



Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF)

Conglomerate of Recognised Tribes in Lamka, Outer Manipur

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PRESS RELEASE

Union Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram is misinformed for thinking that the ethnic conflict in Manipur is a simple “law and order situation,” a statement he made in an interview with a newspaper on Wednesday.

The conflict was a law-and-order issue for the first 24 hours, during which an impartial government could have stamped out the violence. But it is well documented that state police forces from the majority Meitei community made no effort to stop the attacks on minority Kuki-Zo tribals but actively participated in the violence.

It is also well known that the worst and most prolonged ethnic conflict after India's partition happened because of the actions of state Chief Minister N. Biren Singh and his patronage of militant Meitei organizations like Arambai Tenggol and Meitei Leepun, who orchestrated the systematic targeting of tribals.

After more than a year of hostilities, the deaths of more than 200 people, and the displacement of more than 60,000, it should be clear to everyone that the conflict is not a simple law and order issue.

Sections of the Meitei community and militant groups like Arambai Tenggol have openly said they will not stop their attacks until they kill all Kuki-Zo tribals or drive them all out of the state. They have raped, tortured, killed, and desecrated the dead bodies of tribals and openly recorded their acts on video without facing any repercussions. The state and central government refuse to act. If this is not ethnic cleansing, then what is?

The state machinery, controlled by the Meiteis, supports one community, and all essential and non-essential items for tribal areas like Lamka (Churachandpur) have been blocked for more than a year.

We request that the Union Tribal Affairs minister study the matter more deeply and help the tribals in their hour of need.

Issued by —

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