

Manipur Violence: PUCL People's Tribunal Records Testimonies Of Survivors, Victims

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PUCL says that the Tribunal aims to compile its findings into a 'Report to the Nation' within the coming months. This report will include recommendations aimed at ensuring accountability, justice, and redressal for the people of Manipur.

TFM Desk

People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) convened an Independent People's Tribunal on Manipur in Delhi on July 6 and 7, 2024. This tribunal was established to hear the testimonies of survivors and victims of the ethnic violence that has plagued Manipur since May 3, 2023. A press release issued by PUCL says that prior to the hearings in Delhi, a group of Jury Members and Secretariat members of the Tribunal visited Manipur in May and June 2024. The team traveled to districts severely affected by the violence, including Bishnupur, Churachandpur, Imphal, Kangpokpi, Kakching, Senapati, and others.

During these visits, the team collected personal testimonies from survivors and victims across various communities and interacted with numerous service organizations providing relief. They also inspected several Relief Camps, speaking with inmates, school children, women, and the elderly, as well as meeting government officials and security personnel.

The objectives and context of the tribunal

The Tribunal, announced on March 15, 2024 by PUCL, was formed in response to the prolonged violence and significant constitutional governance issues in Manipur. There is deep distrust towards the state and central government, controversies regarding the role and response of security forces, including the state police, and concerns about the neutrality of Central Forces. Militant groups, vigilante militias, and incidents of looting police armouries have further exacerbated the hostile environment, says PUCL.

The Key Objectives of the Tribunal

The objectives of the tribunal include the following:

1. Document human rights violations with a focus on loss of life, sexual violence, and violence against vulnerable groups like children, women, and the elderly.
2. Evaluate the performance and responsibilities of constitutional authorities in preventing violence, providing justice, and maintaining law and order.
3. Investigate the role of security agencies and government functionaries in ensuring law and order, and protecting human rights.
4. Analyze existing documentation on the Manipur situation to understand the causes of ongoing violence.
5. Propose recommendations to repair the social, cultural, and political fabric of the state.

As for the future actions, PUCL says that the Tribunal aims to compile its findings into a 'Report to the Nation' within the coming months. This report will include recommendations aimed at ensuring accountability, justice, and redressal for the people of Manipur.

The Jury Members of the Independent People's Tribunal on Manipur comprises of Kurian Joseph, former judge, Supreme Court of India; K. Kannan, former Judge, Punjab and Haryana High Court; Anjana Prakash, former Judge, Patna High Court; MG Devasahayam, IAS (retd), former Addl. Chief Secy, Haryana; Swaraj Bir Singh, IPS (retd), former DGP, Meghalaya; Uma Chakravarti, Feminist Historian; Virginius Xaxa, Social Scientist and Author; Rosemary Dzuwichu, formerly from Nagaland University; Tanweer Fazal, University of Hyderabad; Sandeep Pandey, Peace Activist; Manjula Pradeep, Senior human rights activist; Navsharan Singh, Writer, researcher & Activist; Henri Tiphagne, Advocate, Madras/Madurai High Court; and Aakar Patel, Journalist and Author.

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