



Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF)

Conglomerate of Recognised Tribes in Lamka, Outer Manipur

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PRESS RELEASE

Violence continues to escalate in Moreh because of the central government's continued refusal to remove Meitei police commandos from Kuki-Zo areas, thereby helping the communal Meitei government in its attempt to drive out tribals from the key border town.

Yesterday, Meitei commandos led by Senior SP Nectar Sanjenbam entered Moreh's Canaan and Phaicham localities in a Casspir bullet-proof vehicle and burnt down 11 homes, three schools, and a church in an act of wanton destruction. Earlier in the day, a 55-year-old woman who was part of a group protesting against the entry of Meitei forces into Moreh was run over by a Casspir vehicle.

It is also well-known that cadres from militant groups like Arambai Tenggol and Meitei Leepun are embedded with the police force, unleashing terror on civilians in Moreh.

The Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) condemns the despicable actions of Meitei commandos and militant Meitei groups and demands their immediate removal from Moreh. The excuse that the centre cannot prevent state forces from entering Moreh rings hollow as a single phone call from the home minister would be enough for the state's chief minister to withdraw his forces.

As we have repeatedly said in the past, if the government really wants peace in the trading town, Meitei forces should be replaced with neutral central security forces, who, by the way, are already deployed in the region. For now, Kuki-Zo volunteers have no option but to defend their homes and their lives.

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