

## MHA expands police canteens in Manipur to ease supply chain disruptions amid ongoing ethnic conflict

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The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has directed Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) to bolster manpower and resources in police canteens across Manipur as part of a broader effort to address the disruptions in the supply of essential goods caused by the ethnic violence.

This decision follows Union Home Minister Amit Shah's announcement to increase the number of CAPF-run canteens available to the general public in the violence-torn state.

As of Tuesday, a Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) canteen has already



begun operations at Imphal airport, and more stores are set to follow.

The MHA has ordered regular stock replenishment at these canteens to ensure the uninterrupted availability of essential items, which include groceries and consumer goods.

Previously reserved for personnel from CRPF, BSF, ITBP, CISF, SSB, and allied organisations, these canteens

offer goods with a 50 per cent GST concession, subsidised through the internal budget of the respective forces.

Now, due to supply chain breakdowns in conflict-affected regions, the government has opened the canteens to the general public, allowing residents to purchase goods at reduced prices.

In total, 16 new canteens are being established, in addi-

tion to the existing 21, with half of these new outlets located in the valley and the rest in hill areas.

This initiative aims to alleviate hardships for both the Kuki and Meitei communities, who have been severely impacted by the violence that erupted in May 2023.

The ongoing conflict, stemming from the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe status, has led to over 220 fatalities and widespread displacement, severely affecting daily life and access to essentials. By expanding the canteen network, the MHA hopes to stabilise the region's access to basic goods and restore some normalcy amidst the ongoing strife.