



## Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF)

Conglomerate of Recognised Tribes in Lamka, Outer Manipur

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### PRESS CONDEMNATION

The Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) holds the new SP of Lamka, Shivanand Surve, entirely responsible for tonight's incident in the district, where one person was shot dead by security forces and at least 25 others were injured after civilians came out in the streets to protest the unjust treatment of a tribal official.

In the past few months, numerous video clips and photos have been circulating on social media showing Meitei police personnel openly fraternizing with armed militants, and in some cases shooting at tribal villages with automatic weapons. But no action has been taken against them.

On the other hand, a Kuki-Zo tribal policeman has been immediately suspended after one screengrab went viral showing him sitting with village volunteers guarding their lands.

As a high-ranking police official, the SP is fully aware of the nature of the conflict in Manipur and the sensitivities involved on the ground. But that did not stop him from acting in a manner that would lead to tension and violence. Mr. Surve was transferred to Lamka by the communal chief minister to create problems in the hill areas, and he did not waste any time carrying out his assignment.

On Tuesday, police personnel stationed at the 5th IRB in Imphal allowed the looting of 200 weapons and 20,000 ammunition without any resistance. No one was hauled up for the incident. There are numerous personal accounts of Meitei police personnel leading mobs in attacking tribal villages. No action has been taken against them. Commandos shot at civilians and burned houses and schools in Moreh. No action has been taken against them.

If the SP cannot act with fairness, we will not allow him to remain in any tribal area. He should immediately revoke the suspension of the policeman and leave the district within 24 hours. Otherwise, Mr. Surve will bear sole responsibility for any future incident.

We are also announcing a shutdown tomorrow to protest the killing of a civilian by security forces.

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