

# Rituals and protests of the Meitei Community in Manipur, India

Debanjali Biswas  
King's College London

Map of Northeastern states, India ; District Map of Manipur (l - r)



*Meira Paibi* (torch-bearers) protest against police atrocities and for implementation of Inner Line Permit system to protect the land-property rights of Meiet community

Imphal, August 2015



Meitei women protest against police atrocities and for the implementation of Inner Line Permit system to protect the land-property rights of Meiet community

Imphal, August 2015



Meitei women protest against army brutalities, in this case, killing a 'suspected' insurgent Manorama and to revoke Armed Forces Special Powers Act from 1958. Imphal, 2004 (image courtesy: The Sangai Express)



The Meitei ritual of *Lai Haraoba*, essentially an annual harvest/fertility ritual to please the ancestral deities and protect the land and its people.

Thoubal, May 2015



Signs of celebration, signs of propitiation  
*satra* or prayer flags

Moirang, May 2015



## Selected References:

- Baruah, Sanjib. (2007). *Postfrontier Blues: Toward a new policy framework for Northeast India*. <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/fileadmin/stored/pdfs/PS033.pdf> Accessed on September 6, 2014
- Bharucha, Rustom. (1991). Politics of Indigenous Theatre: Kanhailal in Manipur. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 26(11/12): 747-754
- Brara, N. Vijaylakshmi (1998). *Politics, Society and Cosmology in India's North East*. Delhi: Oxford University Press
- Chaki-Sircar, Majusri. (1984). *Feminism in a Traditional Society*. Calcutta: Shakti Books.
- Chatterjee, Partha (2004). *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics in Most of the World*. New York: Columbia University Press
- Mahajan, Gurpreet (2003). *The Public and the Private: Issues of Democratic Citizenship*. New Delhi: Sage
- Parratt, John. (2005). *Wounded Land: Politics and Identity in Modern Manipur*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications
- Parratt, Saroj N.A & John Parratt. (1997). *The Pleasing of the Gods: Meitei Lai Haraoba*. New Delhi: Vikas Publications.
- Premchand, Nongthombam. (2005). *Rituals and Performances: Studies in Traditional Theatres of Manipur*. Imphal: Cultural Resource Centre.
- Tambiah, Stanley J. (1996). *Leveling Crowds: Ethnonationalist Conflicts and Collective violence in South Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press