



Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF)

Conglomerate of Recognised Tribes in Lamka, Outer Manipur

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PRESS RELEASE

In a historic move on November 29, 2023, the United National Liberation Front (UNLF) – a previously banned outfit – signed a Tripartite Peace Agreement with the Government of India and the State of Manipur. This momentous development, long envisioned by Chief Minister N Biren Singh, has, however, sparked concerns regarding the safety and well-being of the Kuki-Zo people.

It has come to light that Chief Minister N Biren Singh's alleged connections with Meiteis' underground outfits, including the UNLF, are no longer a secret. Disturbing reports suggest that the state government has facilitated the safe passage of UNLF cadres and other Meiteis' underground groups from Myanmar to Manipur. Shockingly, these militants are allegedly involved in activities targeting the Kuki-Zo people.

The Peace Agreement between the UNLF (Pambei) and the Central and State governments introduces a new threat to the Kuki-Zo community. Media reports and social media sources indicate that the government is considering establishing designated camps for the UNLF (Pambei) in various locations within the Kuki-Zo hills, such as Kakching Khunou, Ingourok, Jiribam, Kwatha, and Moreh.

The Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) condemns this move, seeing it as part of a larger agenda by the Meitei government to endanger the existence of the Kuki-Zo people. The selection of Kuki-Zo Hills for the designated camps is perceived as a calculated effort to fulfill what appears to be an ongoing agenda to eliminate the Kuki-Zo community.

The ITLF urgently appeals to the Central Government to act decisively to safeguard the lives of the Kuki-Zo people. Recent attempts to deploy state forces in Kwatha, Tengnoupal district, are viewed with suspicion, possibly indicating preparations for the arrival of UNLF (Pambei) cadres, thereby putting the Kuki-Zo people at significant risk.

Chief Minister N Biren Singh's selective support for the Meiteis Peace Talk, coupled with the withdrawal from the Tripartite talks with the KNO/UPF, raises questions about his commitment to peace in Manipur. The ITLF urges the Central Government to recognize the gravity of the situation and the already deeply divided separation by considering establishing a Separate Administration for the Kuki-Zo people and providing them with a secure administration to live without fear of annihilation by the Meiteis.

Ginza Vualzong,

Media & Publicity,

Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF)

Website: <https://www.itlfmediacell.com/>

