

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 20/022/2006

04 September 2006

Further Information on UA 228/06 (ASA 20/020/2006, 25 August 2006) Fear for safety/torture

INDIA

**Leitangthem Umakanta Meitei (m), aged 35
Yengkokpam Langamba Meitei (m), aged 26**

Human rights defenders Leitangthem Umakanta Meitei and Yengkokpam Langamba Meitei have both been accused of links with an illegal armed group. A Judicial Magistrate in Manipur has ordered that they be released on bail. However, both men have refused to pay their bail monies as they claim the charges against them are false.

Leitangthem Umakanta Meitei appeared before the Judicial Magistrate on 29 August, charged with being a member of an illegal armed group called *Kanglei Yawol Kana Lup* (KYKL). However given that the police investigations are not yet complete, the Judicial Magistrate ordered that Leitangthem Umakanta Meitei be released on bail.

Leitangthem Umakanta Meitei, himself a practising lawyer, has asked his legal counsel to call for the charges to be completely dropped, as he claims that they are false. The Judicial Magistrate has refused to allow this as the investigation into the allegations is still in its initial stages. Leitangthem Umakanta Meitei has also submitted before the court that he was arrested at 4am on 24 August from his house but the arrest warrant subsequently produced by police stated that he was detained at 9.30am.

Leitangthem Umakanta Meitei is currently in Sajiwa Central Jail. He is due to appear before the Judicial Magistrate again on 13 September. He is reported to be suffering from health problems after being tortured while in police custody. The police's Investigating Officer in the case has been ordered to submit a statement to the Judicial Magistrate before the next hearing, regarding the allegations of torture and Leitangthem Umakanta Meitei's claim that the doctor who examined him in police custody was a specialist in ear, nose and throat ailments, and not in the sort of injuries he had sustained.

Yengkokpam Langamba Meitei appeared before the Judicial Magistrate on 1 September. He was charged under sections 38 and 39 of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, 1967, relating to charges of being a member of and providing support to the KYKL. The Judicial Magistrate ordered his release on bail as he found that the charges were not corroborated by the evidence presented. However, Yengkokpam Langamba Meitei refused to provide bail monies on the grounds that a false case had been lodged against him. He has since been remanded into judicial custody. The Judicial Magistrate found that Yengkokpam Langamba Meitei had been tortured by police in custody and has ordered that the authorities at Sajiwa Central Jail have him examined by a medical doctor approved by the Manipuri government's Health Department.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- calling on the authorities to ensure that Leitangthem Umakanta Meitei and Yengkokpam Langamba Meitei receive all necessary medical treatment, including for injuries allegedly sustained during torture in police custody;
- ensure that both men are given a medical examination by independent experts to ascertain whether they were tortured, with the findings made public and anyone found responsible for torture brought to justice;
- calling for guarantees that the men are being treated humanely in detention;

- urging the authorities to ensure that all legal proceedings against the men conform to international standards for fair trial, including by providing assurances that no evidence extracted under duress or torture will be used against them.

APPEALS TO:

Mr. Okram Ibobi Singh
Chief Minister, Manipur
Government Secretariat
Imphal 795 001,
Manipur
India

Fax: + 91 11 2611 1803

Email: cmmanni@man.nic.in

Salutation: Dear Chief Minister

COPIES TO:

Shivraj Patil
Minister of Home Affairs
Ministry of Home Affairs
104 – 107 North Block
New Delhi 110 001
India

Fax: + 91 11 2309 2979

and to diplomatic representatives of India accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 16 October 2006.