

## Women of Lamka in Manipur crying out for justice on the occasion of 16 Days activism on Violence against women



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In a resolute display of solidarity and resilience, over 5,000 women hailing from the Kuki-Zomi-Hmar-Mizo communities congregated at Peace Ground, Tuibuong, Lamka, Churachandpur in Manipur, kickstarting the annual 16 Days Activism on Violence Against Women. Orchestrated by the Women of Lamka, the event was a fervent call for justice and a poignant outcry against the distressing instances of gender-based violence (GBV) that have plagued the state.

Led by the indomitable Ngaineikim from Kuki Women organization for human rights, the program's inauguration was a tapestry of impassioned speeches, stirring presentations, and solemn moments dedicated to the victims. Distinguished figures such as representatives from Women in Governance (WinG) India, Kuki women Union and ZMA GHQ lent their voices, echoing the urgent need to tackle GBV in conflict-ridden state of Manipur

The concept note delineated the theme "UNITE: Invest to prevent violence against women and girls," underscoring the imperative for global action against GBV. It painted a stark picture of the harrowing aftermath of conflict-related sexual violence, citing the distressing ordeals endured by tribal women during Manipur's recent crisis, including ghastly instances of gang rapes and cold-blooded murders. "This year's theme calls on citizens to demonstrate their commitment to ending violence against women and girls by sharing actions for a world free from such atrocities," articulated Ms. Ngaineikim, President of KWOHR, highlighting the essence of the 16 Days Activism campaign.

Amidst traditional attire and stirring musical renditions, the event became a canvas for shared sorrow and unyielding strength. Victim narratives were bravely shared, amplifying the echoes of anguish and resilience that resonated across the gathering. A poignant candlelight vigil illuminated the evening, commemorating the lives lost during the Manipur conflict and serving as a beacon of hope for a future devoid of such tragedies.

Echoing the sentiments of the memorandum addressed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Women of Lamka appealed for urgent intervention and redressal for the grievous violations inflicted upon their community's womenfolk during the crisis. The memorandum laid bare the alarming atrocities, ranging from ruthless assaults to heinous murders, beseeching justice, expedited legal processes, and comprehensive support for the affected women.

"We seek full justice for women who are victimized during the ongoing violent conflict in the state of Manipur at the earliest," read the memorandum, a poignant testament to the collective anguish and ardent plea for swift action.

The document elucidated the distressing mental health toll on the survivors, many of whom grappled with fear and anxiety, dwelling in dilapidated relief camps without adequate healthcare facilities. It underscored the urgent need for compensatory measures, rehabilitation, and a conducive environment for the affected women to reclaim their lives.

Quoting Annie Raja, Secretary of the National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW), the memorandum emphasized, "Women have been used as instruments to exact revenge on the other community, and all this is happening in a modern society and this has to stop!"

Signed by numerous stalwarts of the Women of Lamka, the memorandum transcends mere words; it's a powerful clarion call for action, urging authorities to not just hear but heed the anguished cries for justice and rehabilitation for the women who have borne the brunt of the conflict.

As the 16 Days Activism on Violence Against Women gains momentum worldwide, the resounding voice of Manipur's women reverberates as a solemn reminder of the urgent need to safeguard and empower women in conflict-ravaged regions. It stands as a poignant plea to the nation's leadership to take decisive action and ensure a future where women are shielded from the horrors of gender-based violence.

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