

Hi to All Supporters of James Connection and the children of Angels' Place,

There is much news to report and much we do not know about the violence that has gripped the state of Manipur since last Wednesday. First, be assured that the children of Angels' Place are safe. We have a report from a staff member on site that the children are confined to the campus and a 24 hour guard has been placed at the locked entrance of the campus. No violence has occurred there despite the fact that it is not far away in downtown Churachandpur.

The same cannot be said for our partners who live in Imphal. R. Sanga, of whom many of you have heard, lives there. He supervises a compound that includes a church, the Imphal School of Preaching and residences for faculty, family and students. On Wednesday last Sanga became aware of the rising danger and evacuated himself and 40 others to the army post that is next the main airport. They escaped just in time, for rioters came and looted the buildings and set fire to Sanga's car and all else that remained. Sanga's entourage has flown to Calcutta where they spent the night in the airport. Then they flew to Aizawl in the state of Mizoram where Sanga has family that can help them. They are safe now too.

The rioting has now been reported on CNN and many newspapers. Many churches have been burned. As many as 50 people have been killed. An estimated 23,000 have been made refugees. Imphal and Churachandpur are littered with burned debris and houses and buildings as well as churches have been sacked and burned. The violence is being perpetrated by the ethnic group known as Meiteis. They live in the plain areas and are the majority ethnic group of the state. They are virtually all Hindus. The victims of the violence are tribal people who mostly

live in the hills. They are various religions but are 25 % Christian. These two groups have lived in quiet opposition to each other for decades ever since Great Britain gave India independence. The friction has now led to bloodshed because the Meiteis want to encroach on the tribal lands.

We will keep you informed as we receive more information. I will try to keep the report to only eye witness reports and will not try to interpret the propaganda that is being spread.

Please pray for the Christians of Manipur and for the children of Angels' Place.

In Him,
Jan Swensen
Executive Director of James Connection