

PRESS RELEASE

July 09, 2016

Shri Randeep Singh Surjewala, Media Incharge, AICC; Shri C.P. Joshi, General Secretary, AICC, Incharge North-East; Shri Nabam Tuki, former Chief Minister; Shri Vincent H. Pala, former Union Minister have issued the following statement to the press today:-

“India’s sovereignty and integrity has been an article of faith for Indian National Congress. We have steadfastly fought against and sacrificed for upholding India’s territorial integrity and finding lasting peaceful solutions within our constitutional framework. Peace, prosperity and social harmony in the North – Eastern States have always been an indelible conviction for the Congress Party.

Indian National Congress has not only tackled insurgency/militancy/naxalism strongly but has engaged with various insurgent groups/outfits with a sense of responsibility to bring them back into the National mainstream by building a National consensus around lasting solutions from one corner of the country to another i.e. Punjab to North-East.

This innate belief in the principles of unquestionable ‘territorial integrity’ of India, ‘cooperative federalism’ and ‘National consensus’ led the Congress Party headed by late Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi to sign the ‘**Assam Peace Accord**’ on 15th August, 1985 and ‘**Mizo Peace Accord**’ on 25th June, 1986.

On the same lines, successive efforts at building lasting peace by constituting a separate State of Nagaland on 01.12.1963 and thereafter have been made. A separate note containing brief description of the peace efforts is attached as **Annexure A-1** to this press release.

On 3rd August, 2015; BJP Government headed by Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi announced signing of a Peace Accord with NSCN (IM) of Shri T. Muivah without taking into confidence the elected governments of Assam, Arunachal, Manipur and even Nagaland. It later turned out that there was no regular ‘Peace Accord’ but a ‘**Framework Agreement**’ was entered into and was kept under wraps without sharing its details either with the Union Cabinet, Parliament of India or people of India.

While Indian National Congress fully supports finding a lasting peaceful solution to the Naga problem through the process of dialogue, **it has to be compulsorily within the four corners of our constitutional framework without a whisper of compromise on India’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. No one, however mighty, has a right to do otherwise. People of India will never accept a compromise on this cardinal principle of India’s unquestionable sovereignty and integrity.**

Press interview and public statements made by NSCN (IM) General Secretary, Shri T. Muivah qua the agreement entered into with Modi government questioning India’s sovereignty and territorial integrity have shocked and stunned the collective conscience of our Nation.

Shri T. Muivah has specifically stated that:-

- (a) 'A separate flag and passport for Nagas was not just a demand but a right as the Nagas were never under Indian rule'; and
- (b) 'The understanding on shared sovereignty has been arrived because the uniqueness of Naga history is recognized. We are not giving up on the demand of sovereignty'; and
- (c) 'On the 'Framework Agreement', he stated that "time will come (when it will be shared with the public). It is a secret because until a complete settlement is done, some secrecy will have to be maintained'.

As a watchdog of India's sovereignty and a responsible opposition, Congress Party urges upon Modi government to answer the following questions to people of India in general and North-East in particular:-

1. Whether Modi government has entered into an **agreement** with NSCN (IM) '**compromising the territorial integrity**' of India?
2. Whether Modi government has promised a '**separate Flag**' for Nagas other than our proud '**Indian National Tricolor**' in an agreement with NSCN (IM)?
3. Whether Modi government has entered into an agreement for a '**separate passport**' for Nagas other than an '**Indian Passport**' in an agreement with NSCN (IM)?
4. Whether Modi government has agreed on '**shared sovereignty**' for Nagas as stated by NSCN (IM)?
5. What are the details of '**Framework Agreement**' entered into between Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi and NSCN (IM) General Secretary, Shri T. Muivah? **Will Prime Minister place the Agreement before Parliament and people of India?**
6. Whether Modi government has or will take into confidence the elected governments of Nagaland, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur before entering into an agreement for '**alteration of territories**' of these States?

Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi must answer."