

Thingkho *Le* Malcha

A Daily Newsletter by KSO Media & Documentation Cell



AWAITING JUSTICE



NEICHOIHOI HANGSHING (33 YEARS)

D/O HENKHONGAM HANGSHING

ADDRESS: KANGCHUP CHINGKHONG VILAGE, SADAR HILLS

DATE OF INCIDENT: 19TH JANUARY, 2024

PLACE OF INCIDENT: KANGCHUP CHINGKHONG VILAGE, SADAR HILLS

CAUSE OF DEATH: DIED IN THE LINE OF DUTY (HEART ATTACK)



KUKI VICTIMS' UPDATE

As on 22. 11. 2024



219
DEATHS

1. Haojoel Doungei



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.

CONGRESS CALLS FOR RESIGNATION OF AMIT SHAH, SAYS MODI HAS 'DONE NOTHING BUT PROTECT' CM

At a press conference held at the All India Congress Committee (AICC)'s headquarters in New Delhi, the Congress demanded the resignation of Union home minister Amit Shah, citing his failure to stop the ongoing violence in Manipur, as well as the resignation of Manipur chief minister N. Biren Singh.

The press meet on Tuesday (November 19) was addressed by the Congress's Manipur president Meghachandra, its general secretary in-charge of communications Jairam Ramesh and its Manipur in-charge Girish Chodankar.

Addressing the media, Keisham Meghachandra recalled a statement Prime Minister Narendra Modi made in 2017, in which he said that "those who cannot ensure peace in the state have no right to govern Manipur".

Meghachandra asked whether this principle applied to the current 'double-engine' government in Manipur.

A state in distress

Violence escalated in Jiribam, a new hotspot of the Manipur violence, where ten people apparently from the Kuki-Zo community were killed in a gunfight with security forces last week. The Manipur police identified them as armed militants.

Jiribam shares its boundary with Assam's Cachar district. On the day the ten Kuki-Zo individuals were killed, six people reportedly from the Meitei community went missing – some alleged they were abducted by militants. Within the last week, it has been reported that five of their bodies have been found, with a sixth one possibly belonging to the group also discovered.

Figures provided by the AICC said that over 300 people were killed in the Manipur violence and "nearly a lakh" people rendered displaced. The Wire could not independently corroborate these figures. The state



government has claimed that 226 people died in the violence and close to 60,000 were displaced.

Retail inflation in the state has hit 10%, the AICC claimed, adding to say that "business are closed down, jobs are getting lost", "essential food items, medicines [and] essential commodities are in scarcity" and that schools and educational institutes were shut.

Meghachandra also spoke of the situation in Jiribam, saying, "Sisters, brothers, even babies are unsafe. Mobs are attacking politicians, including Congress MLAs. This is a direct result of poor administration."

Party announces five demands of the government

In its press conference, the Congress laid out a five-point charter of demands. First, it insisted Modi visit the state before the next parliamentary session – the winter session will begin on November 25 – meet relief camp residents and consult local leaders.

Second, the Congress demanded that Modi engage with delegates from all parties, including the BJP and the Congress, as the homes of legislators from both parties were being targeted in the state.

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Third, it demanded that a new governor be appointed specifically for the state. Former governor Anusuiya Uikey left office in July and Assam governor Laksman Acharya currently bears additional charge as governor of Manipur.

Fourth, the party called for accountability from Shah, questioning the alleged “jugalbandi” between him and Manipur chief minister N. Biren Singh. It also alleged favouritism on Shah and Singh’s part as well as a failure to prosecute drug-related cases.

Its fifth demand was immediate action on the Supreme Court’s concerns relating to the state. The party cited an observation by the apex court last year that the constitutional machinery in the state had collapsed.

‘Prime minister has done nothing but protect Biren Singh’

Chodankar, the Congress in-charge for Manipur, accused the BJP of prioritising the chief minister’s political survival over the state’s welfare.

“For the past 18 months, the prime minister has done nothing but protect the chief minister of Manipur,” Chodankar said.

The Congress said it was committed to restoring peace in Manipur. “We tried every possible way to bring

stability, but this government has failed. The prime minister must respond immediately,” Chodankar added.

At least twenty people have been killed in a spike in the violence in Manipur just this month, as per some estimates.

Shah last year promised compensation to the kin of those who lost their lives to the violence. The Union home ministry has not disbursed enough money that would cover all 226 people officially estimated to have lost their lives.

After tensions in the Imphal valley over the six people who went missing from Jiribam escalated into violence last week, the authorities imposed an indefinite curfew across multiple districts of the valley and curbed internet services in these districts as well as two Kuki-Zo-dominated hill districts to curb the unrest.

The ethnic violence in the state erupted in May last year, following which segregation between the Meiteis and Kuki-Zos reached near-complete levels. The two communities are physically separated by buffer zones patrolled by security forces.

(The Wire)



He will win who knows when to fight and when not to fight.

— Sun Tzu

MANIPUR GOVT EXTENDS INTERNET BAN BY TWO MORE DAYS TILL NOVEMBER 25

The Manipur government on Saturday extended the ban on mobile internet services by two more days till November 25 (Monday) in nine districts, according to a home department order.

The state authority had initially suspended internet services on November 16 for two days “to thwart the design and activities of anti-national and anti-social elements and to maintain peace and communal harmony and to prevent any loss of life by stopping the spread of disinformation and false rumours, through various social media platforms.”

The suspension of services will impact Imphal West, Imphal East, Bishnupur, Thoubal, Kakching, Kangpokpi, Churachandpur, Jiribam and Pherzawl areas of the

state, said commissioner (home) N Ashok Kumar in the order on Saturday.

The internet ban, which was initially enforced in only seven districts, was extended to Jiribam and Pherzawl districts, except for lease line and FTH connections to government offices or any case whereby the state government grants exemption.

The order to extend the ban comes after the state witnessed widespread protests and subsequent curfew in five districts over the recovery of bodies of six civilians (three women and three children) who went missing after 10 armed militants were killed in an encounter with the security forces on November 11.

JUSTICE D KRISHNAKUMAR SWORN IN AS CHIEF JUSTICE OF MANIPUR HIGH COURT

Justice D Krishnakumar was sworn in as the eighth Chief Justice of the High Court of Manipur on Friday, officials said.

Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya administered the oath of office to the new Chief Justice in the swearing-in ceremony in Raj Bhavan in Imphal.

He was appointed the Chief Justice of the high court on Wednesday within 48 hours of the Supreme Court Collegium making the recommendation.

He replaced Justice Siddharth Mridul who retired. Justice D Krishnakumar earlier served as a judge of the Madras High Court.



Chief Minister N Biren Singh congratulated the new Chief Justice. “I look forward to working with you in furthering the cause of justice and ensuring that every citizen’s rights are safeguarded and respected. May your tenure be filled with wisdom, progress, and positive transformation for the people of Manipur,” Singh said in a post on X.

NPP ASKS ITS MEMBERS NOT TO ATTEND ANY MEETING CALLED BY CM N BIREN SINGH IN FUTURE

As three MLAs from National People's Party (NPP) attended NDA's meeting on Monday, NPP has asked its members not to attend any meeting called by chief minister N Biren Singh in future.

NPP and ally of BJP, has clarified that it will start supporting the Manipur government once N Biren is replaced as the chief minister. An advisory signed by NPP state president N Kayisii on Thursday emphasised that the party's national president had officially withdrawn support from the Singh government on November 17.

"Consequently, all NPP members are required to comply with this decision," Kayisii said .

As many as 11 MLAs skipped the meeting of NDA on Monday. Notices were served to them for not attending the meeting. Out of 11, at least 9 MLAs belonged to BJP, one of National People's Party and one Independent. Around seven MLA took leave out of which three were BJP legislators.

Officially it was claimed that the meeting was attended by around 26 legislators.

Already BJP's ally National People's Party has withdrawn, however three out of the seven MLAs on Monday attended the meeting.

The meeting was called at chief minister to discuss the emerging law and order situation.

Last year the Kuki People's Alliance (KPA) with two MLAs in the Manipur assembly withdrew its support from the BJP-led state government. In the house of 60, BJP has 37 MLAs while JD(U) has one, there are three independents supporting the government. Five MLAs from Naga People's Front (NPF) are supporting the government. Congress has five MLAs.



Ten Kuki-Zo tribal MLAs, including seven of the BJP, along with all the leading organisations of the community, have been demanding a separate administration or a Union territory for the tribals in Manipur.

In October this year the state was caught in a leadership change tussle, around 19 BJP MLAs have moved the Central leadership seeking replacement of chief minister N Biren Singh.

There is speculation that a letter was submitted to the Prime minister's office recently by disgruntled MLAs. Leaked portions of the said letter showed the first signatures as that of Speaker Th Satyabrata, Ministers Th Bishwajit and Y Khemchand. Bishwajit and Khemchand are dissenters, Speaker Satyabrata is a loyalist of Biren Singh.

The letter is signed by 19 MLAs of the ruling party and was reportedly submitted on Wednesday. The letter was submitted after the first meeting was conducted between Meitei, Kuki and Naga MLAs at Delhi. (the Economic Times)

ThePrint

FEATURED ARTICLE

What's stopping the BJP from taking decisive steps in Manipur? Electoral apathy

Monideepa Banerjee

The only time it seemed the Centre was about to take a decisive step in Manipur—finally—was when Home Minister Amit Shah cut short his election campaign in Maharashtra on 17 November and dashed back to New Delhi. He supposedly rushed to headquarters to confabulate with stakeholders on how to control the latest conflagration in the northeastern state that's been burning and simmering in turns over the last 19 months—only to explode once again two weeks ago.

Other than that, the BJP-led government at the Centre that boasts a double-engine sarkaar in Manipur has done little to reassure the state or the rest of the country that Manipur matters. But even in the five days since Shah's return to Delhi, what has the Centre done? Except rush more paramilitary forces to the state and impose the controversial Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) in six police station areas, nothing.

Wrong. Amit Shah may wag his finger and say to Doubting Thomases that it is only because of his latest interventions that there have been no fresh deaths in the state since Jiribam district, which went up in flames on 7 November and left at least 21 dead in 10 days. But a mere five days of no killings out of more than 500 days of violent turbulence cannot be a feather in the cap.

At least 250 people have died in Meitei-Kuki violence in Manipur since 3 May 2023 after the Meiteis demanded Scheduled Tribe status, like the Kukis.

President's Rule, new CM

Nineteen months later, after violence in the Jiribam district escalated the tensions once again, the chorus is growing louder for the imposition of President's Rule or at least a change of chief minister. These seem the two most obvious interventions the Centre can make and yet it seems caught in a Hamlet-like dilemma: to act or not to act?

Is it procrastination? Is it policy paralysis? Is it indifference? Or is it that the Centre simply doesn't know what to do next?

It looks like a khichiri of all of the above.

Let's take the last question first. It is becoming increasingly clear that the BJP doesn't quite have a finger on the Manipur pulse and is floundering

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over what to do. The knee-jerk move to impose AFSPA in six police stations, for instance, is triggering a fresh ethnic churn.

AFSPA was reimposed on 14 November. Three days later, Chief Minister Biren Singh wrote to the Centre, asking for a rollback. But on Thursday, all 10 Kuki MLAs in the Manipur Assembly, including seven BJP MLAs, demanded AFSPA be extended to all 60 police stations in the state, including 13 that are still out of its jurisdiction. They want the Act extended, they say, so that authorities can hunt for and seize around 6,000 arms stolen from state armouries on 3 May last year when chaos descended on the state.

What BJP appears to have forgotten is that AFSPA has a dark history in Manipur. The Draconian law ignited widespread protests against alleged killings of civilians by the Army. The protests have been going on since it was imposed to tackle the insurgency in 1958—initially in the Naga-dominated districts and then across Manipur in 1980. Dramatic protests erupted in July 2004 after a 32-year-old woman Thangjam Manorama was allegedly raped and then killed by forces. A dozen women disrobed in front of the headquarters of Assam Rifles in Imphal in protest. Four years earlier, a 28-year-old woman Irom Sharmila had gone on an indefinite hunger strike against AFSPA, which she finally ended in August 2016.

The Act was rolled back in large swathes of Manipur over 2022-23.

The lack of clarity on how to deal with Manipur was on display last May when the Centre dithered over whether to impose Article 355 or not. Media reports varied widely, with a section claiming it was imposed, while another asserted that it was not. It took an RTI by a Karnataka High Court lawyer to get MHA to finally state in June that—full marks for obfuscation—the ministry's CPIO “has no such information for the period January 2023 to June 2023.”

Had it been imposed back then, Article 355 could have worked. On the other hand, the Centre's latest move to reimpose AFSPA in six police station areas could backfire seriously.

Procrastination or apathy?

The BJP's actions are motivated by electoral gain and Manipur is not on its list of priorities. A BJP-led government is safely ensconced there. The allied party, National People's Power (NPP), has said it is withdrawing support from the Biren Singh government but the BJP hasn't turned a hair. It has the numbers without the NPP or even its seven Kuki MLAs who are speaking out against the incumbent chief minister more and more loudly. The Congress won the parliamentary seats in Manipur this June. But that's only two seats. So, it is easy for the BJP to put Manipur on the back burner, if not for good, then for long stretches of time.

It is not as if Congress knows much better than the BJP what to do next in Manipur. To its credit, at least Rahul Gandhi visited the state. The Prime Minister still has not. Gandhi's visit helped Congress make a clean sweep of the state in the general elections. But now a tweet, since deleted by P Chidambaram, once the country's home minister, has caused the party much embarrassment—he called for regional autonomy of Manipur. The state leadership has chided him publicly and demanded that the party take action against him.

But the BJP is the party in power and the onus of restoring normalcy in Manipur rests on its shoulders. Heavily, uneasily.

Monideepa Banerjee is a senior journalist based in Kolkata. She tweets @Monideepa62. Views are personal.

Contd.

THE SOCIAL MEDIA BUZZ



Sushant Singh
@SushantSin

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How many weapons from the state armouries over the past 19 months have been recovered so far? How many culprits (officials) have been punished for the loss of weapons?

The Hindu @the_hindu · 1d

JUST IN | Centre has deployed 90 more companies (since August) of central armed police forces in #Manipur, 258 people killed so far, 32 arrested for arson and vandalism at the homes of MLAs and ministers last week in Imphal : Kuldiep Singh, security adviser, Manipur Government.

20:29 · 22 Nov 24 · 2,240 Views



NinglunHanghal
@ninglunhanghal

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The "big" child activist ..after milking #climatechange now moving on to milking #ManipurCrisis....she has made enough from ClimateActivism now she need to move on to ConflictActivist..there is lots of money in Conflict as well.

EastMojo @EastMojo · 2d

Is 'child activist' Licypriya Kangujam fueling violence in Manipur? eastmojo.com/premium/2024/1...



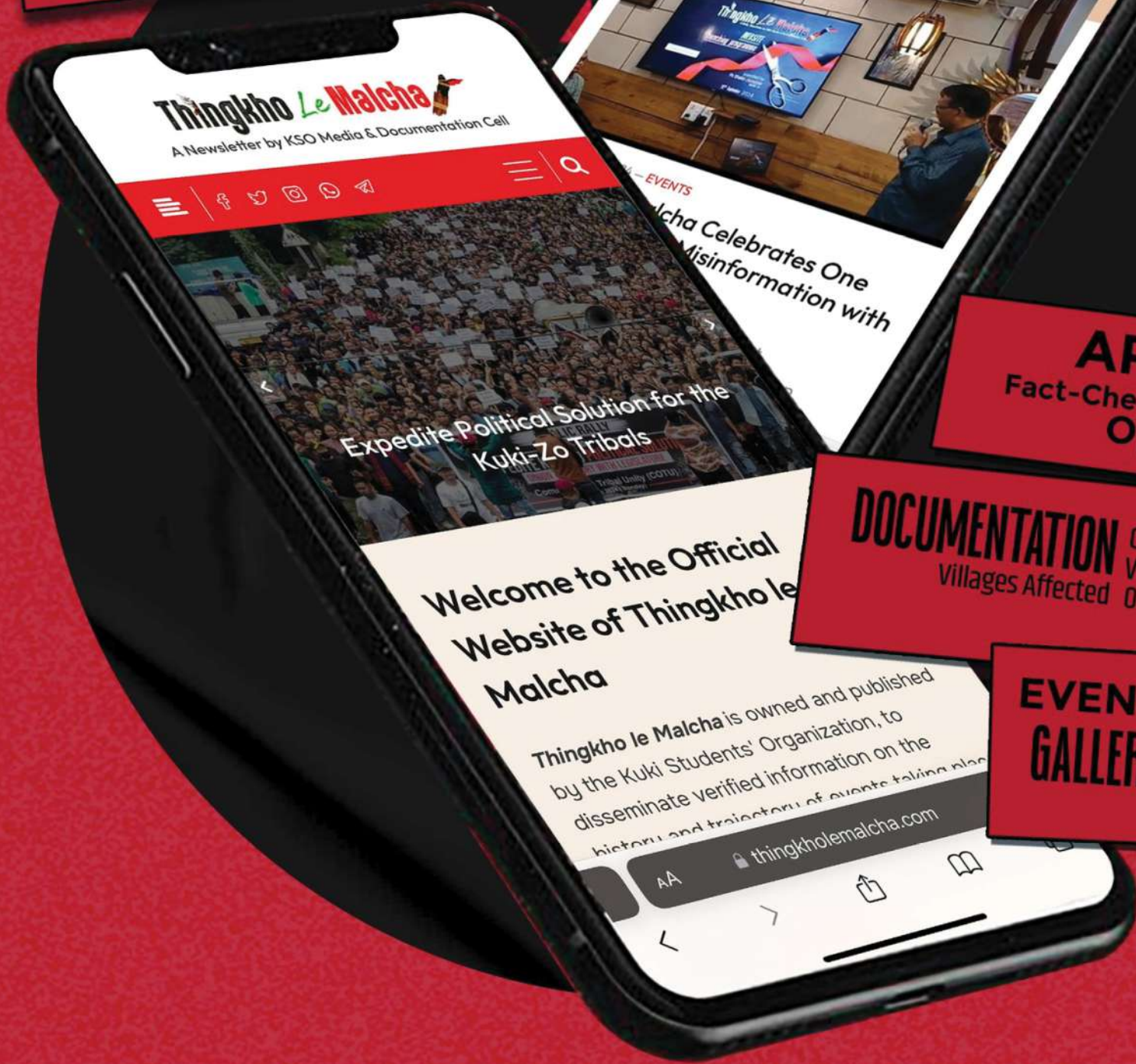
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THE POLITICAL FIGHT



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THEIR SACRIFICE OUR STRENGTH

A Eulogy for the Eleven Martyrs

We remember with heavy hearts and deep gratitude to honour 11 courageous souls, our beloved martyrs, who gave their lives so we may stand together in strength and unity. They were more than heroes to us—they were brothers, sons, friends, and protectors, bound by a love for our land and our people that transcended fear.

These eleven stood firm in the face of adversity, embodying the spirit of resilience and courage. They fought not just for themselves but for every one of us, so that future generations might live in peace and freedom. Their bravery will forever be etched in our hearts, and their legacy will guide us in the years to come.

In moments like this, we feel the weight of our loss, but we also feel the power of their sacrifice. They are a reminder that our strength lies not only in our numbers but in our unity, our determination, and our shared commitment to justice. Their spirit will not fade; it will live on in every step we take toward a better future.

Let us carry forward their memory as we move forward. May we honor them not just with words, but with action—standing together, refusing to yield, and fighting for the ideals they held dear. Today, we promise never to forget their sacrifice. They live on in our hearts and in our resolve. To our eleven brave martyrs—may you rest in power. You will be remembered, always.

~ *Lien Mate*