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# **ETHNIC VIOLENCE IN MANIPUR: ITS IMPACT UPON THE ENTIRE STATE AND CERTAIN SUGGESTIONS FOR ITS PREVENTION**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Ethnic violence has become a major issue of the North- Eastern state of Manipur now. More than eight months of ethnic violence in Manipur has led to an unprecedented loss to the economy and business also. Therefore, it is necessary to prevent this inhuman type of violence. This ethnic violence is mainly between the two communities of Manipur, these are Kuki and Meitei. Kukis are under Christian community and Meiteis are under Hindus. This ethno-religious violence had erupted on 3<sup>rd</sup> of May, 2023. After responding to the long standing demand of the Meitei Tribe Union to give the Meitei community Scheduled Tribe status, the Manipur High Court ordered the state government to send a recommendation to the central government. Later on, this decision was criticized by the Supreme Court. To protest the High Court order, the All Tribal Students' Union Manipur called for a peaceful protest to be conducted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May. But this protest became violent day by day in Manipur's Imphal valley, Churachandpur district and Bishnupur district. Till now most of the people of this state are badly affected by this violence. Things become worse over a plan to recognize the Meitei as a Scheduled Tribe. Day by day, the condition of the inhabitants of Manipur becomes pathetic. The State Governor of Manipur, and leaders of various political parties have visited the relief camps in which people of violent ridden area are staying. The state government of Manipur has tried to resolve this situation. They are interacting with the central government leaders regarding this matter. The government should take strict action against those who indulge in violence and lawlessness. Human rights should also be protected and the innocent civilians should not be targeted.

**Keywords:** *state, violence, Manipur, interact*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Diversity on the basis of language, culture, religion etc., are the well-known features of Northeast Indian states. North Eastern region is often described as the cultural mosaic of India being a receptacle of diverse tribal communities, linguistic and ethnic identities. On the basis of one or the other factor like socio- cultural similarity, linguistic affinity, ethnic affiliation and common territory, these tribal communities may conveniently be put under certain groups like the Boro, the Khasi, the Naga, the Lusei, Kuki, the Arunachali and others. The tribal communities of the North- east have their own traditional system of governance<sup>2</sup>. But in the context of maintaining governance, it is common to have conflict among the ethnic communities. The ethnic discontent was basically among the ethnic groups living in the hill areas<sup>3</sup>. Manipur is also not exceptional from this. By raising certain demands, the inhabitant communities of this state are engaged in violent activities from time to time. Manipur's state government wants to suppress the supply of illegal use of narcotic drugs and evicted the areas in which areas these drugs are available. Due to these, the communities which are involved in these acts are opposed the evicted work of their state government. Currently, violence is between the two communities of Manipur i.e., Kuki and Meitei. This violence is due to the Manipur High Court's decision to give the Scheduled Tribe status to the Meitei community by responding the demand of the Meitei Tribe Union. But the Kuki community has strongly opposed it.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER:**

1. To study the historical background of Manipur.
2. To analyse the causes of this ethnic violence.
3. To examine the violent activities of various districts of Manipur.
4. To study the activities of respective state government, political party leaders. and central government regarding this issue.
5. To suggest certain measures to resolve this type of violence.

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<sup>2</sup>Biswas, Amlan(2022), *Yojana*, July, Volume. 66, No. 07, p. 18

<sup>3</sup> Konwar, Narayan (2008), *Society and Politics in Assam*, Book Land Publication, Guwahati, p.65

## **METHODOLOGY:**

Methodology is a plan and procedure for carrying out the research. It refers to research techniques and strategies for obtaining valid information<sup>4</sup>. This study is descriptive and analytical in nature. Data for this research paper have been adopted from both primary and secondary sources. Several primary sources were collected from government documents, reports. Secondary sources were collected from the books, journals, articles, newspaper and internet etc.

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STATE OF MANIPUR**

Among the 8 states of northeast India, Manipur is also a state. Its capital is Imphal. It is bounded by the Indian States of Nagaland to the north, Mizoram to the south and Assam to the west. It also borders two regions of Myanmar, Sagaing Region to the east and Chin State to the South. The official and most widely spoken language is Meitei language. Native to the Meitei people, it is also used as a lingua franca by smaller communities, who speak a variety of other Sino-Tibetan languages. Manipur has been at the crossroads of Asian economic and cultural exchange for more than 2500 years. The Meitei people represent around 53% of the population of Manipur, followed by various Naga ethnic groups at 24% and various Kuki tribes at 16%. Manipur's ethnic groups practice a variety of religions. According to 2011 census, Hinduism and Christianity are the major religions of the state. Between the 1961 and 2011 censuses of India, the shares of Hindus in the state declined from 62% to 41% while the share of Christians rose from 19% to 41%.

After the Anglo- Manipur war, in 1891 Manipur became a princely state under the British rule and this was the last of the independent states to be incorporated into British India. During the world war II, Manipur was the scene of battles between Japanese and Allied forces. After the war, Maharaja Bodhachandra signed a Treaty of Accession merging the kingdom into India. It was made a union territory in 1956 and a full fledged state in 1972.

## **ORIGIN OF VIOLENCE**

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<sup>4</sup> Ahuja, Ram (2021), Research Methods, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, p.41

The recent violence broke out in Churachandpur, a town just south of the state capital Imphal of Manipur, on May 3, following a Kuki led tribal solidarity march in ten of the state's sixteen districts. As the Meitei organized counter-protests and blockades, clashes spread across Manipur. Women were part of some of the mobs. The escalation in violence in Manipur has its roots in an over 10 years old demand by the Meitei community for a Scheduled Tribe tag. The immediate reason for this violence, however, is a Manipur High Court order directing the state government to recommend to the Union Tribal Affairs Ministry to give Scheduled Tribe tag for Meitei community. The petitioners have argued that this community had once enjoyed the Scheduled Tribe tag prior to the merger of Manipur with the Indian Union and have sought the restoration of this status.

Violent clashes broke out in Manipur after a "Tribal Solidarity March" was organized in the hill districts on May 3 to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe status, leading to the deaths of at least 54 people.

Eviction drive in the state reserve forests is another reason for the protest by the tribal people. This eviction drive which began in February by the BJP led Manipur government, was seen as yet another anti-tribal move, leading to alarm and widespread discontent not only among the Kuki community which affected by it but also other tribals who have many villages within reserved forest areas. Ahead of Chief Minister N Biren Singh's visit to Churachandpur district, a mob vandalized and set on fire the venue in New Lamka town where he was scheduled to address a function.

Such inner conflicts which have resulted in the violent communal clashes are not at all a good omen for Manipur's future. Sustained efforts by the Army and Assam Rifles are imperative to rescue civilians and restore normalcy to pave the way for dialogue with political leaders and enlightened people for lasting peace in a deeply- polarized Manipur.

## **EFFECTS OF THIS VIOLENCE AND REACTION OF COMMON PEOPLE OF THAT STATE**

In this barbarous type of ethnic violence of Manipur, all types of people are affected badly. After the incident, immediately hundreds of people including students were camping at the Imphal

airport trying to get out of the state. Even a number of makeshifts camps were set up at government buildings to give shelter to refugees. Besides more than 13000 people have reportedly been taking shelter in army camp as well as temporary camps were set up by ordinary people, while many more have fled to the neighbouring states of Mizoram, Nagaland and Meghalaya.

However, no one imagined that it would degenerate into the spiral of violence like forest fire, killing and wounding scores, forcing thousands of people to flee from their homes and see the central government rushing in large numbers of Army, Assam Rifles and central police forces to contain the situation.

The cabinet also reiterated its stance that the “state government will not compromise on steps taken to protect the state government’s forest resources and for eradicating poppy cultivation. Even as discontent grew over the eviction of the villagers, three churches in Imphal’s Tribal colony area were demolished for being “illegal constructions” on government land, leading to more discontent”.

Unidentified miscreants have torched a few half- burnt and abandoned houses at Torbung area along the Bishnupur- Churachandpur inter- district border in Manipur. There was however no report of any casualty. The incident took place at around mid-night on Saturday dated May 15. On receiving information about the incident, two companies of Border Security Forces were deployed in the area, newly appointed State Advisor Kuldiep Singh told to media person. Three more companies of Border Security Forces were dispatched to secure the area. In the morning time in the same day, another incident was happened in which two tipper trucks were set on fire by unidentified miscreants in the Saparmeina Police Station area of Kangpokpi district. Singh said that the miscreants however let off three tipper trucks and five drivers.

The fresh incidents came days after widespread violence broke out in the state on May 3. The security Advisor said that death toll in the violence has gone up to 73 with the recovery of a body in Bishnupur district. Altogether 243 persons were injured and 1809 houses were torched in the ethnic clashes. Singh further informed that two Assam Rifles personnel were injured in an attack by unidentified armed miscreants when a joint team of Army and Assam rifles were on an area domination patrol at Lailampat in Churachandpur district on that day. He further added that

456 arms were snatched from security personnel during the recent violence and 385 FIRs have been registered.

Around 46,145 people have been evacuated to their respective destinations while 26,358 people are lodged in 178 relief camps and 3124 persons were escorted to the Airport to take flights. He said the militants, who are in suspension of operation agreement with the government, have been told to stay in their designated camps. Regarding blocking of the highway at Kangpokpi, he said that efforts are on to ensure the supply of essential commodities via Jiribam route. A total of 62 companies of paramilitary forces and 126 columns of the Army and Assam Rifles are currently deployed in the state.

On June 12, at least four persons were injured as exchanges of fire were reported at some places on the hill- valley borders of strife- torn Manipur. According to the official report, in the gunfights at Khamenlok which is a place located at the border between Imphal East and Kangpokpi, at least four persons sustained bullet injuries.

On the same day, gunfight reportedly erupted after youths of Nongshum village retaliated when a group of suspected militants came down from the hillsides and opened fire upon the village at around 9 am. On receiving the news, a combined team of state police commandos and paramilitary forces rushed to the spot and engaged in a gunfight with the suspected militants. There were no reports of any fatality on either side till the time of filing this report. Reinforcement teams of the Gorkha Regiment that rushed to the site faced resistance from the womenfolk of Keibi and Taret Khun villages as the women blocked the road. In their bid to disperse the crowd, the security forces fired some shots in the air. On hearing news of the gunfight, a large number of womenfolk of the Khurai area of Imphal East came out to the main roads and blocked the roads to disrupt the movement of Central security forces. The firing was reported while Governor Anusuiya Uikey was visiting the relief camp at Churachandpur. On the way back from visiting the relief camps in Churachandpur, the Governor also visited the relief camps at Moirang in Bishnupur district and other camps opened on the side of the Tidim Road.

A peace committee was constituted by the Central Government. The Governor of Manipur is the chairperson of the peace committee whose objective is to help establish peace and communal harmony among various ethnic groups and promote a sense of security among the

general public. Meanwhile, Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh highlighted a slew of steps to be taken up in the state as part of the efforts to restore peace and normalcy.

Briefing the media at the Darbar Hall of the Chief Minister's Secretariat in Imphal on Monday afternoon, Singh also made a fervent appeal to the people of the state to give peace a chance and have confidence in the government of India and government of Manipur in so far as bringing normalcy to the state is concerned.

Internet facility has been banned in Manipur on May 4. Continued suspension of the internet for the purpose of preventing rumour-mongering and the spread of misinformation do not pass the threshold prescribed by the Telecom Suspension Rules 2017. Two Manipur residents have moved the Supreme Court against the "mechanical and repeated" Internet shutdown in the State rocked by ethnic violence that began on the first week of May. The plea filed by Chongtham Victor Singh and Mayengbam James said that shutdown was "grossly disproportionate" in its interference with the constitutional right to freedom of speech and expression and the right to carry on any trade or business using the Constitutionally protected medium of the internet. It said the measure has had a significant economic, humanitarian, social and psychological impact on both the petitioners and their families. On June 6, the Manipur government extended the ban on Internet services. The suspension of mobile data services, including broadband, has also been continued.

On May 30, the Mizoram Government has sought a sum of Rs 5 crore as assistance from the Centre to provide immediate relief to people who have taken shelter in the state from violence-hit Manipur, a senior official said on that day. Many people from Manipur, affected by ethnic conflict, have continued to flock to Mizoram. "A letter seeking monetary assistance of Rs 5 crore as immediate relief for the internally displaced people was sent to the Ministry of Home Affairs last week. We are hopeful that the Centre will provide the assistance as the displaced people are none other than Indian citizens," the State Home Secretary told the news agency.

The numbers of internally displaced persons are also increasing. State Home Department official said that with the arrival of 136 more internally displaced persons from Manipur, the number of such people taking shelter in Mizoram rose to 12,006 on June 21 due to the continuing strife in the neighbouring state. They added that Kolasib district bordering Assam has the highest



number of internally displaced persons at 4313 followed by Aizawl and Saitual districts at 3951 and 2940 respectively. While 9065 internally displaced persons have taken up lodgings with their relatives and friends or are living in rented houses across the state, 2941 people are taking shelter in 35 relief camps. Meanwhile, the Mizoram Government has been making efforts to ensure that all the internally displaced students of college and university as well as their counterparts from Mizoram, who have been forced to leave Manipur due to the violence, are admitted to institutions in the state.

The villagers were venting their anger after militants burnt down at least 100 abandoned houses, including the residence of Sugnu Congress MLA K Ranjit, at Serou in the Kakching on June 3 midnight. There had been almost round-the-clock exchange of fire between militants and security forces for the last two days, the police said.

On June 5, there were reports of several incidents of violence in the last 24 hours in different districts of Manipur. Media reporters said that at least three people were burnt alive or beaten to death by a mob in Imphal West District. The victims were travelling in two vehicles when the incident occurred at Lamsang on that day at night. Defence sources said that as part of a joint strategy for recovery of snatched weapons, the ongoing operations are significant for restoring peace and will continue in a calibrated manner.

A meeting chaired by State Higher and Technical Education Minister Dr. R Lalthangliana on the issue was held on June 21, which was attended by officials of the Higher and Technical Education Departments, Mizoram University and the leaders of the Mizo Zirlai Pawl, the apex Mizo students' body. The Mizo Zirlai Pawl leaders said that over 600 college and university students have been identified who need resumption of their studies in different courses and subjects.

The ongoing violence between the Kuki- Chin- Zomi tribals and the largely Meitei Hindus is the first time in three decades that Manipur has witnessed direct clashes. The deeper divide is a gulf between the plains and the hills, shifting and settled agriculture, state and non- state and the so-called civilized and the anarchist syndrome.

Driving a wedge between the Kukis and the Meteis, Chief Minister N Biren Singh did not act as a force for inter- ethnic unity. Dousing the flames in Manipur would now mean a separate

administration for the Kukis and tribals in the hills. This would certainly give a fill up to the demand for the elusive homeland for the Kukis called Zalen' gam. Designating their homeland, Zalen' gam, the Kukis in the North East including Manipur and Assam, are still on the run as renegades in the mountains and deep jungle areas. Though some Kuki insurgent outfits are under suspension of operations, the Manipur government has revoked suspension of operations with the Kuki National Army and the Zomi Revolutionary Army. By doing so, N Biren Singh walked out of the tripartite peace process between Imphal, New Delhi and the Kuki armed groups. An autonomous council of the Kukis in Manipur would be the first step out of the non-state syndrome. Zalen' gam, the elusive homeland of the Kukis spread over six nations, is another story.

Another barbarous incident happened on May 4, but due to the suspension of internet for long time in this state, it was disclosed to public after almost 2 months. The report of parading two women naked by a mob during the initial stage of the ethnic violence in Manipur in the early days of May, has evoked strong condemnation from various quarters in the state on July 20. The video of the two women being paraded naked at a remote village under the Nongpok Sekmai Police Station surfaced on the social media, fanning fresh tension in the state. The Manipur Police have got into touch with two women, who were paraded naked in May and then sexually assaulted and were in the process of recording their statement, official said here on that day. They said keeping in mind the situation arising out of ethnic clashes that broke out in the state on May 4, a team of women officials and personnel from Manipur Police was formed to probe the case. The officials said the team had met the family members as well as the two women and the process of recording their statements have begun. The process of identifying eyewitnesses and recording their statement has also begun, they said.

Police have arrested as many as seven people including a juvenile in connection with the case so far. They have registered a case of abduction, gang- rape and murder at the Nongpok Sekmai Police station in Thoubai district against unknown armed persons.

Meanwhile, addressing a press conference here on July 20, Chief Minister Biren Singh, accompanied by 21 legislators including seven ministers, said that the ruling party MLAs in a meeting condemned the incident in the strongest terms. Terming it as a crime against humanity, Biren Singh reiterated that the state government would make all efforts to give exemplary

punishment to the culprits involved in the heinous act. The Chief Minister added that two persons have been arrested in connection with the incident so far. According to Biren Singh, the complaint relating to the incident was registered at the Saikul Police Station in Kangpokpi district on May 18 and transferred to the Nongpok Sekmai Police Station on June 21.

As many as 103 women journalists working across the country have made a fervent appeal to editors and fellow journalists to ensure that Manipur stays in the news.

In a statement received here, these journalists observed: “After more than two months of unprecedented civic strife and violence, events in this state have gone off the front pages. The incidents of violence were barbaric, with gross violation of human rights becoming routine”. As of last week of violence, more than 142 people have been killed in the violence, over 300 wounded and over 50,000 internally displaced. Despite this, both the state and central government have not taken adequate measures to quell the violence or address the grievances of the clashing communities. They urged to covering this situation to go beyond the ghastly reported beheading, burning and shootings, to follow up with diligent fact checking and contextualize reports of brutality and atrocities. It is in need more reporting from states like Mizoram and Assam, where the displaced have taken shelter, to bring alive the consequences of this ethnic war. Media from across the country must report and media houses must demand security from their reporters.

Irate villagers set ablaze an abandoned camp at Sugmu in Manipur’s Kakching district where militants from the United Kuki Liberation Front had been staying after signing a peace accord with the government police.

An official said that Security forces in Manipur have recovered 790 sophisticated and automatic arms and 10,648 rounds of ammunition that were looted from the police and various other security establishments during this ethnic riots.

A defence spokesperson said that, “The search operations are being conducted under the surveillance cover of drones and quad-copters. The operations have so far resulted in the recovery of large numbers of weapons, mortars, ammunition and other warlike stores”. He said that while conducting these operations, adequate measures were taken to ensure that the locals were not harassed and personnel safety and security were maintained. Following directives from

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the security forces have once again appealed to all those in possession of looted weapons to surrender the same at the earliest to ensure peace and stability in Manipur. Security forces also warned that failure to surrender these weapons will make all such people liable for strict legal action. Media reports claimed that thousands of different types of arms and large quantities of ammunition were looted by the miscreants and agitated mobs from many police stations and security camps after the riots broke out.

After the ethnic violence of Manipur, around 100 students among the internally displaced people in Manipur, who have taken shelter in Mizoram, have expressed their willingness to resume studies in the state, the Mizo Zirlai Pawl, the apex student body of the state said. In a press release, Mizo Zirlai Pawl said that the student body has been making efforts to ensure that the internally displaced people who want to continue their studies, are given an opportunity to do so.

The student leaders met the Director of the State School Education Department, Lalsangliana, at the latter's office and appealed to him to make arrangements for resumption of studies by internally displaced students. The Director assured the Mizo Zirlai Pawl leaders that he would take up the matter expeditiously in all the districts where internally displaced persons are taking shelter and issued a letter to all District Education Officers, Sub- Divisional Education Officers and Principals of government higher secondary schools to admit the students from Manipur, taking shelter in the schools within their respective jurisdictions. The Mizo Zirlai Pawl also has taken up the matter with State School Education Minister Lalchhandama Ralte.

On May 14, ten tribal MLAs belonging to the Chin- Kuki- Mizo- Zomi group in Manipur have urged the Centre to give their region a "separate administration" in the wake of recent violent clashes between the Meiteis and tribals.

Of the 10 legislators, 7 belong to the BJP, two are from Kuki People's Alliance and one is an Independent. The two Kuki People's Alliance and Independent MLAs are also part of the NDA led by the BJP. The MLA said in a statement, "As the state of Manipur has miserably failed to protect us, we seek from the Union of India a separate administration under the Constitution of India and live peacefully as neighbours with the State of Manipur".

The legislators alleged that violence was perpetrated by the majority Meitei community and was "tacitly supported" by the BJP run State government. "the unabated violence that began on May

3, 2023, in Manipur perpetrated by majority Meiteis tacitly supported by the Manipur government against the Chin- Kuki- Mizo- Zomi hill tribals has already partitioned the state and effected a total separation from the state of Manipur,” the statement said.

After a similar programme of Washington on the month of June, the Association of Meiteis in the Americas organized daylong demonstrations in Austin, Texas, on June 25 and San Francisco, California on June 9. Holding placards that read ‘End The Violence’, ‘Save Manipur’, National Security Matters, Protect the Integrity of Manipur’, and ‘Disarm for Peace’ etc. Meitei women in traditional *phenoks* participated in the demonstrations, calling for an end to the violence and restoration of normalcy in Manipur, a press release stated.

The demonstrations were attended by Meitei families from across California and Texas, who actively engaged with the local communities to provide background information on the crisis and its consequences, the release said, adding that they informed and educated the public about the violence, which began on May 3. “By organizing these demonstrations in prominent locations, such as the San Francisco City Hall and the iconic Golden Gate Bridge, as well as in front of the Texas Capitol Building in Austin, the Association of Meiteis in America aimed to draw attention to the situation in Manipur and encourage support for resolving the conflict”, the release stated.

The violence in Manipur has had devastating consequences, making it one of the deadliest conflicts in independent India’s history. Over 140 lives have been lost, and more than 50,000 individuals have been displaced. Farmers are unable to cultivate their fields, increasing the risk of famine among the most vulnerable populations.

The Association of Meiteis in America urged all individuals, organizations, government bodies and the media to join their efforts in bringing attention to the plight of the people of Manipur and supporting initiatives that foster peace, stability and justice in the region. It also requested all media outlets to investigate facts and combat the spread of fake news.

The violence was preceded by tension over the eviction of Kuki villagers from reserve forest land, which had led to a series of smaller agitations. As of 29 July, 181 people have been killed in the violence. More than 300 were wounded and approximately 54, 488 displaced.

## **EFFORTS TAKEN BY THE CONCERNED STATE GOVERNMENT, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND OTHER VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS**

To overcome this type of violent situation, various steps were taken by the central government and the Manipur state government. In the month of August, a delegation of the North East Students' Organization (NESO) led by its chief advisor Samujjal Bhattacharya, called on Governor Anusuiya Uikey at the Raj Bhavan and discussed the prevailing situation in Manipur with her. The North East Students' Organization team expressed concern over the current situation in the state, which has affected students, and requested the Governor for a special initiative to protect the academic career of the students in Manipur and other North Eastern States. The team also submitted a memorandum to the Governor and called for steps to restore peace in Manipur. The Governor assured the North East Students' Organization team that efforts are on to restore peace and harmony in the state. She said that hatred and mistrust among the communities have to be removed and therefore, student bodies could play a major role in upholding brotherhood among the youths of different communities in the State. Uikey reiterated that she would raise the concerns of the NESO team before the Prime Minister and take steps to protect the academic career of students.

Various types of violent incidents from May to July in the state of Manipur are discussed below- on June 4, Manipur Governor Anusuiya Uikey convened a meeting with Chief Minister N. Biren Singh and Chief Secretary Vineet Joshi at Raj Bhavan to take stock of the law-and-order situation of the state. The Governor enquired about the security measures being taken up to maintain law and order and discussed the restoration of peace and normalcy in the state. She also enquired about the arrangements made by the district administrations for distributing relief materials to the violence- affected displaced people in various relief camps and asked the Chief Minister to take up appropriate steps to reach out to the people.

The meeting dwelt upon the formation of a 'Peace Committee' as suggested by Union Home Minister Amit Shah during his visit to the state.

On June 10, the Centre constituted a peace committee in Manipur headed by Manipur Governor to facilitate peacemaking process among various ethnic groups in the state. The members of the committee include the Chief Minister, a few ministers in the state government, MP, MLA and leaders from different political parties. The committee also includes former civil servants, educationists, literatures, artists, social workers and representatives of different ethnic groups. The mandate of the committee will be to facilitate the peace- making process among various ethnic groups of the state, including peaceful dialogue and negotiations between conflicting parties and groups.

On June 15, it was reported that a prominent tribal body of Manipur has appealed to the Supreme Court to set up a special investigation team head by former Director General of Assam Police Harekrishna Deka to investigate and prosecute the accuse responsible for assaults on the tribal community in the state.

On June 26, Prime Minister Narendra Modi took stock of the situation in Manipur immediately after returning to India from his six- day state visits to the United States and Egypt. Union Home Minister Amit Shah briefed the Prime Minister on the steps being taken by the Centre and the Manipur Government to restore peace in the conflict- hit Manipur.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi met Manipur Governor Anusuiya Uikey and expressed his deep concern over the prevailing law and order situation in the state on June 30. This Congress leader visited a few relief camps and spoke to the inmates. He also interacted with the representatives of different civil society organizations and appealed to all sections of society for restoration of peace in Manipur.

On July 15, senior BJP leader Wilubou Newmai as a member of the peace committee visited Kuki-dominated areas of the hill districts. He also interacted with the leaders of Kuki civil society organizations. During the meeting, the BJP leader said that the enmity between the Meiteis and Kukis would not bring any good to either community. Newmai urged leaders of the Kuki community to play their role as responsible citizens to restore normalcy in Manipur. He added that forgiveness and love are the core values of Christianity. The Newmai-led team also visited relief camps and heard the grievances of the inmates.

A delegation of the National People's Party (NPP), led by its national vice presidents Y Joykumar Singh, Sonelal Kol and SK Sarkar called on Manipur Governor Anusuiya Uikey at the Raj Bhavan on July 14. According to a Raj Bhavan press release, the five-member National People's Party team expressed its concern over the prevailing situation in Manipur, which has led to loss of lives, destruction of properties and displacement of thousands of people. The team appraised the Governor of the plight of students from within and outside the state, the difficulties being faced by farmers in cultivation of land and the economic blockade on the National Highway 2, causing scarcity of essential commodities. The National People's Party members urged the Governor to take appropriate steps to address these issues. They also informed the Governor that as a political party they have been actively engaging with various stakeholders, appealing for peace, dialogue and reconciliation efforts.

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On July 19, a team of five MPs of Trinamool Congress arrived at that State on a two-day visit to take stock of the prevailing situation in Manipur. Firstly, the team visited the Kuki- dominated hill district of Churachandpur in a chopper. Later on, the Trinamool Congress MPs met the Manipur Governor at the Raj Bhavan here. After the meeting that lasted about a hour, Lok Sabha member Banerjee said that they had come to assess the situation and hear the voices of the people. Rajya Sabha member Dol Sen said that they urged the Governor to make efforts to restore peace and normalcy in the state.

In the mid week of July, Manipur Governor Anusuiya Uikey said that only a meaningful dialogue would bring about an amicable solution to the current crisis in the state. She appealed to all communities to cooperate with the Government in restore peace and normalcy in Manipur. The Governor reiterated that the State Government with the help of the Centre is making all- out efforts to restore normalcy. She stressed the need to remove the hatred between the Meitei and Kuki communities. She also said that the above mentioned two communities should stop the violence which is the prerequisite for initiating a meaningful dialogue.



## **CERTAIN MEASURES TO OVERCOME THIS VIOLENT SITUATION**

At the current time, ethnic violence of Manipur has become a national issue. The violent activities of this state are increasing day by day. With the increasing numbers of wounded people, killed people and internally displaced people, it is very urgent to prevent such type of situation in Manipur as soon as possible.

But only central or state government cannot suppress this type of situation. People of violent hit areas and the civil society organizations, political parties of the ruling government and opposition parties should also cooperate with them. The authority should check the areas to prevent the pathetic violence against women which was happened earlier very badly. Diversity is a normal issue in a state where different people have different culture, different language and different religion. So, we all should have to work for 'unity in diversity'. All should clear in this thing that if one community gets their due status it will not take the situation of crisis to the identity of another community.

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