



Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF)

Conglomerate of Recognised Tribes in Lamka, Outer Manipur

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PRESS CONDEMNATION

Showing no empathy and respect for innocent tribals who were mercilessly lynched in Manipur's capital Imphal, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told India's highest court on Monday (Aug 1) that most of the bodies lying unclaimed are of "infiltrators."

It is now common knowledge that all Kuki-Zo tribals were attacked by bloodthirsty Meitei mobs when violence broke out on May 3. Officers, retirees, businessmen, labourers, students, women, and children – none were spared.

Whole localities were burned down while women were raped and murdered. A cursory glance at news reports by the national and international media reveals the devastation wreaked on Kuki-Zo tribal settlements in the Imphal valley.

For the second-highest law officer in the country to make such unwarranted comments in the Supreme Court shows his prejudice and reveals that his office is openly partial in its handling of the ethnic conflict.

Is Mr. Mehta suggesting that "infiltrators" were roaming freely in Imphal until May 3, 2023? Were they plucked out from the general population with precision by rampaging mobs, while all tribal Indian citizens were left untouched? Were state agencies helping the mobs identify the "infiltrators"?

Mr. Mehta, representing the center and the Manipur government, is clearly attempting to sway the opinion of the Supreme Court and the citizens of India by making unwarranted assumptions about the citizenship of innocent Indian citizens who were brutally killed because of their ethnicity.

The Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) vehemently condemns the solicitor general for his comments on Kuki-Zo tribals, who are being vilified even after death to suit the narrative of the majority Meitei community..

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