

Thingkho *Le* Malcha

A Daily Newsletter by KSO Media & Documentation Cell



AWAITING JUSTICE



GOUSANGKUNG (37 YEARS)

S/O KHUPLALLOM

ADDRESS: NALON, LAMKA

DATE OF INCIDENT: 23RD FEBRUARY, 2024

PLACE OF INCIDENT: KHOUSABUNG, LAMKA

CAUSE OF DEATH: DIED AT THE LINE OF DUTY



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.

KANGPOKPI ERUPTS IN MASS PROTESTS OVER ARMY'S LEIMAKHONG ROADBLOCK; WARN OF ESCALATING AGITATION

Kangpokpi District witnessed a total shutdown and mass protests today, organized by the Committee on Tribal Unity (CoTU) in response to alleged “unwarranted road restrictions” imposed by the Army at Leimakhong. The 12-hour bandh, spanning from 4:00 AM to 4:00 PM, paralyzed daily life, leaving National Highway 2 deserted and businesses shuttered.

The protests were sparked by the Army’s road closures following the abduction of an MES employee from Leimakhong cantonment—a move strongly criticized by CoTU as “regrettable and unjustified.” While the tribal body expressed support for search operations to locate the abducted individual, they condemned the restrictions as excessive, causing unnecessary hardship to the public.

Women and youth volunteers enforced the shutdown at key points such as Kangpokpi, Keithelmanbi, and Gamgiphai, as heavy security deployments ensured peace. Simultaneously, protests erupted at multiple locations, including Saikul, Kangchup, and the Twilang Region. Protestors carried banners with messages like “We Demand Our Lifeline Back” and “We Want Justice,” calling for an immediate end to the roadblocks.

CoTU leaders addressed gatherings at various protest sites, emphasizing the community’s demands and discussing potential escalation if their grievances remain unaddressed.

Despite the peaceful conclusion of today’s actions, tensions persist, with CoTU vowing to intensify their agitation unless the roadway restrictions are lifted promptly.

Slamming the army’s blockade of the Leimakhong road, CoTU Spokesperson Ng. Lun Kipgen condemned



the army’s actions during a powerful statement made at a mass protest, calling it a direct attack on the lifeline of the Kuki-Zo community.

According to Kipgen, the road, which connects Lamka and Sadar Hills, was built by the community without government aid and is now being unjustly restricted.

“This road is not just a path; it’s our lifeline,” Kipgen declared. “Blocking it has brought hardship to a community already struggling. This road, built by our own hands, should not be dragged into political disputes. It is crucial for our survival, and such restrictions are unacceptable.”

Kipgen questioned the army’s neutrality, accusing them of aligning with the Meitei community’s ethnocentric narrative. “The army, once trusted as a neutral force, has failed us. Their actions now seem to support a divisive agenda, further alienating the Kuki-Zo people,” he said.

Highlighting the double standards, Kipgen pointed out that the Kuki-Zo community has never blocked vehicles traveling to Imphal, despite the lack of reciprocity. “Why is our road being targeted? The Kuki-Zo people cannot even travel to Imphal safely,

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yet the only alternative route to Churachandpur is being blocked. This is unjust, and it must stop immediately,” he asserted.

Kipgen called for urgent intervention by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, urging the immediate lifting of restrictions on the Leimakhong highway. “The army must reconsider its stance. This blockade only deepens the crisis and sets a dangerous precedent,” he warned.

He also made a strong appeal to Home Minister Amit Shah, demanding a shift in control over law and order to the Defence Ministry. “If the State Chief Minister

cannot maintain order and neutrality, then it is time to hand over control of all state and central forces to the Defence Ministry. Only then can we hope for fairness in the discharge of their duties,” he said.

With the Kuki-Zo community standing firm in their demand for justice, Ng. Lun Kipgen concluded, “The Leimakhong road blockade is more than just a road issue—it’s a matter of survival and dignity,” signaling that the community will not back down until the restrictions are lifted.

INDIGENOUS TRIBAL LEADERS’ FORUM ANNOUNCES PLANS TO HONOR JIRIBAM MARTYRS

The Indigenous Tribal Leaders’ Forum (ITLF) held an emergency meeting today to discuss the tragic deaths of the martyrs killed in Jiribam recently. The meeting resulted in several key resolutions to honor the fallen and ensure that proper procedures are followed.

Postmortem Reports Reviewed: Forensic and legal experts reviewed the postmortem reports and confirmed that they were satisfactory. The ITLF Legal Cell, along with the Hmar Students Association (HSA), will take further legal actions in response to the deaths.

Martyrs’ Burial and Condolences Program: ITLF announced that the twelve martyrs will be laid to rest with full honor and respect on December 5, 2024. A program to pay condolences will be held at Peace Ground in Tuibuong. A committee has been formed to plan the event.

Final Homecoming Ceremony: The martyrs’ families will have the opportunity to perform the final rites and homecoming ceremony on the afternoon of December 4, 2024.

Silent Rally on Burial Day: On December 5, a massive silent rally will take place as the bodies of the martyrs are transported from Ngurte and the surrounding villages to the Public Ground in Hiangtam Lamka. The procession will then continue to Peace Ground.

Total Shutdown on December 5: In a show of respect, ITLF has called for a complete shutdown on December 5, 2024, to honor the martyrs.

The ITLF has requested the Joint Philanthropic Organization (JPO) to arrange for the transportation of the martyrs’ remains and preparation of their graves at the Martyrs Cemetery in Sehken. Student organizations are urged to prepare placards and banners for the silent rally.

The ITLF expressed deep gratitude to the JPO and HSA for their selfless efforts in ensuring the dignified transfer of the martyrs’ remains, acknowledging their dedication and compassion.

LAPC HOLDS PUBLIC RALLY OVER UNJUST ROAD CLOSURE

A peaceful rally was organized today by the Leimakhong Area Protection Committee (LAPC), as instructed by the Committee on Tribal Unity (COTU), aimed at fostering awareness and building bridges between the Army and the Kuki-Zo people of the Leimakhong area to ensure peaceful co-existence.

The rally, attended by a large number of participants, sought to emphasize the importance of maintaining peace and understanding in a time of heightened tensions. The LAPC reminded the public of the responsible conduct exhibited by the Kuki-Zo community during previous incidents. Notably, the community refrained from protesting the brutal act of pulling down a person in front of the Army near Haraothel on 4th May 2023, choosing instead to show respect for the armed forces. Similarly, two Meetei individuals caught near the Ex-servicemen colony in 2023 were handed over to the Army without incident.

However, the rally's focus also addressed several concerns. The LAPC and COTU condemned the abduction of a person from within an Army camp on 25th November 2024, calling the incident unfortunate. Despite this, the LAPC extended full cooperation to the Army during subsequent combing operations in local villages.

The rally also raised concerns over the Army's current policies, particularly regarding the entry of people from other communities into Army camps. The LAPC urged the Army to reconsider this policy to prevent further incidents of abduction and kidnapping, suggesting that local workers be employed instead to support developmental work in the region.

Another key point raised was the closure of the Army gates in Leimakhong, which serve as the primary lifeline connecting the districts of Kangpokpi and Churachandpur. Participants questioned the rationale behind the gate closures, highlighting the adverse impact on essential daily services such as ration distribution, medical treatment, and transportation



for local residents. The LAPC voiced concern over potential human rights violations due to restricted access to these vital services, which had been provided without issue for decades.

The rally also called attention to the disruption caused to candidates of the Territorial Army recruitment process. Medical candidates, who had been directed to undergo re-examinations at the 183 Military Hospital in Leimakhong, were reportedly turned away without receiving the necessary medical check-ups, leading to further frustrations in the community.

In conclusion, the LAPC demanded the immediate reopening of the Army gates, with the same timings of 6 AM to 6 PM and extended hours as previously observed. They emphasized the importance of these gates for the movement of the local population, particularly during the ongoing ethnic conflict, where alternative routes are unsafe. The committee reiterated the need for the Army to respect the fundamental rights of the people in the region and to work toward a solution that upholds peace and cooperation for all.

The rally concluded with a call for increased dialogue and resolution to the issues raised, hoping to restore a sense of security and mutual respect between the Army and the Kuki-Zo community of Leimakhong.

ARE CLAIMS OF KUKIS FROM MANIPUR SETTling IN KARBI ANGLONG FACT OR FICTION? VILLAGE SURVEYS WILL FIND OUT

Kuki leaders in Assam's Karbi Anglong have agreed to surveys being conducted in their villages to ascertain if there are any people from the community from Manipur staying there. This comes after a Chief Executive Member (CEM) of Assam's Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) claimed that "around 1,000" members of the Kuki community moved from Manipur to the region because of the ongoing violence and that they would be made to move from there.

As The Indian Express had reported earlier, local Kuki leaders maintain this is a baseless allegation, and that no Kukis from Manipur have settled there. However, they said that they agreed to the surveys in a meeting convened by the CEM on Thursday in the hope that such an exercise will put to rest concerns on this matter.

On Thursday, KAAC CEM Tuliram Ronghang had convened a meeting with Kuki gaon buras (village heads), members of the Kuki Students' Organisation, and other members of the community. In a statement, Ronghang said that the meeting "focused on concerns regarding illegal settlements of some migrants from Manipur in Karbi Anglong".

He announced that in the meeting, it was resolved to form a task force which would include local leaders, revenue officials and members of the Kuki Students' Organisation and Karbi Students' Organisation to "survey and identify illegal immigrants in Kuki-dominated areas". He said that the meeting had also resolved that "any illegal migrants from Manipur or other areas will be deported to their places of origin".

The KAAC has jurisdiction over the two hill districts of Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong and governs them under provisions of the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. This is a largely tribal region with a mix of different tribes, of which the Karbis – Assam's

third largest tribe and its largest hill tribe – are the largest in number. Kukis and Hmars, which are part of the Kuki-Zomi umbrella and are scattered across different states in the Northeast, including Manipur, are also among the tribes from this region.

Groups such as the Karbi Students' Association and the Karbi Lammet Amai, a literary body, have approached the autonomous council alleging an influx of Kukis from Manipur and asking that such movement be monitored, following which Ronghang made his earlier statement and called the meeting.

"In the meeting I had questioned where 1,000 such people would even stay in our small villages in the hills. Yes, in May, June, July last year, when the violence began, a few families had come from Manipur seeking shelter, but they have all left and gone to Mizoram now. Since then, no such refugee has come from Manipur. I said in the meeting that if my statement is not enough to convince, we agree to a joint survey team being formed and if needed, it can go from village to village doing surveys but the local gaon buras have to be a part of it," said Paolen Kipgen, chairman of the Kuki Gaon Bura Association of Karbi Anglong.

"We also agreed that if any such people are found, they should be returned. I mentioned that in the name of such alleged influx however, the local Kuki community should not be affected and that their lives and properties should be protected. The CEM assured that all communities living in Karbi Anglong will live in peace," said KSO Karbi Anglong president Lengin Singson.



The Shillong Times
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FEATURED EDITORIAL

Manipur: BJP's Fatal Flaw

A state that has been on the boil for 18 months and is ruled by a Chief Minister who leans towards one warring group and labels the other as “narco-terrorists” and illegal migrants but is allowed by an insensitive central government to continue to hold the reins of government, cannot be expected to reach any solution. The Kukis and Meiteis are both suffering. Lives have been lost on both sides of the divide and both communities have been displaced and lost their hearths and homes to arson. People from the hills of Manipur holding jobs in the Imphal valley cannot return to their stations and vice versa. Manipur should have in all fairness and going by the tenets of the Constitutions been brought under President’s Rule since at least two militant outfits belonging to the Meitei community namely the Arambai Tengol and Meetei Leepun have been running amok and allowed to loot weapons from the police armoury at the start of the violence on May 3, 2023. How was this even allowed to happen? How could a militant outfit summon the legislators from their community to direct them to hold on to a particular view – which is to reject the idea of a separate administration for the Kuki-Zo inhabited areas in the hills of Manipur. That has been the demand of the Kuki-Zo people since all development, including location of several institutions

has been skewed in favour of Imphal which houses the majority Meitei community.

It is the bounden duty of the Central Government, more so when both are from the same ideological framework, to step in and curb internal disturbances that are not controlled within a few days. It is also the duty of the Central Government to prevent killings and bloodshed between people within a state and which the State Government has failed to control. Manipur is a clear example of a Constitutional breakdown yet the BJP-led Government at the Centre refuses to budge. The Prime Minister does not seem to care what happens to a state in the distant periphery which only matters during election season.

As per Article 356 of Indian Constitution, the President can proclaim President’s Rule in a state, if he/she is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the government of a State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. Is this not the case with Manipur? Has governance not broken down completely? President’s Rule is

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meant to be a crisis management strategy to bring down violence and killings. President's Rule empowers the Central government to intervene and take direct control of the State's administration during times of political instability, law and order issues, or other crises that prevent the State government from functioning effectively. Why is this constitutional machinery not invoked? Merely adding boots on the ground, mainly

central forces, when the command and control is not in the hands of the central government, is unlikely to end the Manipur crises because the uniformed personnel have no countervailing impact. But does the Modi Government care? Do lives in Manipur really matter?

Published by [The Shillong Times](#)



Sushant Singh
@SushantSin



Never in India's history in independent India has the union government abdicated its primary responsibility of asserting its authority and ensuring monopoly over violence. Not for want of effort. From Mizoram to Punjab to Kashmir, nowhere. But now, in Manipur 🙄

"Nobody wants to speak. Even we, MLAs, who are facing such threats, are afraid to come out in the open and say anything, fearing for our safety," a BJP MLA said.

Talking about how the atmosphere of fear is playing out, the second MLA told ThePrint that all the assembly constituencies in the Imphal Valley now have a unit of Arambai Tenggol (AT), a Meitei socio-cultural group, which transformed into a radical armed outfit operating like militia since the ethnic conflict with the Kukis broke out last May.

"AT has a unit in all constituencies. Their members move around freely in broad daylight, brandishing weapons. Even the MLAs are expected to give them donations for buying arms, ration, etc. It's happening openly but nobody dare speak about it out of fear. Have you heard something like this in any other Indian state?" the MLA said.

20:06 · 29 Nov 24 · 6,773 Views



Vijaita Singh
@vijaita

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Clamour for President's Rule gaining momentum in Imphal: Siddharth Mridul, Former CJ, Manipur HC who retired on Nov 21

"Peace hasn't returned to Manipur, situation worsened in the past 1-year", Justice Mridul in an exlntw with The Hindu

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Clamour for President's Rule increasing in Imphal, says former Chief Justice of Manipur High Court

8:33 · 30 Nov 24 · 4,317 Views

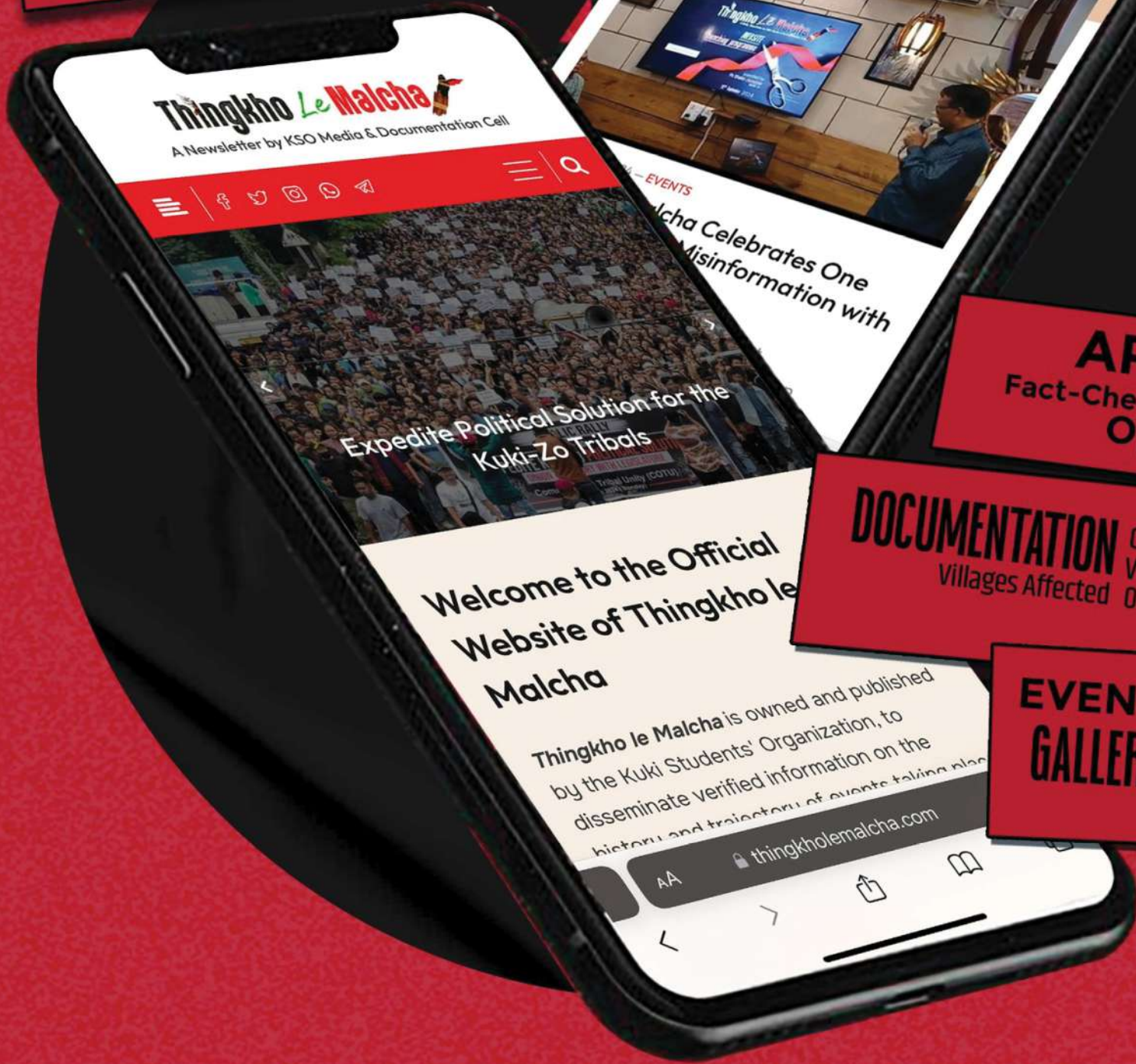


He will win who knows when to fight and when not to fight.

— Sun Tzu



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A CALL TO UNITY AND *Justice*

**With hearts still heavy, with souls still sore,
We seek justice for the crimes of yore.
The perpetrators, brought to account, one day,
For the pain, the suffering, they've caused along the way.**

**To our indignant souls, a glimmer of peace,
A solace that comes, with the truth released.
The aspersions cast, without a shred of proof,
Will not deter us, from the justice we pursue.**

**We remember the past, the misdeeds of old,
The Meitei society, with its self-centered gold.
Their oppression, a weight, we've borne for so long,
But now we rise, united, and strong.**

**Like our tribal brethren, in Mizoram, Nagaland, and more,
We too, must stand, for our rights, and our future's score.
Separation, the only solution, we now proclaim,
To free ourselves, from this oppressive regime's chain.**

**Let us march forward, together, hand in hand,
With a clarion call, for a brighter future to stand.
Separation, our only hope, our only way,
To rise above, the oppression, of yesterday.**

~ Jerry Pulamte