

Manipur: A Broken Land

Harsh Mander

Centre for Equity Studies, Delhi

hmander@protonmail.com

ABSTRACT

This article analyses the descent of Manipur—a small state in India’s north-east—into a civil war since May 2023. It describes the conflict and the humanitarian crisis that it has spawned with the state government doing little for thousands whose homes and villages have been burnt down or those who fled in fear. It explains how the conflict rests on bitterly fought rival claims both of indigeneity and access to land, with the Kuki falsely stigmatized as foreigners and infiltrators. A court ruling for the dominant Meitei to be notified as Scheduled Tribes ignited the conflict, because this would enable them to buy hill lands. The Kuki, constitutionally protected as Scheduled Tribes, feared being submerged in their homelands. However, as the article elaborates, grounds for the conflict were laid by a series of openly partisan and provocative actions taken by BJP Chief Minister, N. Biren Singh. His notorious anti-Kuki rhetoric stigmatizing them as “illegal immigrants” and “foreigners” and narco-terrorists; declaration of large, cultivated hill tracts as reserved forests, cancellation of property deeds, and large-scale ejections had caused much consternation. He also withdrew ceasefire protection to Kuki militants and tacitly encouraged Meitei militant groups. Most culpably, the Meitei were allowed to loot over 4,000 modern weapons from various police armouries.

Keywords: Manipur, Meitei, Kuki, Northeast India, human rights violation, Hindu Nationalism, Hate speech, Civil War, ethnicity, Scheduled Tribes, indigeneity

Manipur: Una región dañada

RESUMEN

Este artículo analiza el descenso de Manipur, un pequeño estado en el noreste de la India, a una guerra civil desde mayo de 2023. Describe el conflicto y la crisis humanitaria que ha generado, con el gobierno estatal haciendo poco por miles de personas cuyos ho-

gares y aldeas han sido destruidos, o para aquellos que han huido con miedo. sido quemado. Explica cómo el conflicto se basa en reivindicaciones rivales encarnizadas tanto de indigeneidad como de acceso a la tierra, con los kuki falsamente estigmatizados como extranjeros e infiltrados. Un fallo judicial para que los meitei dominantes fueran notificados como tribus reconocidas encendió el conflicto, porque esto les permitiría comprar tierras montañosas. Los Kuki, protegidos constitucionalmente como tribus reconocidas, temían quedar sumergidos en sus países de origen. Sin embargo, como explica el artículo, las bases del conflicto las sentaron una serie de acciones abiertamente partidistas y provocativas adoptadas por el Ministro Principal del BJP, N. Biren Singh. Su notoria retórica anti-Kuki, estigmatizándolos como “inmigrantes ilegales”, “extranjeros” y narcoterroristas; La declaración de grandes extensiones de colinas cultivadas como bosques reservados, la cancelación de títulos de propiedad y las expulsiones en gran escala habían causado mucha consternación. También retiró la protección del alto el fuego a los militantes de Kuki y alentó tácitamente a los grupos militantes de Meitei. Lo más culpable es que a los Meitei se les permitió saquear más de 4.000 armas modernas de varios arsenales policiales.

Palabras clave: Manipur, Meitei, Kuki, noreste de la India, violación de derechos humanos, nacionalismo hindú, discurso de odio, guerra civil, etnicidad, tribus reconocidas, indigeneidad

曼尼普尔邦：破碎的土地

摘要

本文分析了印度东北部的一个小邦（曼尼普尔邦）自2023年5月以来陷入内战的过程。本文描述了冲突和由此引发的人道主义危机，该邦政府对“成千上万的居民（其家园和村庄被烧毁）以及那些在恐惧中逃离的人民”几乎没有采取任何行动。本文解释了冲突如何建立在对本土性和土地使用权的激烈争夺之上，并且库基人被错误地污蔑为外国人和渗透者。法院裁定将“占主导地位的梅泰人”列为表列部落，这引发了冲突，因为这将有助于他们购买山地。库基人作为表列部落受到宪法保护，而他们担心自己会消失在家园。然而，正如本文所阐述的那样，印度人民党首席部长比伦·辛格采取的一系列公开的党派行动和挑衅行动为冲突埋下了伏笔。他臭名昭著的反库基人言论，将他们污蔑为“非法移

民”、“外国人”和毒品恐怖分子；宣布大片耕作山地为保留林、取消财产契约、以及大规模的驱逐引起了极大的恐慌。他还撤销了对库基武装分子的停火保护，并暗自鼓励梅泰武装组织。最难辞其咎的是，梅泰人被允许从不同警察军械库掠夺4,000多件现代武器。

关键词：曼尼普尔邦，梅泰人，库基人，印度东北部，人权侵犯，印度教民族主义，仇恨言论，内战，族群性，表列部落，本土性

At the time I write this,¹ eight months have passed since Manipur—a small state in India’s north-eastern region, abutting Myanmar—exploded into a civil war of the kind that independent India has not seen, with civilians of the two bitterly warring communities, the Meitei and Kuki, armed to their teeth with weapons of modern warfare.

Religious and caste conflicts are by no means new to India, and ethnic conflicts have been rife in the states in India’s north-east region. Mainland India has seen recurring cruel and brutal attacks on oppressed-class Dalits and indigenous Adivasis; violence against religious minorities—most often Muslims, but on occasion also against Sikhs and Christians—with tacit to open support of the state; and Maoist uprisings. India’s north-eastern states have been torn apart by a range of often decades-long insurgent movements mostly organised around ethnic lines.

Many commentators see close parallels between the Manipur violence of 2023 to the Gujarat anti-Muslim

communal carnage of 2002. What is indeed similar between these bloody conflicts separated vastly by geography and two decades of time is that in both of Gujarat and Manipur, the state governments were openly, even defiantly majoritarian in their communal or ethnic partisanship. In both of these, the state governments took few steps to prevent or effectively control the violence once it broke out; nor to protect the lives and properties of the targeted minorities—Muslims and Kuki tribal communities respectively. And after the clashes, both state governments did not extend any comprehensive relief to the victim survivors, nor ensure legal justice. Another similarity was that the same party—the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party—was in power in both the central and state governments, but the central leadership refused on both occasions to remove the Chief Ministers from office despite their disgraceful failures and manifest unconstitutional partisanship.

Other commentators view the current conflict in Manipur as one

more in a long series of violent ethnic conflicts perpetrated by militant groups affiliated with various ethnic groups that have wounded Manipur ever since its union with India in 1949. There are an estimated 30 militant groups in Manipur. One indicator of the extent to which violence is endemic to Manipur is that while Manipur constitutes barely 0.2 percent of the total population of India, its share in the number of criminal cases under India's anti-terror law (UAPA) between 2014 and 2020 is as high as 38 percent (2595). Jammu and Kashmir, riven as it is with militancy, comes a distant second at 1202 cases. In 1949, militant groups rose among the Meitei and Naga people. The Kuki militant groups formed from the 1990s, particularly after a bloody conflict between the Kuki and Naga that took 400 lives. In recent years, the militant groups were relatively dormant. The Naga groups were in extended peace negotiations with the Government of India. The Indian government had also joined a tripartite Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement since 2008 (Donthi 2023). Two Meitei militias have been active in the present conflict, the Arongal Tengol and Meitei Leepun. These are widely believed to be actively patronised by the Chief Minister Biren Singh.

There are no doubt echoes of both of these streams of blood-letting—ethnic and insurgent—in the Manipur clashes of 2023. But the combat in Manipur cannot be reduced to a communal, caste or ethnic clash nor to a militant insurgency of the kind that have racked the country in the decades since Independence. What makes it different from

both streams is the scale to which ordinary citizens—and not just members of militant groups—are armed in the 2023 Manipur combat with weapons of modern warfare, including assault rifles, light machine guns and mortars. It is this that has turned the state into a war zone unlike what free India has seen.

Even eight months after this conflagration began, the hostilities show no signs of any end. News of fresh gunfire, bomb explosions and casualties on both sides continues to pour in. The state has also effectively been militarily partitioned by armed citizen action. Civilian groups including of women have not permitted for eight months the passage of even food and medical supplies or security personnel from the Imphal valley to the hills, spawning an intense humanitarian food and health care crisis. The Imphal valley has been entirely emptied out of its Kuki residents, and the southern hills of their Meitei inhabitants. Not just civilians, businesses and professionals but even government officials including policepersons, doctors and teachers have felt compelled to abandon their posts based on their ethnicity; now no Meitei can work in the southern hills and no Kuki in the valley.

Even the ten Kukis elected to the legislative assembly, including a minister, were unable to travel to Imphal for assembly sessions or to attend office. These ten Kuki MLAs, including eight from the ruling BJP, issued a public statement reflecting their despondency: “Our people can no longer exist” in the state of Manipur because “the hatred against our tribal community

reached such a height that MLAs, ministers, pastors, police and civil officers, laymen, women and even children were not spared, not to mention the destruction of places of worships, homes and properties.” To live amidst the Meitei after this violence, they declared, would be “as good as death” (*Scroll.in*, 12 May 2023).

* * *

There are three main ethnic groups in Manipur, the Meitei, Kuki-Zomi, and Naga people. The Meitei are the politically and economically dominant group, constituting more than half the population (53%). The Nagas form around 17 percent of the population, and the Kuki-Zomi around 26 percent. There are also Meitei who are Muslim, called the Pangal. They form 8 percent of the population of Manipur. They are also people who migrated from Nepal and mainland India.

Whereas we refer in a kind of short-hand to the Naga and the Kuki-Zomi as though each of these are homogenous tribes, this is not a reality. In fact, the Indian Constitution lists 34 tribes listed as Scheduled Tribes in Manipur (Das 2023). Some of these identify with the Naga cluster, and some with the Kuki-Zo.

It is interesting that after the Manipur king had converted Manipur into a constitutional democratic monarchy in 1947 (Schoetz and Das 2023), the first of its kind in Asia, the Constitution reserved 30 seats in the legislature for what it called the “General” category, 18 for the “Hill” people and 3 for the Mohamaden (Muslim) citizens of Manipur.

The Meitei have tended to cluster in the valley, the Kuki in the southern hills, and the Naga in the northern hills. There have been periodic occasions in the past of spikes of bloody clashes between various ethnic groups. But for the greater part they have lived side by side peaceably. The separate living of the three communities was not absolute or hostile, because in areas where one community dominates, the others tend to cohabit peacefully as minorities. However, the 2023 conflict threatens to reverse this, because both Meitei and Kuki people no longer feel safe living side by side with each other.

* * *

The three major communities of Manipur today press rival claims both of indigeneity and access to land. There are rancorous wrangles about which peoples are indigenous to Manipur and who are outsiders. The claims to indigeneity of the Meitei are indisputable; they trace their history to one of the longest unbroken dynasties in the world, the Ningthouja, that goes back around two millenia, from 33 CE. The kingdom for the greater part was confined to the valley, but on occasion included the hills and even stretched up to the Irrawady River in Myanmar (Schoetz and Das 2023).

The rulers and people followed the indigenous animistic faith of Sanahism until the 18th century. In 1704 CE, the king converted to the Hindu faith, and large sections of the people followed his example by adopting the Vaishnavite faith. The kingdom was called Kangleipak. The king, now con-

verted to Hinduism, renamed the kingdom in 1724 CE to Manipur which in Sanskrit name means the Jewelled Land (Schoetz and Das 2023).

The claims of ancient belonging to Manipur of the Nagas also are likewise incontestable. They have lived in the northern hills surrounding the Imphal valley for nearly as long as the Meitei inhabited the valley.

The disputes of belonging pivot on the claims of the Kuki people, often stigmatised as foreigners and infiltrators in today's majoritarian discourse. The first archival mention of the Kuki in Manipur is in British colonial records in 1777 CE (Schoetz and Das 2023). Some scholars believe that the British aided the settling of the more peaceable Kuki people in the Manipuri hills as an offset to the more belligerent Naga tribes. But it is also true that the Kuki were enemies of the colonial British and so the veracity of colonial writings cannot be taken for granted. Therefore, their habitations in the Manipur hills could conceivably be of even older vintage.

Even more than belonging, at the core of the current combat lies land ownership. The dominant Meitei community with more than half the population occupy just 10 percent of the land. They are barred from buying land in the hills, inhabited predominantly by Naga and Kuki tribal communities, because of the special constitutional protections of the Naga and Kuki as Scheduled Tribes. It is the restiveness of the Meitei people—and allegedly of large business houses—that seek legal rights to buy lands in the hills that fuelled the demand that

the Meitei too be notified as Scheduled Tribes. If this is done, it would open the floodgates of enabling them for the first time to buy lands in the hills, which stirs a dread of being submerged by the more powerful outside community in their own homelands.

The immediate spark for the fearsome 2023 conflagration in Manipur was lit by a ruling of a single-judge bench of the Manipur High Court in March 27 that instructed the state government to recommend that the Meitei be notified as Scheduled Tribes in the Indian Constitution (Lakshman 2023). This led to outrage and existential anxieties among the Kuki people, who feared that their safe sanctuaries in the hills would be invaded by the politically and economically dominant Meitei people, and using them as a front, by big businesses. But the state government, instead of allaying their anxieties instructively chose not to appeal against this order.

This High Court ruling became the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. The ground for the inferno was already laid by a series of openly partisan and provocative actions taken by the BJP Chief Minister, N. Biren Singh.

To begin with was his anti-Kuki rhetoric. He was notorious for this even from the time before his defection from the Congress to the BJP. But holding the constitutional office of Chief Minister did nothing to restrain him. The state government also did not intervene to restrain the leading local print and digital media outlets that ran a vicious hate campaign against the Kuki, including

distortions of their history and demonising them in other ways as well.

The Chief Minister stigmatised the Kuki people as “illegal immigrants” and “foreigners.” He was not restrained by the fact that the decennial censuses from 1901 to 2011 did not reveal any unusual rise in the non-Naga tribal population, revealing the claim of the Kuki being aliens to Manipur an evident falsehood (EGoI 2023).

Second, he repeatedly disgraced the Kuki as “poppy cultivators” (or worse, narco-terrorists). It is true that large acres of fields in the Manipuri hills have been diverted by impoverished Kuki farmers to cultivate poppies. Data put out by the statutory Narcotics and Affairs of Border (NAB) admits that 15,497 acres of land is under poppy cultivation over the past five years. Of this, 13,122 acres were in Kuki-Chin-dominated areas, 2,340 acres in Naga-dominated areas and 35 acres under other parts of the state (Achom and Choudhury 2023).

But it is unfair to lay the blame for Manipur’s drug epidemic primarily at the door of the Kuki people. This illegal cultivation could not have continued without the tacit consent of successive governments in Manipur. And second, there is no empirical basis for the Chief Minister to claim that the Kuki are key actors in the cross-border drug industry centred in Myanmar (Donthi 2023), making them answerable for the massive rise in drug addiction has grown like a cancer across the valley. Local commentators estimate that the scale of the illicit drug trade in Manipur is

of around 50,000 crore rupees (which is considerably higher than the entire budget of the state) (Kapoor 2023); and there is no convincing proof that the processing and trafficking of drugs are done by Kuki entrepreneurs. The giant transnational drug industry could only flourish with the patronage of people of immense wealth and political clout in Imphal, Delhi and Myanmar.

The Biren Singh government also took major high-handed executive steps that further fuelled the trepidation and land anxiety among the Kuki. The Kuki have for generations, indeed centuries depended on shifting cultivation in their forested hill habitats. But the state government precipitously declared parts of these hill tracts as “reserved” and “protected” forests and cancelled all land ownership documents beginning from December 2022. The Editors Guild reports that while this was troubling enough for the Kuki, what led to even more fear and rage among them was “that the forest surveys, inquiries, evictions and demolitions were carried out only in the non-Naga inhabited tribal areas, once again leading the Kuki community to believe that it was being singled out” (EGoI 2023, 3). This led inevitably to violent confrontations in the early months of 2023, there were inevitably many clashes between officials and the Kuki residents of these villages. On April 3, 2023, a committee chaired by the Chief Secretary cancelled all land and property deeds and recognition of villages within the newly declared reserved and protected forest areas, without any rehabilitation plan for the evicted tribal population (EGoI 2023, 3).

The chief minister also launched with much fanfare a “war on drugs.” The drugs of choice in the transnational drug trade are “heroin, brown sugar, prescription painkillers, cough syrups and Yaba or WIY (“World Is Yours”) pills.” The government instead focussed only on criminalising poppy cultivators, the majority of who are, as we saw, Kuki. It did little to act against “the other components of the drug trade, the smuggling of synthetics to Myanmar and the smuggling in of drugs and their distribution through Manipur” (EGoI 2023, 4).

Again, summarily, without public debate and explanations, in March 2023 the state government suddenly and unilaterally cancelled the tripartite Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with the Kuki militants. This amounted to a sudden unexplained withdrawal of what was effectively a ceasefire with Kuki militants. The government also withdrew the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) only from the Imphal Valley and not the hill districts. The Editors Guild notes that this was openly targeting the Kuki because “the Kuki insurgent groups were in peace talks with the Centre while the Meitei insurgents active in the Imphal Valley were outside any process of negotiation for peace” (EGoI 2023, 3). He also posed for pictures with Meitei militias like the Arambai Tenngol. The Editors’ Guild observed that this was understandably “seen by the Kuki-Zo tribals as a partisan move in preparation for violence against the Kuki, which came a few weeks later” (EGoI 2023, 3).

But the state action (or inaction) that most transformed what would otherwise have been at its worst a blood-drenched ethnic conflict (of the kind that Manipur had seen also in the past) into a full-scale civil war, was allowing with little resistance the looting of police armouries. On the day of the march, throngs of Meitei people raided police armouries and absconded with more than 4,000 modern weapons. Among these were assault rifles, long-range guns, 51 mm mortars and over half a million bullets. It is clear that the Manipur police forces, most of them of Meitei identity, did little to halt this plunder, because there are no reports of significant injury or loss of life both among the police personnel and the civilian looters. This was not a one-time episode. Instead, such raids recurred periodically. There are allegations that Kuki police personnel in the hills stood by as crowds of Kukis also looted weapons, but on a much smaller scale (Donthi 2023). To date, only a small fraction of these arms has been recovered. This kind of serial loot by civilians of state armouries without resistance from the police, strongly suggestive of the concurrence of the state to arming themselves with lethal cutting-edge weapons a section of citizens with modern weapons, is unprecedented in independent India.

* * *

The fires of the combat were lit on May 3 after tribal student groups organised protest marches in all district headquarters with the call “Come Let Us Reason Together” (Das 2023). But during rallies in ten of sixteen districts people of the two communities clashed

violently. That night radical squads of Meitei youth attacked and set afire Kuki homes, villages and churches in the Imphal valley and murdered many including women and children. The following day, the Meitei, including women, spilled onto the streets in massive counter-rallies, even preventing the security forces from protecting and rescuing people, their properties, and villages and churches. These attacks were quickly mirrored in the hills, where people attacked and burned down most villages and houses of Meitei minorities in the hills. Horrifying incidents of sexual violence also were reported, in which women were stripped naked, groped, and publicly raped and killed.

The murders, rapes, looting, and gutting of thousands of homes, villages, and religious shrines resulted in more than 60,000 people turning homeless, as both the Kuki and Meitei fled from settlements in which they had lived peacefully as minorities, after their houses were vandalised and razed, and over 300 churches burnt down. While both communities have been badly ravaged by the violence, it is indisputable that losses have been graver among the Kuki, arguably the outcome of tacit or open state government support for the majoritarian Meitei community.

The state government is largely absent from the relief camps, especially for Kuki internally displaced persons in the hills. A team of *Karwan e Mohabbat*, a civil society campaign for solidarity and justice for survivors of hate violence (of which this writer is a part) published a report about the humanitarian crisis into which the people in-

ternally displaced by the bloody clashes have been thrust (*Karwan e mohabbat* 29 August 2023).

The governments of India and Manipur have also done little—even eight months into the conflict—to disarm civilian populations and militant militias, and to charge, arrest and prosecute people charged with the killings and rapes, the plunder of armouries, and the vandalising and arson of homes and villages

What needs deeper study is the contribution of the Hindu supremacist organisation, the RSS, in laying the ground for the conflict. It is well-known that RSS workers have been working with dedication for many years in the Manipur valley. The large majority of the Meitei are Vaishnavite Hindus, and most of the Kuki are Christians, aligned to the local protestant Church of India. But the clashes in Manipur, as indeed all across India's north-eastern states have been not about religious but ethnic identity. Many observers suggested in conversations with me that the RSS has contributed to the recent surge of "Meiteism"—a concerted campaign to revive Meitei identity, religion and culture often aligned with Hinduism" (Bose 2023). Has the RSS been able to converge Meitei sub-nationalism with Hindutva nationalism? Are the Kuki being demonised not just for their ethnicity but also for their religious faith, feeding into the much older RSS trope of alleged proselytising by the Christian church? It is difficult to offer definitive answers to these questions, but there are signs on the ground that point in this direction.

* * *

The Kuki people have erected a Wall of Remembrance in the hill town of Churachandpur. In the front is a long line of empty black coffins. On the rear is a wall with pictures of every person — child, woman, and man—who lost their lives in this combat. On another wall people write messages of tearful tribute to the dead. For many months, on every alternate day thousands of women would wear black clothes of mourning and collect at this memorial site to collectively grieve.

After this writer travelled in Manipur seven months after it had exploded with violence and hate, I took the extraordinary step of writing to all Members of the Indian Parliament (MPs).² I end this account with some lines from my letter to the MPs.

[I am bearing witness to a Manipur that is] still badly broken—smouldering, wounded and aching. ...[The] informal border that separates the two bitterly warring communities, the Meitei and Kuki, remains as stubborn and unbending as it was when they first took up arms against the other. ... It is both “unyielding” and “pitiless” ... [as] 109 bodies of Kuki men, women and children killed during the violence lay in the mortuary of the medical college in Imphal for seven months, until finally the Supreme Court intervened and bodies of 64 victims were airlifted on 14 December. Up to then no arrangements had been made

to secure their safe transport from the valley to the hills, and it was not possible for the families of the dead to travel to Imphal to claim their dead for fear of being murdered along the way. In the mortuary of the Churachandpur Medical College, another 46 bodies lay. The Kuki people awaited the return of the corpses from Imphal before all the killed people were buried side by side in keeping with their customs.... [The wrenching conditions of the] relief camps in the hills from which the state is almost entirely absent ... Food is austere, sanitation primitive and children unschooled. The loss of the residents in relief camps in both the hills and the valley ... is profound—of homeland, loved ones, home, friends, trust and an entire way of life ... [The] relief workers spoke to me of the sharp spike in drug usage by young people who found themselves trapped in the darkest of despair. Despair deepens further ... because people battered by the violence encounter few public expressions of remorse, little legal justice, too small an attempt to confiscate the massive cache of firearms looted from police armouries, and no let-up on the propaganda of hate. ... [A] a very tiny trickle of people has returned to their villages, barely a few hundred. These too are only young men trying to cultivate their fields even at risk

to their lives to better feed their families in the camps. People of both communities are convinced that it is impossible for them to

return to their old burnt down habitations to live side by side with the estranged community again.

Endnotes

- 1 I draw upon a range of my articles on the situation in Manipur, including “As Manipur crisis intensifies, where is the state?” in *The Indian Express*, 2 August 2023, available at: <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/manipur-visit-harsh-mander-karwan-e-mohabbat-kuki-meteis-clash-8871974/>; “Manipur: A Land of Settled Grief,” 1 Nov 2023, *The Wire*, available at: <https://thewire.in/security/manipur-a-land-of-settled-grief>; and “In grief-struck relief camps, songs and prayers heavy with suffering – Manipur, seven months later,” 20 December 2023, *Scroll.in*, available at: <https://scroll.in/article/1060752/in-grief-struck-relief-camps-songs-and-prayers-heavy-with-suffering-manipur-seven-months-later>
- 2 I wrote individual letters separately to each of the MPs, on the dates 28 Dec 2023, 30 December 2023, and 2 January 2024, and sent these letters to them by post. I also published an online copy of the letter on <https://karwanemohabbat.substack.com/p/as-the-people-of-india-let-us-care>. I did not receive any acknowledgement of the letters from the MPs.

References

- Achom, Debasish, and Ratnadip Choudhury. 2023. “15,400 Acres Under Poppy Cultivation In Manipur, 2,500 Arrested In 5 Years: Sources.” NDTV India. May 16, 2023. Available at: <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/15-400-acres-under-poppy-cultivation-in-manipur-2-500-arrested-in-5-years-sources-4040264>
- Bose, Rakhi. 2023. “Why Kuki-Meitei Conflict In Manipur Is More Than Just An Ethnic Clash.” *Outlook* May 29, 2023. Available at: <https://www.outlookindia.com/national/why-kuki-meitei-conflict-in-manipur-is-more-than-just-and-ethnic-clash-news-290306>
- Das, Pushpita. 2023. “The Unfolding Kuki–Meitei Conflict in Manipur.” IDSA Issue Briefs, May 26, 2023. Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis, New Delhi. Available at: <https://www.idsa.in/system/files/issuebrief/ib-kuki%E2%80%93meitei-conflict-pdas-300523.pdf>
- Donthi, Praveen. 2023. “Ethnic Clashes Roiling Manipur Pose Test for India’s Modi.” The International Crisis Group, Q&A Asia, 26 July 2023. Available at: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/india/ethnic-clashes-roiling-manipur-pose-test-indias-modi>

EGoI (Editors' Guild of India). 2023. *Report of the Fact-Finding Mission on Media's Reportage of the Ethnic Violence in Manipur*. 2 September 2023. Editors' Guild of India: New Delhi.

Kapoor, Sanjay. 2023. "Manipur Violence: Why Doesn't the Violence Stop Here?" *The Probe*. August 28, 2023. Available at: <https://theprobe.in/columns/manipur-violence-why-doesnt-the-violence-stop-here/>

Lakshman, Abhinay. 2023. "Manipur High Court directs State to consider inclusion of Meitei community in Scheduled Tribes list." *The Hindu*, April 20, 2023. Available at: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/manipur-high-court-directs-state-to-consider-inclusion-of-meitei-community-in-scheduled-tribes-list/article66756719.ece>

Schoetz, Ananya Niharika and Yudhajit Shankar Das. 2023. "When did Kukis reach Manipur and how the past is shaping the state's present." *India Today*, August 4, 2023. Available at: <https://www.indiatoday.in/history-of-it/story/manipur-violence-when-did-kukis-reach-manipur-and-how-past-is-shaping-states-present-2416215-2023-08-04>

Karwan e mohabbat. 2023. "The Humanitarian Crisis in Manipur," 29 August 2023. Available at: <https://karwanemohabbat.substack.com/p/the-humanitarian-crisis-in-manipur>

Scroll India. 2023. "Manipur violence: All 10 Kuki MLAs demand separate administration for their community." May 12, 2023. Available at: <https://scroll.in/latest/1049014/manipur-violence-all-10-kuki-mlas-demand-separate-administration-for-their-community>