



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

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PRESS RELEASE

The bodies of 87 martyrs from the Kuki-Zo community were laid to rest in a mass burial ceremony today in Lamka district, more than seven months after being killed in Manipur's ethnic violence.

The burial took place around 2:30 pm at Sehken village near Khuga Dam. Earlier in the day, a farewell ceremony for the departed, attended by tens of thousands of people, was held at Peace Ground in Tuibuong area.

Five days ago, the funeral of 19 other Kuki-Zo victims took place in Kangpokpi district.

The youngest tribal victim in the ongoing conflict is one-month-old Isaac, while the oldest is 87-year-old Veinem Chongloi. One hundred and sixty tribals have died during the violence, including 13 whose bodies have not yet been recovered.

At the burial site in Sehken, volunteers from various philanthropic organizations prepared 87 graves on the morning of the ceremony, using pickaxes to dig into the rocky ground, preferring hands over machines to show their respect for the martyrs.

With crosses laid on top of the coffins, a traditional gun salute was held by volunteers, while Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) Women Wing members placed white shawls as a show of respect.

While most bodies were laid to rest with Christian rituals, a Messianic ritual was performed on 3 victims, and a Jewish ritual was performed on one victim who followed Judaism.

The sacrifices of our martyrs are a testament to the boundless love and unwavering devotion they held for our land, and shall forever echo in the annals of history. May their souls find eternal peace, knowing that their sacrifices were not in vain, and may their legacy endure as a source of strength, unity, and hope for generations to come.

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