

# Thingkho *Le* Malcha

A Daily Newsletter by KSO Media & Documentation Cell



## AWAITING JUSTICE



### JANGKHOMANG HAOKIP (40 YEARS)

S/O MANGJALET HAOKIP

ADDRESS: G. MONGJANG, LAMKA

DATE OF INCIDENT: 5<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2023

PLACE OF DEATH: PHOLJANG, LAMKA

CAUSE OF DEATH: KILLED BY MEITEI MILITANTS



## 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.

# THE WIRE RELEASES NEW TAPES IMPLICATING MANIPUR CHIEF MINISTER N. BIREN SINGH IN VIOLENCE

In a startling development, The Wire has released the fourth and fifth installments of its investigative series on the Manipur violence, further implicating Chief Minister N. Biren Singh in the ongoing ethnic conflict. These new tapes allegedly reveal Singh's collusion with valley-based insurgent groups in orchestrating attacks against the Kuki community.

The recordings reportedly feature a voice, purportedly Singh's, discussing coordination with banned Meitei outfits, including the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK). In these tapes, the speaker claims to have united state security forces with these insurgent groups during the ethnic unrest that has resulted in over 200 deaths and displaced at least 60,000 individuals.

According to The Wire, the recordings indicate that Singh intervened to obstruct a National Investigation Agency (NIA) operation in Imphal, which was attempting to arrest key suspects linked to the violence. The voice in the recording boasts about successfully preventing



the arrest of five individuals despite instructions from Union Home Minister Amit Shah to facilitate the NIA's work.

Shah is quoted in the tapes as urging Singh to respect the NIA's presence and to allow them access to all five suspects. Ultimately, the NIA was only able to detain two of the five individuals they were pursuing. The Wire's exposé has sparked renewed calls for accountability and transparency in Manipur's political landscape.

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## INDIAN ARMY CHIEF DISMISSES REPORTS OF DRONE BOMBINGS, INFILTRATION OF 900 MILITANTS FROM MYANMAR

Indian Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi has dismissed reports about drone bombings and infiltration of 900 Kuki militants into Manipur from Myanmar.

In an exclusive interview with Firstpost Managing Editor Palki Sharma at the Chanakya Defence Dialogue in New Delhi, Indian Army chief General Upendra Dwivedi said the volatile situation in Manipur has become a battle of narratives. The situation may be stable today, but it is tense, he added.



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Indian Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi has stated that India will continue to provide shelter to displaced people who have fled Myanmar due to the ongoing conflict there. He also cautioned against the spread of false narratives surrounding the ongoing crisis in Manipur, particularly regarding its origins and the current situation on the ground.

The Army Chief revealed that while the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) initially surged to 60,000, it has since decreased to below 40,000. He expressed concerns about the weaponization of society, including the looting of arms and the emergence of underground organizations and women's groups formed for defensive purposes. "Battle lines have hardened," Gen. Dwivedi stated, adding that the Army has recovered large number of the stolen weapons, which amounts to around 25 percent. He also revealed that he has held discussions with ex-servicemen to address the escalating situation as they are last bastion of national integration.

Regarding foreign intervention, Gen. Dwivedi emphasized the need for a national effort to resolve the complex issues in Manipur, acknowledging the historical challenges and the involvement of valley-based insurgent groups supported by elements across the border. He noted that similar allegations have been made against other groups.

Addressing concerns about misinformation, Gen. Dwivedi urged against allowing misinformation to shape public perception, dismissing claims of drone bombings and the infiltration of 900 militants into the state as false.

On the issue of illegal migration, Gen. Dwivedi highlighted the conflict in neighboring Myanmar, which has displaced many people seeking refuge in India. He noted that Manipur and Mizoram have become safe havens for these displaced individuals and assured that India will continue to provide food and shelter to those in need for as long as necessary.

Notably, the Manipur Police in the past has reported that Kuki militants have resorted to using drone bombings. The Chief Minister's Office has also informed the DGP Manipur about the infiltration of 900 militants from Myanmar into Manipur. All these hoax or false narratives have created a sense of insecurity among the people. Chief Minister N. Biren has misused his power and position to spread terror in the minds of the people with false news feed. All these have been debunked by concerned authorities one after another, exposing Chief Minister N. Biren's mischievous policies to malign the Kukis with wrong narratives.



**You cannot buy the revolution. You cannot make the revolution. You can only be the revolution. It is in your spirit, or it is nowhere.**

— Ursula Le Guin

# AFSPA EXTENSION IN MANIPUR: A DISCRIMINATORY MOVE BY GOI TO ANNIHILATE THE KUKIS AND PROTECT THE MEITEIS, SAYS KOHUR

The Kuki Organization for Human Rights Trust (KOHUR) has raised alarm over the Government of India's recent decision to extend the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) selectively in Manipur, sparking concerns of ethnic discrimination and increased violence against the Kuki community.

In a statement released today, KOHUR criticized the government's move to enforce AFSPA exclusively in the hill districts, while excluding the valley areas predominantly inhabited by the Meitei community. The organization argues that this decision exacerbates existing ethnic tensions and legitimizes state-sponsored violence against the Kuki and other hill communities.

"By placating the majority Meitei community and marginalizing the Kukis, the government undermines its own credibility regarding law and order," KOHUR stated. The organization highlighted that many violent incidents, including abductions and extortion, have been reported in the Meitei-dominated valley, raising questions about the rationale behind the selective application of AFSPA.

"It is also essential to question why AFSPA is not being enforced in the Valley (Meitei areas), where incidents of violence, abduction and extortions are prevalent. The fact that the thousands of armed Meitei extremists, including hundreds of banned VBIGs (banned Meitei terrorists groups, armed and trained by the Chinese) who infiltrated from Myanmar with the help of state armed forces, radical militia groups like Arambai Tengol and Meitei Leepun, who were handed over by the state government thousands of automatic rifles and ammunitions from the state armouries could freely roam in the valley with such deadly weapons only to annihilate the hapless Kuki-Zo civilians, was enabled by the withdrawal of AFSPA. It is self-evident that the state government was preparing the ground for the Meitei extremist militants and radical militias for the impending war it had designed against the Kukis. It is pertinent to mention that on the 24th January 2024, incident involving the infamous Kangla oath



administered by the Arambai Tengols which saw legislatures from valley being coerced into accepting terms dictated by them."

Similarly, on the 24 June, 2023, cadres of the Kanglei Yaol Kanba Lup (KYKL), a proscribed valley-based Meitei outfit who were the "mastermind" of a 2015 ambush on a convoy of 6 Dogra Regiment in which 18 soldiers had been killed, and are actively involved in attacking Kuki villages were rescued by Meitei mobs during attempts by central forces to apprehend them. These incidents starkly illustrates the complete collapse of law and order and a troubling trend where terror groups feel increasingly empowered in the valley. By withdrawing AFSPA from the Valley, the government is not only abandoning its responsibility to ensure justice and security for all citizens but is also sending a clear message of favouritism that undermines the rights and dignity of the Kuki people. This decision paints a chilling picture of a state that is prepared to sacrifice a particular ethnic minorities at the altar of majoritarian politics, a broader strategy of ethnic cleansing that we cannot and will not accept.

Reports from the ground also indicate alarming levels of brutality, including arbitrary arrests, unwarranted violence, and intimidation tactics employed against Kuki civilians. The use of excessive force by security personnel has resulted in numerous casualties and injuries among innocent

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people who are merely trying to defend their homes and communities. In Moreh, incidents of targeted attacks have been documented, where armed forces have engaged in violent confrontations with Kuki residents, resulting in the destruction of property and a deep sense of fear within the community. On May 3, 2023, the tragic killing of two young men in Moreh by Manipur Police commandos marked a grim turning point. This act of violence was further compounded by the horrifying events of May 6, 2023, when mobs from the Meitei community, having looted state armouries, escalated their aggression by attacking the families of the deceased, resulting in further loss of life and safety for Kuki families. The situation continued to deteriorate on July 28, 2023, when educational institutions, namely Bethsaida Academy and Mt. Moreh High School were torched down, and over 20 houses were destroyed, reflecting a blatant disregard for the future of Kuki youth and the right to education and shelter. Most alarmingly, on January 17, 2024, reports emerged of women from Govajang village, near Moreh being assaulted, and state forces even opened fire on these women, an act of violence that is both reprehensible and unacceptable.

To date, over 45 FIRs have been registered, detailing the atrocities committed by state forces against the

Kukis civilians. In Churachandpur, a shocking incident involved Ms. Nianghoihchinh Simte, a dedicated nurse, who was shot at by Manipur Police commandos. The current situation is dire. Families live in fear, and the sanctity of life is being systematically undermined continuously. These incidents expose the insidious consequences of the government's selective application of AFSPA, which effectively shields perpetrators of violence while targeting marginalized communities. The disregard for basic human rights, coupled with the impunity granted to state forces, has led to a humanitarian crisis that demands immediate attention.

The Kuki Human Rights Organization is calling for a reconsideration of the government's approach, urging civil society and political leaders to oppose what they deem a discriminatory policy. They stress that the selective enforcement of AFSPA undermines the fundamental principles of justice and human rights in India. The KOHUR urges the Government of India to take immediate action to protect the rights of all communities and restore

THE SOCIAL MEDIA BUZZ



Ambalica Singh @Iam\_amby

#ManipurTapes | 'Amit Shah Called Me, He Wanted NIA to Arrest 5 Persons, I Didn't Reply at First, They Finally Got Only Two'

[thewire.in/government/man...](https://thewire.in/government/man...)

Recording placed before commission of inquiry raises questions about CM's degree of cooperation with the NIA. | @sangbarooahpish



7:29 PM · Oct 1, 2024 · 1,747 Views



Ravinder Kapur @RavinderKapur2

Meitei lies debunked !

" Ek ke Saath Ek Free , Manipur ke.saath Myanmar free " Manipur was a problem now we have Myanmar on our hands .

General Upendra Dwivedi

Indian Army Chief General Dwivedi referenced the challenges in Manipur and Myanmar .He said that the narrative claiming infiltration of 900 anti-national elements was false.

"We checked, there is nothing like that." He forgot to mention the ' Drone Bombings '



4:54 PM · Oct 1, 2024 · 4,274 Views

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**THE MANIPUR TAPES  
PART-4**

**FEATURED ARTICLE**

**Manipur Tapes: Did Biren Singh Get Banned Militant Groups to 'Join Together' With the Police?**

**Sangeeta Barooah Pisharoty**

Among several incendiary statements heard on an audio recording submitted to the Commission of Inquiry on the violence in Manipur is one so explosive that if eventually authenticated and confirmed it could lead to the owner of the voice being accused of expressing support for banned terror outfits and thus falling foul of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, or UAPA – India’s anti-terrorism law.

The voice is heard in the recording clearly referring to at least two Meitei outfits banned under the UAPA — the PLA (People’s Liberation Army of Manipur), and PREPAK (People’s Revolutionary Party of Kangelipak) — and claiming credit for having “made all of them join together... with the commandos”.

In other words, the man in the recording says he “made” the state security forces come together with at least two groups – considered terrorist by the Government of India – during the ethnic conflict that has so far claimed over 200 lives, and displaced at least 60,000 people belonging to both the Meitei and Kuki communities.

The maker/s of the recording have said in a sworn affidavit to the commission that the voice belongs to Manipur chief minister N. Biren Singh. The state government denies this and The Wire cannot independently authenticate the voice on the recording.

If the Justice Ajai Lamba commission, now in possession of the full recording, is able to establish its veracity, the BJP’s Biren Singh would be in the invidious position of being perhaps the first sitting chief minister in the sensitive, insurgency-prone north-eastern region to be liable for investigation for not just violating the sacred oath he took to uphold the sovereignty and integrity of the country but also for support to ‘unlawful or/and ‘terrorist’ organisations as listed in the UAPA.

**What does the audio clip say**

Since this particular segment of the audio recording is in Meiteilon, The Wire took help from a native speaker of the language to translate it into English. The voice is heard saying the following:

**“Commandos...those underground people at frontline...made all of them join together. I am telling you...revealing the truth, the PLA, U this ... that, Pambei’s people, PREPAK and every other... with commandos, I let them all join together.**

**“People scolded me from Bazar (women’s market Ema Keithal in Imphal, which was at the forefront of the ethnic conflict) not knowing**

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**I have done so much. So let us form a team...since you people can work from outside...for Manipur. Those who would not join politics ...lets first save our land...politics we can do later...Lets save our 'Jati' first..."**

As stated in the first part of the Manipur Tapes, The Wire is unable to independently establish that the person heard speaking on the recording about the violence in Manipur is indeed Biren Singh, but we have confirmed the date, subject and contents of this meeting with some of the participants, none of whom was willing to be identified because of fears for their safety. Some persons claiming to have been participants at the meeting held at the chief minister's official residence sometime last year, assert that the voice is indeed that of Biren Singh and that he did say all the things in the recording in their presence.

In the controversial audio clip, all Meitei armed groups mentioned purportedly by the voice of Singh except the Pambei faction of the UNLF (United National Liberation Front), belong to the banned list of the central government under UAPA. Unlike most Kuki insurgent groups – which are under Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreements with the Union government – none of these proscribed groups from Manipur have so far formally agreed to enter into any peace talks with New Delhi till their demand for sovereignty of Manipur is put on the discussion table. In other words, these groups can be termed secessionist under Indian law. Unlike members of the SoO Kuki groups, those from these outfits, typically, therefore, can't move around freely overground.

### **Centre's curious peace agreement with UNLF (P)**

In the recording, made last year, the voice also mentions — “U this...that, Pambei people” — which is likely a reference to the UNLF (United National Liberation Front), the oldest Meitei insurgent group which over the decades has seen multiple splits. The Pambei faction of the UNLF is one among several armed groups that have been involved in insurgent activities in the state.

Although the Pambei faction is not a banned outfit unlike PLA and Prepak, many violent acts are attributed to it and its leader is believed to be incarcerated in Myanmar.

In an unusual turn of events, the Pambei faction entered into a peace agreement with the Union ministry of home affairs (MHA) in November 2023, during the thick of the ethnic conflict in the state. Taking to X on November 29, Union home minister Amit Shah declared:

“A historic milestone achieved!! Modi govt's relentless efforts to establish permanent peace in the Northeast have added a new chapter of fulfilment as the United Liberation Front (UNLF) signed a peace agreement, today in New Delhi.

“UNLF, the oldest valley-based armed group of Manipur, has agreed to renounce violence and join the mainstream. I welcome them to the democratic processes and wish them all the best in their journey on the path of peace and progress.”

Shah glossed over the fact that the Pambei faction is just one among several factions of the UNLF. It is, however, the first Meitei armed group to enter into a ceasefire with the government.

On X, Shah shared photos of some of the arms and ammunition and of cadres belonging to the faction, to confirm the development. Curiously, the faction's chief, Khundongbam Pambei, was missing from the 'historic' moment.

According to reliable sources in the Manipur police, “Pambei is currently incarcerated in a Myanmar jail.” The Wire is not able to confirm this claim. Most militant outfits from Manipur – including those from the Meitei community – are said to have camps in Myanmar. The area of interest of these Meitei groups is typically the valley districts of Manipur.



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What made the peace agreement more significant was the apparent short-life of that “historic milestone” as announced by Shah. Barely three months after his announcement on X, the National Investigating Agency (NIA) – which reports to Shah’s ministry – arrested three top leaders of the Pambei faction on March 13, 2024. “According to reliable sources, a joint operation involving the Assam Rifles, Manipur Police commando, including NIA personnel, conducted the operation in the early hours of the morning in the Kwakeithel area under Singjamei police station. The detained individuals were subsequently transported by a special flight to New Delhi in the afternoon,” reported the Ukhrul Times.

As per the chief minister’s recent statement in the state assembly, the NIA is handling 13 cases related to the ethnic conflict in the state. Were the March 2024 arrests made because of their participation in the ethnic conflict against the Kukis?

Significantly, this April, a PTI report had said that security officials had “expressed concern” about “violence perpetrated by” the Pambei faction of UNLF even though it had signed a ceasefire agreement with the central government. The report had said, “Officials said that the group has failed to disclose the number of its cadres who were supposed to be kept in a secure area and they have not surrendered their weapons either.”

**Modi govt lifted AFSPA from valley areas**

What makes these statements extremely significant is also because it suggests the PLA and Prepak – banned groups under the UAPA – can now function freely in the valley areas of Manipur.

On April 1, 2022, the Modi government, citing the improved security situation, had lifted the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act — (AFSPA) — from 15 police stations located in the Meitei-dominated valley districts of Manipur. That decision was made for some districts of Assam and Nagaland too, also citing improved security situation.

Announcing the decision on X then, Shah had stated: “In a significant step, Gol under the decisive leadership of PM Narendra Modi Ji has decided to reduce disturbed areas under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act in the states of Nagaland, Assam and Manipur after decades”.

On March 24, 2023, AFSPA was removed from four more police stations in the valley areas of Manipur. Addressing reporters in Imphal then, Biren Singh had said, “This historic moment was achieved, following the era of peace and prosperity that came in the state with the arrival of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led BJP government in Manipur”.

Only the hill districts of Manipur, which are populated by various tribes of the state including the Kukis and Nagas, now have the “disturbed area” status under AFSPA. This means the army and Central forces can carry out anti-insurgency operations and arrests of suspects only in the hill areas.

In September 2023, when the Manipur government extended the status quo, a report in The Hindu had said, “It comes despite the army’s demand for the re-imposition of AFSPA in the valley districts, arguing that its absence had hampered operations against insurgent groups.”

The news report added, “After a lull of many years, these groups (Meitei) are said to have regained a foothold in the State during the current wave of ethnic violence”.

In this context, the contents of the audio clip gain immense significance. In June 2023, there were media reports of a “women-led mob” in the valley areas of Manipur forcing the Army to release 12 “militants” belonging to another proscribed Meitei group, KYKL (Kanglei Yawol Kunna Lup).

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The Wire had obtained a copy of the audio recording, which runs into about 48 minutes in total, from a well-placed source in July 2024, and has transcribed and translated its contents. The Wire had, however, refrained from publication until it was told that the same has been placed on the record of the official Commission of Inquiry set up under the law. The Commission was set up by a notification of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on June 4, 2023.

The date and time of the recording as well as the circumstances under which it was made at the chief minister's official residence have been provided to the Commission in the affidavit but The Wire is withholding from publication any particulars that might help lead to the disclosure of the deponent/s' identity and endanger their security. The deponent/s have also sought confidentiality from the Commission citing the sensitivity of the content and possible threat to their life and limb, which has been granted, The Wire has learnt.

Thus the issue is now a contested one before a statutory Commission – with makers of the tape asserting the identity of the voice to be Biren Singh's and Singh's government denying it. As such this issue too is a matter of public interest.

Given the compelling public interest involved in the contents of this recording – both for the people of Manipur and the rest of India – The Wire is placing key excerpts in the public domain.

**A precedent for President's Rule**

While it is for the Commission to take the audio recording to its logical end, there is a precedent from the 1990s when the Union government decided to dismiss a state government in the Northeast on similar charges against a state home minister, followed by army operations to clear the area of a powerful armed group.

On November 28, 1990, barely a month before the first Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) government under Prafulla Kumar Mahanta was to complete five years in office

after signing the "historic" Assam Accord with the Rajiv Gandhi government, the Chandra Sekhar government, supported by the Congress from outside, clamped President's Rule on Assam; the Indian army was then asked to go after the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) after declaring it a banned outfit.

By then, ULFA had carried out several extortion demands particularly from the tea companies. Despite its activities, the group had not been banned by the earlier V.P. Singh government most likely because the AGP was a part of the United Front coalition and had a central minister in Dinesh Goswami.

In 2018, Mahanta had told this correspondent on record that though he met the prime minister in New Delhi and requested him to instead declare elections in the state which would be due in a month's time, Chandra Sekhar didn't agree because he was "convinced about the need to clamp President's Rule in Assam after watching a video shot by R&AW featuring home minister Bhrigu Phukan taking a salute at an ULFA event." That incident was later corroborated by senior AGP (now BJP) leader Atul Bora who was a PWD minister in the first Mahanta government. Bora had told this correspondent on record that he too was invited by Phukan, then the home minister, to attend the ULFA event held in Golaghat district but he refused the invitation. This finds reference in a book published as far back as 2019.

Mahanta had told this correspondent that Prime Minister Chandra Sekhar had showed him the video during his meeting with him in New Delhi which also had clips of ULFA cadres "getting arms training from the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) of North Burma."

A day after that meeting with the prime minister, President's Rule was imposed on Assam – which

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set off the first central action to take control of Assam's fast deteriorating law and order situation due to an alleged nexus between the state home minister – who controlled the state police – and ULFA.

Interestingly, that declaration of President's Rule came just a day after the fall of the V P Singh government, which suggested that the intelligence agencies were waiting for an opportune time to strike at ULFA and were only waiting for a political consensus arrived at due to a threat to national security in a border state, and also breaking of the sacred oath by a state home minister to protect the sovereignty and integrity of the country as mandated by the Constitution.

**Questions to the Chief Minister's Office**

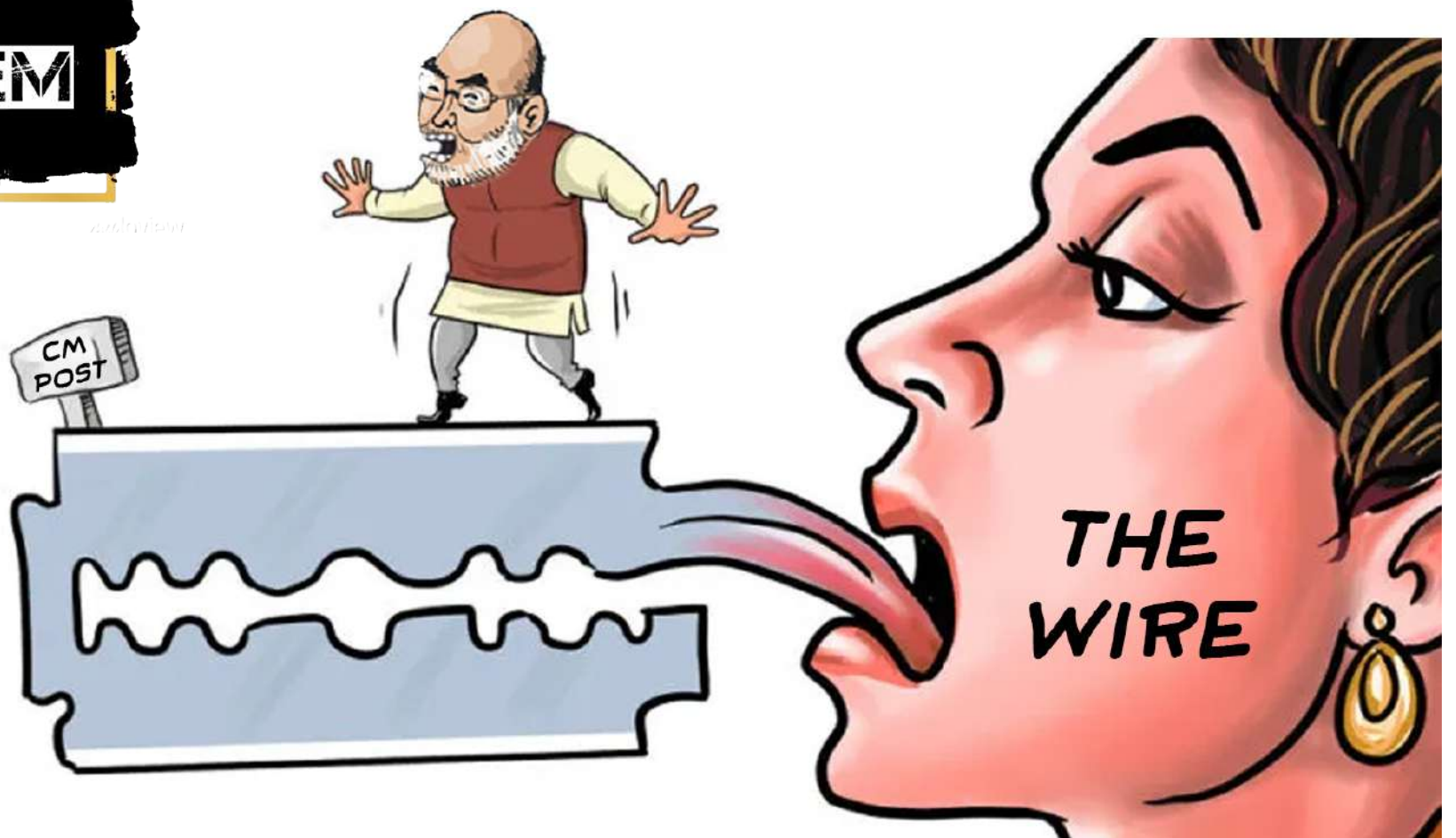
In view of the seriousness of the statements made in the audio recording, which has been claimed under

law by the deponent's to be of Manipur chief minister, The Wire has sent the following questions to Biren Singh's office for a response; will be added if received:

A) What is the actual status of the PLA and PREPAK? Are you aware of these groups working together with the police and/or other security forces under the command of the Manipur government in the areas bordering the hill and valley districts?

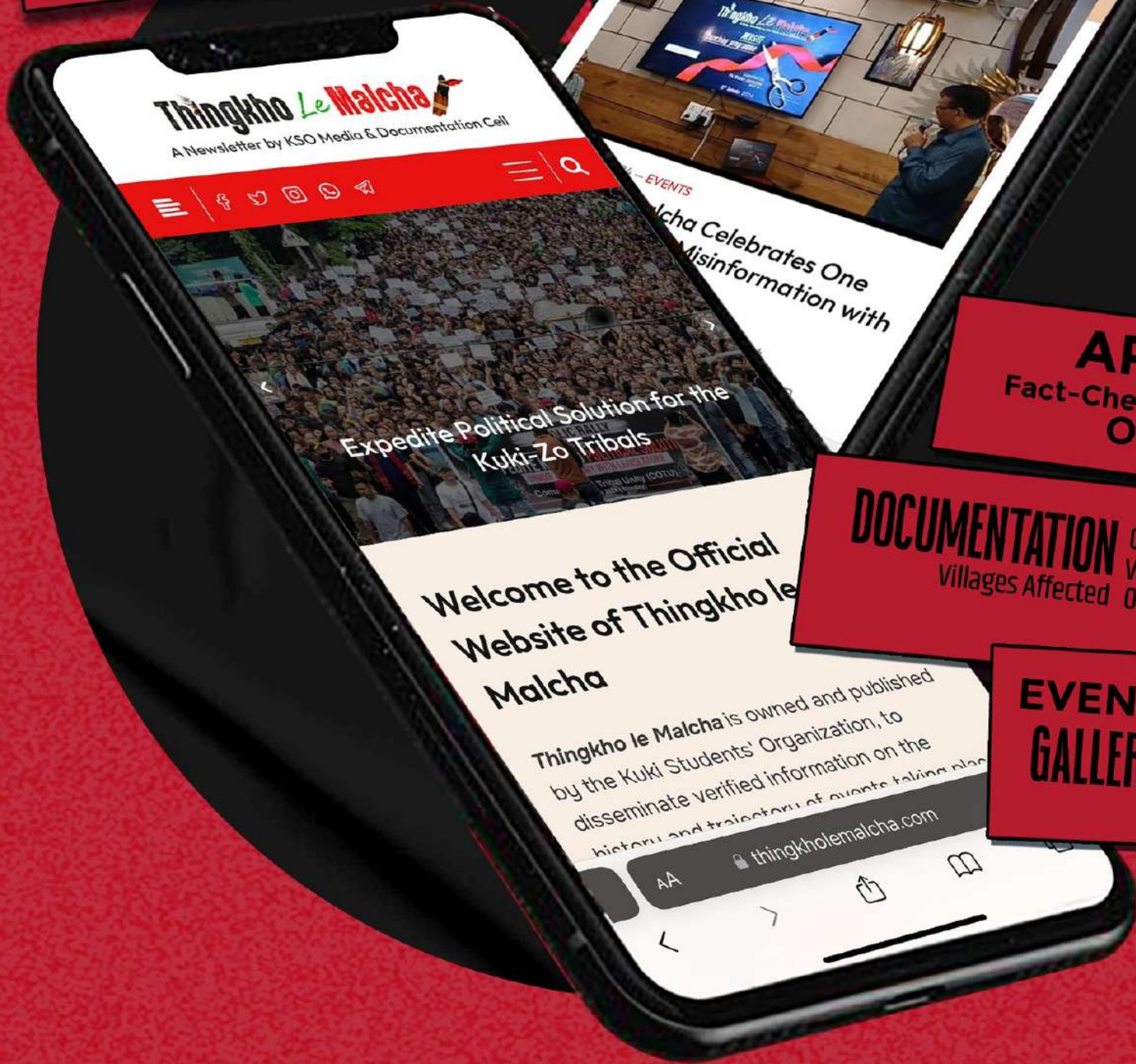
B) What is the status of the UNLF (Pambei) and what is the role you played in the group signing a peace agreement with the Centre? Are there plans for the UNLF (Pambei) to be deployed with state police commandos in the areas bordering the hill and valley districts?

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# FOR THE BRAVE SOULS OF JIRIBAM



In Jiribam, where rivers flow and mountains stand tall,  
Four brave souls answered duty's call.  
With hearts of courage and spirits bright,  
They stood their ground through the darkest night.

They knew the risks, they felt the fear,  
Yet never wavered, their purpose clear.  
With every breath, they held their line,  
Defending their land with hearts divine.

In fields of green and skies so wide,  
They gave their all, with honor and pride.  
For every step they took, every fight they fought,  
Was a testament to the freedom they sought.

The winds now whisper their names with grace,  
Four heroes who will never be replaced.  
In the soil of Jiribam, their memories bloom,  
Guardians eternal, beyond the tomb.

We remember their courage, their sacrifice so deep,  
In our hearts forever, their legacy we keep.  
For in their valor, we find our way,  
Four brave Tahchapa's who live in us today and forever.

~ Lalcha Haokip