

## Manipur parties ask Centre to spell out Naga talks agenda

Imphal, April 8 (Agencies): Various political parties are advocating safeguarding Manipur's territorial integrity even as peace talks between NSCN (I-M) and the Centre have reached the "conclusive stage". According to Times of India report, some parties even demanded the Centre to spell out the talks agenda.

During the previous BJP-led NDA regime, Manipur had witnessed an unprecedented people's uprising in June, 2001 to denounce the extension of NSCN (I-M) ceasefire beyond Nagaland, the report stated.

JD(U) has demanded a white paper on the agenda of the ongoing Naga peace talks to ensure people are fully aware of it. "We welcome all forms of peace talks, but Manipur's territorial integrity should not be compromised. As nothing has been spelt out on the talks since its beginning in 1997, there must be some hidden agenda in it," said Manipur unit JD (U) president Moirangthem Tombi.

"The BJP at the Centre should bring out a white paper on the topics of the talks through the governor of Manipur. The Centre should also declare that Manipur's territorial integrity has not been compromised," Tombi added.

Echoing similar sentiments, CPI has also sought the parameters of the NSCN (I-M) talks. CPI's Manipur council secretary and former minister M Nara Singh said the party stands for the protection of Manipur's integrity. He said the party is demanding the status reports of the talks.

BJP's Manipur unit leader and renowned historian Gangmumei Kamei, while stating that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a peace lover, said the talks would not compromise the state's integrity and geographical boundary and the PM is fully committed to it.

Gangmumei, who is also the national executive member of BJP ST Morcha, said igniting public unrest in Manipur for restoring peace in neighboring Nagaland would not be acceptable.

NPN Adds: It may be mentioned that the Centre's interlocutor for Naga talks and chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), R.N. Ravi during his recent visit to Manipur ruled out any time frame for a result-oriented end to the decades old talks with the NSCN (I-M).

Ravi, who was in Manipur along with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) Core Group to monitor the security scenario along the Indo-Myanmar border areas, said: "The government has not given any timeline to end the talks. I have no knowledge of it but we are trying to come to a logical conclusion as early as possible."

According to highly placed sources in the MHA, Naga political talks at the Centre had taken off well now and that there could be some positive results soon.

Centre is trying its best to come up with a well negotiated settlement acceptable to all, sources said. The recent visits of top officials from the MHA to Nagaland and Manipur clearly indicate that things at the "higher level is moving ahead," sources said.

As reported, Prime Minister Modi, keeping in view of the 'Act East Policy' to help expand trade with South Asia, has instructed Ravi to come out with a proposed settlement that could be a final solution to the Naga issue. Though Ravi has been asked to try and clinch a solution preferably within a year to 18 months, the latter had ruled out any time-frame.

BJP-led NDA government at the Centre had categorically assured NSCN (I-M) leadership in December, 2014 that the political dialogue would be brought to a logical conclusion within the next 18 months.