



Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF)

Conglomerate of Recognised Tribes in Lamka, Outer Manipur

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PRESS RELEASE

Apropos the news article on Sept 25 with the headline "Dispose unclaimed bodies respectfully if no kin come: SC panel on Manipur", the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) reiterates that it has been asking the central government for the past five months to transport dead bodies belonging to the Kuki-Zo community to tribal areas so that they can be given a proper funeral.

It is common knowledge that the state has been physically separated along ethnic lines and it is impossible for families to collect the remains of their loved ones on the other side of the divide. Physically coming forward to identify dead bodies is also not possible.

Meanwhile, ITLF has been painstakingly tracing and identifying tribals who were killed by Meitei mobs in the Imphal valley and whose bodies are lying in morgues in the state's capital. The data has been openly shared with government and security officials. And in every talk with the central government, the need to bring back dead bodies has been one of the key points of discussion.

It is, therefore, the responsibility of the government to transport the bodies to their respective communities. We will give them the respectful burial that they deserve.

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