Manipur Blockade Part II

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Why in news?

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The Centre has decided to hold tripartite talks with the United Naga Council (UNC) and the Manipur government to end the ongoing blockade of two national highways in Manipur.

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What is the current situation?

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- UNC called for an indefinite economic blockade in November 2016 by cutting off normal movement of trucks on National Highways
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- The blockade has disrupted normal life and led to a shortage of essential commodities in the State.
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- Two C-17 Globemaster cargo aircrafts were used to airlift six fuel tankers to Imphal to ease oil shortage in the State.
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- Manipur is going to the polls on March and due to the ongoing economic blockade, it has been kept in the most sensitive category.
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- The State Government plans to declare UNC unlawful to curb the economic blockade
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- The State government is also accused of not doing enough for peace talks to end the deadlock as the current situation would help them in the upcoming elections.
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What was centre’s response?

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- The Union government had signed a framework agreement in 2015 with UNC to resolve the decades-old Naga issue.
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- Therefore it is accused of turning a blind eye to the activities of the UNC.
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- Around 17,500 Central forces are deployed in Manipur currently.
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- The Centre has even kept choppers and aircraft on standby, in case forces need to be airlifted.
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- But no law permits the Centre to interfere in the matter, as law and order is a State subject.
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- The Home Ministry had earlier written a letter to the Election Commission (EC) requesting it to defer the elections in the State in the wake of shortage of security forces.
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- The EC overruled the request and announced that polls will be held in March.
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- The centre is planning to send a notice for holding talks with the UNC and the Manipur government. The meeting has been proposed to be held in February.
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- On November 2016 similar meeting was held but no representative of the Manipur government showed up.
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Source: The Hindu

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