



Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF)

Conglomerate of Recognised Tribes in Lamka, Outer Manipur

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Silencing the Voice of the Tribals: ITLF Media Cell Twitter Account Blocked in India

[Lamka, North East India] - The Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum (ITLF), the forefront organization representing the issues of the Manipur Hill tribes, particularly the Kuki-Zo tribes, has been subjected to a shocking act of censorship. The ITLF Media Cell Twitter account, a crucial platform for raising awareness and advocating for the rights of marginalized and persecuted Kuki-Zo tribal communities, has been blocked in India.

Over the past year, and especially since May 3, 2023, the ITLF has been tirelessly working towards spearheading the challenges and atrocities faced by the Kuki-Zo tribal communities in Manipur from the dominant community and the State Government. Through dialogue and engagement with the central and state governments, including the esteemed Union Home Minister, Mr. Amit Shah, the ITLF has been at the forefront of addressing the concerns of the Kuki-Zo tribes.

However, the recent blocking of the ITLF Media Cell Twitter account is yet another attempt to stifle the already marginalized Kuki-Zo tribal voice. This act comes as an addition to the already crippling 40+ days of internet shutdown in the Manipur Hills districts (minimal restriction in the valley districts), severely limiting and hampering the ability of the Kuki-Zo tribals to report on-ground daily incidents of attacks perpetrated by state-sponsored Meitei separatists, rampaging Meitei mobs including Meira Paibis, and radicalized groups such as Arambai Tenggol and Meetei Leepun.

By obstructing the ITLF Media Cell's reach and dissemination of vital information, our limited efforts to shed light on the ongoing ethnic cleansing committed against us have been choked. This unjust censorship not only suppresses our right to freedom of expression enshrined under the United Nations treaty of 1948 on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 19 of the Indian Constitution but also undermines the democratic values that uphold the principles of equality and justice for all.

The ITLF strongly condemns this act of silencing and calls upon the concerned authorities to immediately restore access to the ITLF Media Cell Twitter account in India. The ITLF also urges the international community, human rights organizations, and media outlets to take notice of this grave violation and lend their support in amplifying the voices of the oppressed Kuki-Zo tribal communities of India.

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