

## LATEST NEWS

### **Kuki-Zo Council Apologises for Killing of Six Naga Hostages, Seeks Impartial Probe**

*In a rare public expression of remorse, the apex Kuki-Zo body admits the killings were a “grave mistake”, while calling for equal justice for all victims of the escalating Naga-Kuki violence in Manipur.*

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Kuki-Zo Council Apologises for Killing of Six Naga Hostages, Seeks Impartial Probe

In a significant development amid tensions between Naga and Kuki-Zo communities in Manipur, the Kuki-Zo Council (KZC) on Thursday publicly apologised for the killing of six Naga civilians whose bodies were recovered earlier this month after nearly a month in captivity.

Addressing the media in Churachandpur, KZC Chairman Henlianthang Thanglet described the killings as a "grave mistake" committed in an emotional state and expressed regret on behalf of the Kuki-Zo community. He said the incident was tragic, unacceptable and had not been authorised by any Kuki-Zo political or community leadership. The Council demanded a fair, transparent and impartial investigation to identify and prosecute those responsible.

The apology comes weeks after the recovery of the bodies of six Naga hostages from a forested area in Kangpokpi district. The victims were among civilians abducted during violence that erupted on May 13 following the killing of three church leaders and a Naga villager in the district.

The six hostages were found dead shortly after 14 Kuki civilians, held by Naga groups for nearly a month, were released following negotiations involving community organisations and authorities. Their release had raised hopes that the missing Naga captives would also return safely.

The killings drew widespread condemnation from political leaders, civil society organisations and Naga groups across the Northeast, which demanded strict action against those responsible.

The Manipur government has already handed over the investigation into the abduction and killing of the six Naga civilians to the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

While apologising for the killings, the KZC also alleged that the deaths of 14 Kuki-Zo civilians, including three pastors, since March this year had not received the same level of investigative attention. The Council claimed that attacks on Kuki-Zo villages and civilians had deepened mistrust between communities and called for equal treatment of all victims irrespective of ethnicity.

The Council urged both the Centre and the Manipur government to ensure impartial investigations into all incidents linked to the ongoing violence, warning that selective justice could further complicate efforts toward reconciliation in the conflict-hit state.

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