

Thingkho *Le* Malcha

A Daily Newsletter by KSO Media & Documentation Cell



AWAITING JUSTICE



KAMMINLAL LUPHENG (25 YEARS)

S/O PAOKHOLET LUPHENG

ADDRESS: NONGDAM KUKI VILLAGE, KAMJONG DISTRICT

DATE OF INCIDENT: 13TH APRIL, 2024

PLACE OF INCIDENT: SADAR HILLS

CAUSE OF DEATH: KILLED BY BOMBING AND BODY MUTILATED



KUKI VICTIMS' UPDATE

As on 28. 11. 2024



222
DEATHS



200+
VILLAGES BURNT



7000+
HOUSES BURNT

1. Thangtinmang Khongsai



360+
CHURCHES &
SYNAGOGUES BURNT



41,425+
DISPLACED
PERSONS

Thingkho Le Malcha (charred wood tied with chilli): A war symbol; a pre-arranged secret code agreed upon by the Kukis to inform the people about the commencement of war and on receiving this, one has to remain alert and be ready for the battle.

KUKI-ZO MLAS TAKE UT DEMAND TO DELHI; SEEK PM'S INTERVENTION

In a renewed push for a separate administration or Union Territory (UT) for Kuki-Zos in Manipur, ten Kuki MLAs, including seven BJP legislators, staged a dharna in Delhi on Tuesday. The protest, held at Jantar Mantar, was followed by a memorandum addressed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging his intervention to end the ongoing violence in the northeastern state.

The Kuki-Zo MLAs, in a joint statement, reiterated that the creation of a separate UT with a legislature is the only viable solution to the ethnic conflict in Manipur. They also strongly criticized the delay in political talks with key tribal groups such as the United Peoples' Front (UPF) and Kuki National Organisation (KNO), condemning proposals to end the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with select armed groups.

The SoO agreement, signed in 2008 between the UPF, KNO, and the government, was intended to address political issues and promote peace. However, the Kuki-Zo MLAs argued that halting the agreement goes against its very purpose, warning that such actions could deepen existing divisions.

Since ethnic violence erupted in Manipur on May 3, 2023, Kuki-Zo tribal organizations, along with the 10 Kuki MLAs, have boycotted Manipur's Assembly sessions, demanding a separate administration for the tribal population. Both the Centre and the state government have repeatedly rejected these calls for a separate UT.

In their memorandum, the Kuki-Zo MLAs also highlighted the longstanding neglect of the hill districts by the Meitei-majority state government, particularly in development matters. They expressed concern that



the situation had worsened during the ongoing conflict, pointing out that affected hill districts were excluded from receiving Central financial assistance under the 'PM-DevINE' scheme for healthcare projects.

The 10 Kuki-Zo MLAs urged the central government to implement interim mechanisms and budgetary provisions to support development in tribal-dominated districts until a final political resolution is reached.

This protest followed a similar demonstration by the INDIA bloc leaders from Manipur the day before, who also called for the Prime Minister's intervention to resolve the 19-month-long ethnic strife. Opposition leaders, including Congress' Jairam Ramesh, Gaurav Gogoi, and CPI's D Raja, participated in the protest, accusing both the Centre and state government of failing to address the crisis.

KSO SADAR HILLS CALLS FOR JUSTICE ON HUMAN RIGHTS DAY, ALLEGES SYSTEMIC BIAS AGAINST KUKI-ZO COMMUNITY

On the occasion of Human Rights Day, the Kuki Students' Organisation (KSO), Sadar Hills, called on the National Human Rights Commission of India (NHRC) to initiate an impartial investigation into the grave human rights violations allegedly committed by Meitei supremacist groups against the minority Kuki-Zo community.

In a show of solidarity and resistance, Kuki-Zo women gathered at Gamgiphai under the banner of KSO Sadar Hills to protest against these alleged violations. They demanded immediate justice for the victims, describing the ongoing atrocities as systemic and deliberate acts in the ethnic conflict.

The demonstrators condemned various acts of violence, including sexual assaults, murders, and arson, claiming they were carried out with impunity. They criticized the lack of accountability and the failure of investigative agencies to deliver justice, emphasizing that the Kuki-Zo community continues to face targeted attacks and marginalization.

The KSO stressed that these violent acts are not isolated incidents but part of a broader campaign to undermine the Kuki-Zo community's dignity and existence. They called on the NHRC to uphold its mandate by conducting unbiased investigations, bringing perpetrators to justice, and restoring faith in the rule of law.

Bebeck, Women Coordinator of KSO Sadar Hills, highlighted that more than 19 months have passed since the voices of the Kuki-Zo community were silenced amidst ongoing ethnic violence in Manipur.

"Human rights in Manipur seem to have been redefined as 'Meitei rights,'" Bebeck asserted. "From the right to live a dignified life to the fundamental right of receiving a proper burial, every aspect of our humanity has been



denied since the start of 2023."

She urged national media and investigative agencies to ensure fair and thorough probes into the crimes committed against the community. She also appealed directly to the NHRC Chairperson to take cognizance of the atrocities and ensure equal justice for all citizens, irrespective of ethnicity or community.

The KSO Sadar Hills also submitted a memorandum to the NHRC Chairperson through the Deputy Commissioner of Kangpokpi. The memorandum detailed systemic bias in investigations into heinous crimes against the Kuki-Zo community by central agencies, including the National Investigative Agency (NIA) and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

It listed several gruesome incidents over the past 19 months, including - David Thiek Hmar (32) – Decapitated and tortured (July 2, 2023); Florence Nengpichong Hangshing (27) and Olivia Lhingneithem Chongloi (23) – Gang-raped and murdered (May 4, 2023); Tonsing Hangshing (7) – Burned alive in an ambulance with his mother and aunt (June 4, 2023); Kamlengsat Lunkim (25) and Kamminlal

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Lupheng (23) – Mutilated into pieces, remains still unrecovered (April 13, 2024); and Zosangkim Hmar (30) – Gang-raped and burned alive (November 7, 2024).

The memorandum also mentioned other cases of murder, mutilation, and arson targeting women, children, and elderly individuals. Many victims' remains remain unrecovered, depriving families of the opportunity to perform last rites.

The Kuki top student's body appealed to the NHRC to conduct impartial investigations into these crimes, ensure justice for victims and families, and hold perpetrators

accountable to restore faith in judicial and law enforcement systems. Copies of the memorandum were also sent to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, the Chief Justice of India, and the Supreme Court's Justice Mittal Committee.

The KSO stressed that the continued neglect of these cases underscores the urgent need for intervention at the highest levels. They called for justice, accountability, and respect for human rights to prevent further atrocities against the Kuki-Zo community.

POPPY CULTIVATORS FROM NON-KUKI COMMUNITY ARRESTED; LARGE ACRES OF POPPY PLANTATIONS DESTROYED

Even though the BJP government of Manipur under the leadership of N. Biren Singh selectively labels the Kuki-Zo community as “poppy cultivators or narco-terrorists”, etc, the hard fact has come out openly with the arrest of Tangkhul Naga community for involving in Poppy plantations in their areas.

As per Police, in the intervening night of 6th and 7th December, a discrete operation was conducted in Khamasom range poppy field led by Hopeson Chiphang, MPS, SDPO/Ukhrul to apprehend poppy cultivators indulged in Poppy cultivation. In the operation, District Police detained four persons (including one female). Approx. 30 acres of poppy plantations were detected. 2 knives, one air gun was recovered from their possession.

FIR has been registered for investigation. The arrested persons were identified as Peimi Ramsak (27) S/o. Pamlei Ramsak of Khamasom Khayangkho village; Lightson Shimrah (49) S/o. Shangam Shimrah of Changa village; Kapangkhui Khashim (21) S/o. Peter K. of Khamasom Khayangkho village, and Yatei SV (22) D/o. Reishang SV of Phungdaret village (near Somra).



Also, on December 9, Manipur Police and Forest Department conducted poppy destruction in the hill range of Sihai Khullen village, Ukhrul. Approximately, 55 acres of poppy plantation was destroyed and 5 huts which were found in the poppy fields were burned down.

An FIR has been registered and efforts are being made to identify the culprits, Police said.

CENTRE & STATE MUST ACT IN MANIPUR, NOT US: SUPREME COURT

Realising that its Intervention failed to douse the 18-month-old Kuki-Melait ethnic conflagration that continues to smoulder in Manipur, SC on Monday focused on remedial measures by asking the state to give details of properties burnt, damaged, looted or illegally occupied during the crisis.

“We want every detail of such incidents. Also give details of action taken by the state in each of these incidents and whether the properties which have been encroached upon or illegally occupied have been restored to the original owners and whether the encroachers have been penalised,” ordered a bench of Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar.

The bench told solicitor general Tushar Mehta and additional solicitor general Aishwarya Bhati that the court is not going to pass any orders on supplementary applications filed by other persons as “it is Union and state governments that have to take action, not us.”

Mehta told the court that governments are aware of the ground situation and are taking remedial measures. “We are advisedly not resorting to aggressive action which could be counterproductive to the priority of restoring peace in the state.” The SG also informed the court that details of the properties burnt, damaged, looted or illegally occupied would be given in sealed cover to the court as making it public could trigger violence. “We will also give details of recovery of looted arms and ammunition,” he said.

Appearing for Justice Gita Mittal Committee, senior advocate Vibha Datta Makhija said the committee is doing commendable work in rehabilitation of people displaced by ethnic violence and required certain directions from the court. The bench asked Union home ministry to coordinate with Manipur government in ensuring that the recommended measures for rehabilitation of displaced persons are implemented at the earliest.

SC, which first heard the petition filed by one Dinganglung Gangmei on May 8 last year, has since conducted 27 hearings during which it appointed Justice Mittal Committee more than one and a half years ago and appointed a “seasoned sleuth” to supervise investigations into criminal cases filed against members of both communities for their roles in the ethnic crisis.

It all started with Manipur HC’s April 2023 order directing state government to respond to a more than decade old letter from Union government seeking its view on demand from Meitei community for declaring them tribal community entitled to reservation like Kukis in government jobs and admissions to government educational institutions. The Kukis in tribal areas started violent protests against the HC order, which they apprehended would dilute their recruitment to government jobs. (TOI)



**Tomorrow belongs to people who
prepare for it today.**

— African Proverb



An Interview with ITLF Leader

FEATURED ARTICLE

'It's Cold-Blooded Murder'

Prasanna D Zore

The Indigenous Tribals Leaders Forum, a conglomerate of recognised tribals in Lamka, Outer Manipur, wrote to Union Home Minister Amit A Shah seeking his intervention to initiate a judicial inquiry into the killing of '10 Kuki Zo volunteers' allegedly in a fake encounter by Central Reserve Police Force personnel.

Ginza Vualzong, ITLF spokesperson, discusses the contents of this letter with Prasanna D Zore/Rediff.com and why the Kukis fear the CRPF.

Why did it become necessary for the Indigenous Tribals Leaders Forum to write a letter to Union Home Minister Amit Shah?

We have written to the Union home minister with the subject line asking for justice for 10 Kuki volunteers who were killed by the CRPF. The letter also seeks a political solution to end the violence in Manipur.

This letter also talks about how even after 19 months of conflict in Manipur there's no sign or semblance of normalcy and we the minority Kuki-Zo community are continuing to suffer at the hand of Meitei militants which is supported by the state government. Now, we are also suffering at the hand of the Central Reserve Police Force.

We have been telling the Indian home minister that all

these attacks have always started from the Meitei side. The Kuki-Zo community never provoked anybody nor did we first attack. But when we were attacked we only defended our people and territory.

The letter also talks about the latest violence in Zairon village in Jiribam district, where a 31-year-old tribal woman was burned to death and in the following days another 10 Kuki volunteers were also killed by the CRPF.

One more Kuki was killed by Meitei militants when he was visiting his pregnant wife. He was kidnapped on the way and was killed.

We also highlighted the fact that the CRPF being a neutral force should be saving our lives, saving everyone's life, every Indian citizen's life. But they are the ones who are actually killing, taking the lives of Indian citizens. We condemn that.

We have asked for a judicial inquiry that would investigate and give justice to the 10 Kuki volunteers and take action against the (CRPF) personnel involved in these horrific killings.

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Is the ITLF claiming that these 10 Kuki youth, who you call village volunteers, and who the CRPF killed because they were militants, were killed in a fake encounter?

Yes, of course it's a fake encounter. Looking at the post mortem reports, (one would find that) most gunshots were (fired) from the back. Four of them were tortured to death and their eyes were being gouged out.

I won't even call a fake encounter; it's like a murder. It's cold blooded murder.

Why do you think the CRPF would engage in fake encounters as you are claiming?

Look at the post mortem reports. Every body (of the 10 Kuki-Zo youth who were killed) has almost 12 bullet marks on them.

Why do they have to fire so much even if they wanted to kill them. One or two shots would be enough to kill them. Why then they had to fire so many bullets on them? That too in their backs.

The bullet marks on their back shows that it was not a (genuine) encounter. (They were killed) maybe while they were fleeing or they were killed while they were being captured, which the CRPF have to answer. I have no answer why they engaged in these horrific killings.

Manipur has been engulfed in a cycle of violence since May 3, 2023. The Meiteis claim that the Kukis started the killings first and they retaliated in defence. The Kukis charge the Meiteis of the same.

Would you say the state government has failed in protecting the lives of ordinary Manipuris, be they Kukis or Meiteis -- Indian citizens, basically?

Definitely the government of Manipur completely failed. From the Kukis' side we have lost about 220 lives so far. On the Meiteis' side, I think it would be more than 150. In total it's almost like 300 to 400 lives have been lost already and the state government is doing nothing to stop this violence.

What emboldens people on both sides to engage in such murder?

I don't know about the other side (the Meiteis), but from our side, we are protecting our lands. This issue (violence) cropped up because of the land issue.

All this violence started because the Meiteis, who are the majority in the state, are trying to grab the lands of the tribals (Kuki Zo) who are on the hills. That's how the feeling of insecurity started and that's when the (Kuki Zos) began distrusting (the Meiteis).

All this anger and mistrust came to the fore when we had a rally on May 3, 2023 to fight against or to deny the demand of ST (scheduled tribe) status for the Meiteis.

When they (the Meiteis) are already a majority people and (belong to the) higher race why are they demanding to become tribals again by demanding ST status? This is a very tricky scheme to grab tribal land.

The Constitution of India protects tribal lands saying that no non-tribal can purchase the land (from tribals).

What has made Kuki land so precious for Meiteis that they want to grab hold of lands on the hills?

I don't know if you are aware of Manipur's geography. The Imphal Valley, which is about 600 to 700 square kilometres, is the only land occupied by the Meiteis. The rest of the state is hilly terrain where tribals (Kuki Zo) live.

In terms of population, the population of the Meiteis is more (than that of the Kukis) and their land area is less. So they need more land. They have been thinking of ways to get tribal land -- demanding

Contd.

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ST quota is one way.

When N Biren Singh become the chief minister, he started bringing up forest policies like reserved forests and started claiming all these reserve forests which fall under the tribal areas belong to the state and so must go back to the state.

It sounds very good to conserve the environment but the tribals are not convinced because we think that this is a way to grab our land.

While you have written a letter to the home minister asking for a judicial inquiry into the killing of 10 Kuki Zo volunteers, do you condemn the killing of six Meiteis, including women and two infants last month? Does the ITLF condemn such violence which allegedly was perpetrated by Kuki militants?

Violence in any form is condemnable, be it violence done by our side or their side. ITLF has always condemned all forms of violence.

There is no justification for these kinds of killings.

Why does it become so easy for Kukis to enter Meitei territories and Meiteis to enter Kuki territories and kill each other?

I think that is wrong. We have never entered Meitei territory. If we entered, we would be killed.

You said that 150 Meiteis too have lost their lives in the ongoing violence in Manipur. How did these 150 Meiteis die then?

When they came to attack the Kuki villages, our volunteers retaliated, that's when they (150 Meiteis) lost their lives. If you ask even the Indian Army or anyone (other paramilitary troops stationed in the state), you would never hear of Kuki volunteers entering Meitei areas and killing their people.

It's only when the Meitei militants come to attack our villages when we retaliate. In the process of retaliation they lost their lives.

Is the ITLF demanding replacement of the CRPF by some other central paramilitary force?

We do not make such demands. Even before the Jiribam incident (killing of 10 Kukis by the CRPF) happened, from the beginning (of the violence), we have expressed our apprehensions about the CRPF because we know that Meitei officers are embedded within the CRPF and we don't trust them.

We even opposed when there was an order from the ministry of home affairs pulling out some battalions of the Assam Rifles to other places, and replacing them with the CRPF.

We do not have any confidence in the CRPF because of the Meitei officers embedded there.

Would you be happy if CRPF is replaced by Assam Rifles again? Would it help contain violence?

We do not trust CRPF and our mistrust is confirmed by the Jiribam killings. When Zairon village was attacked by militants, a CRPF camp was nearby but the CRPF did not even fire a single shot to thwart the violence. They were quiet, they let the attack happen.

And on the next day they killed 10 of our volunteers again. In the minds of all the tribals it's clear that the CRPF is not for (protecting) us.

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Pauboi
@pbkhuptong

Seeking Justice at Jantar Mantar, Delhi

10 MLA sit-in-protest against state sponsor ethnic cleansing against the Kuki, Zomi and Hmar in Manipur by Meiteis.

Demanding Separate Administration and financial assistance from the Union Government.

Hats off to pu Vungzagin, who was left to death by Arambai Tenggol on May 4, 2023.

@HMOIndia @PMOIndia



3:46 PM · Dec 10, 2024 · 1,508 Views



Manipur Police
@manipur_police

On 09.12.2024, Manipur Police and Forest Department conducted poppy destruction in the hill range of Sihai Khullen village, Ukhrul. Approx. 55 acres of poppy plantation was destroyed and 5 huts which were found in the poppy fields were burned down. An FIR has been registered and efforts are being made to identify the culprits.



8:07 AM · Dec 10, 2024 · 1,814 Views



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THEN THEY'LL COME

Then they'll come, and plead with us,
"Forget, and bury this bitter trust."
But hear me now, and mark it well—
'Tis not a wound that time can quell.
For the trees and winds, they whisper clear,
The dues in blood we have to clear.
'Tis not a grief that we can hide,
For not the oceans, deep and wide,
Could wash away the sorrow we bear,
This burden beyond all compare.

Then they'll come, and bid us peace,
"Forgive, and let the rancor cease."
But listen close, and understand—
Is there one among us with the strength to stand?
To shake the hand, with blood still stained,
Of those who caused our people pain?
Would the dead, whose cries still ring,
Approve such acts, or curse the sting?
So, could we forgive and turn the page,
Or rise with wrath, and fuel our rage?

~ *Seikang Haokip*