiefs from the hills is ready in Imphal. He said that that tribal chiefs from the hill district can now avail the facility in the state capital. This is being seen as a big confidence building measure amid the



unrest. However, the hill and the valley people have been already separated since the 3rd May and the separation was complete when the mortal remains of the Kukis who had been lying at morgues in Imphal were flown back to their respective district. The emotional and physical separation is complete and the only way for peace to return is to grant separate administration for the Kukis so that they can live peacefully with their neighbours Meiteis.

“When we formed government in the state in 2017, we decided to construct one guest house particularly for the hill chiefs. The people of Hill and Valley are inseparable. Politically and historically, we are all brothers and sisters. Whenever the people from the hill districts come to Imphal, they look for hotels or accommodations to stay. However, Imphal is a small area which does not have enough space or hotels. That is why we decided to construct one guest house, so that they do not have to keep looking for hotels and rooms and can stay directly in that guest house,” said the Chief Minister.

The chief minister is known to have bragged about his government’s activities which in reality does not bear fruit. Now, what’s the point

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in having guest house for hill chiefs when none of them can travel to Imphal anymore. Travelling to Imphal for the Kukis is now as good as death. The Meiteis too will not have the audacity to travel to the Kuki areas. Many Meitei CSOs and personalities have made a promise to visit Kuki dominated areas, but none have come so far. This highlights the deepening divide between the Kukis and Meiteis.

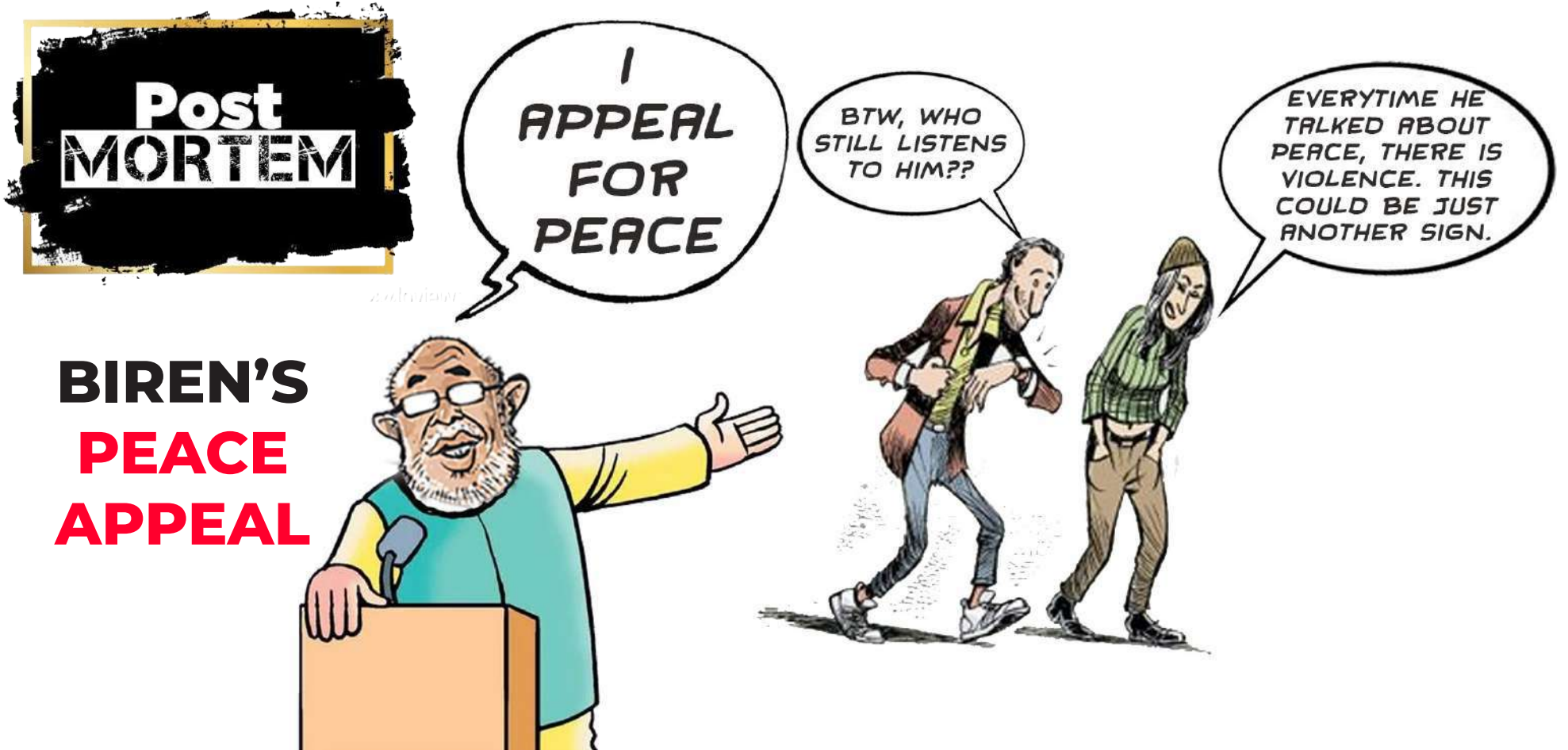
Interestingly, on December 21, the Home Department of the Government of Manipur issued a public notice for the deployment of additional forces along Imphal-Kangpokpi-Mao highway and Imphal-Bishnupur-Churachandpur highway for the convenience and security of the people.

The Government also appointed two senior police officers to monitor the two routes wherein the convoy (trucks/vehicles) will start moving from 9:00 am onwards.

Movement of the convoy (trucks/vehicles) with the deployment of additional forces under the command of the two appointed senior police officers will be effective from December 23.

However, a public notice issued by ITLF states that they have received intelligence inputs about an imminent threat from the Meitei to disrupt the Christmas season, thereby sealing the border from December 23 till 24 January, 2024. The home department's Public Notice has also been opposed by Kanggui based Committee on Tribal Unity (CoTU).

"It would be wise on the part of Meitei civilians to tread with care when tensions are high and not to be misled by the sugar-coated policies of the Manipur state government and Biren's insidious appeal," added the CoTU's statement.



The Kuki Students' Organisation, Kerala branch, on invitation from the organizers of Patabhedam Subalteran Festival 2023, set up "Kuki Cafe" stall wherein Kuki traditional foods are prepared, and traditional shawls, attires and clothings are displayed as a showcase for the cafe visitors.

The food consists of dishes like Kukis' Salad, Friendfritters, Changlhah (bread), Special Kuki-styled beef curry, Ahsa-mepoh (Chicken curry), Special tea, etc.

The students belonging to the Kuki community interacted with the cafe visitors besides familiarising them with the Kuki tradition by means of explanations and traditional food taste testing.

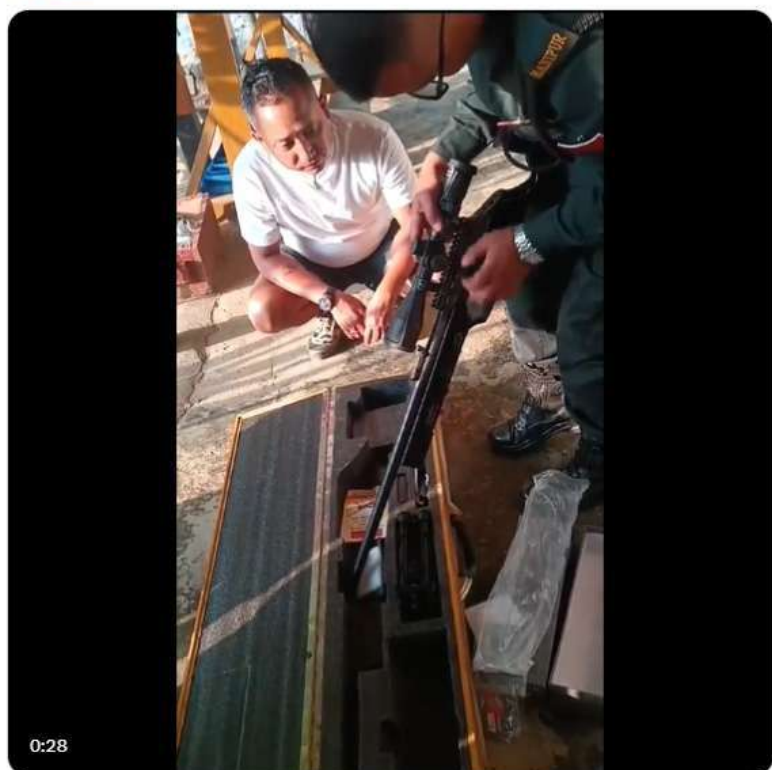
The objective of opening "Kuki Cafe" was met with good response from the visitors of the festival. It will last for three days wherein an interaction program on Manipur issue is planned for tomorrow. Kuki students from Manipur- Goulungmon Haokip, Kimshy and Gegen will address the matters on behalf of the KSO Kerala branch.

# NEWS IN PIC



H S Benjamin Mate  
@BenjaminMate1

How can @ministryofhome1 allow Manipur Police to procure this kind of military grade weapons that r not even issued to all @adgpi. Is this another sinister design to annihilate the entire Kuki-Zo population? @narendramodi @AmitShah @adgpi @official\_dgar @IndiaTodayNE @vijaita



11:54 PM · Dec 20, 2023 · 12.4K Views

## THE SOCIAL MEDIA BUZZ

Sagarika Ghose  
@sagarikaghose

Vunzjagin Valte, @BJP4India MLA from Manipur was savagely beaten almost to death by a mob in the heart of Imphal. Today, in a small Delhi apartment, his mind and body badly damaged, Valte sits alone with only his family for support. Not a single visit from Chief Minister @NBirenSingh or even @PMOIndia. Forget the politics, where is humanity?

11:01 AM · Dec 22, 2023 · 24.6K Views



**FEATURED ARTICLE**

**Negotiations, Selecting Burial Sites, Graves Dug by Hand: How 87 Kuki-Zo Bodies Finally Came Home**

**Shivnarayan Rajpurohit**

Before the 87 bodies of their loved ones were laid to rest in Churachandpur district in strife-torn Manipur on Wednesday, Kuki-Zo families in the hills had lost hope of ever recovering them. Most of the victims had been killed in the initial phase of ethnic violence in May.

What led to the recovery was talks between civil society organisations and the central government, and a Supreme Court order.

Officially, the violence claimed 175 lives – 98 Kuki-Zos and 67 Meiteis. Many Kuki-Zo bodies have been unclaimed in hospitals – predominantly the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences and Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences in Imphal – for the past seven months.

Hence, bringing the Kuki-Zo bodies back home from Imphal and other valley districts was a main demand from civil society groups in the hills during their prolonged negotiations with the union ministry of home affairs, according to Ginza Vualzong, spokesperson of the Indigenous Tribal Leaders’ Forum.

He credited the union home ministry, Mizoram government, and Joint Philanthropic Organisation for making sure it happened. The JPO, formed by the ITLF, was ultimately responsible for bringing the bodies back home.

Vualzong said the ITLF initially held several rounds

of talks with the home ministry on the issue. The Kuki-Zo community had in August zeroed in on a burial site in Torbung, on the border of Meitei-dominated Bishnupur district and Kuki-dominated Churachandpur district. Both communities lay claim to Torbung.

“After August 3, we met Amit Shah who asked us to change the burial site. When we returned, the task of negotiation with the MHA was handed over to JPO,” he said. The burial site was accordingly shifted to Sekhen village near Khuga Dam, about 15 km from Torbung.

The ITLF said a home ministry official had visited Churachandpur twice for the talks. In November, after the Supreme Court directed the state government to dispose of unclaimed bodies, the negotiations picked up pace.

“The MHA was under pressure too due to the Supreme Court order. The bodies were brought back before the SC order could be implemented,” Vualzong said, adding that they wanted the burial ceremony to take place before Christmas. “The sooner the burial, the quicker we will be able to cope with the loss.”

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So, according to Vualzong, on December 14, 60 bodies were flown from Imphal to Churachandpur. Nineteen were buried in Kangpokpi. The remaining 41, along with 46 bodies preserved in Churachandpur, were laid to rest on Wednesday. The burial was preceded by a traditional gun salute by volunteers.

### 'Had lost hope'

Among the burials yesterday, baby Isaac was the youngest victim. The one-month-old baby was caught in the crossfire in Imphal on May 11.

"It's a big relief for us. We had not expected that the bodies would come back. It was only because of the MHA we could perform the burial," L Puruolte, grandfather of the baby, told NewsLaundry.

Isaac's father was among the attendees at the burial. He lives in a remote village in Pherzawl district. "His mother could not come because of her health. It takes one day to reach Churachandpur from his village," said Puruolte.

He said all 87 graves were dug using hand tools rather than heavy machinery to show "love and respect" for the departed.

The oldest among the victims was 87-year-old Veinem Chongloi who was killed along with her two daughters, in their 50s, in Imphal on May 4. They had lived in Imphal for 30 years.

"We are at peace now. But the bodies were not preserved properly. They were treated like waste by the roadside," Chomgneo, granddaughter of Veinem, told NewsLaundry on the phone. The Chongloi family lives in a village in Kangpokpi district.

How media covered it

NewsLaundry looked at the coverage of the mass burial on mainstream news channels and five leading newspapers.



Only Hindustan Times carried a snippet of the report on its front page today in Delhi. A larger story on page 11 had a four-column photograph as well.

Otherwise, The Indian Express, The Hindu and The Times of India relegated the story to their inside pages in Delhi. So did The Telegraph in Kolkata, which carried the story on page 4. The front pages across papers were devoted to Modi's assurances to the US on the "plot" to kill Pannun, the crucial issue of Jagdeep Dhankhar being mimicked, and the passage of three criminal bills.

On news channels, primetime shows last night skipped the burials entirely. Debates on Aaj Tak, Times Now Navbharat and Network18 India instead focused on Dhankhar, alleged "rifts" in the INDIA alliance, the three criminal bills, and how a dadi was working out at the gym.

First Published by: [News Laundry](#)

**Research by Ishita Pradeep.**



# DECEMBER COMES

December comes,  
Everyone is preparing for Christmas,  
To celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ,  
Hoping to meet their loved ones and family  
But where will I go?

My heart fills with sorrow and tears,  
Oh where will I go? Where will I settle?  
Oh how painful and pitiable a nation we are?

Oh Lord, I miss the land and the villages  
you have given to my forefathers,  
Father that they have been settled  
and the place where they live.

Oh Lord I miss the days where I enjoyed and smiled with my family,  
I miss the days where we joined hands and worshipped you.  
Oh Lord reveal your strength and power  
as you have guided the people of Israel.  
Let the world know we have above all kings and power is with us.

- *Haotinmang Sitlhou*