

# Thingkho Le Malcha

A Daily Newsletter by KSO Media & Documentation Cell



## AWAITING JUSTICE



### JOSEPH HAOKIP (28 YEARS)

S/O M LUNKHOPAO HAOKIP

ADDRESS: MOTJANG, TENGNUPAL

DATE OF INCIDENT: 4<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2023

PLACE OF DEATH: UNKNOWN

CAUSE OF DEATH: MISSING SINCE 4<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2023 AROUND 8:30 AM



## KUKI VICTIMS' UPDATE

As on 11.09.2024



**199**  
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.

# CoTU CALLS FOR PROTECTION OF INTELLIGENCE INTEGRITY AS 2-DAY SHUTDOWN ENDS PEACEFULLY IN KANGPOKPI

The Committee on Tribal Unity (CoTU) has concluded its two-day total shutdown in the Sadar Hills Kangpokpi District, which began on September 27, amidst escalating tensions surrounding controversial intelligence reports. This shutdown coincided with a one-day shutdown by the Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM) that started at midnight the same day and is set to end at midnight tonight.

The shutdown was a direct response to unfounded claims alleging the influx of 900 Kuki militants from Myanmar into Manipur. These reports, initially disseminated by the Chief Minister's Office, were later retracted, as government officials clarified that there was no substantiation for the claims.

Throughout the shutdown, all business establishments, private institutions, and schools in the district were closed, with vehicular movement largely restricted, barring exempt vehicles. Kangpokpi police, alongside newly deployed Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel, monitored the situation along National Highway 2 to ensure public order.

The participation of Kuki-Zo women was notable, as they gathered at key locations like the Kangpokpi District Headquarters and Gamgiphai to express their solidarity with the shutdown efforts.



Ng. Lun Kipgen, a spokesperson for CoTU, expressed his gratitude to the Kuki-Zo community for their unwavering support. He criticized the politically charged nature of the intelligence reports, calling for urgent action from the central government to safeguard the integrity of the intelligence framework from political manipulation.

Kipgen said that the community is committed to their rights and constitutional norms, confidently anticipating the establishment of a separate administration in the future as they navigate these challenging times.

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## SHUTDOWN IN LAMKA TOWN HITS LIFE FOR SECOND DAY

Normal life in Lamka town remained disrupted for a second day on Saturday due to a shutdown called by various Kuki groups in anticipation of potential attacks on Kuki-Zo tribals.

Shops, markets, educational institutions, and other commercial establishments were closed, while vehicles—except those belonging to security forces and



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emergency services—stayed off the roads. Fortunately, no untoward incidents have been reported so far.

The shutdown in Lamka began yesterday, affecting educational institutions, and today saw a complete closure of schools, shops, markets, and businesses. The shutdown is expected to continue until Sunday.

The shutdown was called earlier this week by various organisations of Kuki-Zo communities, including the Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum (ITLF), Kuki Inpi Churachandpur, Zomi Council, Zomi Students' Federation and the Kuki Students Organisation (KSO) Churachandpur, in protest against the Manipur government's Security Advisor Kuldiep Singh's claim on September 20 that 900 Kuki militants after being infiltrated from Myanmar might carry out violence in peripheral villages of valley districts.

However, in a joint statement signed by Manipur's Director General of Police Rajiv Singh and Security Advisor Singh on Wednesday late night (September 25), the claim was retracted and they asserted that the likelihood of "any such misadventures by armed groups is minimal and unsubstantiated".

"The reports of infiltration of 900 trained Kuki militants from Myanmar to carry out attacks in Manipur in the

state on September 28, could not be substantiated on the ground," the joint statement had said.

Kuldiep Singh, a former Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), had told the media on September 20 that the security forces are treating this "alarming development with utmost seriousness, implementing necessary precautionary measures to counter potential threats". He had said that Assam Rifles and Central Armed Police Force, including the Border Security Force, have been placed on high alert in districts bordering Myanmar, such as Kamjong, Tengnoupal, Pherzawl, and Churachandpur.

On September 25, predicting attacks on Kuki-Zo tribals in Manipur, various tribal organisations, including ITLF, asked people not to travel outside Kuki-Zo-dominated areas between September 26 and 29. After an emergency meeting, the ITLF had announced the closure of borders (between the Kuki-Zo community and Meitei inhabited areas) from September 26 to 29, closure of schools, institutions and offices from September 27 to 29 in the areas inhabited by tribals belonging to Kuki-Zo community. The tribal organisations had also directed all village volunteers and citizens to be on high alert during these days.



**The first duty of a revolutionary is to be educated.**

*- Che Guevara*

# MAN THRASHED BY MEITEI LEEPUN FOR SHARING CLARIFICATION MESSAGE

A Meitei radical group – The Meitei Leepun, has thrashed a youth for sharing clarification message by Human Rights Activist Babloo Loitongbam. 12 Women’s organization condemns the act, calling it a ‘despicable act’ by some who want to subdue the truth in a society.

The incident has sparked outrage, with 12 prominent women’s organizations, including AMKIL, NUPI SAMASH, TAMMI CHINGMI, NIMPAL, NLANL, ANUL BISHNUPUR, THOUBAL IMA, and MACHA LEIMA, condemning the attack. These groups have called for justice and demanded an end to such violent actions, emphasizing the need for protecting freedom of expression in the state.

Notably, on September 22, 2024 at the Manipur Press Club, the Meitei Leepun (ML), a radical cultural organisation of the Meitei, has reportedly issued a stern warning to human rights defender Babloo Loitongbam, accusing him of collaborating with the Kuki community and acting against the interests of the Meitei people.

ML has particularly criticised Babloo’s stance on sheltering illegal immigrants, referencing a letter he had sent to a human rights organisation advocating for their protection. According to ML, this stance undermines the Meitei community’s interests. ML had previously directed Babloo to avoid public involvement or advocacy concerning the ongoing conflict in the state.

Accordingly, on the morning of September 23, a group of at least 50 individuals affiliated with ML visited Babloo’s residence and issued threats to his family. In an open display of impunity, they warned the family that if Babloo makes any further public statements, they would face serious consequences.



With over thirty years of experience in human rights advocacy, Loitongbam, in his clarification statement issued against the accusations, emphasized his commitment to peaceful coexistence among all communities in Manipur. He categorically denied allegations of financial ties with any Kuki militant groups, calling them completely unfounded.

He reaffirmed his support for the right of individuals facing persecution to seek asylum, including those from Myanmar. He advocated for a clear refugee policy in India that protects the rights of all, including the right to return home when conditions permit.

## MEITEI CONTINUES ATTACK ON KUKI-ZO VILLAGES OF JIRIBAM AREA

The Indigenous Tribes Advocacy Committee (ITAC) has expressed deep concern over the ongoing attacks on the Kuki-Zo villages of Mongbung and Sejang. Early this morning, these communities were targeted by armed groups, including Arambai Tenggol, UNLF, and the outlawed Meitei terrorist faction known as G5. The latest assault on the Kuki-Zo tribals occurred around 10 AM of this morning, employing sophisticated weaponry, following threats from Meitei groups to launch a significant offensive.

In their statement, Kuki-Zo leaders emphasized that the Kuki-Zo community is left with no option but to defend themselves against this coordinated campaign of terror. "We must fight back at all costs," they declared, condemning the hypocrisy of those who preach peace while planning destruction.

The Kuki-Zo people remain steadfast in their resolve, asserting that they will not be intimidated or forced



from their ancestral lands. The ITAC has urgently called on central government forces to enhance protective measures for the tribal population, stressing the need for immediate intervention to prevent further violence and safeguard their communities.

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## DG BSF REVIEWS OPERATIONAL PREPAREDNESS IN MANIPUR AMID RISING TENSIONS

The Director General of the Border Security Force (BSF), Daljit Singh Chawdhary arrived in Manipur on September 28 to review operational readiness amid recent escalations of violence in the region.

Welcomed at Imphal Airport by Ravi Gandhi, ADG BSF (Eastern Command), and Shri Sanjay Kumar Misra, IG M&C Frontier, DG Chawdhary proceeded to Moreh, where he evaluated the preparedness of the Force and engaged directly with commanders and troops stationed there. He praised the relentless dedication of BSF personnel and emphasized the critical role they play in maintaining security in the state.

During his visit to the Sub-Headquarters BSF CI (Ops) in Manipur, DG Chawdhary conducted a Sainik Sammelan, addressing the officers and troops. He expressed gratitude for their ongoing efforts in bolstering the security framework in Manipur and encouraged



them to continue performing their duties with professionalism and commitment.

The DG also held discussions with the Director General of Police and the Chief Secretary of Manipur, along with senior officials from allied agencies, to address the current security situation comprehensively.

**FEATURED ARTICLE****Why Manipur CM's Office Warned of Kuki Militant Attack – and Then Retracted the Claim****Rokibuz Zaman**

On September 17, a letter to Manipur's security advisor leaked on social media. The message, sent from the chief minister's office, was alarming.

It warned that "900 Kuki militants" had entered the state from Myanmar and were planning to "launch multiple coordinated attacks on Meitei villages around September 28".

The militants, said the note signed by N Geoffrey, secretary to Chief Minister N Biren Singh, were "newly trained in [the] use of drone-based bombs, projectiles, missiles and jungle warfare".

It was not clear what the source of Geoffrey's information was.

Since May last year, Manipur has been in the grip of an ethnic conflict between the majority Meiteis, who live in the Imphal valley, and the Kuki-Zo tribes, who live in the hills. The violence has led to an unofficial partition of the state on ethnic lines, with no Meiteis in Kuki-Zo areas and vice versa.

Three days after Geoffrey's note went viral, security advisor Kuldiep Singh in a press conference said that the state had been placed on "high alert" on the basis

of the intelligence input. He said the information about possible attacks on Meiteis is "100% correct unless and until it is proven wrong".

Remarkably, just days later, the state security establishment retracted all such claims of an imminent Kuki militant attack. On September 25, Singh and the director general of police, Rajiv Singh, said in a joint statement that the recent "intelligence" input issued by the chief minister's office "could not be substantiated on [the] ground" and "there is no basis currently to believe in any such input".

The chief minister's office too backtracked. In a statement that used a far more temperate language than its first alert, it said the "possibility of any such misadventure by armed groups is remote". "The public need not worry further in this regard," it said.

This is the second instance in less than a month that claims about armed Kuki-Zo militants have spread panic in the state's Meitei areas – only to be either rebutted or withdrawn.

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On September 1, the Manipur police alleged that Kuki militants had used sophisticated drones to drop bombs and used rocket launchers in an attack on Koutruk, in the Imphal West district. This claim was contested by the Assam Rifles and Army officials.

Not only do both instances underline the rift between the state police and the paramilitary force, observers also flagged them as attempts by those in authority to spread false narratives and fuel more enmity between the communities. “All these false rumours come from the top of the state establishment,” a senior Assam Rifles official posted in Imphal, who declined to be identified, told Scroll.

The Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum or ITLF, which claims to represent the Kuki-Zo people, alleged that the episode was a “dangerous disinformation campaign” orchestrated by Chief Minister N Biren Singh. The forum was also critical of security advisor Singh for giving “legitimacy to the chief minister office’s report by parroting the claims”.

“This [led to] fears among both the Meitei and the Kuki-Zo communities,” the statement added. “The damage has been done, as tensions have spiked on both sides of the buffer zones.

**The ‘drone bombings’**

After a brief lull of a few months, violence returned dramatically to Manipur in September.

Two people were killed and 10 injured in an attack on Imphal West’s Koutruk area on September 1 – a buffer zone demarcating Meitei areas from the Kuki-dominated Kangpokpi district.

The Manipur police alleged that “high-tech” drones had been used to drop bombs by alleged Kuki militants. In a statement, it said, “While drone bombs have commonly been used in general warfare, this recent deployment of

drones to deploy explosives against security forces and the civilians marks a significant escalation.”

The next day, too, the police said a similar “bomb attack using drones” in Imphal West had injured three civilians.

The allegation was denied by Kuki groups, who said they use drones only for surveillance in the buffer zones. They admitted to the use of traditional cannons called “pumpis”, which are crude rockets made by stuffing pipes with explosive material.

A senior Churachandpur-based Kuki leader told Scroll that they launched an attack in response to an incursion by Meiteis into Kuki territory. “We used traditional cannons called pumpis, which have a range of 4-5 km, to drop bombs,” he said. “These are not guided rockets. We can only fire them, we don’t know where they will hit. We use drones only for surveillance,” he explained.

The first public statement refuting the police claims came from PC Nair, the former director general of Assam Rifles, who denied that bombs or ammunition were dropped from the drones. Nair was at the helm of the decision-making process related to Manipur security till July 31, when he retired.

“I have checked with military sources on the ground, the Assam Rifles, and even confirmed it with the army chief,” Nair said. “Drones are indeed being used, but not to drop ammunition.”

His comments were sharply criticised by Meitei civil society organisations and the Manipur police. A senior police official called Nair’s claims “myopic” and “immature”. “We strongly dismiss it. There is evidence of drone and hi-tech missile attacks,” said

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inspector-general of police K Jayanta Singh.

The Imphal-based Assam Rifles official, however, told Scroll that there has been no confirmation that drones have been used to drop bombs. “Where is the proof? Have they done a forensic test?”

He pointed that one of the two casualties on September 1 – a 32-year-old Meitei woman – succumbed to bullet injuries sustained in the attack, while her 8-year-old daughter was injured in her arm, according to a statement from the Manipur Police. “The medical report said she died because of gunshot wounds, not from drones or a rocket attack,” the official said.

Another senior Manipur police official told Scroll that “not all bombs were dropped by drones”. “According to the officials of the Lamsang police station in Imphal West, about 50 to 60 bombs were dropped in the Koutruk area on September 1,” he pointed out. “If only drones were used, there should be at least 10 drones doing five roundabouts. But that did not happen. Instead, long-range pumpis or crude rockets were used.”

Days later, the chief minister’s office’s claim of an incursion by 900 Kuki militants was again countered by the Army.

In a post on Twitter/X, the Army sought details from security advisor Kuldiep Singh on the input of “900 Kuki militants from Myanmar”. “These inputs have very serious security implications and the office of security advisor has been requested to share the details so that appropriate necessary action can be taken at the earliest,” Spear Corps of Indian Army tweeted. The post was later deleted.

“They [the chief minister’s office and the security advisor] really went overboard,” the senior Assam rifles official posted in Imphal told Scroll.

“There are several central intelligence agencies along

the Indo-Myanmar border and none of them knew about this alleged infiltration.”

**Who gains from the panic?**

Observers from the state said the alarm over a militant attack was an attempt by Chief Minister N Biren Singh to shift the blame on to the Assam Rifles.

In the past, too, the Manipur police, which draws most of its constabulary from the Meitei community and is under the command of Biren Singh, has accused the Assam Rifles of siding with Kuki-Zos in this ethnic conflict. Similarly, the commandos of the Manipur police have been accused of abetting and even taking part in the violence against Kuki-Zos.

Several Meitei legislators and groups have accused Assam Rifles of bias towards Kukis and demanded the force’s removal from the state.

“By alleging that 900 Kuki militants have infiltrated the state, he [Biren] is directly blaming the Assam Rifles for not doing their job and maligning them,” said an activist from Zomi community.

The purported use of drones and mortars led to panic in Imphal valley, leading a section of students to hit the streets seeking the removal of the director-general of police and Singh. They also demanded that the unified command, which takes all security-related decisions and is headed by Kuldiep Singh, should be handed over to Biren Singh.

The chief minister’s critics within the Meitei community also pointed out that the effort to create more panic about Myanmar-linked Kuki militants – who Biren Singh has blamed for the

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conflict – was part of a design to provoke.

“Even if there were such intelligence inputs, what was the purpose of making it public?” asked a Meitei political observer, who requested not to be identified. “It was just meant to create chaos among the people.”

The senior Imphal-based Assam Rifles official agreed: “The alleged intelligence input was just meant to sensationalise, to scare people, and cast Kuki-Zos as terrorists and militants.”

A Meitei rights activist alleged that security advisor had endorsed the claim of a possible Kuki militant attack under pressure from the chief minister and in order to “create fear amongst the Meitei population”. “He had to backtrack and dispel that fear [on instructions from the Centre] as it will have serious international implications if reported outside the country,” the activist said.

The Meitei political observer said that greater insecurity among the Meiteis works to Biren Singh’s advantage. “The chief minister just wants to prove that he is the saviour of Meiteis. He wants to show that he and his people [referring to the radical Meitei group Arambai Tenggol] are fighting for the Meiteis.”

He described the fear-mongering about militant attacks as a “political gimmick for the benefit of those sections of people who are benefiting from the continuous violence”. A similar tactic was being deployed by Kuki-Zo leaders, he alleged. “Even some people on the Kuki side want to keep the pot boiling.”

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Paoliental Haokip @paoliental



Ghar ki baat ghar pe hi hona chahiye: possible when baap of the ghar ignores bogeys like narco terrorism and illegal influx and engage political leadership of both sides of the divide. @NewsX @PMOIndia

youtube.com/live/TReKiRCI5... via @YouTube

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IPSA highlights Manipur crisis at UNHRC meeting in Geneva

Meitei CSO's highlighted the ongoing crisis in Manipur at a UNHRC meeting session in Geneva. International Peace and Social Advancement's Working President ...

11:27 · 28 Sept 24 · 3,098 Views



Dr. Laminthang Haokip @DrLaminthangHk

What exactly is Mr. @kartikeya\_1975 trying to convey to the citizens of India? His hate campaign, demonise and attempt of false narrative against the tribal Kukis failed with Ex-DG Assam Rifles. He tried the same campaign with a humble Prof. and yet failed again. What next?

Who's human rights is Mr. Athouba, COCOMI spokesperson who declared war against the tribal Kukis in Manipur, India, masked as IPSA, trying to defend at the @UN\_HRC? Shame..!

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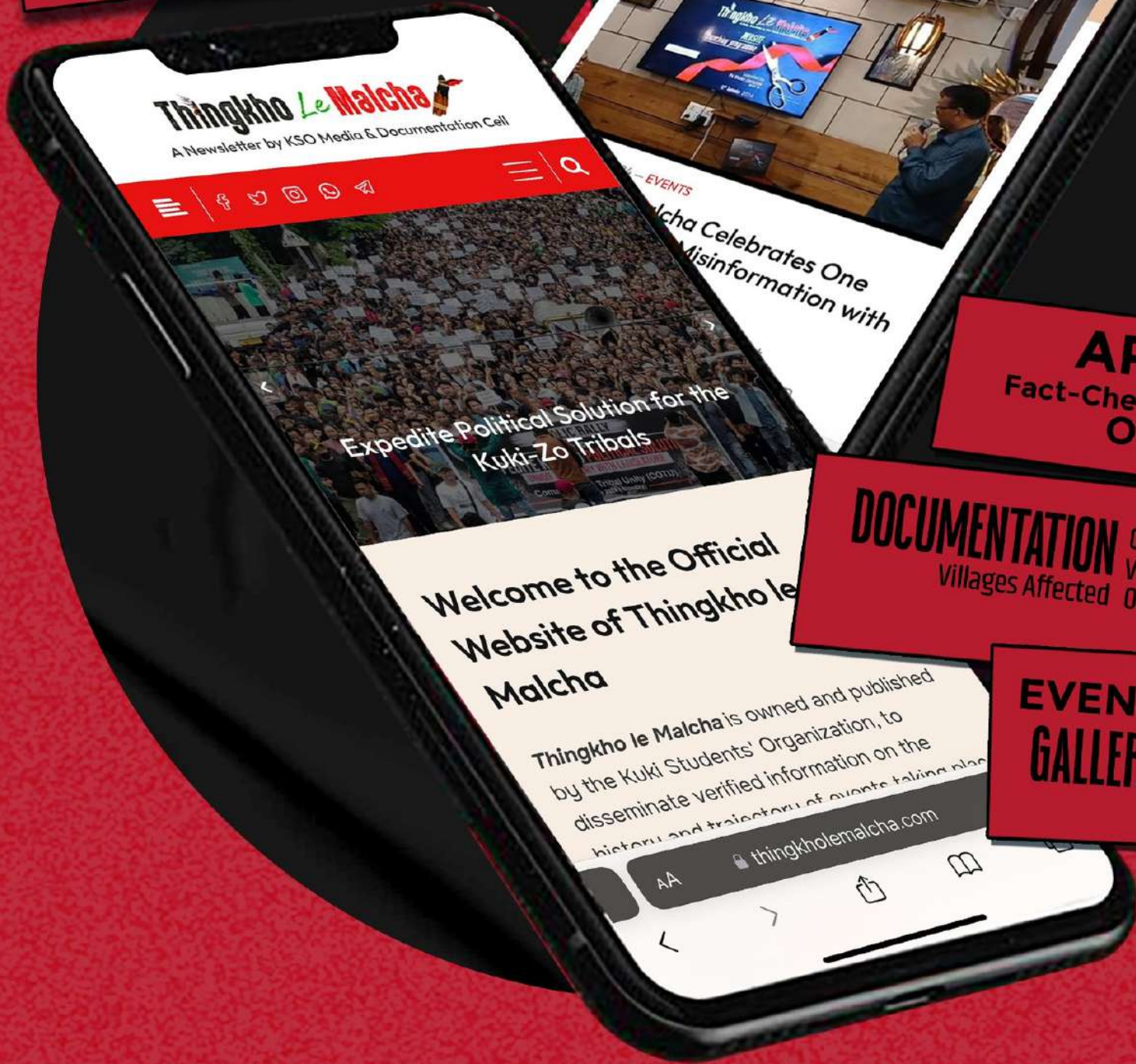


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# EMBERS OF LOSS FLAMES OF RESILIENCE

That particular day is etched in my mind,  
The day my home was burned to the ground.  
From afar, I watched it turn to ashes,  
The land we owned were now a distant dream,  
beyond our reach.

They don't just burn a house;  
They incinerate millions of cherished memories.  
They don't merely scorch paper;  
They destroy the futures of countless students.  
They don't just raze a village;  
They sever the lifeline of entire families.

Their cruelty took my fathers away,  
Their greed stripped me of my home.  
Their twisted culture allowed them  
To kill and to violate.

Oh, Kangleicha, morality left you long ago.  
Your loyalty to the land has turned Manipur into Anipur.  
Your forefathers sacrificed their lives for this soil,  
And now you shed blood to barter your land

In the ashes of loss, i still hold on,  
Dreaming of a future where hope is reborn.  
For the spirits of the fallen still guide our way,  
As we strive for justice, come what may

~ Thanglianmung Mate