



UNITED NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT: MANIPUR

★CENTRAL COMMITTEE★

MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 59th ANNIVERSARY
Friday, 24th November 2023

Beloved countrymen,

Today, the 24th of November 2023 is the 59th Raising Day of the United National Liberation Front (UNLF). The UNLF Central Committee would like to bow our humble heads to the people on this auspicious day. On this day, we remember and pay a revolutionary salute to all the leaders, officers, cadres and everyone else associated with UNLF and our armed wing, the MPA who have given their lives in the struggle for our motherland. We also give our highest salute to all those who have been injured and disabled in the line of duty. Lastly, we bow our heads and pay our highest respects to all those who have laid down their lives and all those who have suffered in the struggle to liberate our motherland.

A BRIEF GENESIS OF UNLF AND THE PARTY LEADERSHIP'S IDEA & VISION

Our motherland Manipur came under the full yoke of British Colonialism in 1891, and this continued till 1947. In the short period between 1947 and 1949, just as we began to taste freedom and representative government, our dreams were dashed when the Dominion of India annexed our motherland without any prior approval of the people. Once again, we had to face the brunt of colonialism in a new form, and we faced oppression in all spheres. Where there is oppression, there will always be resistance. On Tuesday, November 24 1964, UNLF was formed and this gave a much needed impetus to the popular resistance against Indian oppression. It is the firm belief of UNLF that our struggle for independence will be successful only if all the people of the land, irrespective of ethnic affiliation, faith or race come together. For this reason, our pioneering leaders like Ahal Ibungo Kalalang Kamei (Kabui Naga,

Thanagong Village, Tamenglong District), Thangkhopao Singsit (Khongsai, Jalenphai Village Ihang Karong, Sadar Hills/Kangpokpi), Arambam Somarendra (Meetei, Meino Leirak Sagolband, Imphal) and other visionary leaders put motherland before everything else and moulded the party into a united front to lead the freedom struggle.

UNLF has unwavering goals, which we have time and again expressed to the people of Manipur on appropriate occasions. Our main goals include restoration of the lost independence of Manipur by overcoming Indian colonialism, and the establishment of a wealthy and prosperous true 'People's Democracy' ,where there is ample autonomy at all levels by promoting the unique identity, culture and traditions of all indigenous communities of the land, irrespective of the size of their population. We will also strive to assist the liberation struggles of our fellow brethren of Western South East Asia- WESEA (which the colonial Indian administration calls its North-Eastern Region), and build a new society based on equal respect of rights and obligations. In order to achieve these goals, UNLF has been engaging in both armed and unarmed struggle since the early days. Even then, we have never picked up arms in haste and attacked aimlessly. We have always kept in mind that our collective struggle will never be successful unless the people of Manipur develop the political consciousness required to understand why we need freedom and self determination to save our future. With this in mind, the Pan Manipuri Youth League (PANMYL) came into being in the late 1960s as a frontal organisation of UNLF, with an aim to enlighten the people of Manipur. Many educated and far-sighted youths joined the PANMYL and strove hard to mould the minds of the young generations through several publications and pamphlets. The efforts met with considerable success. Notable publications of journals like 'Lamyamba Pakhang', 'Chingkheihunba', 'Resistance', etc. gave a valuable impetus to the freedom struggle and revitalised the deliberation on 'Manipuri Nationalism'. To this day, the ideas and ideals imparted by them act as a guide to many of us. Through the PANMYL, UNLF was able to reach out to people in every nook and corner of the land and was successful in mobilising our people. The party also took an active and successful role in popularising important days of the Manipuri people. Through the collective efforts of the party and the people, many important days came to be observed on a state-level basis.

After laying the ideological foundations of the struggle, the armed wing of UNLF christened as Manipur People's Army (MPA) was formed on 9th February 1987 to take advantage of the ripening revolutionary situation. From the early 1990s, the UNLF-MPA began an armed struggle against the Indian Occupation Forces (IOF), and the campaigns met with tremendous success. There have been several clashes between UNLF-MPA and the IOF over the

years, and several IOF personnel have lost their lives in the process. Several MPA members have also laid down their lives for the motherland.

In order to bring unity and coordination among like minded revolutionary groups, UNLF has been playing a major role in the establishment of major alliances like the Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front (IBRF), Manipur People's Liberation Front (MPLF), Coordination Committee (CorCom), etc. Unfortunately, the party itself has been a victim of factionalism. For instance, a faction broke away from the party and formed the Revolutionary Government of Manipur (RGM) in 1968. Another faction broke away in the 1990s and formed the Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL). The factional feuds even led to unfortunate fratricidal bloodshed and many precious lives were needlessly lost. Most recently, there was a 'split' in 2020 as well. A certain Central Committee member of the party went against the constitution of the party and committed a moral misdeed by entering into marital relations with a young woman and he was a habitual offender. Even though he admitted to his own misdeeds after being caught red handed, there were some disagreements regarding the punishment to be meted out by the party and there ensued an ugly altercation as some took sides in the matter. Due to this incident, a coterie of members 'broke away' from the party and have been using the party's name for their activities. This splinter group is still giving a bad reputation to the party through their deplorable actions, which are akin to a strand of hair preventing a bird from taking flight.

However, spring can never be far away if autumn arrives. All factional feuds, disputes, etc. in UNLF's history have been resolved amicably over the years, and the current issue will also be resolved not far away. The party will continue to shine as a beacon of the Manipuri people's struggle. Ever since its inception, UNLF led by its visionary leaders has been progressing on a path marked by high revolutionary ideals, never losing sight of the ultimate goal- freedom. In order for any freedom struggle to be a success, a revolutionary group is a must in order to channel the people's energy in the right direction. Again, a strong leadership with impeccable qualities is required to spearhead the activities of a revolutionary group. Fortunately for the UNLF, the party has been blessed with charismatic and determined leaders since its inception. 'Collective Leadership' and 'Democratic Centralism' have been unique principles associated with the party's leadership since the early days.

Due to the unfortunate presence of some immature and immoral persons in the party leadership, the party's activities suffered a setback for some time. However in the past three years, through the leadership of the Central Committee spearheaded by Chairman Khundongbam Pambei and the sacrifices of the MPA cadres, the people have once again started to reimpose their faith in the party and many have volunteered for party activities as well. The party is well on the road to recovery and has been carrying out several

notable tasks. Today, the UNLF stands at the threshold of becoming the only revolutionary group in Manipur to complete almost 60 years in the struggle for independence. It is high time that we take up steps to pursue an honourable solution for our struggle, and we call on the people of Manipur to stand with us and support us as we move towards a political dialogue, to realise our collective aspirations.

POLITICAL DIALOGUE IN THE CONTEXT OF INDIA-MANIPUR CONFLICT:

Today, the freedom struggle by the UNLF is going to complete 59 years. In the journey of this revolutionary struggle, there arises a need to tread carefully by judging the direction in which the wind is blowing in order to obtain a goal, reach a destination. A revolutionary struggle is not a straight path, but rather a chimaera of different stages and multiple facets. Taking into consideration our fast changing world, and the current situation in Manipur, the time has come for the UNLF to negotiate an honourable solution with the Government of India on the issue of restoration of freedom to Manipur. It is the firm belief of the UNLF that a nation's freedom struggle should be led by armed revolutionary groups ably supported and backed up by the masses. For this reason, the Government of India has come to realise that the freedom struggle of the UNLF supported by the people of Manipur is not just a simple intra-state 'law & order' problem as they previously thought. India has realised that the popular revolutionary struggle led by the UNLF is a 'historical necessity' in order to right past wrongs and to save the future of the Manipuri people, and that the conflict between India and Manipur is a 'political conflict'. Taking everything into consideration, the UNLF feels that the time is ripe for a ceasefire between the two warring entities, followed by a honourable political dialogue.

In the plebiscite proposal put forward by the party to the United Nations in 2005, it was clearly mentioned that the people of Manipur will be our original and final voice. Hence, after careful consideration of the present global scenario and the situation in Manipur, the party has started preparing to enter into political dialogue with the Government of India. The UNLF feels that this decision is best considering the times we live in and the present reality facing us all. In this defining moment of our revolutionary struggle, the UNLF feels that the people of Manipur should take a definitive stand and unite to save our future. If anyone, or any section of people casts a wrong light or spreads false propaganda on the upcoming India-Manipur political dialogue, the party feels that such people are short-sighted and self-centered. Such people have no considerations for the future of the people of Manipur, and they have no vision at all. The party is of the opinion that such people do not understand the ramifications of their own stand. The UNLF would like to place it before the people of Manipur that the upcoming political dialogue will give a fresh impetus in reaching the goal of freedom so cherished by all. Our actions will speak for themselves.

DEVIOUS STRATEGY BY KUKI MILITANTS TO BREAK MANIPUR APART:

Once upon a time, the struggle for Manipur's freedom was a collective effort—all communities inhabiting the land worked together. But with the passage of time, community and self interests have sadly trumped national interests, and now we are faced with a situation where Manipuris are killing each other. Many groups have fallen into the wily divide and rule trap of the Gol (an unwelcome heirloom of the colonial British administration), and are now pursuing self interests that are detrimental to the future of the Manipuri nation. Their demands range from those of complete separation from Manipur to separate administrative arrangements for areas inhabited by their communities. Such groups have unfortunately captured public opinion at gunpoint to further their own agenda. It is time that their activities are taken seriously and stopped once and for all. In the 1990s, the Kukis were badly affected in the Naga-Kuki ethnic conflict and many of them had to be saved by Meeteis, with many seeking refuge among the Meeteis too. Today, the Kukis are in disarray. It is a well known fact that Kuki from outside Manipur have settled in the hills of Manipur, taking advantage of porous borders and shared ethnic relations with the old Kuki inhabitants of Manipur. This intermixing has led to bad consequences for the Kukis of Manipur, all too apparent in the conflict that broke out in May this year.

There has been some devious planning all along. Kuki who recently migrated to Manipur have been used as labourers and mercenaries by drug lords to expand illegal poppy cultivation in the hills of Manipur. These illegal migrants have also encroached upon protected and reserved forest areas, establishing new settlements here and there. Their so-called 'scholars' who seem to be experts in fabrication are also working overtime to turn the history of Manipur upside down. Armed groups serving the interests of these illegal migrants have also turned their guns on indigenous Manipuris. There is also the fact that several Kuki armed groups have been given active support by the Indian Army and have been used as pawns since the early 2000s to control and limit the activities of Manipuri revolutionary groups.

For this reason, UNLF believes that the violence in Manipur that started on the 3rd of May orchestrated by armed Kuki militants is also part of the long term devious plan. The militants have not spared even innocent Meetei civilians in their bid to divide Manipur. Both the Government of India and the Government of Manipur still seem clueless even after more than six months when faced with questions regarding the genesis of the violence. A clear and comprehensive report of the violence still eludes us. To this day, one sided narratives are being peddled in global media. A big question to be asked is whether the violence was orchestrated by the colonial administration by using the Kuki militants as proxies, or whether the Indian intelligence agencies and think tanks completely botched their assessment of the situation. Since the

beginning of the conflict, thousands of Indian Army and Paramilitary personnel have been sent to Manipur but till date they have not been able to contain the violence fully, which begs the question, is the Indian State planning to use these personnel for a sinister game plan or political move?

At this juncture, UNLF would like to express the following thoughts to the people of Manipur- the bonds between the different communities inhabiting our land were not built overnight, but through a long nation building process of more than 3000 years. Any group/community that seeks to break these bonds will be seen as enemies of the idea of Manipur, and the party will make sure their hollow dreams do not see the light of day. Ever since the start of the conflict, MPA cadres have been tirelessly working to safeguard lives and public property. Also, the party has started strategizing to completely weed out illegal migrants from the soil of Manipur. It is our strong belief that the ultimate and final solution to all issues plaguing Manipur currently (Kuki militants and their devious plans, ethnic conflict, hollow dreams of a separate administration, etc.) would lie in a honourable, globally accepted political dialogue between the UNLF and the Government of India that takes into account the real history and situation of Manipur.

CONCLUSION:

Lastly, the UNLF Central Committee would like to pay its highest tribute and homage to all our leaders, cadres and revolutionaries who have made the supreme sacrifice in the struggle to liberate our motherland from the chains that bind her. Our humblest respects go to all revolutionary groups in Manipur and the WESEA region. We would also like to pay our respects to everyone- our mothers and sisters, students, youths and civil society organisations who have been at the forefront of the response against Kuki armed aggression. Also, we extend heartfelt respect our people who have stood by the party through thick and thin, and to all revolutionaries in the WESEA region.

“Victory to Our People”

Long Live UNLF!

Kangla,

24th. November, 2023

Central Committee,

United National Liberation Front, Manipur