



NAMTA

NORTH AMERICAN MANIPUR TRIBAL ASSOCIATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Human Rights Crisis in Manipur, India: No Justice from Indian Government a Year Later

WASHINGTON D.C. — A significant and timely event was held at the Rayburn House Office Building, where concerned individuals gathered in a packed room to discuss the ongoing human rights crisis in Manipur, India. The event took place from 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM and was well attended by Congressional staffers, activists, community leaders, academics, and concerned citizens.

Organized by the North American Manipur Tribal Association (NAMTA), the event aimed to shed light on the plight of the Kuki-Zomi-Hmar people of Manipur, who have been facing violence, discrimination, and persecution for over a year. The crisis, which erupted on May 3, 2023, has resulted in the displacement, dispossession, and loss of lives of countless innocent individuals and families.

Speakers at the event shared personal testimonies, expert analyses, and calls to action, highlighting the urgent need for international attention and intervention to address the root causes of the conflict and ensure justice for the victims. Among the speakers were:

- **Florence Lowe (Gwite), President NAMTA:** Florence, a victim of the crisis, chaired the briefing and shared her personal experiences of the violence and injustice faced by her family in Manipur. She emphasized the need for immediate action to address the human rights abuses and hold accountable those responsible.

Quote: "...there are good and bad people in every religion, country and tribe. We need the good people of every religion, country, and tribe to stand up for what is right."

- **Dr. Fernand de Varennes, Former UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues:** Dr. Fernand de Varennes, a renowned expert on minority rights, offered a comprehensive analysis of the human rights situation in Manipur. He underscored the importance of addressing the root causes of the conflict in the broader Indian context.

Quote: "First, what the Kuki-Zomi-Hmar peoples have been experiencing in Manipur is part of a pattern of atrocities and massive violations of international human rights and



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this is happening particularly for non-Hindu minorities and peoples in India and that what we're experiencing is therefore not ad hoc. It's not accidental. Secondly, why this is occurring is not a mystery either. Many International organizations such as United Nations Civil Society organizations including Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, India Hate Lab and others have warned of the social and political instrumentalization of extreme forms of Hindu nationalism. The wide degree of impunity for those who are inciting violence and even calls to genocide through social and other media which are creating an extraordinary toxic and hostile environment for religious and ethnic minorities and peoples such as those in Manipur and all of these have laid the ground of the normalization of discrimination exclusion and even brutality against those who are perceived as threats or foreigners or Outsiders."

- **Niang Hangzo, VP Communications NAMTA:** Niang Hangzo, a co-founder of NAMTA, provided insights into the historical and political context of the crisis in Manipur. She called for international solidarity and support for the Kuki-Zomi-Hmar people in their struggle for justice and dignity.

Quote: *"US Congress must raise the human rights violation and genocide of the minority Christians in Manipur on the floor of US Congress. For the staffers who are here I'm speaking directly to you: not to speak is to speak, not to act is to act. It is time to break the sound of silence. It's time for the US to say something about this. It's time the US stops sitting on the fence."*

- **David Curry, USCIRF Commissioner:** David Curry, Commissioner of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), spoke about the importance of protecting religious freedom and human rights in Manipur. He pledged continued support for efforts to address the crisis and urged the State Department to designate India as a Country of Particular Concern.

Quote: *"One of the most alarming and egregious instances of these violations is the conflict in Manipur. It was just a year ago that my colleagues and I watched in horror and then quickly expressed alarm about the serious and egregious violations we saw coming out of Manipur. I personally received daily videos some of which were too graphic even for any sort of publishing that showed what was happening there. What originally had begun or seemed as though it was a protest in May quickly turned into widespread violence by predominantly Hindu Meitei and Christian Kuki tribes and had left hundreds of people dead and tens of thousands of people displaced during the initial weeks."*

- **Dr. Gregory H. Stanton, Founding President of Genocide Watch:** Dr. Gregory H. Stanton, a leading authority on genocide studies, highlighted process of an unfolding



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genocide and to watch out for its hallmarks. He talked about his deep involvement in raising alarms years before the Rwandan genocide of 1994 and emphasized the need for urgent intervention to halt another impending genocide in Manipur.

Quote: *"Manipur is a perfect example of how Nazism is now invading India because the Meitei in the valley part of Manipur are Hindu nationalists. They want to take over all of Manipur. The Kuki, who are for the most part Christians, are the victims of this."*

- **Lien Gangte, President NAMTA Canada:** Lien Gangte spoke about his family's dispossession and the broader campaign of ethnic cleansing against Kuki-Zomi-Hmar people from the Imphal valley. He excoriated the Indian government for failing to fulfill its constitutional obligations. He charged Manipur's Chief Minister, Biren Singh, as a fascist and called for the radical Meitei groups, Arambai Tenggol and Meetei Leepun, to be banned. He echoed Niang Hangzo's call for the United States Congress to take a strong stance against human rights violations, attacks on freedom of speech and expression.

Quote: *"We need you to stand up for human rights and religious freedom. We need each and every one of you to stand with us. Please don't let our little community become the forgotten casualties in a rapidly deteriorating situation."*

Attendees expressed solidarity with the Kuki-Zomi-Hmar people and their commitment to advocating for human rights and religious freedom in Manipur. Discussions focused on strategies for raising awareness, conducting thorough investigations into human rights abuses, providing assistance to victims, and promoting dialogue and understanding among all communities in Manipur.

The event concluded with a call to action for the United States Congress to intervene and address the deteriorating situation in Manipur. Attendees pledged to continue advocating for the rights of vulnerable communities and to stand in solidarity with those affected by the crisis.



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For more information about the North American Manipur Tribal Association (NAMTA) and its advocacy efforts, please visit [namta.us](https://www.namta.us).

Video recordings of the briefing session are available at the following links:

Congressional Briefing - May 06 2024 - Florence Lowe (Gwite), President NAMTA:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fQKNjz4Ueo>

Congressional Briefing - May 06 2024 - Fernand de Varennes, Former UN Special Rapporteur:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6emCHCrawbo>

Congressional Briefing - May 06 2024 - Niang Hangzo, NAMTA VP Communications:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySdyyPb9x2g>

Congressional Briefing - May 06 2024 - David Curry, USCIRF Commissioner:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnAYAWHONzI>

Congressional Briefing - May 06 2024 - Dr. Gregory Stanton, Founding President Genocide Watch:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0jfhwzc2dCQ>

Congressional Briefing - May 06 2024 - Lien Gangte, President NAMTA Canada:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQiUt-FhT4w>

Congressional Briefing - May 06 2024 (Full livestream recording of the briefing):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZaKSSMcHThk>

About NAMTA:

The North American Manipur Tribal Association (NAMTA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to advocating for the rights and welfare of the Kuki-Zomi-Hmar people of Manipur, India. NAMTA works to raise awareness about the ongoing human rights crisis in Manipur, promote dialogue and understanding among all communities, and advocate for justice and accountability.



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Photo Caption:



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#KukiZomiHmar #ManipurViolence #3May2023