

India: Hostages must be released

Amnesty International today called for the immediate release of Paul Leo, a human rights activist and Naga leader, and all other hostages who are reportedly being held by armed political groups in Manipur in violation of international humanitarian law.

Paul Leo was reportedly taken hostage by an armed Kuki group while on his way to Imphal (capital of Manipur) on 17 April. The incident happened only a few days after the massacre of at least ten people of Kuki tribal origin in an area north of Imphal on 12 April, reportedly carried out by an armed Naga group. Up to four others are believed to be detained by the group.

Intermittent violence between Kuki and Naga tribes who inhabit areas of the north-eastern state of Manipur has claimed hundreds of lives in recent years.

Hostage-taking and the killing of civilians are violations of international humanitarian law and all armed groups operating in the region must cease these activities immediately, Amnesty International said.

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