

# AIPPM STUDY GUIDE



## AGENDA

**Discussing the crisis in Manipur, with emphasis on communal violence and violation of the Suspension of Operations Agreement, and legislating ways to restore peace.**



## **Introduction to the Literary Circle**

Literary Circle is the club in NIT Durgapur, which gives the college an extra dimension of creative expression in the midst of technical unilateralism and gives the students of the college an opportunity to transcend the ordinary and mundane . The Literary Circle organizes a plethora of events throughout the year. Verve, The Literary cum Youth Festival of the college and the biggest of its kind in eastern India being one of them. The Literary Circle has successfully pulled off 18 editions of Verve till now. Flagship events in the fest have become the matter of college folklore. The club maintains a blog, The Darkest White, as the culmination of myriad pen strokes from the collective literary expression of the college. The club publishes the yearbook, so each student graduating out of college can reminisce about their days in the college, their hostel life and take with them a part of it. Humans of NIT Durgapur, by The Literary Circle, captures the untold stories, legends, and experiences of individuals , showing our readers how ordinary people can be unique, inspirational and relatable . The TEDx is an initiative where influential speakers are invited in order to realise TED's overall mission to research and discover “ideas worth spreading.” TEDxNITDurgapur was co-organised by The Literary Circle and was a confluence of ideas and innovation. The club is known to be highly selective in its admission of new members, with only about 10-15 students inducted out of the entire batch of 900 each year. Great believers of the phrase ‘quality over quantity’, the members selected every year are the best of the best in the field of expression and creativity. Come, step into the Circle!

## Note from the OC

Greetings Delegates!

Firstly, welcome to NITMUN XII.

The Manipur crisis is a unique challenge, both within and beyond the realms of reality. Despite lacking legal powers, it consistently symbolises and influences significant events on the national stage.

The mixed opinions on the Manipur crisis, particularly from various stakeholders, have been observed since its emergence. While efforts have been made to address crucial issues, given the complex nature of the crisis, there is always room for more effective strategies and resolutions. Manipur's demographics predominantly consist of diverse communities, and the conflicts often involve unheard voices. In this MUN, our intention is to immerse you in the perspectives of the individuals making decisions that impact millions.

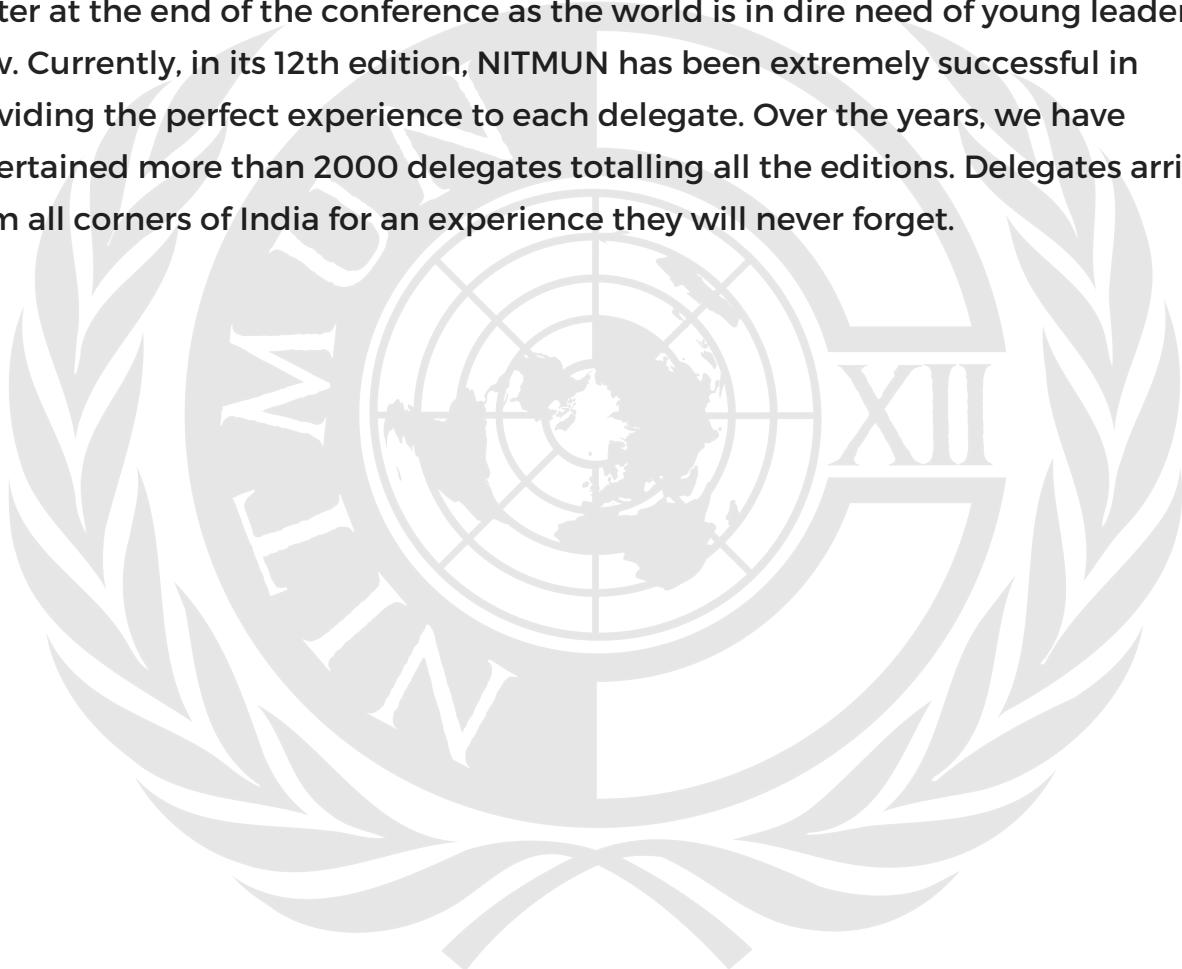
The choice of your leaders holds considerable importance.

As the OC, we anticipate solutions from this committee. Please note that nothing in this study guide is quotable during the session. You will need to conduct your own research, and your Executive Board will provide you with relevant and credible sources. We trust that NITMUN will offer you a fresh perspective on the Manipur crisis, guiding you to make informed decisions.

Resolution through diplomacy, not ideology.

## **ABOUT NITMUN**

NITMUN is a forum convened by the members of the Literary Circle for discussion and analysis of global issues. It seeks to bring out motivated delegates from all over the country for a meaningful debate on significant international issues. Our greatest goal is to make sure that each delegate learns how to tackle world issues better at the end of the conference as the world is in dire need of young leaders now. Currently, in its 12th edition, NITMUN has been extremely successful in providing the perfect experience to each delegate. Over the years, we have entertained more than 2000 delegates totalling all the editions. Delegates arrive from all corners of India for an experience they will never forget.



## Introduction to the Committee

**Disclaimer :** The Literary Circle, NIT Durgapur in no way endorses any political party or ideology. The views written here have been penned keeping in mind that an Opposition meet has been simulated and do not represent our views. This study guide is not quotable in committee.

As the name signifies, the All India Political Parties Meet is a forum for unrestricted political debate, discussion and deliberation, free from the legislative functions of the parliament. The AIPPM provides a platform where diverse political perspectives and personalities come together to make decisions on issues of national importance. The All India Political Parties Meet is a venture to emulate political realities by stimulating the various levels of policy and governance existing in our nation today. Participants are allotted specific leaders, which they represent. All the representatives must be well versed, with their political party's ideology, manifesto and beliefs. It is important that members research well and are conscious of their portfolios affiliations, interests and ideologies at all times during the conference. It is a meeting called before a session of Parliament in order to decide its agenda and ensure smooth functioning of the committee. Although it has no legislative powers, its reports and outcomes are highly valued and considered authentic.

## Introduction

In the culturally rich and diverse state of Manipur, the tapestry of traditions, religions, and ethnicities weaves a compelling narrative. Rooted in the ancient Sanamahism, the indigenous religion of the Meiteis, Manipur's history is deeply intertwined with its spiritual beliefs. According to Meitei tradition, Sidaba Mapu, the Supreme God, created the Universe, and Lainingthou Sanamahi, the son of Sidaba Mapu and earth goddess Leimarel Sidabi, holds a pivotal role in Sanamahism. Maru Loishang, the governing body, oversees religious affairs without a designated religious head.

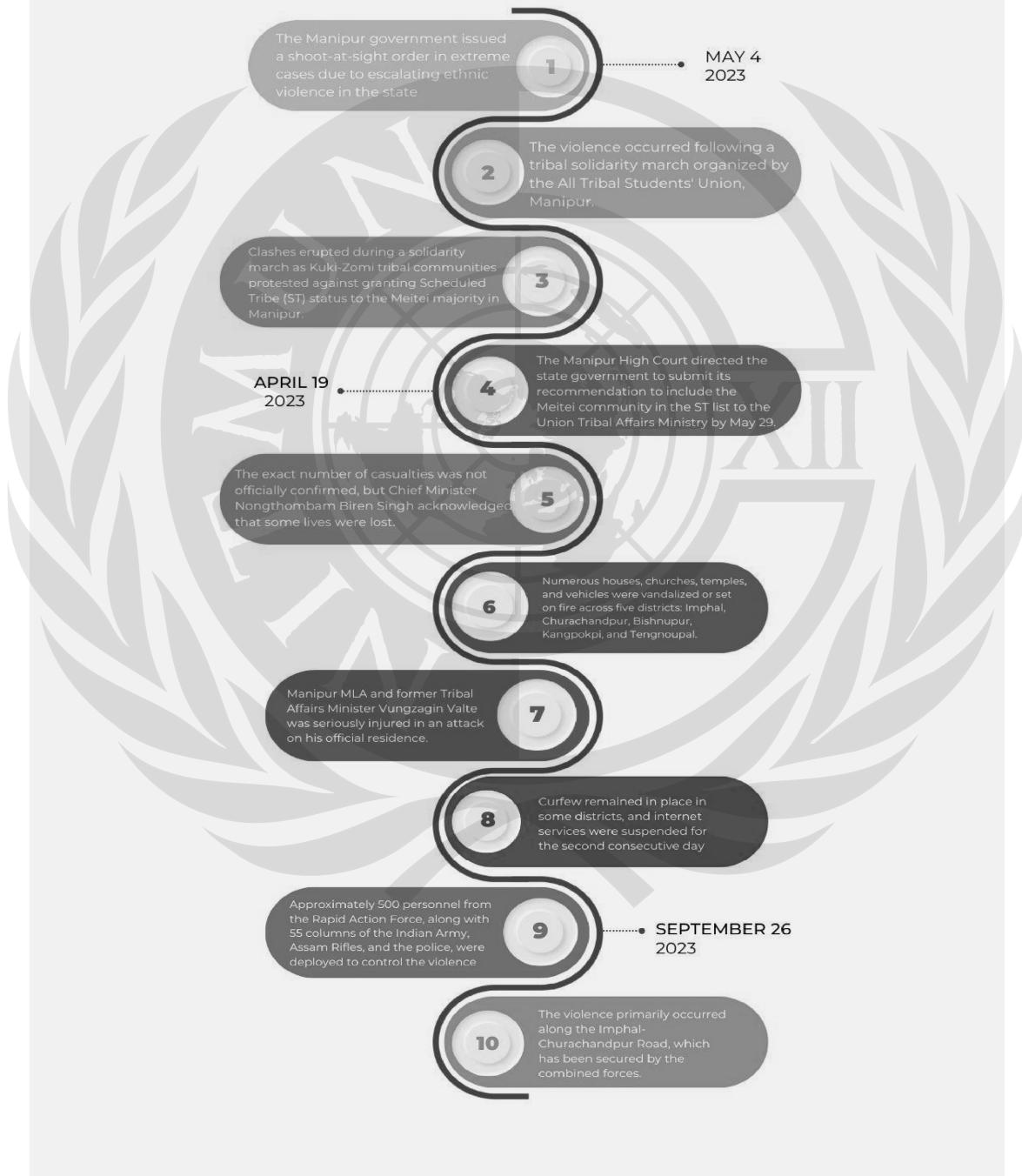
The origins of Sanamahism trace back to the 1st century AD, as documented in the court chronicles of kings of Manipur, specifically in the text Cheitharol Kumbaba. Rituals within Sanamahism encompass food offerings, hymns, and oracular ceremonies where priestesses become vessels for deities. Esoteric practices, including the use of mantras, are also integral. The mystical text Sanamahi Naiyom encapsulates the spiritual essence, offering formulas such as mantras believed to influence natural elements.

Beyond its spiritual tapestry, Manipur is a northeastern state in India, often referred to as the "seven sisters." Connected to the rest of the country through a narrow corridor, Manipur showcases diverse ethnicities, languages, and cultures. The region has a history marked by separatist uprisings, rooted partly in the aftermath of British colonial rule. While many insurgent movements have evolved or diminished, some linger, establishing bases along the porous Myanmar border.

Geographically, Manipur presents two distinct regions—the Imphal Valley and the surrounding Hills. The majority of the land, around 90%, lies in the Hills, with the remaining 10% comprising the Imphal Valley. Three primary ethnic groups shape Manipur's demographic landscape—the Meiteis, Nagas, and Kukis. Meiteis, constituting 53% of the population, dominate the Valley districts, while Nagas (17%) and Kukis (26%) contribute significantly, with distinct concentrations in the northern and southern regions, respectively.

Against this backdrop of diverse traditions, insurgencies, and ethnic landscapes, Manipur's intricate identity unfolds, revealing a region that is both historically and culturally unique within the broader context of India.

## MAJOR EVENTS IN THE CONFLICT



## **1.1. Who are the Meitei?**

The majority of the ethnic native to the Manipur valley. The natives are primarily settled in the Imphal area which is the epicentre of the ethnic unrest triggering the North-eastern part of the country. Their Meitei language has been adopted as one of the 22 official languages of the Indian republic i.e members of the Indian parliament are allowed to speak and share their views in any of the languages as listed by article 120. In India they reside in the Sylhet District, Moulvibazar District, Sunamganj District and the Habiganj District of the Sylhet Division of Bangladesh.

The Meitei community, spearheaded by the Scheduled Tribes Demand Committee of Manipur (STDCM), has been actively seeking Scheduled Tribe (ST) status since 2012. Their primary objective is to secure constitutional safeguards that would protect and preserve their distinct culture, language, and identity. One of the key arguments put forth by the Meiteis is that they were officially recognized as a tribe prior to the merger of Manipur with India in 1949. However, after the merger, they contend that they lost their tribal identity, worsened their vulnerability and lack of constitutional protections.

The absence of ST status has left the Meitei community feeling marginalized and victimized, as they lack the legal safeguards afforded to Scheduled Tribes. The Scheduled Tribes Demand Committee of Manipur has emphasized that the Meitein/Meetei population has faced gradual marginalization in their ancestral land.

The demographic shift is evident from historical data, as the Meitei population constituted 59% of Manipur's total population in 1951. However, according to the 2011 Census, their proportion has decreased to 44%, indicating a significant decline over the years.

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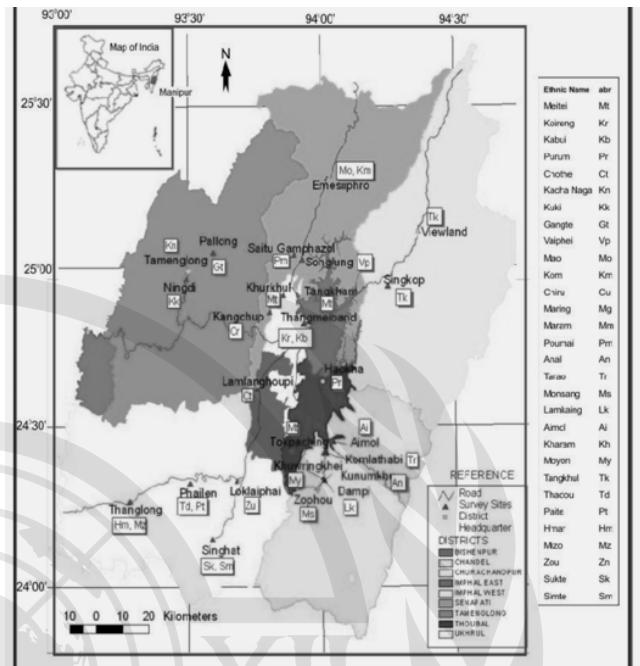
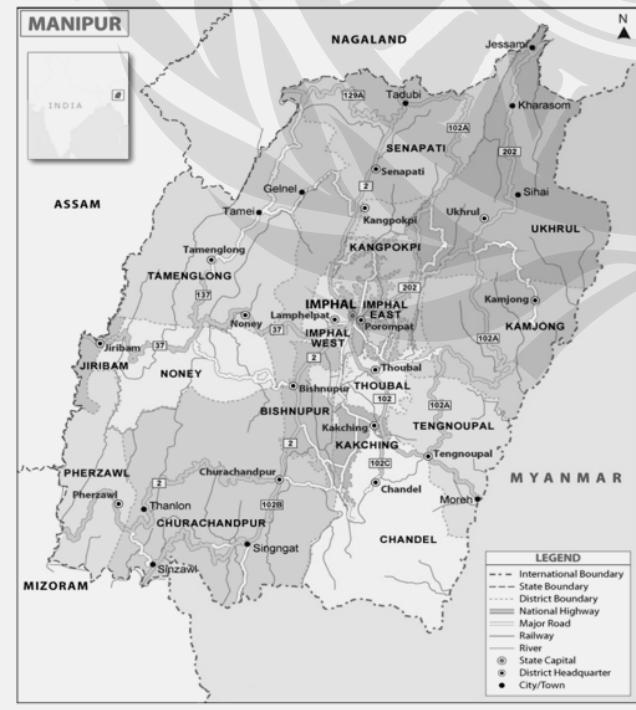


Image: Ethnic demography of the state of Manipur



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## 1.2. Who are the Kuki's?

The Kukis are a group of people who live in the northeastern states of India, such as Manipur and Mizoram, as well as in Meghalaya, Assam, Tripura, and Nagaland. They are one of several hill tribes found in India, Bangladesh, and Myanmar. Although they are present in most Northeast Indian states, they are not found in Arunachal Pradesh.

Most Kukis live in the hills, with Churachandpur being their main area. They also have a significant population in Chandel, Kangpokpi, Tengnoupal, and Senapati districts in Manipur. The Kuki people are thought to be originally from the Mizo Hills, a mountainous region in the southeastern part of Mizoram in India. It's believed that there are more than 20 sub-tribes within the Kuki tribes of northeastern India.

The significant rise in poverty among tribals, particularly the Thadou-Kukis, is closely linked to the evolving political landscape in the hills of Manipur. The Thadou-Kuki community, affected notably during the early 1990s due to the Kuki-Naga ethnic clash, experienced a surge in landless labourers and wage earners. The conflict resulted in substantial losses for both communities, leading to the alleged uprooting of over 300 Kuki villages between 1992 and 1996. More than 580 Kukis, predominantly men, became victims, with over 3,000 houses burnt, rendering over 50,000 people homeless. Today, tens of thousands of Kukis remain stranded and unrehabilitated, highlighting urgent socio-economic and political challenges that demand immediate attention.

## **2. Background of the conflict**

In the ongoing conflict, the Meitei, constituting 53% of the state's 2.85 million population (as per the 2011 census) but occupying only 10% of its land, are pitted against the Kuki and 33 other tribes, making up around 30% of the population and residing in various locations across the economically disadvantaged hill areas. This strife has its roots in decades of disputes over land and natural resources, which have bred profound resentment among both the Meiteis and Kukis.

The violence between the Meitei and Kuki communities in Manipur started when the High Court told the Manipur government to give their opinion on whether the Meitei people should be included in the Scheduled Tribe list. However, even before this, there was growing anger among the Kuki community because they felt the government was controlled by the Meitei people. This anger had been building up for a while because the government had been taking strong actions against drug farming and illegal immigrants in areas where the Kuki people live, which led to protests. Additionally, some Kuki people have been demanding their own separate region called Kukiland for a long time.

In early May 2023, there was a lot of violence in Manipur after a march called the 'Tribal Solidarity March,' organized by the All Tribal Students' Union Manipur (ATSUM) on May 3, 2023, in the ten Hill Districts of Manipur. While the protest marches in the state started peacefully, one in the Torbung area of Churachandpur district became violent when an armed group attacked people from the Meitei community. It is believed that Kuki militants were behind this attack. In response, Meiteis attacked Kukis and set their property on fire. This violence then spread to other districts dominated by Kuki and Meitei communities in the state. It resulted in at least 70 deaths, 231 injuries, and made 48,000 people homeless. More than 1,700 houses, including religious places, were burned.

To control the situation, the Indian government quickly sent additional soldiers from the Indian Army and the Assam Rifles, and even the Indian Air Force was involved. The Ministry of Home Affairs appointed Kuldiep Singh, a former Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force, as a security advisor to the Manipur government. The state government imposed curfews in the affected districts, suspended internet services, and authorized soldiers to shoot if they saw anyone involved in looting or arson. Although the situation gradually improved, there were still sporadic incidents of violence later on.

The 'Tribal Solidarity March' that triggered this ethnic violence was organized in response to the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status. ATSUM called for this march on April 27, 2023, following a meeting of tribal student organizations on April 21, 2023, where they decided to express their disagreement with the Meitei community's ST status demand. This meeting was convened because of a High Court order on April 19, 2023, in which a single judge, after hearing a petition by eight people representing the Meitei Tribe Union (MTU), instructed the Manipur government to give their opinion on including the Meitei community in the ST list, preferably within four weeks. However, the Supreme Court later put a hold on this order, considering it factually incorrect.

Certain Meitei leaders have attempted to frame the unrest in religious terms, possibly for political reasons. They seek to garner support among Hindus in other parts of India, including within the federal government, which is led by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Given that the Meiteis, as Manipur's largest community, hold considerable social, political, and economic sway, including dominance in the state government and its police force, they maintain a significant advantage in the ongoing conflict.

## **2.1. Demand for the ST status by the Meiteis**

The Meitei community has long sought Scheduled Tribe (ST) status, with the demand raised in 1981. Despite being designated Other Backward Class (OBC) in 1995, the Meitei community persisted in seeking ST status. The Scheduled Tribes Demand Committee of Manipur Valley (STDCM) was formed, submitting a memorandum in 2012. In 2013, the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs requested the Manipur government's recommendation, but there was no response.

In 2022, the Meitei Tribe Union (MTU) urged the Union Tribal Affairs Ministry for consideration, leading to a petition filed in 2023 compelling the Manipur government to respond. The Kuki and Naga communities oppose Meitei's ST status. Naga areas saw peaceful solidarity marches, while Kuki areas experienced violence. The Naga community distanced itself from violent protests, clarifying that the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) did not represent all tribal people in Manipur.

## **2.2. Demand for separate Kukiland**

The Kuki community, aspiring for self-determination since the 1960s, faced tensions and violence, leading to demands for a separate state. In 2008, 23 insurgent groups formed the Kuki National Organisation (KNO) and the United People's Front (UPF), entering into a Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement.

Despite talks since 2016, differences persist between the KNO and UPF. Recent indications suggest reconciliation, proposing a Kukiland Territorial Council. The Meitei-dominated state government opposes it, fearing it could lead to a separate Kuki state. Chief Minister Biren Singh rejected the proposal in May 2023, emphasizing the importance of safeguarding Manipur's territorial integrity. The Meitei-Kuki conflict also highlights the broader Valley-Hill divide, a persistent challenge in achieving peace in Manipur.

## **2.3. Valley-Hill divide**

The Meitei community, constituting 53% of the population, seeks Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to preserve their land, traditions, and culture. They face challenges in land acquisition due to protective provisions for tribespeople in the hills under Article 371(c).

Tribal communities oppose Meitei's ST status, citing their dominant political representation and better socio-economic conditions. They fear a monopoly on government benefits intended for tribespeople and potential land acquisition by Meiteis.

The Meitei community demands Inner Line Permit (ILP) extension to protect indigenous rights. The ILP was extended in December 2019, but the state government's decision in June 2022 to use 1961 as the 'base year' faces opposition from tribespeople due to record-keeping challenges. The Hill-Valley divide, rooted in colonial policies and religious differences, continues to impact administrative structures in Manipur.

## **2.4. Probable Reasons for the conflict**

While the High Court's instruction to the Manipur government served as the immediate catalyst for the conflict between the Meiteis and the Kukis, the Kuki community had been harboring discontent toward the Meitei-dominated state government for some time. Over recent months, the Manipur government had taken a series of actions and decisions that contributed to a sense of discrimination and insecurity within the Kuki community.

To begin with, Chief Minister Biren Singh had raised concerns about the presence of many illegal migrants from Myanmar who had settled in the state, particularly within reserved and protected forest areas. The anxiety surrounding these migrants was significant enough that his government reportedly suspended the Free Regime Movement (FMR) with Myanmar and detained 410 individuals labeled as 'illegal migrants' from Myanmar.

Furthermore, the Biren Singh administration initiated a land survey of reserved forests, protected areas, wetlands, and wildlife habitats. During this survey, encroachers were identified, and eviction notices were issued. Some of these evictions were carried out forcibly, resulting in clashes between local villagers and forest and police officials.

These efforts to remove 'illegal encroachers' from Myanmar were seen by the Kukis as actions against their own community, as they identified the Chin refugees from Myanmar as members of their own tribe, specifically, the Chin-Kuki tribe. However, it should be noted that the Manipur government claimed that out of the total 291 encroachers removed from Manipur's forests between January 1, 2017, and April 18, 2023, 160 belonged to the Meitei community, indicating that the Kuki community was not singled out exclusively. Nonetheless, grievances persisted within the Kuki community.

Additionally, the Manipur government launched the 'War on Drugs' campaign in 2017, with a particular focus on the hills of Ukhrul, Senapati, Kangpokpi, Kamjong, Churachandpur, and Tengnoupal districts, where large-scale illegal cultivation of poppy plants was prevalent. According to government records, of the 2,518 people arrested under the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act between 2017 and 2023, only 873 were from the Kuki-Chin community, while 1,083 were Muslims, 381 were Meiteis, and 181 belonged to other communities. This is despite the fact that the Kuki-Chin community cultivated poppy in 13,121.8 acres of land, while the Naga Community only cultivated it in 2,340 acres.

However, the Kuki community perceived the forcible destruction of illicit poppy cultivation and the subsequent arrests of villagers as depriving them of their livelihoods. They felt that the 'affected cultivators' had not received the promised compensation from the state government. Consequently, these crackdowns on encroachers and illicit poppy cultivators triggered large-scale protests, particularly in districts dominated by the Kuki community, with some of these protests escalating into violence, including a notable incident on April 27, 2023, in Churachandpur.

The state government characterized these protests as anti-government and contended that the protesters had been heavily influenced and incited by Kuki militant organizations, particularly the Kuki National Army (KNA) and Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA). These groups were accused of not only providing shelter to illegal migrants from Myanmar but also encouraging illegal poppy cultivation and drug trade.

In fact, on March 10, 2023, the Biren Singh government made the unilateral decision to withdraw from the tripartite Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with the Kuki militant organizations. This move not only disheartened the Kuki community but also raised doubts about the resolution of the Kuki militancy issue in the state. Peace talks between the government and militant groups, initiated in 2016, had given hope to the Kuki community that their demand for a separate Kukiland might be realized. This hope had even led them to support the BJP during the 2022 Manipur elections.

### **3. Important Legislations and Articles**

#### **3.1. Suspension of Operations Agreement**

In 2008, an agreement known as the Suspension of Operations (SoO) Agreement was signed with the main goal of starting a political discussion with Kuki insurgent groups and bringing an end to violence and hostilities from all parties involved. This agreement was signed by the Central Government, the Manipur State Government, and two main organizations, the Kuki National Organisation (KNO) and the United People's Front (UPF), which together consist of 25 different groups (17 under KNO and 8 under UPF).

In Manipur, there are approximately 30 Kuki insurgent groups, and 25 of them are part of the SoO Agreement. Instead of seeking a separate state, these Kuki groups agreed to the formation of a 'Kukiland territorial council.' This council would have its own financial and administrative authority separate from the Manipur State Assembly.

The Suspension of Operations (SoO) Agreement, initiated in 2008, aimed at maintaining peace in the region, has been crucial. Key terms include annual extensions, the Joint Monitoring Group (JMG) overseeing the agreement, a ban on military operations by security forces, and restrictions on underground groups' hostile activities. Militant members must stay in designated camps, adhere to the Indian Constitution, and receive a monthly stipend as part of a rehabilitation plan. The recent revocation of the SoO agreement, amidst ethnic violence involving Meitei and Kuki groups, has raised concerns. The May 3 incident led to the acquisition of over 4,000 weapons and ammunition from police armories. Home Minister Amit Shah pledged to address the Kuki issue before the 2022 elections, but the situation following the SoO revocation has sparked inquiries and concerns.

On March 10 2023, the Manipur government decided to withdraw from the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with two militant groups, Kuki National Army (KNA) and Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA), alleging their involvement in inciting agitation among forest encroachers.

### **3.2 Article 244A**

Rahul Gandhi from the Congress party promised to use Article 244(A) of the Constitution to protect the people in Assam's tribal areas. He criticized the BJP for removing Article 244(A), saying it hurt the culture of hill tribes.

Leaders in Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills had the choice to stay in Assam with more powers promised under Article 244(A) of the Constitution. By the 1980s, this demand turned into a push for autonomy, leading to violence among Karbi groups.

Article 244(A) lets specific tribal areas in Assam have their own local government with control over laws and order. It was added in 1969 and gives more autonomy than the Sixth Schedule, which covers tribal regions in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram. The Sixth Schedule safeguards tribal rights, while the Fifth Schedule applies to other states, excluding Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram.eguard the interests of the indigenous people

### **3.3 Village Authorities Act of 1956**

The Manipur (Village Authorities in Hill Areas) Act, 1956 consolidated and amended the law governing the constitution and functions of Village Authorities in the hill areas of Manipur. The Act introduced the election of Village Authority members based on adult franchise. It also repealed the Hill People's Regulation of 1947.

The Act allowed the Chief Constitution Commissioner to appoint two or more Village Authority members to serve as a village court during their term. The Act also gave village courts the power to: Impose fines, Award compensation, Order retrials. The Kuki community opposed the Act because they believed it would eliminate the rights of village chiefs over land. The Kukis had a traditional system of unelected village chieftains.

### **3.4 Article 371(C)**

The President has the power to create a committee in the Manipur state assembly, made up of members elected from the hill areas of Manipur. This committee would have special functions and responsibilities to ensure proper governance in those areas. The Governor of Manipur is required to report annually or as needed to the President about the administration of the hill areas, and the central government can give directions to the state government on how to manage these areas. The term "Hill Areas" refers to specific regions that the President can declare through an order.

### **3.5 Inner Line Permit**

The Inner Line Permit (ILP) system is a legal document that Indian citizens from outside certain states need to obtain in order to enter and stay in those states. It is a mechanism primarily aimed at regulating the entry of outsiders into protected or restricted areas to safeguard the interests of the indigenous population.

In the context of Manipur, the demand for the extension of the Inner Line Permit (ILP) is associated with concerns about the potential loss of land by the Meitei community. The Meitei are one of the major ethnic groups in Manipur, and the fear of losing their ancestral land to outsiders has led to the call for the implementation or extension of the ILP system.

The ILP system, if extended to Manipur, would require individuals from outside the state to obtain a permit to enter and stay in the region. This is seen as a measure to control the influx of non-indigenous people, thereby protecting the rights and interests of the Meitei community and other 'indigenous' groups in Manipur.

### **3.6 Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act**

In Manipur, the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act is enforced to combat drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking. The state faces challenges due to its proximity to drug-producing regions. The NDPS Act regulates various aspects, including the production, sale, and trafficking of narcotics and psychotropic substances. Law enforcement agencies, such as state police and the Narcotics Control Bureau, work to enforce the Act and curb the illegal drug trade in Manipur. Ongoing efforts include raids and operations to seize illegal drugs and apprehend offenders involved in drug-related activities.

## **Questions to be addressed**

- One pertains to the unprecedented internet shutdown in Manipur: was the state government worried that the spread of such news would further shred its authority? For future crisis situations, will it be a good decision on the part of the government to halt internet access in the area? How has the government protected the netizens from the fake news circulating in most social media platforms? Do we require new legislations on what is starred as trending on popular platforms?
- More than 50,000 displaced people still live in relief camps; they've lost everything and make do with basic food and health essentials. The studies of school and college students have been disrupted due to this crisis in North eastern India. Besides a settlement with the tribes what other aspects do the government and tribe leaders/political parties need to work on?
- Considering the diverse ethnic landscape of Manipur, how do political parties intend to engage in constructive dialogue and negotiations to find a resolution regarding the establishment of Kukiland that is acceptable to all stakeholders?
- To prevent future escalations, how do political parties envision reforming security and law enforcement in Manipur, ensuring a balance between maintaining order and respecting the rights and dignity of the local population? Were the women of the tribes more susceptible to the violence faced?

## Point of View of the Leaders

### N. Biren Singh

N. Biren Singh, the Chief Minister, blamed the unrest in Manipur on illegal migrants and drug smugglers. He explained that efforts to control illegal immigration sparked the trouble, and some outsiders, including militants and drug smugglers, were involved. Singh assured that the state government, along with the central government and the Army, was working to restore peace and hoped things would soon be normal. He also addressed reported crimes against women, mentioning that out of over 6,000 cases, only one rape incident was confirmed. Regarding the recent deaths of two women, Singh clarified that they were not cases of rape.

### Ch. Ajang Khongsai

Ch. Ajang Khongsai, president of Kuki Inpi, Manipur, stressed the necessity of emotional integration among Manipur's diverse communities to protect its territorial integrity. He emphasized the longstanding peaceful coexistence between Kuki and Meitei people and expressed disappointment over the current conflict initiated by the Meitei community.

Regarding the demand for the National Register of Citizens (NRC) to identify undocumented Kuki people from Myanmar and Bangladesh, Khongsai clarified that the Kuki Inpi had no issues with the NRC or Inner Line Permit (ILP) as per the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation Act, 1873. He asserted that those settling in Manipur were indigenous people of the state. While suggesting measures to address concerns about illegal immigration, Khongsai opposed branding the entire community as poppy cultivators or illegal immigrants. He stressed the responsibility of the State and Central governments in handling these matters, urging authorities to take appropriate action without unfairly implicating specific communities.

## **Kh. Athouba**

Kh. Athouba said that he had informed the parliament session on the ongoing communal violence in Manipur state (India) which was not based on religious issues as accepted by the Western countries as highlighted by the Kukis-Zo communities in the international scenario.

The real cause of the violence is narco-terrorism to which Churachandpur district of Manipur state has been reduced to a new hub of the notorious Golden Triangle.

The communal carnage erupted in the Churachandpur district on May 3 in which over 19 villages belonging to the Meiteis were destroyed. Besides, the churches belonging to the Meiteis were also burnt down by the Kuki Christians in the clashes. The Meiteis have around 8 lakh population whereas the Christian communities in the state have around 12 lakh in Manipur.

## **Pramot Singh**

He asserted that the ongoing conflict in Manipur is primarily rooted in the issue of illegal immigration and external aggression against India by armed Kuki groups from Myanmar. According to Singh, these armed Kuki groups in India, Myanmar, and Bangladesh share a common vision of establishing their own homeland.

Singh accused the Kukis in Manipur, both the permanent residents and those brought by the British, of harboring illegal infiltrators from Myanmar. He emphasized the right to defend their land from encroachment by these infiltrators, stating that the killings by these groups are perceived as a declaration of war on the Meiteis.

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