



Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF)
Conglomerate of Recognised Tribes in Lamka, Outer Manipur

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Thursday, 31st August 2023

CONDEMNATION

For the third consecutive day today, armed Meitei radicals attacked tribal positions in areas bordering Lamka (Churachandpur) and Bishnupur districts, disregarding repeated calls by Union Home Minister Amit Shah to maintain peace.

The attacks today, which started around 6:00 am, happened simultaneously at six locations - Chingphei, Lonphai, Langchingmanbi, Khouabung, Khoirengtak, and Kangathei. One Kuki-Zo tribal, Paokam Kipgen, died in the attacks while two others were injured. Firing is still continuing.

Earlier in the day, two tribals who were injured in a bomb attack the previous day died of their wounds. One of the dead, LS Mangboi Lhungdim (50), composed the song "I Gam Hilou Ham" (Is this not our land?) after the ethnic violence broke out in Manipur on May 3, and it became a rallying cry for tribal unity. The other casualty was Richard Hemkholun (31), a village volunteer.

Meitei militants have lately been pounding tribal areas with mortar shells stolen from police stations and armouries, and this is leading to high tribal casualties. The Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) once again urges the government and security forces to prioritise the retrieval of looted weapons from the Meitei community.

These unending attacks are clearly a ploy to derail political talks between tribal SoO groups and the central government. The latest round of talks was held today and will continue tomorrow.

ITLF condemns the dastardly attacks and appeals to the security forces to ensure the safety of tribals who are guarding their villages in the foothills.

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