

European Parliament urges end to violence in Manipur

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The European Parliament overwhelmingly approved a resolution calling on authorities in India to stop ongoing violence in the northeastern state of Manipur, where more than 250 houses of worship have been destroyed or damaged.

The [resolution](#) “strongly urges the Indian authorities to take all necessary measures and make the utmost effort to promptly halt the ongoing ethnic and religious violence, to protect all religious minorities, such as Manipur’s Christian community, and to preempt any further escalation.”

It calls for “India’s central government and all political actors and religious leaders to take urgent action to restore calm and ensure an inclusive dialogue involving civil society and the affected communities.”

The European Parliament resolution calls on authorities “to allow independent investigations into the violence,” urges an end to an internet shutdown in the region, and demands the government “grant unhindered access to humanitarian aid providers, international observers and journalists.”

More than 120 killed in two violent months

Up to 50,000 people have been displaced and more than 1,700 homes seriously damaged or destroyed since violence flared up in Manipur more than two months ago. About 120 people have been killed.



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The resolution notes “accounts of partisan involvement by security forces in the killings have increased distrust in the authorities.”

Conflict between the Kuki, a predominantly Christian ethnic group in Manipur, and the Meitei, who are mostly Hindu, began as a political dispute over land rights. The [oil belt beneath Manipur](#)—particularly in the hill country occupied by the Kuki tribe—is estimated at 8 trillion cubic feet.

Riots first broke out in response to May 3 protests calling on the government to grant scheduled tribe status to the Meitei people. Scheduled tribes have constitutionally granted property protection, and tribal members have access to political representation, educational benefits and affirmative action in employment.

Adina Portaru, senior counsel for ADF International in Brussels, global partner of the Alliance Defending Freedom, welcomed the resolution by the European Parliament.

“The ongoing religious freedom crisis we are seeing throughout India has erupted into violent destruction and chaos in Manipur,” Portaru said.

“It’s long past time for India to not only address the situation in Manipur, but also it must eradicate any laws and policies that obstruct freedom of religion. Our prayers are with the people of India.”

Both ‘ethnic cleansing’ and ‘religious persecution’

The [U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom](#) reported India’s government, led by the Bharatiya Janatra Party, has supported

discriminatory policies—including anti-conversion laws—that severely restrict the religious freedom of minorities.

The commission repeatedly has recommended the U.S. Department of State designate India as a Country of Particular Concern for engaging in “systematic, ongoing and egregious violations” of religious freedom.

Pastor Thong Lun of Greater Houston Burmese Christian Fellowship and his congregation have a longstanding ministry among refugees from Myanmar who live in northeast India.

Thong has maintained close contact with sources there, and he characterizes the situation as both “ethnic cleansing” and “religious persecution.” He characterized the situation as “complicated and difficult for anyone on the outside to understand.”

“The Meitei Hindu nationalists are determined to wipe out the tribal Kuki Christians from the land,” Thong told the *Baptist Standard* last month. “But the mobs also are destroying Meitei Christian churches and killing their own people who are Christians.”