CHAPTER FOUR
RISING AGAINST BRITISH RULE IN THE HILL AREAS OF MANIPUR

In the Pre-British period the tribal people of North East India live in the remote hills for many centuries and led a life of their own. They were uninfluenced by the main currents of history. In Manipur the tribal chiefs rule their respective chiefdom independently without any fear of outsider's interference. They occupied the land which they claim for themselves. They were independent and sovereign people in their land. The hill areas of Manipur were divided into hills adjoining the valley with permanentsubjection under the Raja, and hills that were not under the rules of the Raja of Manipuri.¹

British Rule
The British rule in India began after the Battle of Plessey in 1757. During the British rule all classes of Indian society were exploited. The Indians were disregarded everywhere and were subject to all sorts of humiliations and were treated as inferior human beings. They were not only considered as slave but also were considered simply to serve the interest of the Britishers and their homeland, Britain. The people of this country suffered in so many ways. Therefore, there were several revolts by the Indians.²

The Khasis a primitive tribe inhabiting the hilly region that border Assam in 1829 have revolted against the British. The British desire to construct road that passed through the land of Khasis which was

resented by the Kasis. The Kasis tribal chiefs thus, decided to turn out the British not only from the Kasis hill but also from the plain areas of Assam. They organized under Bar Manik. The insurrection broke out in May 1829. The British suspended it brutally and systematically burn and plunder Kasis villages. Similar interference by the British was common all over India in general and North East India in particular.

The British colonization process of Assam started in 1826 and ended in 1898. The colonial regime, at the beginning, resorted to the policy of non-intervention in most of then larger Assam. Two administrators J.H. Hutton and N.E. Parry advocated for separation of hill areas from general administrative scheme. In 1873 was introduced "The Inner Line" in hill areas, beyond which no person could pass without a license. Local tribes-people resisted colonial interference in their midst, and thus they often attacked the British. In 1860 and 1862 entire Jaintia tribe and the Garos (1852-57, 1872) rose against imposition of taxes. The Lushai-Kuki, Manipuri and many plains -Assam tribes raided British posts in 1860-90, 1891 and 1892 - 1894 respectively. There are records of Aka / Khamti resistances -1835-1839; Naga resistances - 1835-1852, and even an agrarian movement in 1893-94. The Sonaram (1902), Anglo-Kuki War (1917-1919) and Jadonang- Gaidinliu.

During the colonial rule in Manipur the general policy of the British in the beginning was to refrain from any direct control over the tribal people in the management of their internal affairs. Later, the British started interference in the traditional system of the tribal people which

---

resulted into the latter to live under poverty and in pathetic conditions. The British rule in the state exploited the hill people which results into tribal revolt in different occasions and areas. Such revolts were an expression of outrage incited by a cumulative military power and indignation felt at various stages since the beginning of colonial rule.5

Since Manipur declare war against British which is popularly known as ‘Anglo Manipur War’ in 1891 the British authority begins tighter control over the state.6 In 1893-94 the hill areas were divided into five divisions, Mao and Maram, Ukhrul, Tamenglong, Tengnoupal and Churachandpur. Subdivisions and each division were placed under an official called Lum Subedar. Some Lambus were appointed to assist him. The Lum Subedar was paid Rs. 15/- and the Lambus, Rs. 7/- per month. The Lam Subedar in the ‘Southern Lum’ was abolished later. This was due to the fact that there were large village with responsible chiefs. Therefore the Lum Subedar, the intermediary body between the government and the village was not needed.7

The Sanad issued by the British authority to Raja Churachand Singh in 1918 clearly stated the final authoritative control rested with the British. Throughout the period of colonial rule, the administration of the hill areas was under the direct supervision of the Vice President or President and after 1916 the Durbar as a whole had no jurisdiction over the affair of the hills.8

The following events took place in the history of Manipur in which tribal people carried out strong movement against British. These events in the twenty century are of concern to our study to understand the nature and causes of the war which the tribal people claim\(^9\) were fought to protect the land they owned. In that case, it was wars fought to protect tribal land ownership.

\textbf{Anglo-Kuki War 1917-1919}

The World War I marked a momentous Kukis offensive against British which is recorded as Anglo-Kuki War 1917-1919 by Palit (1984),\(^{10}\) Kuki Rising 1917-1919 by Shakespeare (1929)\(^11\) and R.S Chhettri (2003)\(^12\) recorded the event as Kuki Rebellion, 1917-1919 in Manipur. T. S Gangte (1980) named the event as Kuki War of Independence.\(^13\) In this war a relative minor Kuki ethnic group withstood the might of the British nearly for three years. Sir Robert Reid, Governor of Assam, noted it as the most serious event in the history of Manipur. It is worth noting that in recorded history, Kukis alone stood against the imperial power, no other peoples, particularly in the Northeast, have the reputation of such sustained opposition to the British.

---

9. Till today the Anglo-Kuki war fought with the British during 1917-19 was taken by every Kukis man as a war fought to defend and protect their land as it was so.
It had a wider perspective of the Indian National Movement for independence with a long history of outrages and ugly scenes of fighting in their relationship in the backdrop. The war marks the end of the beginning of a new one in the history of the Kukis who struggle against the British since 1777 AD. The interference of the colonial British in Manipur hills ends the era of independence of the Kukis and their overlordship in the Hills surrounding the valley of Manipur. It also marks the beginning of threat of British rule which commence with the opening of three Sub-divisional head quarters out of the Kukis inhabited land each at Churachandpur, Tamenglong and Ukhrul appointing three British Officers belonging to Assam Civil Service cadre in the persons of B.C Gasper, William Shaw and LL Peter.14

The earliest Kuki protest against the British colonialists date back to 1777, at the time of Warren Hasting was the governor General of India. The first incident of record was impelled by the colonialist’s annexation of Hill Tipperah (Tripura) in 1761 whereupon the Kuki went on the offensive against the invaders.15 Elly (1978) described ‘Great Kuki Invasion of 1860s’ in Chittagong Hill Tracts as a culmination of previous ‘raids’ beginning from 1845 to 1851.16

Carey and Tuck (1976) recorded that, the year 1860 saw the great invasion of Tipperah (Tripura) and in the following year a large body of

———
police marched to the hills to punish and avenge. Elly (1978) also wrote that in 1845, 1847-1848, 1849-1850, and 1850-1851 there were raids which are altogether called the Great Kuki Invasion of 1860s. A. Mackenzie (2005) mentioned in his ‘North East Frontier of Bengal’ that, reports were received in 1860 that at Chittagong, of the assembling of a body of 400 or 500 Kookies at the head of the river Fenny, and soon the tale of burning villages and slaughtered men gave token of the work they had on hand. Before any intimation of their could reach them on 31st January the Kookies, after sweeping down the course of the Fenny, burst into plains of Tipperah at Chagulneyah plundered 15 villages, butchered 185 British subjects, and carried off about 100 captives.

But the revolt (Rebellion) of 1917-19 can be described as the biggest revolt by the Kukis against the British. The magnitude of the revolt is reflected in the words of Lt Col RS Chhettri:

“...to handle the 'Kuki Rebellion', ‘An Assam Rifles Brigade under Col LW Shakespear, the newly appointed Deputy Inspector General, set out with a strength of 2,600 men assisted by a contingent of Burma Military Police numbering 400.”

A Minute Paper of the Secret Political Department refers to ‘23 principals involved, 13 in Manipur under Assam, 10 in the Somra Tract under Burma.’ Military columns, commandeered by British officers

Coote, Herbert, Higgins and Clocte, 'criss-crossed the area and fought a number of actions to successfully suppress the Kuki rebellion. In the process they won 1 CIE, 1 OBE, 14 IDSMs, 1 King's Police Medal, innumerable Mentions-in-Despatches and Jangilnams.22

The Kukis never accepted the British domination. Their inherent instinct to fight against the design of the British imperialism never died in them. To the Kukis, the British were alien people; had never been at peace with them since their early contact during Lord Warren Hastings's time, the 1770's. The repeated outrages and consequent defeats in the hands of English men never cowed the Kukis down. Presence of British in their hills was a threat to their independence and very existence in the eyes of the Kukis ever since they first encountered with them.23

Robert Raid (1942) on the Anglo-Kuki War said that it was the "Most serious event in the history of Manipur"24 which last two and half years beginning from January 28, 1917. It was a resistance to imperialist movement.

Major General D.K Palit (1983) wrote:

"Mention has been made earlier that the Kukis had been encouraged by the emissaries from Bengali Nationalist in Assam, any thought that the German had also hand in it had not occurred to anyone"25

Similarly, Col. Shakespeare wrote:

---
23. Chakravorty, B.C British Relation with the Hill Tribes of Assam since 1858, N.p: 1964, Pp. 47-52
24. Reid, Robert History of the Frontier Areas bordering on Assam, Shillong: 1942, p.47
25. Letter dt. May 22, 1918 from Maharaja of Manipur to P.A Main.
"it was the most serious military involvement in the North East and the Bengal seditionists in Sylhet and Cachar encourage Kukis to rebel against the British and gave example of an instance that occurred in Tamu among the Indian sepoys where some of them were found to have possessed photographs of two Germans on the back of which were written that if captured the photograph would sage them whenshown to the rebels".  

The Chief Commissioner of Assam remarked:

"The Kuki Rising 1917-1919 which is the most formidable with Assam has been faced for at least a generation... the rebel villages held nearly 40,000 men, women and children interspersed...over some 6,000 square miles of rugged hills surrounding the Manipur valley and extending to the Somra Tract and the Thunglut State of Burma."  

Contemporary nationalist look it at as an Indian resistance to British imperialism and for the Kukis and their chiefs it was a 'Great Nationalist Revolution'. Prof. H.K. Borpujari (1918) an Assamese Historian-Scholar, said that,

"... the German spies had a secret hand in fomenting the war" ...

and that the Kukis were under the influence of the activists of the revolutionaries of Bengal."  

---

27. Burma and Assam frontier, L/PS/10/724, Oriental and Indian Office Collections (OIOC), British Library London, Resolution on the Late Kuki rising, Extract from the proceedings of the Chief Commissioner of Assam in the Political Department, No.8856 P. dated the 27 September 1920.
To confirm his view, he cited an example that occurred-
"... at Tammoon in May, 1918, where a column was assembling
prior to breaking up after the first phase of operation, the Medical
Officer going through the Sepoys' huts found some Sikhs tearing
up papers which they told the officer they would not want any more.
He took the paper torn and whole, and found photos of one or two
white men, obviously Germans, one being in uniform, and on them
was written in Hindustani: "If you fall into the rebels' hands show
these and they will not harm you". 29

 Territory

The Encyclopaedia Britannica records 'Kuki' as a name given to a
group of tribes inhabiting both side of the mountains dividing Assam and
Bengal from Burma, south of Namtaleik River. 30 It is historical proved that
the area within latitudinal lines 20°5½N to 25°5½N and longitudinal lines
90°3½E to 95°4½E 31 of the world is the place of origin, where the
indigenous groups of people came to be known in the generic term 'Kuki'.

Originally 'Kuki', is a name given to a people of tribes inhabiting
both sides of the mountains dividing Assam and Bengal from Burma, South of the Namtaleik River. 'Kuki'isan ethnic group of people who live in
Burma, Nagaland, Assam, Tripura, Mizoram and Manipur in North Eastern
India. 32 Stevenson's (1932) reference to Kuki in relation to Ptolemy's

29. Ibid, p.230
31 Closes landmark area called the home of the Kuki tribes by George Abraham
Gnerson (1851-1941), marked out by Lhunkhosei Mate and the author with reference
The Geography also bears critical significance to its period of existence. The Encyclopaedia Britannica records, Captain Dun (1981) have written that the whole of wild tribes who dwell in the mountain districts contained between Bengal, Burma, Cachar, Manipur and Arakan, have conceived the designation 'Kuki'.

G.A. Grierson (1904) provides a general idea of the wingspan of the Kuki territory. An excerpt of the general introduction of the chapter on 'Kuki-Chin-Group' in The Linguistic Survey of India, Volume III, Part-III, is reproduced as follows:

"Territory inhabited by the Kuki-Chin tribes extends from the Naga Hills in the North down into the Sandoway District of Burma in the South; from the Myattha River in the East, almost to the Bay of Bengal in the West. It is almost entirely filled up by hills and mountain ridges, separated by deep valleys.

A great chain of mountains suddenly rises from the plains of Eastern Bengal, about 220 miles north of Calcutta, and stretches eastward in a broadening mass of spurs and ridges, called successively the Garo, Khasia and Naga Hills. The elevation of the highest points increases towards the east from about 3,000 feet in the Garo Hills to 8,000 and 9,000 in the region of Manipur. This chain merges, in the east, into the spurs which the Himalayas shoot out from the north of Assam towards the South. From here, a great mass of mountain ridges starts southwards, enclosing the alluvial valley of Manipur, and hence spreads out westward to the south of

Sylhet. It then runs almost due north and south, with cross ridges of smaller elevation through the districts known as the Chin Hills, the Lushai Hills, Hill Tipperah, and the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Farther south the mountainous region continues, through the Arakan Hill tracts, and the Arakan Yoma, until it finally sinks into the sea at Cape Negrais, the total length of the range being some 700 miles.

The greatest elevation is found to the north of Manipur. Thence, it gradually diminishes towards the south. Where the ridge enters the north of Arakan it again raises, with summits upwards of 8,000 feet high, and here a mass of spurs is thrown off in all directions. Towards the south the western off-shoots diminish in length, leaving a track of alluvial land between them and the sea, while in the north the eastern off-shoots of the Arakan Yoma run down to the banks of the Irrawaddy. This vast mountainous region, from the Jaintia and Naga Hills in the north, is the home of the Kuki-Chin tribes. We find them, besides, in the valley of Manipur, and, in small settlements, in the Cachar plains and Sylhet.

Kuki is an Assamese or Bengali term applied to various hill tribes such as the Lusheis, Rangkhols, Thados etc. It seemed to have been known at a comparatively early period. In the Raj Mala, Siva is stated to have fallen in love with a Kuki woman, and the Kukis are mentioned in connection with the Tipperah Raja Chachag, who flourished about 1512 A.D.\textsuperscript{35}

Vumson (1986), a noted Kuki scholar who is well verse in the earlier accounts of the British writer wrote on the territory of the Kukis as below:

"The land occupied by Kuki-Chin speaking people extends roughly from a latitudine of about 25 degrees 30 minutes north to about 20 degrees and 30 minutes north and falls between 92 degrees 20 minutes East. The region at present covers different political areas:

a) Assam: Part of Cachar, North Cachar Hills and Mikir Hills,
b) Meghalaya: Part of the East
c) Mizoram: State
d) Nagaland: Part of extreme South
e) Tripura: Part of the East
f) Manipur: State (Except part of the central valley and extreme North)
g) Myanmar: The chin state, large group including Tiddim, Falam and Haka are to be found, and part of the Magwe division and Kabaw valley.
h) Bangladesh: Sylet District and Chittagong Hill Tracts."

According to Ralthanga (2003), the land of Kuki person extends from 92 degree 10 minutes east and 94 degree 20 minutes East, which lies in the Indo-Burma ranges. According to H.W. Cutter, they lived in a land where they moved freely, with the boundary beginning from Upper Chindwin in the East, Akyab sea of Bengal in the south, Kaptai River in the West and two miles along the North of Imphal city.

38. Quoted in Sailo, Ralthanga, Op. Cit., p.6
The Kuki country covered by the movement of 1917-1919 ranges broadly from the upper Chindwin (Burma) in the West; the hills in Manipur and Aisan (Nagaland) in the East. The leadership was Chengjapao Doungel, King of Kuki, Pache Haokip, Chief of Chassad, Tintong Haokip, Commander-in-Chief of Kuki Army, Enjakhup Kholhou, Deputy Chief-in-Command of Kuki Army, and Khotinthang Sitlhou alias Kilkhong, Chief of Jampi. Kuki chiefs received tax and tributes from their various subjects in the regions stated above.39

When Assam came under British rule following the conclusion of the Anglo-Burmese War in 1826, expeditions to extend British rule throughout the North East were carried out by the Assam Rifles and the Assam Military Police. What followed was the Kuki Rising of 1917-1919 which served as a foundation of Kuki nationalism. In ‘Zale’n-Gam: The Kuki Nation’, Haokip recounts details of the rising, which was painstakingly collected. The event is a reminder of the spirit of nationalism exercised by our forefather.40 The territory inhabited by the Kukis people is known as Zale’n-Gam. It is an ideological concept propounded by Kuki National Organisation.41

Causes of the War

The Kuki people throughout the history have been on preserving their ancestral land. The Kuki chiefs own the village and the land. They have been tenacious in defending their land. Any foreign encroachment

39. Ibid.
41. Zale’n-gam’ is an ideological concept propounded by P.S Haokip, President of the Kuki National Organisation. ‘Zale’n-gam’ means ‘freedom of the people in their land’; it encapsulates and expounds the essence of Kuki history and nationalism. In recent history, this spirit of Kuki nationalism was reflected in the vehement opposition to British imperialists’ designs in Zale’n-gam, which began in the nineteenth-century.
on their land was resisted. Furer Haimendorf (1945) an anthropologist describe the Anglo-Kuki War 1917-19 as defensive, a last attempt by the desperate community against foreign encroachment on their land and economic resources. Many historians believed this as a guiding principle for tribal movement during British India. Encroachment on land and exploitation of economic resources thus, remain as the guiding principle for the Kukis to revolt against the British. It was the outcome of anti-British, a response to British imperial policy.

With the coming of British in Manipur the independence of Kuki people which they have enjoyed for long on their land have been in jeopardize. There was a long and deep-rooted tribal discontent, which had been lying latent. It was an outburst of tribal pride and prestige of their traditional freedom on their land against oppressive measures and high handedness of the British. Sikhohao Kipgen (2009) a noted Kuki scholar aptly wrote,

“The Kukis fought the British for the protection of their land.”

The need to protect themselves as a nation from injustice that had invaded them which threaten their land and freedom was the main concern for the Kuki people. Gautam Bhadra (1975) wrote,

“The British version of the causes of the Thadou (Kuki) uprising is not sufficient, to explain many problems. However the labour recruitment, which is said to be the ostensible causes for the

42. Haimendorf, Christo von Furer ‘Aboriginal Rebellion in Deccan’ in Man in India, Vol. 25, No. 4, 1945, p. 208
uprising, did have an important role, in so far as it ignite all the accumulated grievances of the Thadou (Kuki) chief and community."  

He also further observed that, 
"the causes of the revolt go back to some years; the labour recruitment only decided the timing of the outbreak".  

Thus, the enforcement of the Kukis for labour corps only decided the timing to revolt against the British long years of suppression and exploitation in their land. The suppression of the rebellion cost the government twenty eight lakhs rupees.  

Apprehensive of Alienation from Land 
Kuki chiefs and community apprehensive of alienation from their land were the main causes to wage war against the British although there may be many other that which ignite their grievances. The Kuki chiefs own the land and rule in it. They felt the British have encroached their ancestral land which threatens their independence. It was fought under the leadership of Kuki chiefs who are customarily the owner of the land. This proved that the chief were not ready to lose their land and the war was fought for the protection of their land and rights. They also felt that British rule in Manipur undermine their authority, power and prestige's. They never accepted the British domination on their land. Their inherent instinct to fight against the design of the British dominance never died in them. They were on the lookout for such an opportunity to drive the

47. Ibid. 
Englishmen away from their land. In that case the Kukis are nationalist and they never lost sight of the nationalist movements.

Pache one of the great Kuki chief in the Chassad Meeting was, "convinced to believe that the British had encroached upon the land of the Kukis and thereby jeopardizing their age old independence and so also their very survival."49 In the Kuki society, as has already mentioned land and land relation bears a significant not only on their authority structure but also is the basis for their socio-economic, cultural and political system. Without land the Kukis are slave. Land for both the chief and the village remain to be their very own survival. Thus, the British policy to annexed and colonalised the Kuki area was not possible for the latter to accept.50 The coming of British only threatens the Kukis of losing their land.

The British in the beginning use the warlike Kuki for maintenance of law and order. They depended on the Kukis against other tribes especially the Nagas, was the government policy. Jenkins clarify the government policy in explicit term that,

"Our hope of reclaiming this country appears be rest on these Kookies. They are already sufficiently numerous to delay the Nagas if they can be united for the purpose of defense."51

British use the Kukis as their helper for the main reason that preferred tribal organizations led by the chiefs, for they found it easier to control them through the chiefs. Thus, Kukis were used by the British as

50. *Ibid.*, p.82
51. Jenkins Report, Mill, p. CXXIII
instrument to accomplish their objective without any consideration for the former benefit.\textsuperscript{52}

The Anglo-Kuki war was the direct outcome of anti-colonial and anti-imperial feeling which began to develop following the extension of political power by the British over the Kukis later who remained powerful and independent on their land. The following general discontentment of the Kukis on their very own land was also collectively responsible for the outbreak of the revolt.

1. \textbf{The Demand for Labour Corps}

India as part of the British was to contribute 50,000 non-combatant force at the battlefront in France in the First World War in order to augment combatant force by those employed in labour battalions in France and to husband as much manpower as possible in France and England of which Manipur was to contribute 20,00 non-combatant force.\textsuperscript{53} The first Labour Corps (No.22) consisting of 2,000 Nagas and Kukis from the hill was completed and send away by May 1917.\textsuperscript{54} They were not getting any information and knowledge of the work which assigned to them. They were sent much against their will.\textsuperscript{55}

The British demanded men for Labour Corps through the Minor Raja of Manipur. The Minor of Manipur Surchandra gave an extensive cooperation in this regard which result into giving him the title

\textsuperscript{52} Letter to the Court of Directors, Judicial Department, 2\textsuperscript{nd} October, 1850, part 126.
\textsuperscript{53} Vide telegraph dated 28\textsuperscript{th} Jan 1917 from the Secretary of State for India. London addressed to the Army Headquarter, Simla followed by letter No. 110-14 dated 31\textsuperscript{st} Jan. 1917 from B.C Allan, ICS Special Officer, Shillong to Lt. Col. H.W.G Cole Political Agent Manipur
\textsuperscript{54} Reid, Sir Robert History of Areas bordering Assam, Shillong: 1884, p.79.
'Maharaja'. The first Manipur corps was dispatched to France in 22 March 1917. For any further recruitment the Kuki chiefs were reluctant to send their youth to France as labour forces and they even gave money to the British officers not to call for such recruitment again for France service. Kim Vaiphei(1995) wrote,

"They (Kukis) were also convinced that men who were reported as having died of sickness were really killed fighting. Thus, the chief even refused to attend a durbar called to discuss the matter. They argue that this war was not their war and that they have no intention of co-operating with an administration that had treated them unjustly".

The Kuki people paid to the Political Agent a sum of Rs. 1500/-, three gongs and one Mithun as Salam adding that, It was the custom of the Kukis to bring the head of the dead man wherever they died. But there was disagreement between him and the Kuki chiefs. The result was that Higgins burned down a Kuki village and laid the foundation of the rebellion. The Kuki chiefs were called to attend meeting in Imphal to discuss the issue. The chief however refused to "either to send any coolie or to come to Imphal to discuss the matter".

The British official document have even view the war as the outcome of the recruitment for force labour corps. The Kukis took strong

58. A traditional Kuki fine for committing serious crime such a murder, etc.
60. Webster Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam to Secretary to Government of India, No. 1245,W,7th Nov, 1917,FPD EXT- 'Secret', July, 1918, Pro. No.7.
exception to the manner of imposition and refused to accept the orders and instead decided to declare war against the British. The Kuki people sentiment, pride and right was hurt. They reacted into oblivion and the Kuki people immediately rose in armed struggle with a vow that,

"If ever there was a time to commit
Themselves to their Chiefs for
protection of their independence,
Culture, tradition, etc it is now."62

It was also an expression of alienation from the Maharaja of Manipur in whom the Kukis saw an ‘ally-turned-deserter’. It was, therefore, in defiance to the commitment of the Maharaja of Manipur made to the British to send the Kukis to France without prior consultation with Kuki Chiefs as was practice and existed then.

2) Pothang63 or Force Labour and Collection of Hill House Tax:

The British were mainly concern to collect hill house tax and exact force labour. To achieve these British use the Kuki chief who was the master within his chiefdom. Through the chief the British need not worry about the support of the Kuki people. A house tax of Rs 3 per house was levied annually from the hill areas as against Rs 2 per household annually in the valley areas.64

There were two kinds of Pothang or force labour:

a) Pothang Bekari:

63. A force labour impose on the local people by the British
The Kukis were obliged to carry the luggage or goods of the British officers. They were also engaged in free labour for making bridges and road which the Kukis were against to it.\textsuperscript{65}

b) \textit{Pothang Senkhai}:  

Each household in the village under this system were made to subscribed money, domestic animals to feed the British official touring the hill areas at free of cost.\textsuperscript{66} Although \textit{Pothang} was abolished in the valley areas after sometime, it continued in full force in the Kuki areas. Even the demand for labour corps cannot be consider in terms of \textit{Pothang}.\textsuperscript{67}

3) Economic Distress:  

There was total negligence of tribal welfare among the hill tribes. The tribal people in the hill have contributed Rs. 70,000/- a year in the form of house tax but they in return have no benefits.\textsuperscript{68} In the year 1915-1917 the situation were similar. Less than one fifth of the total revenue was expended on them. It results into famine in the Kuki areas. There was almost complete failure of the crops in the villages inhabited by the Kukis.\textsuperscript{69} The famine continued till the year 1914-15. In the flood of 1916 the price of rice rose to abnormal height. But no relief measures were taken.\textsuperscript{70}

4) Confiscation of Kukis Fire Arm:

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{67} ARM- 1912-1913 Chief and Leading officials and personages in Manipur, Shillong, 1919, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{68} Resolution of Assam Administration, Para 14.
\textsuperscript{69} Supplemented to Assam District Gazetteer, Vol. IX, Shillong 1914, Pp.5-6.
\textsuperscript{70} Resolution of Assam Administration, Para 14.
\end{footnotesize}
About nearly 1000 guns of the Kukis were confiscated by the British between 1907 and 1917. Shakespeare (1977) recorded that, “the total number of firm-arms confiscated by the end came nearly 1000 weapons which, though old flint lock or percussion muzzle loaders, were good enough for their jungle fighting and guerilla tactics at closer range”. This is also corroborated by the Disarmament Report of the Manipur Administration.

5) Semang Upa Pachong

The Kuki knew nothing but their chiefs whom they venerated with reverential respect, and whose words were law. Their chiefs have called for war against the British. As a result the people have no option but to obey to the order of their chiefs by the dictates of culture, tradition and unbreakable allegiance to their blood relationship. Fighting for their independence on their land was supreme.

6) Conversion to Christianity

The spread of Christianity among the tribal was also a great concern, it attract the younger generation. This had undermined their social value which they all stood for. As it will leads to loosening of their identity and the rich cultural heritage in oblivion. The Kuki did not know any religion except their own which they believe was their protector and almighty. They worship stones, trees, the sun and the stars with various purposes.

72. Village Council’s members
74. Questionnaire respondent Haokip, L. Janghun of Loinuol, Churachandpur district, Manipur, dated 2 July 2009
7) Emotion

The Kukis people were proud of their land, culture and independence. They believed that there were no Hills like theirs, no Chiefs greater than theirs, no religion fundamental than theirs, nothing whatsoever to match with their own. The Kuki consider manual labour as below their esteem. Prim S. Vaiphei (1995) a Kuki wrote,

"During the reign of Chandakirty...my ancestor lived at Mahabali in Imphal. The ancestor leaved Imphal because the King not only used them as warrior, but he wanted to use them also to carry palanquin. They wanted to serve the king as warrior and not as servant."75

Kukis people considered the Englishmen as impure more than Harijan to the Hindus Brahmin, Gentiles to the Jews, etc. They did not like foreigner to infringe upon their rights of living independently on their land.

Preparation for the War

As a result of the above circumstances the Kuki people of Manipur came in a situation of unbearable socio-economic and political conditions under the British administration in Manipur. While the British authority and the maharaja continued their efforts of raising labor corps in the beginning of 1917, the other side of the scene was that the Kukis remained mentally alert and physically prepared for the showdown against the British colonialists and their armed forces. The Kuki people took preparation to fight the British to drive away the latter from their land. This preparation includes manufacturing of weapons, customary oath taking, military

training, various conference and meeting. On their preparation for the war, British Brigadiers-General C.E.K Macquoid wrote:

"The enemy to deal with was, in their own way and manner of fighting, by no means lacking in courage. In the art of lying concealed and laying ambuses they could not be excelled. They scarcely ever showed themselves, yet their presence could always be felt. The Kuki stockades were all planned and sited, having 'bold holes' for escape, and provided hitherto unusual, with flank defense. The fact that the troops engage had been armed with a rifle of great penetration than that of the Martini-Henry must have been known to the tribes, as the thickness of the stockades had been increased and generally was found sufficient to stop the penetration of the M.L.E rifle. Our opponent did not fear the 2.5 seven-pounder M.L gun."

The Kukis made different weapons which were quite typical in nature but very good and applicable for that time. The Kukis made Pumpi\textsuperscript{77} which was one of the most sophisticated weapon invented by them. Col. L.W Shakespeare (1929) gives description to the Kukis Pumpi as follow:

"... a curious sort of leather cannon made from a buffalo hide rolled into a compact tube and tightly bound with strips of leather. A vent is bored in the proper place, their own rough powder poured in, and a quantity of slugs of stones is then inserted. The weapon is usually fasten to a tree so as to command a turn in the track up which the enemy is approaching, and is either fired by hand at the head at the \textsuperscript{76} Quoted in Haokip, P.S. Op.Cit., p.144
\textsuperscript{77} A cannon made from the hide of the large animal (Mithun)
head of the party as it appears in sight, or is arranged to be fired by a trip cord which our flankers may touch, and which drops a stone on to a percussion cap on the vent which fires the charge hoped to hit our men coming up the path."

Besides their tradition Pumpi, the Kukis manufactured musket, gun powder. They also made various forms of traps one of which was stone trap called Pel Thang.\footnote{78} They also construct food reserves for storing rice, maize, corn, dried meat, etc as a part of their preparation for the war. The stored items are mainly for supply during the war. These food items were stored in various places in the interior of the jungle so than enemy could not easily reach. The Kukis could manufacture many weapons of different types in a single day. They are highly professional and skill in gun making as much as they are skill to fighting in war.\footnote{79}

\textbf{Sajamlhal and Hansaneh:}

Both \textit{Sajamlhal} and \textit{Hansaneh}\footnote{80} are important customary practices of the Kukis. According to tradition, a mithun is killed for the occasion, where the Kuki chiefs, elders and leaders are present. Each of the Chief is given a portion of the meat called \textit{Sachan}. This token piece of flesh was again distributed by the Chiefs to every household in their respective village on their return to assure their commitment to the common cause. In \textit{Hansaneh} the Chiefs and leader ate the meat together as a token of expression of unity and solidarity to fight against the common enemy.\footnote{81} It

\footnote{78} It was large stone or wooden lock which is place on the wooden planks. The planks which were fixed to a rope and tied against a tree just above the enemy path.
\footnote{79} Personal interview with Haokip, Vumtong (a brave Kuki fighter and inborn organizer in Chased Areas in the 1917-19 War who is still living) at Ukhrul district, Manipur on 2 July 2009.
\footnote{80} It is an oath taking ceremony by the Chiefs and leader.
\footnote{81} Kipgen, Seikhohao \textit{Op.Cit.}, Pp.42,43
is eating of the liver and heart of the animal. The liver and the heart signify heart or core of the matter which eating to it have moral accountability.

P.S Haokip (1998) has given the following list of performance of Sajamlhal in the eve of Anglo Kuki war. They are:
1. Laijang and Jampi (Present-day Tamenglong)
2. Henglep (Present-day Churachandpur)
3. Mombi (Lonpi) (Present-day Chandel)
4. Joujang Somra Area (Present-day Myanmar)
5. Phailengjang, Upper Chindwin (Present-day Myanmar)
6. Haflong of North Cachar Hills and Karbi Anglong (Present-day Assam)
7. Mechangbung Area (Present-day Athsibung Area of Nagaland)

The Concept of Thingkho le Malchapom

It was a traditional Kuki form of notice serve to all the Kuki villages on urgent and serious matter by sending piece of blazing firewood called Thingkho, tied with a big hot chili called Malchapom which signaled declaration of war against the British.

There are argument and counter argument on the exact date and time of performing age old traditional War-Rites ceremony. It however can best be assessed from the confidential letter No. 5C, dated March 17th 1917 of the Political Agent of Manipur, H.G.W Cole addresses to B.C Allen, the Special Officer, Assam in which it was written that most defiant Kuki Chiefs of Aisan, Chassed, Jampi and Ngullen of Khongjang killed a

mithun and performed their traditional and customary war rites in the month of March 1917 to formally declare war against the British. The above date however does not mean the exact date of performing war rites which declare war against the British but Cole sent letter to Allen about the activities of the truculent Kuki Chiefs. All the records officially and oral traditions however, have pointed that the month of March 1917 seemed to be the most closely authenticable fact that could be taken as the commencement of the war.

**Allies**

The Kuki people look for allies in their effort to wage war against the imperialist British. The two Kuki chiefs and great leaders in the war, Chengjapao Doungel chief of Aisan and Lunkhomang Haokip established contact with Bengali nationalist who were in contact with the Germans. In the effort the Kuki and the Germans concluded an agreement that the latter would supply arms and ammunitions to the former during the war. Various secret meeting were held and photographs were exchanged besides others. Chengjapao Doungel and Lunkhomang Haokip met at Aisan in the month of March 1917 which begins formal preparation for the war. The agreement at the meeting was as follows:

"Every Kukis should take part in the war and the Chiefs should organize traditional Sajamilhal in their respective areas, any Chief who do not participate in the war should be dispossessed of his title and his village would be burn down. Every village should manufacture and stocking of weapon like gun powder and

---

84. Cole, H.W.G Political Agent, Manipur Confidential D.O No. 5 C dated 17-3-1917 to Allen, B.C Chief Secretary, Govt. of Assam, Shillong.
ammunition, etc. Each and every village should stock food grains and other food items for use during the war.\textsuperscript{85}

**Kuki-INa Connection**

The Kukis welcomed the Japanese and INA. They eventually joined the rest of India in the struggle against the British. The accorded welcome shown to the I.N.A and the Japanese forces is evidently reflected in an immensely popular song, called *lakoi-la*, which came into currency since 1942. It reflects the sentiments of the Kukis. It resounds the sense of freedom and liberty and the unlimited happiness, boundless as the skies reverberating the sound of the planes. The joyous mood, the indomitable spirit, the love and respect are all reflected in the song.

\begin{quote}
*Theiloukoljang torn lepbanna,*

*Gingdengdeng 'e Japan, lenna huilenkong.*

*Pego Lhemlhei saigin bang,*

*Mao dingdeng 'e van thamjol Japan lenna,*

*Amaodeng deng'e Japan lennamongmo,*

*Vailou konsun solselung hem fante.*

*Atwithei khonglabangging ding deng,*

*Gin dengdeng 'e Japan lenna huilenkonggin.*\textsuperscript{86}
\end{quote}

Free translation:

Beyond the hills from an unknown land,

Floats the sweet humming sound of Japanese planes.

Like the musical notes of the 'lute',

\textsuperscript{85} Haokip, P.S Op.Cit.p.146

Flying high in the blue sky.
The sweet melodic hum of the Japanese planes,
Sets the lone farmer's heart at melancholy.
Like the sweet melody of the water-mill,
Floats the sweet humming sound of the Japanese planes.

In this regard Paokhohang Haokip a Kuki leader narrates,
"This song was so popular amongst the Kukis that almost all of them irrespective of age or sex used to sing it, particularly the youths used to spend their days, humming this sweet note. The song got so deeply rooted in their spirit that threats of bitter punishment or intimidation by the Britishers to those who sang the song failed to produce any effect. The song reminds the ban imposed on singing "Bande Mataram..." 87 by the nationalist and patriotic Indians. It was a reunion of the spirit, which had found echo in the hearts of millions and millions of people across India. 88

Haojathang Haokip, an INA veteran, narrates in this way:
"the Kukis yearn for freedom was so high in their hearts that's why, the sounds of the Japanese planes sounds so sweet to them, and the very sound is the 'sound of freedom' to them (to the Kukis). 89

The Chassad Meeting

A secret meeting of the Kuki leader was held in 7th March 1917 at Chassad the principal village of Lunkhomang Haokip Chief of Haokip clan who killed a Mithun for the solemn function. About 23 Kuki chiefs,

87. National Song of India.
88. The Kuki Rebellion, Souvenir 1985, p. 31
89. Personal interview with Haokip, Haojathang, Chehklep, Ukhral district, Manipur on 4 July 2009.
including from Burma participated in the meeting which discussed on the need for formation of united Kukis to stand against the British, the manufacture of weapons and stocking of food items for the war.\textsuperscript{90} H.W.G Cole made note of the event:

"Lunkhomang Haokip alias Pache, chief of Chassad lived most of his life in independent territory. He killed a mithun in March before he was called on to send coolies and sent the flesh to other Chiefs urging them to refuse to recruit men for the labor corps. Shortly afterward Ngulkhup of Mombi and Khutinthang of Jampi sent beads to Pache with a message inviting him to resist. Pahche sent a message to these two chiefs inviting them to come to his village and discussed matters. Subsequently, I learn on good authority that he sent a bullet to the Chiefs of Jampi, Ukha, Paosum, Henglep and Loibol with instruction to resist forcibly any attempt to impress coolies or to burn villages. Paokholen, chief of Bongbal Khulen, Paboi, Sita, are satellites of Pachei with considerable influence among the Vaiphei villages bordering on the valley.\textsuperscript{91}

In the meeting, the participant leaders ate the liver and heart of the animal killed for the occasion as a promise to unity and fight against the British. The Sachan was distributed to all over Kukis villages by their chiefs. Major General D.K Pallit (1984) recorded as follows:

\textsuperscript{90} Personal interview with Haokip, Vumtong (Laso Haokip chief of Selmei a participant in the resolution of Chassad Meeting relate to Vumtong of the event) at Khonomphai, Ukhrul district, Manipur on 4 July 2009.
\textsuperscript{91} Cole, H.W.G PA Manipur (Vide letter D.O No. 5C, dated 17-03-1917 to Allen, B.C Special Officer, Assam Shillong.
"Twelve hours later came an urgent wire to Shillong from Falam, the headquarters station in the Chin Hills, saying that the southern Chins had risen and that Haka station was surrounded; it asked for urgent assistance, a few days later another urgent wire from Falam called for even stronger reinforcements."\(^2\)

**Jampi Meeting**

In Jampi meeting Tintong (Khupkhotintong) Haokip made an oath of secrecy and declared war against the British. He took oath in Kuki tradition by cutting of a Mithun’s tail on 15\(^{th}\) March 1917 with the following words:

\[\text{“Lend me your ears, brethren, from today and this very moment, I declare that we are at war with the British. May the shot from my gun and my cutting of Mithun’s tail be my oath of secrecy that I would fight to the last of my bullet, even if I am to fight alone!”}\(^3\)

Every one who was present in the meeting responded to the call and they decided to fight the British for the preservation of their independence and for the protection of their land, customs and culture.

**Issuing of Order by Pipa**

Webster’s report refers to Kuki chiefs; led by chief of Aisan Chengjapao sent order to all the leading Kuki chiefs to fight the

---

93. Translated from Higgin.J.C’s Letter No. 1243, & November 1917, addressed to the Chief Secretary of Assam.
British. Other influential chief had taken similar steps. All over the Kuki areas Sajamlhal meat was distributed and Thingkhole Malchapom dispatched to prepare the war against the British and it was formally declare by Chenjapao Doungel the Pipa or Piha during the Chassad Meeting. He thus declares war by issuing the orders:

"No Kuki should response to the call of the British to go to France, but rather they should make preparations to wage war against the British."  

Pipa of the Kukis as custom was authorized to issue such order. With order issued, all the Kukis every where they live have started mass preparation. A song was thus, composed:

Phaichung nung kolkimvel'e
Kolmangtolkon, 
Ikallhangphai thin eisemgomem?
Lhepon bang kitho tin,
Namchemkhat in vabang paotadite.

**Free Translation:**

From beyond the valley of Imphal,
And from across the plains of Burma,
Aren't we served together?
United like folded layers of sheets,
Let us take our sword as one nation as the birds in unison enounce.

---

94. Political Department, From the Hon'ble Mr J.E Webster, C.I.E, I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Chief commissioner of Assam, To the Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign and Political Department, Shillong, the 27 June 1919.
95. Head of the Kuki clan and king
97. Ibid.
Jampi Meeting

Following the Pipa issuing order the Kuki chief and elders from Tamenglong and Sadar Hill areas of the present day Manipur met at Jampi Village on the second week of March 1917. It was hosted by Khotinthang Sitlhou alias Kilkhong, chief of Jampi who killed a Mithun, a customary animal to serve the solemn occasion. Thirteen Kuki chiefs attended the meeting. In the meeting Khotinthang briefed, the entire assembled chiefs, elders and leaders the direction given by Chengjapao Doungel and the agreement made with Pache at the Chassad Summit. In this meeting Tintong Haokip a born leader and warrior was appointed Commander-in-Chief and Enjakhup Kholhou as Deputy Commander-in-Chief. Enjakhup Kholhou joined the 3rd Assam Rifle on 19th July 1911 and because of his physically and mental fitness, he was promoted to the next rank within a year. He however leaved his service on 6th Oct 1914 and the reason is unknown. But it was promoted that due to the understanding and co-operation among the Kukis's chiefs and leaders, he took the decision.98

Customary oath taking ceremony was performed. The oath of allegiance taken by the Kuki chiefs was thus:

“In the event of the death of Tintong and Enjakhup, every Kuki chiefs should perform ‘Kosa’.99 Secondly, ‘Tompon”100 and ‘Pondum”101 would be given to each of their children and wives. And they would be looked after until they could manage themselves.

99. Kosa meaning ko-grave and sa– meat. It is the customary killing of animal for feast on the death of a person to show love, respect and as farewell.
100. A customary practice of a Kuki shawl presented to the corpse or to his or her relatives.
101. A traditional popular Kuki shawl.
In the event of our failure to do so, let the sathin-salung\textsuperscript{102} we have eaten, kill each one of us.”

Oath of allegiance taken by Tuntong and Enjakhup were thus, "In the event of my betrayal of my bounded duties assigned to me by siding towards the British Government, my eating of sathin-salung here would kill me."\textsuperscript{103}

**Oaktan Meeting**

Another important meeting was held in Oak tan under the initiative of L. C Higgins who persuaded the Kuki chiefs in the Southern Region who directed to explain to the chiefs the reason why their men were wanted, the nature of the required of them and pays to be received in case they join the Labor corps in France.\textsuperscript{104} Higgins also told the Kukis if they agreed his proposal he would give a gun to every Kuki chief and many more. He attended the meeting without any guard except a hand gun for self defense. The Oaktan meeting ended in failure when the Kuki chiefs turn down his proposal. Higgins was disappointed and thus refused to accept traditional gift offered to him by the chiefs comprising of Dahpi(gong) and Dangka (silver).

In Taloulong area of Manipur Thangkhokai was leader of the movement. When the British forces were expected to attack from the North Taloulong became the staging point for the battle plans. As such Thangkhokai as tradition of the Kuki did ritual and volunteered to be the

\textsuperscript{102} Sathin-Salung means the heart and liver of the animal usually of Mithun. The Kuki people ate the heart and liver of animal as an oath-taking to fulfill a common objective.  
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid. 25  
area commander. Ngulkhotinpao who was his brother and Onngul who was his brother-in-law were enlisted in the volunteer force.\textsuperscript{105}

When the British sent a force of Assam Rifles and Burma Military Police there were at least two fierce battles under the command of Jangthang from Kuki side. The first battle took place in Bolkot Kipgen village which was about 6 kms from Taloulong. When the Kuki sides realized that the British were no match for them with their muzzled-loaders Jangthang escaped and returned to Taloulong base while his men scattered in all directions.\textsuperscript{106}

The second battle took place in between Haipi and Taloulong. In this battle the Kuki have advantage over the enemy. The Kukis forces gave much a better account of themselves this time and forces the British to retreat. The British on their return were ambushed by Ngulkhotinpao and his brother-in-law Onngul. The encounter took place between Haipi and Lamlaba. Ngulkhotinpao killed the army officer with one shot. The British force once again retreat carrying back their officer to their base at Dulen village.\textsuperscript{107} Jangthang composed a song in this heroic achievement as below:

\begin{quote}
"Kathange, kathange, namtin kaveipheilaii-ah,
Genhisuon cha keibou kathange.
Tuibang luongtengawili bang katinge
Si’ng chlhah lamlaailuong huonthingvum-ie."
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid.
Translation

"Bravo! Bravo! Reverberates the echo of my triumph,
In all human habitation.
Bravo! A Kipgen offspring I am.
As a fishing dam holds in check the flow of a river,
Have I halted the advance of an imperial army.
And branches lay strewn in the Chimah thoroughfare"109

The British administration was not willing to accept defeat at the hands of an untrained and ill-equipped Kuki force. The result was that the British once again came back for revenge with strength and renew determination. This time the Kuki forces could not stop the advancing British forces. Haipi Village was burned to ashes which the number of the village house was more than fifty in numbers. A day before this incident happened the Inhabitants of Haipi evacuated women and children in nearby village Sielsi village which was a day journey from Haipi. Following the surrender of Hapi, Thangkhokai and Onngul were arrested and sent to prison at Imphal for over two years110

With the Kukis declaring war against the British, they were immediately on the warpath. The Kukis soon attacked on important British outposts. Threat, raids, intimidations and coercion, etc were launched. The British too had taken position to fight the Kukis. A plan was chalked out and divided the hill areas into various zones, appointed detachments for each in which lines of post were to be established by the British.111

The Manipur government took unruly harsh measures against the Kuki

109. In desperation, the British platoon felled trees by the road side and devised a makeshift palanquin to carry their fallen leader.
chiefs and barred their entry into the armed and police forces. The Kukis appeared to the Chief Commissioner of Assam against the repressive measures of the government. An enquiry was instituted which found the allegation by Kukis as true.112

List of British column wise and in charge of command during Anglo-Kuki war 1917-19.

Table 1.1
British Areas-Wise Column and in charge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Name of the Column</th>
<th>Place under the Command of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chassad Area</td>
<td>Capt Parry and Black covering the areas East of Imphal valley with supply base at Yaingangpokpi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Aisan Area (North Tangkhul, Somra and Tezu)</td>
<td>Capt. Prior, Lt. Mawson and Rees, covering Areas North East of Imphal and South East of Kohima with supply base at Tadubi and Melomi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lonpi Area</td>
<td>Capt. Coote and Lt. Ask with covering entire South areas of Imphal valley with supply base at Sugnu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Henglep Areas</td>
<td>Placed under the command of Capts. Goodall and Fox, and Lt. Carter covering Manlun Manchong (Zou) areas, South West of Lcktak Lake with supply base at Moirang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kongkal Thana (Burma)</td>
<td>Maj. Brooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Humalin Aung Kuangken (Burma)</td>
<td>Hackett</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lenakot</th>
<th>Capt. Rundall, assisted by Kamhao Chief, Howchingkoop and his men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Tamu</td>
<td>Capt. Patrick</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Kuki Political Sufferer's Association Memorandum to the Prime Minister of India, Imphal 1957.

Officers, who were not deployed in the above columns, were deployed for mobile columns, transport and headquarters duties at Imphal. But by mid October, additional officers arrived at Imphal and were distributed to various areas and duties. They were experienced Officers at different theatres of the Great War and their names were as given below:

1. Capt. W.P Reid  
2. Lieut. R.G Back  
3. Lt. Scott  
4. Lt. C.E Jeffrey  
5. Lt. PA Armstrong  
6. Lt. Congden  
7. Lt.Ress  
8. Lt. Goldsmith  
9. Lt. Mack  
10. Lt. Willis  
11. Dr Crozier\(^{113}\)

Higgins, the Political Officer divided the formation of Kuki Warriors in consideration of their jurisdiction and influences extended in the areas of each Chief as given below:

---

113. The Kuki Political Sufferer's Association Memorandum to the Prime Minister of India, Imphal, 1957.
"We are free people, the white man should not rule over us, we will not pay hill house tax to the government, we will not obey their unjust law like force labour and compulsory porter age subscription"\textsuperscript{114}

Causality and Warrant

The Kukis killed in the raid of 1918 was 289 men and women and 34 villages burned. On the other hand the Assam Rifles killed was 28, 47 and 81 died of diseases in the field.\textsuperscript{115} Besides, 86 Kukis villages were destroyed and another 15 deserted. The British Advisory Committee passed recommendations to subject the prominent leaders to a 'period of restraint', each for fifteen years, with the exception of the Chief of Chassad, who received a penalty of twenty years.\textsuperscript{116}

Warrants dated 8 December 1919, Delhi, signed by RE Holland, Secretary of the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, were issued to arrest Kuki Chiefs. They were to be restrained at Sadiya Jail in Assam.\textsuperscript{117}

1 Chengjapao (Doungel), Chief of Aishan
2 Khotinthang (or Khilkung) (Sitlhou), Chief of Jampi,
3 Pachei alias Hluhomang (Lhukhomang Haokip), Chief of Chassad
4 Pakang (Haokip), Chief of Hinglep (Hinglep)
5 Tintong (Haokip), Chief of Laiyong (Laijiang)
6 Ngulkhup (Haokip), Chief of Mombi (Lonpi)

\textsuperscript{114} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{115} Resolution of Assam Administration, Para I
\textsuperscript{116} Foreign and Political Department Notes, Secret – I, January 1920, Nos 4-12, Submitting, for orders, proposals for dealing with the leading rebels concerned in the Kuki rebellion
7 Leothang (Haokip), Chief of Goboh
8 Heljashon (Haokip), Chief of Loibol
9 Mangkhoon (ManglunHaokip), Chief of Tingkai
10 Semchung (Haokip), Chief of Ukha
11 NgulkhokaiHaokip of Chassad
12 Enjakhup (Kholhou) of Thenjo\textsuperscript{118}

Proposals for the punishment of the ten Kuki chiefs in the Somra Tract and Kale Kabow Valley (Burma) who were concerned in the rebellion were as follow:

1 Kamjadem (KamjahenHaokip, Chief of Phailenjang I)
2 Tongkwalu (TongkholunHaokip, Chief of Phailenjang II)
3 Letkwatang (Letkhothang, Chief of Khotuh)
4 Semkwalu (SemkholunHaokip, Chief of Phaisat)
5 Zahlun (JalhunHaokip, Chief of Molvom)
6 Shuku (TukihLupheng, Chief of Tonglhang)
7 Vumnul (VumngulKipgen, Chief of Tujang)
8 Haokwapao (HolkhopaoKipgen, Chief of Molvailup)
9 Notzang (NohjangKipgen Chief of Saisem)
10 Ngulkolun (Ngulkholun)\textsuperscript{119}

Naga Movement

After a decade of Anglo-Kuki war a Naga movement led by Jadonang emerged which resisted the British in the North Eastern hills of Manipur. Naga movement by Jadonang was later followed by Rani Gaidinliu. These two movements are the famous Naga movements in

\textsuperscript{119} ibid, p. 22.
Manipur. Jadonang a Zelianrong Naga and son of Jhiudai and Tabolliu was born in 1905 at a place called Kambiron in Manipur South. Although the movement initiated by Jadonang was short live, it draws the attention of large section of Nagas population.

Local visionaries foretold many years before the birth of Jadonang that a Messiah (expected deliverer) will be born in the hills for the Nagas to established Naga Kingdom. His mother on the birth of Jadonang believed that her son had communion with the spirit of God through which he see and know the future which made her believed also that her son would become a great spiritual leader in the future. In fact, Jadonang have predicted the future events of miseries, epidemic, famine, etc in the village. In the beginning people did not believed and denied offering of a Mithun which he asked to the villagers. Two years later, famines appeared in the village. Then, the villagers started the prophecy foretold by him the result was that they subsequently offered a sacrifice by offering a mithun to the Supreme God. In the following years the villager received good harvest of all crops. With this the people regarded Jadonang as their Priest. This also made the villager to start consulting him in all spiritual and social affairs. 120

His objective which he promised to his people was ‘Naga Heaven’ on earth where there would be no want; it is a land of plenty. 121 To achieve its goal Jadonang sent his followers to different villages to enlist recruits, impart them military training, engaged them in armed struggle against the enemy and to recognize him as Messiah King who would overthrow the British rule in Manipur.

120. Kamei, Gangumei Zadonang A Mystic Naga Rebel, Imphal, 2009,p.77
121. Ibid.
Objectives of the Zelianrong Movement:

a) Resuscitating the traditional Zelianrong religion in the face of advancing threat from Christianity

b) The integration of three tribes of Zemeis, Liangmeis and Rongmeis by putting an end to inter-tribal ill feeling.

c) To make war on the British government who encroached their land.\textsuperscript{122}

In Manipur Christianity had come to the hill which was challenges to the tribal traditional religion, old value and ideal of the Zelianrong Naga people. Thus, Jadonang took the initiative to restore the old system of the tribal people from the threat pose by the British. Thus, an anti – British feeling had been taking roots since the year 1905. People joining Jadonang were known as Khampaise. To drive away the British from the region and to stop them from spreading Christianity was one of his objectives besides others.

But his aim was first to bring social unity among the Zelianrong tribe who were found mainly in Tamenglong district of Manipur. After consulting his trusted followers Jadonang made a secret plan for a revolt against the British.\textsuperscript{123} He purchased arm, gave training to the youth and gave slogan \textit{“Makammeirui Gwang Tupuni”} which the meaning of \textit{Makamei} is his people, who will become the kings.\textsuperscript{124}

\textbf{Causes, Activities and Nature of Zelianrong Movement}

\textsuperscript{122} Nayar, Kusumlata \textit{Rani Gaidinliu}, New Delhi: Prabhat Prakashan, 2002, p.75
\textsuperscript{123} Dena, Lal\textit{Op. Cit.}, p.135
\textsuperscript{124} \textit{Ibid.}
Jadonang movement was resentful of the burden such as imposition of house tax of Rs. 3 per year by the British, role of lambus as intermediary persons preceding local tribal chiefs and encroachment of lands. He call ‘Makan Pagelle’ will be the rulers.\textsuperscript{125} Jadonang fought to save the Nagas land from the rule and exploitation of the British Raj. The people of Tamenglong were facing an oppressive rule of the British that imposed hill house tax in the later part of the nineteen century. Force labour was imposed to the people of the area. Pothang Bekari and Pothang Senkhai were detested tooth and nail by Jadonang and his followers.

According to Pothang Bekari whenever official of the state went on tour in the hills the villagers in the areas were to carry their goods at free of cost. In case of refusal to carry they were punished severely mostly by whipping. People were unable to pay the house tax due to scarcity of money and the productivity of jhum cultivation was uncertain. The people, many a time, were in famine due to crops failure. Under the system of Pothang Senkhai the villagers were to subscribed money to feed the touring officials and others government employee. The system however was abolisher earlier in the valley areas of Manipur in 1913 through protest agitation.\textsuperscript{126} Gangumei wrote:

"The people of Tamenglong did not tamely accept the British rule. After the Anglo-Manipur war of 1891, they refused to pay the house taxes for four years. During the previous regime, they were free from administrative control of Manipur and never paid any taxes"\textsuperscript{127}

\textsuperscript{125} Kamei, Gangumei \textit{Op. Cit}, p.106.
\textsuperscript{126} \textit{Ibid}, Pp. 46-47.
\textsuperscript{127} \textit{Ibid}, p.47.
The people of Zelianrong also consider British as one sided in dealing with the Kukis and Zelianrong. After the suppression of Kuki rebellion, the British did not punish the Kukis. Such policy as regarded by the Zelianrong as appeasement policy toward Kukis and complete neglect of the Zelianrong people.\footnote{128}

In the early 1894 F.L Crawford, the Assistant Political Agent of Manipur had used force to realize taxes from Tamenglong hills. His good work was recorded that in one of his special duty the north west Zelianrong areas; not less than 7000 was realized by him from village which have never paid taxes nor furnished as coolie since 1891.\footnote{129}

\textbf{Rani Gaidinliu}

After the death of Jadonang his mission was carried forward by Rani Gaidinliu, the daughter of the eight children of Lotthomang and Kalotlenliu, who was born on 26 January 1915 at Nungkhao village. When she grew up, the British clergymen, preachers and linguistics experts had made substantial inroads in entire north eastern region.

She raised a rebellion in 1931 against the British government from Manipur. She was associated with Jadonang in the movement to drive away the British from the hill areas of Manipur. After the execution of Jadonang she took up the leadership of the movement. Her movement concentrated in an area of trans border basin. Her political program was similar to Jadonang that, one day a Naga King would arise, drive away the British and rule over 'all who eat from the wooden platter' which mean all the Naga tribes.

\footnote{128. \textit{Ibid}, p.48} \footnote{129. \textit{Manipur Administrative Report, 1893-94}.}
Under her leadership the movement by Jadonang have been continued once again which spread far and wide. This time the Naga movements have become more militant. Rani Gaidinliudream was to materializethe objectives of Jadonang, her master. She told the people that the British would soon be driven out by Gandhi and this makes her began praise him. She began to encourage the people to join the Indian national movement. Her movement became popular and so the government takes steps to take up a strong repressive measure against it. The government was concern about her activities. Mr. Mills the Deputy Commissioner of Naga Hills was of the opinion that the danger of the movement was the spirit of the defiance now abroad. So, the capture of Gaidinliu would not be a solution as she would be succeeded by more mediators. But the government has set their first objective to capture her. Once she was in their hand they could apply anything to suppress the movement. The first thing the British did in this regard was that they gave serous punishment to the villagers who were found to encourage the cult know as 'Heraka Cult' that Gaidinliu have adopted after the death of Jadonang. People who have know where about of her were also severely punished. The operation was entrusted with the Deputy Commissioner of Naga Hill. A reward was declared in 1932 for the apprehension or information about Gaidinliu to Rs 200/- and a gun. Later the reward was raised to Rs. 500/- and further declared that any village who could give information leading to her capture would be granted 10

132. Assam Secretariat Political (A) June No. 59-15. (Quoted in Reid, Robert History of the Frontier Areas bordering Assam, N.p, p.170)
years full remission of house tax.\textsuperscript{134} But the people were in support of her thus the government plan to arrest her failed. In 1932 a rebel party attacked a detachment of Assam Rifle at Hangrun which in return the British forces burned down 4 Naga villages.\textsuperscript{135} By this time Gaidinliu had collected about four thousand people as for the movement who were ready to attack the government. Upon receiving the information Mill immediately sent Captain N. Macdonald, Commandant of Assam Rifles with a big column to Pulomi village where Gaidinliu was staying. Macdonald attack on the rebel was successful that the rebel party surrendered to the British forces on 17\textsuperscript{th} October 1932. There Gaidinliu was arrested and sent for trial in Imphal.\textsuperscript{136} She was accused on the ground of abetment of murder and the court of political Agent sentenced her transportation for life. After her arrest her followers were unable to carry on the movement. Later the movement was again activated in an institutionalized way by Kabui Samity (1934), the Kabui Association (1946) and by Zelianrong Council (1947).\textsuperscript{137}

\textbf{Conclusion}

The study above indicated that tribal people of Manipur live in the hill areas for centuries without outside interference. The Kuki chiefs (the community in case of Naga) rule their villages where life was self sufficient. They were happy and contended with their traditional life.

The coming of British in the early 19\textsuperscript{th} century and their subsequent authority over the hill areas of the state however, leads to direct or indirect

\textsuperscript{134} Ibid, p.5.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid, p.5
\textsuperscript{136} Administrative Report of Manipur 1932-33, p.3.
control over of the indigenous tribal people. This threatens them their authority, status and ownership of the hill areas. The Kuki chiefs were thus, not ready to surrender their rights. They therefore, revolted against the British in 1917's to restore their land ownership right and freedom. Their war effort was to opposed the alien rulers and overthrow them from their rule. In this perspective the Kukis can be recognized as one of the leading tribe in India to join the national movement.

Nagas another tribe in Manipur headed by Jadonang and Rani Gaidinliu launched strong movements to overthrow the British. Although the movement was similar to Kukis as far as both opposed the British rule in their land, Naga movement however, were concentrated more on religious reformation when the British started converting tribal people to Christianity. But, the ends objective of the movement was defense of the hill areas of Manipur.