

Thingkho *Le* Malcha

A Weekly Newsletter by KSO Media & Documentation Cell

THE HILLS ARE SAFE WITHOUT MEITEIS

Thousands of Kuki-Zo women staged a sit-in protest against alleged attempts by the Meitei community to conduct rituals at the disputed Thangting Hills, which the Meitei referred to as 'Ching-Kaba

PARALYSIS POLICY

Spontaneity is missing in the actions of Nagas whenever situation calls for taking urgent decision without inordinate delay.



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KUKI VICTIMS' UPDATE

As on 09. 03. 2025



226
DEATHS

* Lalgouthang Singsit



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.

THOUSANDS OF KUKI-ZO WOMEN STAGE PROTEST AGAINST MEITEIS ATTEMPT TO TRESPASS INTO THANGTING HILLS



Lamka, April 13: In a powerful display of solidarity and resistance, thousands of Kuki-Zo women staged a sit-in protest at N. Zalenphai village and other frontline areas including Gothol and Khausabung, voicing strong opposition to alleged attempts by the Meitei community to conduct rituals at the disputed Thangting Hills, which the Meitei referred to as 'Ching-Kaba'.

The protests were sparked by what the Kuki-Zo community described as repeated encroachment efforts under the guise of religious rituals. The demonstrators, holding placards reading "Go Back Meitei," "Respect Buffer Zones," and "Don't Politicise Ching-Kaba," condemned the move as an infringement on their land and identity.

The sit-in at N. Zalenphai was attended by various civil society organisation (CSO) leaders. DJ Haokip, General Secretary of the Kuki Students' Organisation (KSO) Churachandpur, told the media that religion should not be weaponised for political or territorial gains. "This frequent attempt by the Meiteis to encroach or trespass is uncalled for. We are not opposed to rituals of any religion, but manipulating religion to suppress others is not freedom of religion," he stated.

At Gothol, Henlianthang Thanglet, Chairman of the Kuki-Zo Council (KZC), addressed the gathering, expressing dissatisfaction over recent talks held with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in New Delhi on April 5. He stated that the KZC returned without signing any agreements, emphasizing that their actions would align with the will of the people. "Our struggle will not go in vain. We will fight together until our desired goal is achieved," he assured the crowd.

The coordinated protests across multiple villages highlighted the growing tensions over territorial rights and cultural preservation in the region. The demonstrators called for respect for buffer zones and demanded that their churches be rebuilt before any religious events by the Meiteis are allowed in the contested areas.

During the sit-in, womenfolk could be seen holding placards with messages such as: 'Go Back Meitei,' 'Respect Buffer Zones,' 'The Hills are Safe Without Meiteis,' 'No Forced Intrusion,' 'No Forced Trespassing,' 'Don't Politicise Chingkaba,' 'Religion is Sacred, Don't Use It as a Scapegoat,'

KUKI INPI MANIPUR SLAMS N. BIREN SINGH'S STATEMENTS; REITERATES KUKI-ZOS' DEMAND FOR UT WITH LEGISLATURE

Lamka, April 09: Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM), an apex body of Kuki Tribes, has expressed its deep concern over the recent statements made by Mr. N. Biren Singh, in which he claims control over both the hill districts and the valley regions of the state.

KIM said, "This assertion is not only misleading but also contradicts his earlier public stance, wherein he acknowledged the clear and strategic division of administrative responsibilities between himself and Union Home Minister Amit Shah."

In a statement issued on April 9 (Wednesday), the Kuki apex body reminded the public that in June 2023, amidst a grave escalation of ethnic violence in the state, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had assumed direct responsibility for the administration of the hill districts. This move was made in response to the urgent need for impartial and effective governance in these conflict-ridden regions. N. Biren Singh was, in turn, assigned the role of restoring peace in the valley, it stated.

"This division of responsibility was not only strategic but also welcomed by the Kuki-Zo community, who had lost trust in the Manipur state government following the violent events that erupted on May 3, 2023. The community viewed this move as a step toward justice, and fairness, and the beginning of genuine efforts at peace-building," KIM said.

Janghaolun Haokip, Information and Publicity, KIM, has claimed that as a result of such arrangement, buffer zones were established between the Meitei and Kuki-Zo areas, which effectively curtailed large-scale violence and saved countless lives.

"These zones, initiated and overseen by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, remain crucial in de-



escalating tensions and providing a semblance of order amidst the ongoing conflict," he said.

Haokip also alleged that former Chief Minister Biren Singh's recent claim of controlling both hills and valleys not only contradicts his earlier statements but also undermines the authority and effectiveness of the Union Home Ministry and the conscience of the general public.

"Changing narratives at will reflect a disturbing pattern of shifting responsibility and avoiding accountability intended to mislead and manipulate the public," he said, demanding that N. Biren Singh should refrain from making statements that distort the truth, diminish the role of the Union Government, or jeopardize ongoing efforts toward peace and reconciliation.

Kuki Inpi Manipur reiterated that the Kuki-Zo community remains resolute in its demand for separation from the Manipur state government and for direct administration under the Union Government in the form of a Union Territory. "This is essential for safeguarding our rights, dignity, and future-and the Kuki-Zo people will continue to strive for it to the end," it added.

CoTU MOOTS GAMGIPHAI CHECKPOINT REOPENING AFTER KEITHELMANBI INCIDENT, CAUTIONS TRANSPORTERS AMID ONGOING HOSTILITY

Kangpokpi, April 12: In a strong response to the tragic road accident at Keithelmanbi Military Colony on April 11, where a Meitei man concealed among sacks of potatoes was injured while en route to Imphal, the Committee on Tribal Unity (CoTU), Sadar Hills Kangpokpi District, expressed deep shock over the presence of the individual and mooted the reopening of the Gamgiphai Checkpoint to resume strict vehicle checking.

The Committee recalled that women volunteers were earlier deployed at Gamgiphai Checkpoint to verify commuters traveling along National Highway-2 for security purposes—until the checkpoint was recently dismantled by security forces.

Despite the ongoing conflict, CoTU commended the residents of Keithelmanbi Military Colony for their humanitarian response, highlighting their adherence to traditional Kuki-Zo war ethics, which emphasize the protection of innocents, women, and children even during warfare. The Committee recalled multiple instances where innocent Meitei individuals, women, and children were rescued during the ongoing unrest and returned safely to their families with dignity.

However, the Committee expressed outrage at what it views as a deliberate crossing into Kuki-Zo territory, especially amid the community's strong opposition to the Government's Free Movement policy. CoTU stated that this act is not only alarming but also indicates a continued attempt to breach the fragile security of Kuki-Zo areas.

Vehemently condemning the reckless act of smuggling a Meitei individual through the area, CoTU warned that any recurrence of such incidents would be met with decisive and forceful action. The Committee described the event as a deliberate and provocative act, adding, "This may not be the first attempt—but it will be the last if we have our way."

Issuing a stern reminder to truck drivers, transport

unions, and other concerned authorities operating along National Highway-2, CoTU warned against transporting individuals from conflicting communities through sensitive areas, citing the potential for misunderstandings and dangerous flare-ups.

For any future violations, the Committee made it clear that full responsibility would lie with the truckers' unions and the authorities involved, reiterating its commitment to act decisively to uphold security and accountability.

Calling for immediate action, CoTU urged the concerned authorities to deter, refrain from, and desist from permitting such violations within Kuki-Zo territories.

Following the Keithelmanbi incident, CoTU mooted to reopen the Gamgiphai Checkpoint and resume strict vehicle checks day and night to prevent further breaches of security.

"Gamgiphai Checkpoint has now become a vital necessity to prevent further border crossings and maintain security in the Kuki-Zo areas," the statement read.

The Committee emphasized that the checkpoint is crucial to ensuring the safety and stability of the region, especially given the community's firm opposition to the Free Movement policy and the heightened risks associated with border crossings.

Finally, CoTU made a fervent appeal to the entire Kuki-Zo community to remain vigilant and united, urging them to actively safeguard their territories and support security protocols to prevent such incidents from escalating into larger confrontations.

KUKI-ZO LEADERS CITE TWO CORE REASONS FOR REJECTING DELHI AGREEMENT DURING RECEPTION CEREMONY IN KANGPOKPI



Kangpokpi, April 11: In a momentous display of unity and pride, the Kuki-Zo community in Sadar Hills, Kangpokpi District, rolled out the red carpet to honor their leaders who participated in the high-level Delhi talks with the Government of India in New Delhi on April 5. The talks, which marked a critical step in addressing the ongoing ethnic conflict, saw strong and principled representation from the Kuki-Zo leadership.

A grand public reception, organized by the Committee on Tribal Unity (CoTU), Sadar Hills Kangpokpi District, was held at the KBC Hall in Kangpokpi District Headquarters. The atmosphere was electric with emotion, anticipation, and unity as hundreds gathered to welcome the returning leaders with open arms and unwavering support.

The event was graced by a host of prominent tribal leaders including those from Kuki Inpi Sadar Hills, Thadou Inpi, various tribe-based organizations, student bodies, and women's groups. Their presence underscored a collective commitment to justice, and the aspirations of the Kuki-Zo people.

During the reception, the Kuki-Zo leaders who participated in the Delhi dialogue took the stage to brief the community on the proceedings. They emphasized that while the talks were constructive, they chose not to sign any agreement at this juncture. The decision, they clarified, stemmed from a need to ensure that the final terms fully reflect the rightful demands and secure future of the Kuki-Zo people.

“We are not here with an agreement, but with a message—that we will not compromise our people’s future for the sake of a hurried solution,” one of the leaders declared, drawing thunderous applause from the crowd.

The event was more than just a reception; it was a reaffirmation of identity, a call for justice, and a powerful expression of solidarity. The community stood united in its resolve, sending a clear message to all stakeholders: the path to peace must be paved with fairness, respect, and the genuine inclusion of the Kuki-Zo voice.

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As the curtains fell on the emotional gathering, chants of unity and determination echoed through the hills of Kangpokpi, marking yet another chapter in the people's resilient pursuit of justice and self-determination.

Addressing the media at a high-stakes press conference, the Chairman of the Kuki-Zo Council (KZC) firmly rejected the six-point proposal set forth by the Government, stating that the terms were unacceptable and constituted the primary reason for the Council's decision to refrain from signing the proposed agreement.

The six-point proposal set by the Government includes:

1. An appeal to their people to refrain from engaging in violence targeting members of the other community, and a call for the administration to take strong action against perpetrators of violence.
2. Appreciation for the steps taken by the Governor to facilitate the deposit of arms, along with an assurance of continued cooperation in this regard to instill a sense of security among the people.
3. An acknowledgment of the difficulties faced by the public due to the obstruction of free movement on national and state highways, and an appeal to the public to cooperate with the administration to normalize the functioning of these routes.
4. A decision to welcome any initiative by the Government to facilitate the return of internally displaced persons to their respective places, subject to logistical and security arrangements made by the Government.
5. An appeal to the Government to prioritize development activities in areas that were neglected during the conflict.
6. An agreement that all long-term and contentious issues will be taken up with the Government of India (Ministry of Home Affairs) for resolution through dialogue and consultation with the concerned communities.

The Chairman highlighted a critical flaw in the Delhi talks: the lack of genuine representation. "The Meitei civil society organisations, AMUCO and FOCS, involved in the talks do not hold a mandate from their community and cannot be considered legitimate representatives. This is the second key reason we declined to sign the agreement," he asserted.

The KZC leader further clarified that it was, in fact, the Kuki-Zo Council that initially proposed a Cessation of Hostilities—a proposal the Government accepted by inviting both communities for talks in Delhi.

However, the first joint meeting between the Kuki-Zo and Meitei representatives quickly turned emotional, exposing the deep-rooted wounds between the communities. "When such high-level engagements are planned, the Government must first hold separate consultations with each of the warring communities," the Chairman stressed. "Only after a breakthrough is achieved at the individual level should a joint dialogue be facilitated."

He reiterated a strong appeal to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to engage with both the Kuki-Zo and Meitei communities separately, but strictly through mandated representatives to ensure any future talks is meaningful and legitimate.

The Chairman also expressed concern over the lack of clarity regarding the next round of talks. "We were informed that no further joint meetings will be initiated. If we are not invited or consulted, how are we expected to participate?" he questioned.

The press conference concluded with a call for a more thoughtful, structured, and respectful approach—one that acknowledges the complexity of the conflict and respects the voices of legitimate stakeholders.

TRAGEDY TURNS TESTAMENT OF HUMANITY IN CONFLICT ZONE: KUKI-ZO LOCALS RESCUE INJURED MEITEI MAN IN HIGHWAY ACCIDENT

Kangpokpi, April 12: In a striking display of humanity amid ongoing ethnic tensions, a tragic road accident in the conflict-ridden region of Manipur brought out an inspiring act of compassion from the local Kuki-Zo community.

At around 3:00 PM today, a truck transporting potatoes en route to Imphal met with a fatal accident near Keithelmanbi Military Colony along National Highway-2 in Sadar Hills, Kangpokpi District—a Kuki-Zo dominated area.

Locals, upon hearing the crash, rushed selflessly to the scene to offer help, braving the risk of casualties. To their astonishment, they discovered an injured man concealed among the potato sacks in the truck. He was identified as Hemam Prem Singh (36), son of H. Inaocha Singh, hailing from Moirang Turenbul Leikai, Ward No. 4 under Moirang Sub Division in Bishnupur District.

The victim belonged to the Meitei community—a fact that might have sparked alarm in any other circumstance, given the deep-rooted conflict between the Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities. However, in a moment that transcended enmity, the Kuki-Zo locals, together with Border Security Force (BSF) personnel



on Road Opening Patrol (ROP) duty, immediately rendered assistance.

Despite fierce opposition by the Kuki-Zo people to the Government's controversial Free Movement Regime (FMR) policy and the ongoing inter-ethnic hostilities, the locals set aside divisions and helped evacuate the injured man to a hospital for urgent treatment.

This unexpected act of humanity amidst adversity stands as a rare yet powerful reminder that compassion can prevail even in times of bitter strife.

Unsurprisingly, the good deeds of the Kuki-Zo locals were not covered by the Meitei Media and its journalists including Debanish Achom of NDTV

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**Courage is resistance to fear,
mastery of fear, not absence of fear.**

— Mark Twain

MLA VUNGZAGIN RETURNS HOME TWO YEARS AFTER BRUTAL MOB ATTACK

Lamka, April 12: After nearly two years of recovery in Delhi, Thanlon MLA Vungzagin Valte returned to Manipur this week—marking his first visit to the region since he was violently attacked by a Meitei mob during the early days of the May 2023 ethnic violence.

Valte, a prominent Kuki-Zo leader and former advisor to then Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, was ambushed on May 4, 2023, while returning from the CM's secretariat. Severely beaten and left for dead, the 62-year-old MLA had to be airlifted to Delhi for treatment, where he fought for his life for several months.

He arrived at Headquarter Veng by helicopter, where he was received by leaders of various Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), friends, and supporters. The sight of Valte—now in a wheelchair—evoked emotion and reflection across the political spectrum.

Speaking briefly to the media at Lengpui airport before arriving in Manipur, Valte said he received minimal support from the state during his medical treatment. “Despite my condition, the state offered me very limited assistance,” he said. He also strongly criticized former Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, accusing him of having long-standing biases against the Zo community.

Valte's return to the region is not just symbolic of survival, but also of the deep fractures in Manipur's political and ethnic landscape. His attack—carried out in broad daylight, right after a visit to the CM's office—exposes the severe breakdown of law and order during the initial stages of the ethnic conflict. That even a sitting MLA, a member of the ruling party and a close aide to the Chief



Minister, could be left for dead speaks volumes.

This incident, and the state's subsequent failure to support his recovery, underscores a chilling reality: in the Imphal valley, political power does not guarantee protection, especially for leaders from marginalized communities like the Kuki-Zo. The attack on Valte became a symbolic low point that highlighted the targeted nature of the violence and the selective inaction of the state machinery.

Moreover, Valte's public criticism of N. Biren Singh suggests that the fault lines run deep within the political establishment itself. His words will likely reignite debates over the role of state leadership in the escalation of violence and the government's handling of minority communities.

The return of MLA Vungzagin Valte is a powerful moment, not just for the Kuki-Zo people, but for all of Manipur. It is a stark reminder of how far the state has drifted from democratic norms.

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FEATURED ARTICLE

FPJ Interview: 'President's Rule Has Not Changed Ground Reality In Manipur,' Says Patricia Mukhim

Afrida Raman Ali

In an exclusive FPJ Interview, journalist Patricia Mukhim says President's Rule has failed to improve the situation in Manipur, where ethnic tensions, displacement, and insecurity continue to affect daily life.

Afrida: On February 13 this year, the Government of India imposed President's Rule in Manipur following the resignation of Chief Minister N. Biren Singh and the ongoing ethnic violence in the state. The expectation was that this move would help restore order and initiate dialogue. But has there been any real change on the ground?

Patricia Mukhim: Sadly, no. We don't see any real change. Those from the Kuki community, who have worked in Imphal for decades, are unable to return due to insecurity. How can we call this situation normal? It remains highly abnormal and fluid. People are still afraid of one another.

Afrida: In your recent column, you mention that even Parliament didn't engage meaningfully with the issue. Can you elaborate?

Patricia Mukhim: Exactly. The decision to ratify

President's Rule was rushed through Parliament in under an hour. It came up late in the day, allowing no scope for debate. It felt like an afterthought—just something that needed to be done. That's not fair to the people of Manipur. The opposition did raise valid concerns, but the lack of discussion shows that Manipur isn't a priority in the national discourse.

Afrida: That's quite disheartening. You also pointed out in your piece that the Prime Minister visited Guwahati but didn't make a short trip to Imphal.

Patricia Mukhim: Yes, and that was symbolic. Just a 30-minute flight could have shown that he stands with the people who've been displaced for nearly three years. These people have lost everything—their homes, documents, and years of education. The emotional and psychological trauma is immense. Many are still living in relief camps. Rebuilding their lives requires much more than symbolic gestures.

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Afrida: You also touched upon the broader alienation felt in the Northeast. Is that sentiment still strong?

Patricia Mukhim: Very much so. There's a sense that the Northeast is often ignored. When debates are pushed to late hours and national leaders fail to visit conflict-hit areas, it reinforces that feeling of neglect. People are aware that the government hosts lavish events abroad, yet struggles to show the same empathy at home.

Afrida: What is the security situation in Manipur today?

Patricia Mukhim: Deeply troubling. The state police, central forces, and even armed civilians are divided along ethnic lines—Meitei and Kuki. That destroys public trust. We needed an independent security force early on. By delaying President's Rule, the Centre let the divisions deepen. The Chief Minister himself has been accused of taking sides, which no leader of a diverse state should ever do.

Afrida: Is there any hope of dialogue or reconciliation between communities?

Patricia Mukhim: Unfortunately, no. I spoke to people from Manipur just days ago—they still guard their community boundaries with guns. Young men are doing 12-hour shifts to protect their villages. They're missing out on education, livelihoods, everything. It's not just about law and order anymore. It's about rebuilding trust, which is entirely absent.

Afrida: You've also highlighted serious issues with connectivity in the region.

Patricia Mukhim: Absolutely. Flights from Shillong to other Northeast capitals like Dimapur and Agartala have been discontinued. We often have to drive three

and a half hours to Guwahati airport for a 40-minute flight. Connectivity is worse than what the government claims. Despite tall promises, the Northeast remains cut off, even internally.

Afrida: There's a lot of official rhetoric about the Northeast being the 'Ashta Lakshmi' of India. What's your take on that?

Patricia Mukhim: It's just rhetoric unless it translates into real care and action. The ground reality tells a different story. Relief materials don't reach the hills because Imphal blocks them. People have to take long detours via Mizoram or Nagaland for medical aid. There is no meaningful discourse around this. Parliamentarians may speak up occasionally, but the micro-level suffering goes unheard.

Afrida: What do you believe the Government of India must do, urgently?

Patricia Mukhim: It must listen to the people. Rebuild trust. Ensure fair governance. Prioritize human lives over politics. And most importantly, visit Manipur. Show up. Engage. Acknowledge that these are Indian citizens whose futures are at stake. The situation cannot be brushed aside any longer.

Afrida: Thank you, Patricia, for sharing these critical insights. We hope the voices from Manipur are heard in the corridors of power.

Patricia Mukhim: Thank you, Afrida. Let's hope for real change—before it's too late.

Published by [The Free Press Journal](#)



FEATURED ARTICLE

Militant Groups Take Over Kuki Property, Flouting SC Order in President-Ruled Manipur

Yaqut Ali

In a dimly lit colony where sunlight barely reaches, some walls have the words “AT” and various numbers written on them. When asked about their meaning, locals explained that this was once a Kuki settlement and has now been “renamed” the Arambai Tenggol – AT – Colony. The area, known as Zomi Villa till 2023, in Manipur’s Imphal West district has undergone a dramatic transformation in other ways too.

Here, most shops are run by people who are not originally from Manipur, but locals said that the landlords of the buildings have “changed.” Businesses that once provided livelihoods for the Kuki community are now generating income for the militant group Arambai Tenggol, locals said. A police officer, stationed at a chowki fewer than 10 steps away, has little to add to this.

In September 2023, the Supreme Court ordered the Manipur government to ensure the protection of properties belonging to displaced persons, including those that had been destroyed or burned during the violence, and to prevent illegal encroachment. However, locals told The Wire that properties in Zomi Villa are now directly under the Arambai Tenggol’s control, and that the group has been profiting – illegally – from them.

This reporter asked a shopkeeper whether he had contacted his Kuki landlord – the rightful owner of the

shop – so as to be able to pay rent directly to him. The shopkeeper said that this was not possible. “Arambai even checks our phones. If they find us talking to Kuki people, they don’t just threaten us, they fine us. I want to sell everything I bought for my shop and go home. What’s the point of maintaining a livelihood like this when we can’t speak freely, can’t talk openly, and the government doesn’t help us?” he said.

Many shopkeepers echoed similar concerns. “Earlier, we paid security money to our rightful Kuki landlords. Now, we pay Arambai Tenggol. Is there any law in Manipur?” another shopkeeper asked.

There was some communication in the days after violence broke out on May 3, 2023 in the state. “In the beginning we were in touch with our rightful landlords but now they have stopped contacting us after coming to know that our life, too, is under threat,” said another shopkeeper. By ‘threat’, the shopkeeper ostensibly meant the Arambai Tenggol.

The militant group has seized control of all Kuki-owned houses and shops in Zomi Villa, marking

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Buildings with the 'AT' mark in Zomi Villa in Manipur's Imphal West. Photo: Yaqut Ali.

them with new identifiers. A building is likely to be branded with 'AT H.No.1' which stands for 'Arambai Tenggol, House Number 1'.

A local resident, requesting multiple times not to be named, described the situation as something akin to being held captive. "More than 300 militants live in this area, and the police take no action. They threaten us, demand money...I feel trapped in my own state," he said. Another resident told The Wire that over 70 Kuki homes and numerous shops in the Zomi Villa area are now under Arambai Tenggol's control, with the group collecting rent against these properties.

"Extortion has become the new normal in Imphal. They keep demanding money. It feels like we are earning for them, not for our families who live far away," said a shop owner. All of those who speak to The Wire say that they fear retribution and request anonymity.

In a month, the violence in Manipur will turn two years old. Manipur is under President's Rule and the Union government has taken charge of the entire state. Yet, this change in governance has not translated to tangible freedom for Imphal residents, thanks to Valley-based militant groups. Since the Zomi Villa area is within

the border of the Imphal West district, The Wire reached out to the Imphal West superintendent of police, but he refused to comment this and asked this reporter to contact the Manipur Police Headquarters.

A similar picture in Imphal East

A similar story is unfolding in New Lambulane of Imphal East, where Kuki families lived until September 2, 2023.

In July 2023, The Wire met with several families who shared how they were struggling to survive without their income in Imphal. One such family was that of Reverend S. Prim Vaiphei and his son Mang. This family managed to live in New Lambulane until September 2023, when both central and state forces ordered them to vacate the area due to security concerns. They were relocated to Kangpokpi.



When The Wire reached out to Vaiphei for an update on April 2 this year, his response was heartbreaking. "My beloved son Mang left us to be with the Lord on October 24, 2023, after we were pulled out of our home in New Lambulane. He suffered a cardiac arrest. It was a big blow to my family," Vaiphei said. Mang was possibly in his late thirties.

Describing Mang's final moments, Vaiphei said, "He had just returned from a walk and was sitting on a bench. He passed away without a word. His

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mother, after preparing tea, called him, but there was no response. When we checked, he was lifeless.”

The Wire had spoken to Mang in September 2023, a month before he died. Back then, he was deeply concerned about leaving Imphal. “My savings, everything I could use to earn a living, are left in Imphal. Now, I have no idea how I will survive or how I will take care of my family,” he had said.

Shortly after the Vaiphei family vacated New Lambulane, their home was looted and attacked by militant groups. Vaiphei recalled, “My house was attacked three times after being looted. The CRPF commander stationed in New Lambulane called me and said, ‘Uncle, even though I am here, I cannot protect your house. I have no power, no authority. I am just a silent spectator.’” He added, “After we left, we were told that everything had been taken. When Mang heard the news, he said, ‘Everything is gone – my computer, my TV, my cycle. I don’t work anymore. How will I ever buy those things again?’ I think the news of our home being looted weighed heavily on his heart.”

Currently, central and state forces patrol New Lambulane – effectively sealing off areas to prevent militant groups such as Arambai Tenggol and the UNLF from taking over Kuki properties.

However, despite security measures, this reporter found that a Kuki house on Playground Road in New Lambulane has been illegally occupied. The house, which belonged to Tonggoulen Singson, was burned on May 30, 2023, during the violence. Although it was partially saved from complete destruction by Meitei Pangal groups, it is now under the control of another Meitei group.

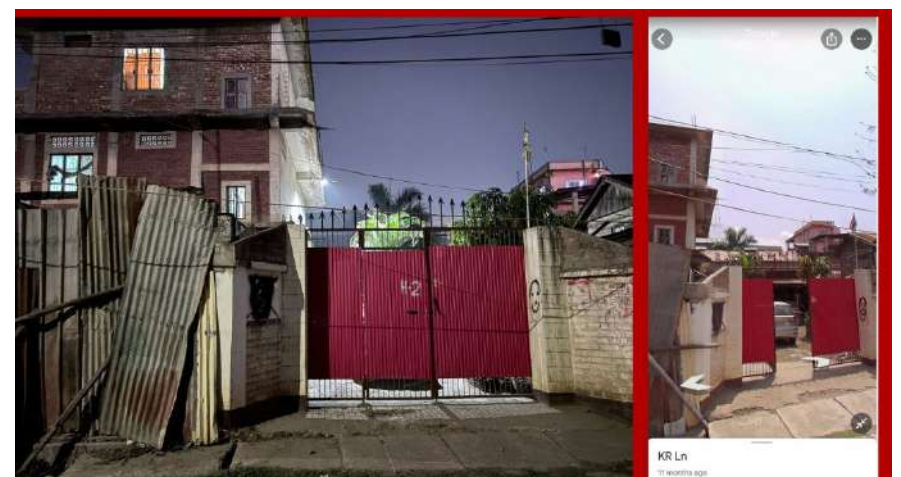
When The Wire last saw the house in May 2023, it was locked and had visible signs of arson. Now, it is locked from the inside, with a Meitei flag displayed at its entrance.

Speaking from his current residence in Kuki-majority Churachandpur, the owner of the house, Tonggoulen

Singson told The Wire, “A friend informed me that members of the suspected VBIG (Valley-Based Insurgent Groups) have occupied the section of our house that wasn’t burned.”

The Singson family fled Imphal on May 6, 2023, just three days after the violence erupted. Despite everything, Tonggoulen Singson still misses his home and the friendships he left behind in New Lambulane. “I didn’t even get time to say goodbye to my friends. I still hope things will improve soon.”

He said that he has discovered the stark difference between Imphal and Churachandpur, saying, “As the capital city, Imphal has most of the government facilities – good roads, reliable electricity, and proper internet. Churachandpur, on the other hand, has suffered years of government neglect, with dusty, poorly maintained roads and inadequate healthcare. But the hardest part is being away from our community....”



To verify these claims, The Wire cross-checked with Google’s Street View, footage from which indicates that the house has been occupied for at least the past 11 months. The street view images also confirm the presence of a car parked inside the property.

Published by [The Wire](#)



Are Tribals Afflicted By Policy Paralysis?

Ngaranmi Shimray

Circumstances that appears to be symptoms of policy paralysis is discussed to enable readers to decide whether it may not be totally wrong to conclude that tribals are slowly losing their sharpness.

Spontaneity is missing in the actions of Nagas whenever situation calls for taking urgent decision without inordinate delay. Take for instance the scrapping of FMR (Free Movement Regime) and border fencing issues. Mr N Biren Singh, as Chief Minister of Manipur, had urged the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on September 23, 2023 to scrap the Free Movement Regime (FMR) between India and Myanmar and construct border fencing along the Indo-Myanmar border. MHA took four months to consider the proposal and announced its decision on 8th February 2024 that FMR has been scrapped to ensure the internal security of the country and to maintain the demographic structure of India's North Eastern States bordering Myanmar. Two days ahead on 6th February 2024 MHA had announced its decision to fence the Indo-Myanmar border.

In Nagaland, where several tribes share social, economic, traditional and cultural heritage with their brethren across the border compared to only one Naga tribe in Manipur, there was hardly any protest from the Naga CSOs, political parties and public of the nature currently being witnessed. Now, in 2025, i.e. one year

after decision by MHA, a crescendo of protests is reverberating across Nagaland and Manipur. Protests at this stage, when decisions taken more than a year back are being implemented on ground, is meaningless. These protests may not yield any result as MHA will not roll back its decisions unless heaven falls. The protests are more or less symbolic for the slumbering Naga bodies to absolve themselves from their omission and redeem their self respect. Take, for example, another case of stupor from the Naga CSOs of Manipur. While the tribal-hill district of Churachandpur erupted on August 31, 2015 on the decision state legislature passing the Protection of Manipur People Bill, 2015, and two amendments in the Manipur Land Revenue and Land Reforms (7th Amendment) Bill and the Manipur Shops and Establishments (2nd Amendment) Bill, the Naga districts reaction was more or less subdued even if it seriously affected the Nagas too as these laws encroached into the rights of the tribals in "hill areas" safeguarded by Article 371-C.

Further, in the current ongoing ethnic conflict between the Meitei community and the Kuki-Zomi-Hmar tribes, when the issue of Manipur High

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Court's Oral order dated 27th March 2024 favouring ST status for Meitei community became public only on 19th April 2023 and triggered the clashes on 3rd May 2023 during the Tribal Students' Solidarity March, the Nagas stayed befuddled. The Nagas did not react to the violence perpetrated on the Kuki-Zomi-Hmar tribes by the Meiteis in Imphal. No Naga CSOs, leaders or bodies condemned the violence or pleaded for calm and peace to both parties.

Today, the tribes are faced with threats from the Meiteis community over designs of grabbing tribal lands in the "hill areas", but there are no concerted efforts by both the group of tribes to counter it through representations against the multi-pronged attack of Meitei leadership to grab tribal lands by:

1) trying to become ST so that they can buy land from another ST with a favourable Order from the Manipur High Court through deceit and legal manipulations;

(2) proposed redrawing of district boundaries between valley districts and hill districts to amalgamate portions of "hill areas" with valley districts in the guise of administrative convenience; proposal for amendment of Article 371-C to blur the boundaries between valley and "hill areas" and dilute the powers and functions of the Hill Areas Committee (HAC);

(3) attempt to sabotage the working of the HAC given for "hill areas" under Article 371-C by an order of the Speaker in September 2021 (now withdrawn) inducting 9 MLAs from the valley districts (non-hill areas) in the HAC; and

(4) provocative suggestions for amendment of the MLR&LR Act to extend it to hill areas with designs to usurp tribal lands by manipulation of law and monetary inducement.

All these strategies solely aimed at grabbing tribal lands is a serious threat given the fact that the Meitei community has 40 MLAs out of 60 in the Assembly and

controls the state government.

Furthermore, a number of Meitei leaders are openly opposing the directive of the Supreme Court for implementation of delimitation based on Census 2001 within three months, but the various tribal bodies, who are likely to be benefited by three additional number of MLA seats, have been keeping mum. The tribal bodies and leaders should be submitting representations to the Delimitation Commission, MHA, Governor etc. urging them to ensure that "rule of law" should be implemented and upheld in Manipur. It should be pointed out clearly that the dominant community should not be allowed to deny the tribes their rights under the Constitution.

The dominant community of Manipur has always been following such strategy of opposing everything that benefits the tribes and manipulating everything in their favour by majoritarian politics. The tribal bodies should fight back and carry out awareness campaigns in the hill district headquarters to educate the tribes of their rights. They should not make the familiar mistake of lying back and doing nothing while their opponents are working overtime to sabotage the decision of the Supreme Court. The silence of tribal bodies on all these issues is deafening. The slow and sluggish reaction/response begs a question whether policy paralysis has afflicted tribal leaders. Has decades of gradual stranglehold by extraneous forces over the tribal voices numbed the brains of tribal leaders? You decide. Citizens should, however, urge their leaders to petition various authorities to fight for the rights of the tribes of Manipur and Nagaland and not allow the oppressive forces to win.

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THE SOCIAL MEDIA BUZZ



KSO CHURACHANDPUR
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#Manipur

Major protests erupt at Zalenphai and Khousabung areas as the Kuki community strongly opposes proposed Meitei entry into our territories, demanding a comprehensive political solution.

Political solution first and entry later!

@rashtrapatibhvn @PMOIndia @HMOIndia @UN



PMO India and 9 others

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Today's mass protest at Zalenphai, Khousabung in Southern Kuki Hills is a strong stand against the attempted Meitei entry into Kuki territories!

#Manipur #KukiZo



Danasari Seethakka and 9 others

14:27 · 13 Apr 25 · 395 Views



*The Exposé of
'Go to Mount
Thangting'*





ONENESS

We are threads in a tapestry so fine,
Interconnected, intertwined, divine.
Each strand unique, yet together we stand,
A masterpiece of diversity, hand in hand.

In oneness, we find our greatest strength,
A bond that heals, that builds, that lengthens.
Our differences forgotten, our hearts now one,
Together we rise, beneath the sun.

The power of oneness, it knows no bounds,
It bridges gaps, and heals the wounds.
It's the melody that harmonizes our soul,
The rhythm that makes our spirits whole.

In unity, we find our peaceful nest,
A world where love resides, and love finds rest.
So let us celebrate our oneness today,
And forge a bond that will never stray.

~ Obed Paogoulien Singson
Songpi, Kukiland

