



ALL MANIPUR UNITED CLUBS' ORGANISATION (AMUCO)

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To,

SHRI. NARENDRA MODI

Hon'ble Prime Minister of India PMO, South Block

Raisina Hill, New Delhi-110011

Imphal, the 7th September of 2023

Through,

SMT. ANUSUIYA UIKEY

Hon'ble Governor of Manipur

Subject: Memorandum to Save the Integrity of Manipur & Resolve the Present Violent Crisis

Hon'ble Sir,

We write to express our deep concerns regarding the growing threat to the unity and integrity of Manipur, driven by persistent attempts to fragment this historically significant state. These efforts are fuelled by irredentist and ethno-exclusivist political ambitions, which pose a significant challenge to the age-old spirit of peaceful coexistence and the diverse fabric of our state.

It is not an exaggeration to state that ethno-centric politics has cast a shadow over Manipuri society, leading to an unfortunate violent outcome and political instability. The Indian State is yet to identify a comprehensive solution to address the diverse ethno-exclusivist political aspirations of numerous communities in the Northeastern region.

It is imperative to recognise that lasting peace can only be achieved by discouraging and addressing ethnic-based politics through appropriate policy interventions. We must work collectively to promote unity, inclusivity, and harmony among all communities in Manipur, ensuring the state's continued prosperity and stability.

We want to emphasise that the recent resurgence of violence and turmoil in Manipur has disrupted the relative peace of the state. This unsettling state of affairs commenced on May 3, 2023, following the Tribal Solidarity March in Churachandpur district, Manipur. The catalyst for this unfortunate turn of events was the initiation of three governance-positive initiatives by the Manipur Government:

1. War on Drugs: An effort to combat the drug menace in the region
2. Eviction of Illegal Encroachers: A drive to reclaim Protected and Reserve Forest areas, including sacred sites and wildlife sanctuaries, from illegal encroachers

3. **Detection of Illegal Immigrants:** An initiative to identify and address the issue of illegal immigration in the State

Regrettably, these constitutional initiatives were perceived as anti-Kuki by ethno-centric militant organisations representing the Kuki-Zo community and supporters, as they were seen to impede their interests. Consequently, the ongoing violence can be traced back to an unfortunate manifestation of ethnic jingoism rooted in the ethno-exclusivist political aspirations of the Kuki- Zo community. This violence persists, causing significant human and environmental costs.

The All Manipur United Clubs' Organisation (AMUCO), a civil society organisation committed to the integrity and peaceful coexistence of indigenous communities in Manipur, firmly believes that a collective political aspiration, coupled with its unimpeded implementation, is the only viable solution to the current conflict and violence. To put an end to the prevailing hatred, savage animosity, and senseless violence, we respectfully submit the following demands to your esteemed office, with the aim of restoring normalcy and establishing long-lasting peace in Manipur.

1. **Immediate Cessation of Armed Violence:** A cessation of all forms of armed violence to halt the ongoing bloodshed and suffering
2. **Peace Process and Resettlement Measures for Internally Displaced Persons:** The initiation of a comprehensive peace process, alongside the implementation of measures to rehabilitate and support internally displaced persons affected by the recent violence
3. **Amendment to the Indian Constitution, Article 3:** A proposal for the amendment of Article 3 of the Indian Constitution by inserting a clause to safeguard the territorial integrity of Manipur and to provide legal protection against future attempts at division.
4. **Immediate Implementation of National Register of Citizens (NRC):** An expedited implementation of NRC in Manipur to identify and address the issue of illegal immigrants, thereby ensuring the state's security.
5. **Ending the Formation of Ethnic-Centric Political Units by Constituting a District Reorganisation Committee:** Cessation of the formation of ethnic-centric political units based on ethnic boundaries, including:
 - a) Any form of separate administration
 - b) The dismantling of Kangpokpi district (formerly SADAR Hills)
 - c) The reorganisation of Bishnupur district
6. **Creation of Special Administrative Zones:**
 - a) Establishment of a Moreh Special Administrative Zone
 - b) Establishment of a Beihang Special Administrative Zone
7. **Protection and Conservation of Community/Reserve Forests:** Strengthening the Manipur State Darbar Resolution of 1932 to protect and conserve community and reserve forests, promoting environmental sustainability.
8. **Eradication of Narco-trade and Poppy Cultivation:** Development of effective mechanisms to eradicate narco-trade and poppy cultivation in Manipur, addressing the root causes of these issues.

Before delving into the rationale and explanation of these demands, it is essential to provide a brief overview of Manipur's modern political history, highlighting its secular, democratic, and pluralistic character that prevailed before its merger with the Dominion of India in October 1949.

BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Reflecting on the historical narrative of Manipur, one cannot help but argue that the state's course of modern political history might have taken a different path had the Government of India recognised and honoured its distinctive political heritage. Many of the issues and movements that plague contemporary Manipur can be traced back to India's failure to acknowledge and appreciate the unique political history of the region. The abrupt cessation of democratic constitutional practices in Manipur, resulting from its merger into the Dominion of India in 1949, proved detrimental to its integrity and peace. Present-day Manipur is marked by ethnic divisions, an influx of illegal migrants, a thriving narcotics trade, and a state of armed conflict.

Manipur: An Asiatic Power

Historically, Manipur was an Asiatic State with strategic significance, nestled between Southeast Asia and British India. The former kingdom of Manipur, located in this strategically vital area, played a crucial role in the geopolitical dynamics of the region. It was recognised as a sovereign entity by various neighbouring powers, including the Ahoms, Takhels, Ava (Myanmar), and the British Empire. The treaty relations that Manipur established with the British Empire serve as illustrative examples of Manipur's historical political status.

Manipur's treaties with external powers, such as King Kiyamba's agreement with Khamaran (Myanmar) and Shan (Pong) in 1470 AD, the Anglo-Manipuri Mutual Defence Treaty of September 14, 1762, the Anglo-Manipuri Defence Protocol of 1763, Article 2 of the Yandaboo Treaty of 1826, the Anglo-Manipuri Treaty of 1833, the Kabo Valley Agreement of 1834, the Anglo-Manipuri Protocol (Barak Treaty) of 1874, and the Instrument of Accession and Standstill Agreement of August 11, 1947, all underscore Manipur's undisputed sovereign status and recognition by the involved parties.

Two particular treaties stand out as they explicitly acknowledged Manipur's sovereignty and territorial integrity. These are the Treaty of Yandaboo, 1826, signed between the British and Burma and the Barak Treaty of 1874. Additionally, the Jiri Treaty, which dealt with trade and commerce, was an attempt to break Manipur's trade monopoly in the northern region of the kingdom. The Kabaw Valley Treaty involved the transfer or lease of the valley to Burma in exchange for an annual rent of 500 siccas to Manipur.

These treaties provided international acknowledgment of Manipur's existence as a political entity. They serve as evidence that Manipur had evolved into a modern nation-state with a defined territory and internationally recognised borders. Concerning the Anglo-Manipur War of 1891, it is essential to note that the British did not annex Manipur; instead, they subjected it to indirect rule. Manipur remained a princely state, with British suzerainty extending over matters such as trade and commerce, taxation, security, and defence. The Manipur king retained power over cultural and religious spheres, including the authority to levy taxes in these internal domains. In essence, Manipur had a dual administration, with the monarchy remaining intact after the British victory in 1891. The Manipur State Darbar was the supreme governing body, exercising authority over the entire territory of Manipur. After nearly 56 years, Manipur gained independence from British colonial rule on August 14, 1947.

Manipur (1947-1949): Establishment of Responsible Government

The years spanning from 1947 to 1949 constitute a pivotal, challenging, and highly active period in the 20th century political landscape of Manipur. Geo-political shifts triggered by the conclusion of World War II piqued the interest of the Indian National Congress in the political developments of the princely states. The politically aware middle class in Manipur began clamouring for a responsible government elected through universal adult suffrage. The central thrust of this movement was the democratisation of the political system. By July 1947, a 16-

member Constituent Assembly, representing Nagas, Kukis, Meitei, and Meitei-Pangal communities, recommended the establishment of a Legislative Assembly. Universal adult suffrage was adopted for the elections, allowing all eligible voters to participate regardless of land ownership or educational qualifications.

John Parratt in his book, “Wounded Land: Politics and Identity in Modern Manipur” published in 2005 aptly described the Manipur Constitution Act, 1947 as “a remarkably enlightened and liberal piece of legislation”. According to him, “It provided, for the first time on the Indian sub-continent, for a legislature to be elected by full adult franchise under a constitutional monarchy”. This 1947 Constitution envisioned an elected Legislative Assembly with a three-year term. The composition of the Assembly was meticulously divided to accommodate Manipur’s diverse population. It consisted of 30 seats for the general population in the Manipur Valley, 18 seats for the hill regions, and 3 seats for the Muslim communities. Additionally, there were provisions for two seats representing the fields of education and commerce, respectively, to be elected through a limited franchise.

As outlined in the Manipur Constitution Act of 1947, the elections for the Manipur (State) Assembly commenced on June 11 and continued until July 27, 1948. The election yielded a hung Assembly, as no single party secured an absolute majority. Subsequently, a coalition government, led by Praja Santi and supported by the Krishak Sabha and hill representatives, was formed. Maharaja Bodhchandra officially inaugurated the first democratically elected Assembly on October 18, 1948, with MK Priyobarta Singh as the Chief Minister. TC Tiangkham, representing the Kuki community, became the first Speaker. In an Extraordinary Order issued on November 27, 1948, the following representatives were appointed to the Council of Ministers.

Table 1: Representatives to the Council of Ministers, Manipur Assembly 1948

Sl.	Name	Portfolio
1.	Capt. PB Singh, Chief Minister	Home and Revenue
2.	Major R. Khathing, MBE, MC	Hill
3.	Sjt. A. Ibotomcha Singh	Finance, Local Self Government (Town Fund, Hydro Electric Board, Water and Vehicles Tax and Chairman Bazaar Committee
4.	Dr. N. Lairon Singh	Education, Press and PWD
5.	Sjt. A. Gourbidhu Singh	Commerce and Industries
6.	Mr. Tebakilong	Forest, Agriculture and Veterinary
7.	Md. Alimuddin	Jail, Medical, Public Health and Sanitation

Source: *Gazette Extraordinary*, published by Order of HH the Maharaja, November 29, 1948.

The Manipur State Assembly and the Council of Ministers in 1948 stood as a testament to the existence of a secular and democratic polity in Manipur. This political landscape was built upon the foundation of pluralistic values and ethos that were deeply cherished by both the people of Manipur and the visionary framers of the Manipur Constitution Act of 1947.

Territorial Size of Manipur

The territorial size of Manipur is clearly outlined in HH Maharaja Bodhchandra’s speech during the inaugural session of the Manipur Legislative Assembly on October 18, 1948. In his words:

Her present area is 8650 square miles plus 7000 square miles of the Kabaw Valley...Read the Treaty of Yandaboo, dated the 9th January 1834 ratified between Maharaja Gambhir Singh and the Company. This Treaty left for us a good heritage, namely the Kabaw Valley of 7000 square miles for which we now

get from Burma Rs. 6270 as annual tribute which according to the terms of the Agreement will cease when the area is reverted to our State.

The modern political history of Manipur clearly indicates the establishment of a responsible form of government that is secular and democratic. The inauguration of the elected Assembly revealed that the Maharaja's power had also been transferred to the Assembly. In essence, the real power lay with the Assembly, and Maharaja Bodhchandra became the Constitutional Head of the State of Manipur. Regrettably, the Government of India seemed to disregard the democratic political developments in Manipur in 1949.

After intense diplomatic negotiations, threats, and intimidation, Maharaja Bodhchandra was coerced into signing the Merger Agreement on September 21, 1949 (Anandamohan, *Shillong 1949*), bypassing the elected Assembly, which embodied the people's mandate and the actual authority to do so. It's worth noting that the agreement was not ratified by the then-elected Legislative Assembly of Manipur. An article in *The New York Times* on October 4, 1949, titled, "India to Rule Manipur", reported the integration of Manipur with the Indian Dominion in the following words:

[...] one of the last important princely states to remain semi-independent of the Indian Government now has integrated with the Dominion. The Indian States Ministry announced tonight that the Maharajah of Manipur, 18,000 square miles state on the Burma border, with a population of 500,000, had signed an agreement ceding full powers and jurisdiction to the Dominion Government.

To summarise, Manipur was an ancient kingdom having a definite population and territorial size when it ultimately merged with the Indian Union.

Post-Merger Political Scenario

Furthermore, the downgrading of Manipur to a Part C State in 1949, its transformation into a Union Territory in 1956, the imposition of ethnic laws in 1960 and 1971–72, and the enforcement of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958, not only deeply wounded the political sentiments of the people but also disrupted political stability in Manipur.

In light of various demands for separate administration or a separate state based on ethnocentric political mobilisation, which has posed a persistent threat to Manipur's existence, it has become increasingly crucial to protect and safeguard the territorial integrity of Manipur. The Manipur Legislative Assembly has passed several resolutions on numerous occasions, reflecting the long-standing demand of the majority of Manipur's population.

The apparent division between the hills and the valley is a consequence of colonial policy designs that have been perpetuated in post-British India. Given the growing ethnicisation of politics in Manipur, it is now imperative to eliminate artificial and discriminatory legislation that divides the people and society. There is growing dissatisfaction amongst the citizens over the existence of multiple land laws in the state such as land ownership system under the Manipur Land Revenue and Reform Act (MLRRA), 1960, Chieftainship ownership and common property ownership. The dissatisfaction aggravates when facticity reveals increasing pressure on land and resources in areas under MLRRA 1960. Over and above, Table 2 table illustrates the district-wise variations in terms of area, population, and density, underscoring the need to address these disparities and ensure equitable development for all communities in Manipur.

Table 2: District-wise variations in terms of area, population and density, 2011

Sl. No.	District	Area Km2	Population	Density
1.	Imphal West	519	5,17,992	998
2.	Imphal East	710	4,56,113	643
3.	Bishnupur	496	2,37,399	479

4.	Thoubal	514	4,22,168	821
5.	Kakching*			
6.	Senapati	3269	4,79,148	146
7.	Ukhrul	4,547	1,83,998	40
8.	Churachandpur	4,574	2,74,143	60
9.	Chandel	3,317	1,44,182	44
10.	Tamenglong	4,391	1,40,651	32
11.	Tengnoupal*			
12.	Kamjong*			
13.	Noney*			
14.	Jiribam*			
15.	Kangpokpi *(SADAR Hill)			
16.	Pherzawl*			

Note*: Newly created district after 2011, hence no census is done so far. Source: Census of India, 2011

OUR DEMANDS

In light of the factual reality and the distinctive history of Manipur, we respectfully submit the following demands that embody the collective aspirations of the majority of the people of Manipur:

1. **Immediate Cessation of Armed Violence:** Put an immediate end to all forms of armed violence to halt the ongoing bloodshed and suffering. Ensure that Kuki-Zo militants, bound by the ground rules of the Suspension of Operation (SoO), remain in their designated camps. Prevent them from providing arm-training to Kuki-Zo volunteer youth.
2. **Peace Process and Resettlement Measures for Internally Displaced Persons:** Initiate a comprehensive peace process while implementing measures to rehabilitate and support internally displaced persons who have been affected by the recent violence. Send back affected persons to their original places of habitat.
3. **Amendment to Indian Constitution, Article 3:** As a mark of reciprocity to Manipur's historical standing as a distinct political entity, amend Article 3 of the Indian Constitution, which empowers the Parliament of India to alter the boundaries of any state in India, by inserting a clause to safeguard the territorial integrity of Manipur and provide legal protection against future attempts at division. This constitutional safeguard for Manipur's unity and boundaries has been a longstanding demand, rooted in the resolution passed at AMUCO's Manipur People's Convention held on August 18, 1997. In addition the Manipur State's Legislative Assembly also has passed resolutions several times to protect and safeguard unity and integrity of Manipur.
4. **Immediate Implementation of National Register of Citizens (NRC):** Address the unnatural and exponential increase in the Kuki-Zo population in Manipur, which has disrupted the demographic balance in districts such as Tengnoupal, Chandel, Kangpokpi, Kamjong, and Churachandpur. The influx of population from Chin State and Sagaing Division of Myanmar has already affected peace and tranquillity in Manipur. The rapid expansion of villages seeking recognition, particularly Kuki-Zo villages, must be managed effectively. Conduct NRC in Manipur without further delay to safeguard the rights of genuine Indian citizens and prevent demographic imbalances, pressure on land and environmental strain.

Manipur has recorded an unnatural and exponential increase of the Kuki-Chin population, disturbing the demography of Tengnoupal, Chandel, Kangpokpi, Kamjong and Churachandpur Districts in Manipur. The rapid influx of population from Chin State and Sagaing Division of Myanmar over the years and decades has already affected the peace and tranquillity in Manipur. In addition to the existing 2803 villages another 970 villages are seeking fresh recognition. The new villages are reported to be 308 from Kangpokpi, 281 from Churachandpur, 205 from Chandel, 130 from Tengnoupal, 27 from Senapati, 14 from Pherzawl, and 5 from Ukhrul. Except for Ukhrul, the rest are exclusively Kuki-Zo villages. In terms of demography, according to the 1881 Census, the Meitei population was about 1.30 lakh which increased to 12.50 lakh according to the 2011 Census. Moreover, the Naga population has increased from 60 thousand in the 1881 Census to 6.04 lakhs in 2011 Census. On the other hand, the Kuki-Zo population which was only 17 thousand in the 1881 Census, increased to 4.48 lakh in the 2011 Census.

Furthermore, the Cabinet sub-committee constituted by Manipur Government on February 16, 2023 to look into the issue of illegal immigrants in the State, in its “initial finding report” to the State Government on April 24 reported of identifying 2,187 illegal immigrants in 41 locations.

- 1,147 Myanmar nationals were found in 13 locations in Tengnoupal district
- 881 Myanmar nationals were detected in 3 locations in Chandel district
- 154 Myanmar nationals were found in one location in Churachandpur district
- Five Myanmar nationals were found in 24 locations in Kamjong district

Significantly, the report said that the illegal immigrants from Myanmar were found to have established their own villages. Moreover, the Assam Rifles on July 22-23, 2023 had reported that 718 Myanmar nationals have been found in Chandel amid the present unrest in Manipur. Asking the Assam Rifles to push back the 718 Myanmar nationals, the Government had then also asked the AR to clarify how and why they were allowed to cross the border into Manipur.

Given this reality, it is high time to carry out NRC in Manipur at the earliest. In order to protect the rights of the genuine citizens of India and to prevent demographic imbalance and pressure upon land and forest, NRC should be conducted without further delay according to the law of the land. It may be reminded that NRC is a longstanding demand of the majority of the people of Manipur. For example, several students’ bodies had launched anti-foreigner agitation from the early 1980s and several memoranda had been signed to detect, delete and deport the foreigners. The issue of illegal immigration has been acknowledge by Union Home Minister of India, Sri Amit Shah in recent speech in the Parliament of India. Influx of illegal immigrants is a reality that cannot be denied: and hence the NRC is need of the hour.

The delimitation process should only proceed after the completion of the NRC in Manipur. Given this situation, conducting the NRC is imperative, and we strongly demand that no delimitation process be conducted without it.

5. Ending the Formation of Ethnic-Centric Political Units by Constituting a District Reorganisation Committee:

- a) Any demand for separate administration on ethnic lines must not be conceded as it shall harm the secular/democratic fabric of Manipuri society**
- b) Dismantling of Kangpokpi district (formerly SADAR Hills):** This plea for disintegration of Kangpokpi district carries special appeal because of various

claims over its territory by several ethnic groups originally inhabiting the district.

During the British period from 1891 to 1947, Maj. John Maxwell, the Political Agent of Manipur and the Superintendent of the State Administration established Selected Area Development Administrative Region (SADAR) covering both the periphery valley areas and low-lying hill regions of Manipur covering a total area of 22327 Sq.Km (see Table 3). Areas in the hill areas is known as SADAR hills.

Table 3: Selected Area Development Administrative Region (SADAR): Valley and Hill regions of Manipur

Sl. No.	Valley region	Area Sq.Km.	% Area
1.	Imphal East/Imphal West	1228	5.5
2.	Thoubal District	514	2.3
3.	Bishnupur District	496	2.2
Sub-total		2238	10%
Sl. No.	Hill Region	Area Sq.Km.	% Area
1.	Senapati District	3228	14.7
2.	Ukhrul District	4500	20.3
3.	Chandel District	3313	14.8
4.	Churachandpur District	4570	20.5
5.	Tamenglong District	4391	19.7
Sub-total		20089	0.9
Grand total		22327	

Source: R.K. Rajendra Singh, "Reorganisation of Districts of Manipur with Special Focus on SADAR Hills for the Integration of Manipur", e-pao.net; <https://bit.ly/3sGMs3D>.

In other words, the nearby hills around the valley administrative centres were selected for development administrative region. The most important factor was that, it was from the point of view of security and protection of the centrally located lowland areas of Imphal which had been the capital. In fact, it was tactical and strategic plan to secure the dominating high features around the vital central administrative area of Imphal and surrounding areas which were often disturbed by hostile intruders as seen in the history of Manipur.

In these areas the British planted the Kukis and Nepalese to secure the valley as well as the lower hill ranges from outside intrusion at the cost of the original inhabitants. However, in 2016, the SADAR Hills was given full-fledged Kangpokpi revenue district status by Manipur Government making it a predominantly Kuki dominated area much at the chagrin of the Nagas and the Meiteis.

Therefore, to allay hurt feeling Kangpokpi District must be dismantled and re-align the areas with the neighbouring districts such as Senapati, Ukhrul, Imphal West and Imphal East for administrative convenience and reduce population pressure in the Imphal valley. Moreover, we urge the Government of India and Manipur Government to immediately re-organise the Kangpokpi district to streamline the exponential growth of unapproved villages in the adjoining areas of districts as majority of these villages are physically located in one district while the administration of the same is done from some other district. Immediate attention must be paid to such overlapping and incongruent administrative

arrangements as it has perpetuated ethnicisation of rural administration in Manipur.

- c) **The reorganisation of Bishnupur district:** Adjacent areas to the Moirang sub-division under Bishnupur district lying across the Churachandpur district such as Kangvai, Tuibong, Churachandpur/Khuga and Saikot subdivisions need to be merged with Bishnupur district because the minority communities such as Chiru, Kom, Aimol, Koireng, Kabui/Rongmei, and Meiteis, etc. are constantly under threat of survival from the dominant Kuki-Zo communities.

6. Creation of Special Administrative Zones:

- a) Moreh holds immense strategic significance as a key centre of India's Act East Policy. This region serves as a vital hub for major Asian connectivity infrastructure projects like the Trans Asian Highway and Trans Asian Railway, in addition to significant commercial initiatives such as the Special Economic Zone and Moreh Township. Fostering the plurality and cosmopolitan nature of Moreh is crucial to enhance its strategic importance. Unfortunately, this strategically and economically important border town, currently a sub-division of Tengnoupal District, has undergone several challenging transitions, ultimately leading to the erosion of its age-old cosmopolitan and multi-ethnic character. The continuous influx of illegal immigrants from Myanmar and the Kuki-Naga clashes of the early 1990s serve as examples of these challenges.

It's worth noting that before the settlement of the Kuki-Zo community, Moreh was inhabited by Tangkhul, Meetei, Tamils, and other groups. Given the heightened importance of Moreh due to our Act East Policy, not only for the national security but also for the socio-economic development and well-being of the people of Moreh and the entire state of Manipur, we appeal for the establishment of Moreh as a Special Administrative Zone, including Kwatha village.

The multi-ethnic character of Moreh has been endangered due to the unqualified transfer of Moreh town to the Autonomous District Council in 2008. It's essential to recognise that Moreh was part of the Thoubal Sub-Division after 1949, governed under the broad provisions of the Assam Municipality Act, 1956. Moreover, Moreh was placed under the Moreh Small Town Committee, MAHUD, until it was placed under the ADC in 2008 without any official (de)notification.

Given the sorry administrative history of Moreh, it should be placed under the purview of the Department of Home, Government of Manipur for administrative convenience. Therefore, we urgently request the Government to grant Moreh a Special Administrative Zone status. Granting this status in the borderlands of the India-Myanmar region will definitely align with India's Act East Policy and the strategic objectives of the region. Finally, restore the plural and multi-ethnic character of the area.

- b) **Establishment of a Beihang Special Administrative Zone:** Behiang, situated in the Singhat sub-division of Churachandpur, is a vital border village in Manipur, India, located on the boundary with Burma. This village, with an approximate population of 1,000 people, stretches for about 2 Km. along the Tedim Road, primarily inhabited by members of the Zou community.

Behiang boasts a robust network of mercantile families who rely on Indo-Burma border trade for their livelihoods. However, over half of the local population is

engaged in agricultural labour, including swidden (*jhum*) or wet rice cultivation. All arable land along the Tuivai River has been dedicated to paddy cultivation. During the lean season just before harvest, food shortages are typically met with the surplus rice produced by Burmese *jhum* farmers.

Previously, Behiang housed a regular camp of India's Border Security Force, but this presence was withdrawn in December 1998, amidst ethnic clashes between Kuki and Paite tribes in 1997–1998. Since 2006, the Assam Rifles has established a camp in this area, located on the southern side of the village near the Khenman boundary.

Considering the strategic importance of Behiang, it is imperative to transform it into a Special Administrative Zone, akin to Moreh town. This would not only address the unique needs and challenges of the region but also enhance its role in the broader context of India's border security and regional development.

- 7. Protection and Conservation of Community/Reserve Forests:** Despite the recognition of valley reserve forests encompassing around 120 Meitei villages by the Manipur Durbar resolution No. 10A of 20/7/1932, many of these forest areas have been included in districts such as Kangpokpi, Tengnoupal, and Churachandpur without the knowledge and consent of the Meitei communities. These forests are essential to the livelihoods and cultural activities and practices of the Meitei people and form a significant part of their way of life.

Additionally, there are several community forests in the Naga areas of the Manipur hill region. These forests are gradually being affected by modern developmental projects and are in urgent need of conservation and protection as common property of the communities.

Therefore, we request that the forest areas recognised by the Durbar resolution of 1932 be officially acknowledged and included within the boundaries of Imphal East, Imphal West, Thoubal, Bishnupur, and Kakching districts, depending on their proximity. This step is essential to preserve these forests and safeguard the livelihoods and cultural heritage of the communities that depend on them.

- 8. Eradicate Narco-Trade and Poppy Cultivation:** According to a report released by the Narcotics and Border Affairs (NAB), Government of Manipur in 2023, the period from 2017 to 2023 witnessed a total of 1083 arrests under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act in trans-border narco-related cases. The report also shed light on the alarming scale of poppy cultivation in Manipur, highlighting the seriousness of the issue. Notably, the Kuki-Zo community accounted for significant areas of poppy cultivation, with a total of 13,121.8 acres during the period from 2017 to 2023. The Naga community reported 2340 acres of poppy cultivation, while other communities contributed 35 acres, bringing the total poppy cultivation in the state to 15,496 acres.

Given these concerning figures, we strongly urge the implementation of effective measures and strict actions to eradicate the narco-business and poppy cultivation in Manipur and the Manipur Government's War on Drugs. The use of advanced technologies such as drone technology and satellite mapping should be employed to combat drug-related issues and eliminate poppy cultivation in Manipur. This effort is not only essential for the well-being of the state but also crucial for the national security interests of India. It will not only help in addressing the drug menace but also in preserving the forest and environment of Manipur.

In conclusion, this memorandum represents the collective aspirations of the majority of the people of Manipur, rooted in the region's rich historical and cultural context. It addresses critical issues that threaten the peace, security, and well-being of Manipur, emphasizing the urgent need for decisive action.

From the cessation of armed violence and the initiation of a comprehensive peace process to safeguarding Manipur's territorial integrity and addressing the challenges of illegal immigration, the demands put forth herein are essential for ensuring the state's stability and prosperity. Additionally, the establishment of Special Administrative Zones in Moreh and Behiang, protection and conservation of community/reserve forests, and the eradication of narco-trade and poppy cultivation are vital steps towards the holistic development of Manipur.

We earnestly request your esteemed office's attention and prompt action on these matters, which are not only crucial for the welfare of Manipur but also in the best interests of India's national security and regional stability.

With our hopes pinned on your support and understanding, we look forward to a peaceful and prosperous future for Manipur and its people.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,

Copy to:

1. Smt. Anusuiya Uikey, Governor of Manipur
2. Shri Amit Shah, Home Minister of India

(PH. NANDO LUWANG)
President, AMUCO

(DR. NORENDRO THOKCHOM)
Secretary General, AMUCO