



Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF)

Conglomerate of Recognised Tribes in Lamka, Outer Manipur

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PRESS RELEASE

As India prepares to host the annual G20 summit in the capital, Meitei radicals have decided to steal the national headlines by renewing their attack on Kuki-Zo tribals in Manipur.

After four months of sectarian violence, the majority community has not stopped its ethnic cleansing campaign and refused to heed the appeal of the central government to stop the attacks so that a path to peace can be chalked out.

In the latest assault on Friday, Meitei gunmen dressed in police commando uniforms attacked Pallel, a Kuki-Zo village in Tengnoupal district, leading to the deaths of at least one jawan and a village volunteer. As we've seen in the past, Meitei women (Meira Paibis) blocked security reinforcements from reaching the area, showing again that they are at the vanguard of the violence.

The latest attack comes 10 days after Col (retired) Nectar Sanjenbam was appointed to lead the commando battalion of the Manipur police, and one wonders if this is just a precursor for things to come.

On Wednesday, a 10,000-strong Meitei mob led by the Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI) disturbed the peace at the buffer zone in Bishnupur, which separates Meitei and tribal areas, by trying to remove an army barricade.

Hosting the G20 summit is a matter of national prestige, and the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) does not want to embarrass the government in front of leaders of the world's major economies with news of ethnic killings in its backward during the event. We want political talks to progress and have been trying to maintain peace ever since Home Minister Amit Shah visited the state and appealed for an end to the violence.

However, it is clear that sections of the Meitei community do not want peace and are intent on grabbing attention by fueling the flames of hatred.

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