

## Voters turn out rate reaches 80% in first phase Manipur poll

**IT News**  
**Imphal, March 4:** First phase Polling of the 11<sup>th</sup> Manipur Legislative Assembly elections ended peacefully at three this afternoon. Heavy to very heavy polling was reported in today's poll which started at seven in the morning. According to preliminary reports, over 80 per cent of the total votes of the 38 Assembly Constituencies of the state assembly has been cast today. The election was held at 38 constituencies in six district of the state viz- Imphal East, Imphal West, Bishnupur, Kangpokpi, Churachand and Pherzawl.

At around 1 pm voters turn out rate is recorded to be nearly 70 percent. Except for some minor technical problem in EVM which delayed voting at some polling station and some confrontation between workers of rival candidates, the polling held today is almost peaceful.

There were confrontations taking place between rival candidates at Porampat TV Tower area over charges of proxy voting.

According to PTI, Manipur Chief Electoral Officer Vivek



Kumar Dewangan said 69 per cent of the voters exercised their franchise in the first five hours of voting. State Nodal Officer (Elections) W Chandrakumar Singh told, "given the circumstances in the state and the nature of voting, turnout is likely to increase after 2 pm." No report of violence has been reported from anywhere in the state. The rise in voter turnout reflected a sense of responsibility among the voters, Singh said. Rights activists from Sharmila cast her vote at a polling booth of Khurai assembly constituency. The first phase of polling take place in 38 constituencies in

1,643 polling stations. Of these 529 polling station are declared sensitive. A total of 168 candidates are contesting in this phase. As per ECO Manipur total number of women candidate is 7. Among the seven lady candidate are Nemcha Kipgen of BJP in Kangpokpi Assembly Constituency, Ak Mirabai of INC in Patsoi Assembly Constituency, Yumnam Romola of MNDP of keishamthong Assembly Constituency, G Seityabati of NPP in Sagaolband Assembly Constituency, Lotongbam Tilotama of Inc in Langthabal Assembly Constituency and Thokchom Bindashkhi Devi of AITC in Bishnupur Assembly constituency.

In the run-up to the polls, the political parties focused primarily on the continuing economic blockade and also the territorial integrity of the state in their campaigns. Interestingly Congress Party which has been in power had promise to lift controversial Armed Forces Special Power Act from the entire state saying that it had already lifted the act from 7 assembly segment of greater Imphal area. Meanwhile, BJP which also assured protection of the territorial integrity of the state had assured to book all those involved in the fake encounter killing in the state. The party also assured for a corrupt free state.

## PRJA candidate Erendro Leichombam attacked

**IT News**  
**Imphal, March 4:** Erendro Leichombam, the convenor of the new political party, Peoples' Resurgence and Justice Alliances (PRJA), formed under the initiative of Anti AFSPA crusader Irom Sharmila was attacked and assaulted at Thangmeiband Sinam Leikai at around noon today.

Erendro is the only male candidate among three PRJA candidates. He is contesting from Thangmeiband Assembly constituency. The other two are Irom Sharmila who is contesting from Thoubal Assembly Constituency and MD.... who is contesting at Wabagai Assembly constituency. Report said that a group of people led by the president of Naharol Leishemba Club, Thangmeiband identified as



one Prakash Leishangthem stopped Erendro and his team while they were conducting election survey at Sinam Leikai area. The club president along with his team reportedly snatch the party flag from the vehicles and later snatch the mobile phone of Erendro.

Erendro sustained minor injury and he was evacuated at RIMS hospital. After providing first aid he was discharged. As per source from PRJA, a complaint has been lodged to the police and also to the Election Commission of India.

## Nitin Gadkari highlights developmental works, Highway construction



**IT News**  
**Imphal, March 4:** Union Minister Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari who visited the state today once more asserted that the Centre is working out on the second-generation ethanol as well as methanol, non-conventional fuel resources, which will bring down the crude import bill by Rs 1 lakh crore in the state of Manipur.

"This can be game changer for Manipur and other", Gadkari said while talking to reporter at Yairipok Public Khoirum ground. Gadkari further said this will

also create an industry worth Rs 1 lakh crore and provide employment to around 25 lakh youths, he said.

On road connectivity the Union Minister said that Manipur has been listed in special category and many connectivity are on the pipeline for upgradation and rehabilitation. He said that the Governemr of India has sanction Rs 22,000 crore for development of National High ways in Manipur. The Minister also said that after forest clearance Barak and Makru bridge will start construction as it has already been approved at the cost of 141 crore. Gadkari also said that project for restoration and reconstruction of Ukhrul, Tolo and Tadubi road in five packages where the total length is 140 Km approximately. However due to economic blockade the constriction could not be taken up as of now even though it has been sanction. Other developmental project being taken up and proposed to take up has also been announced by the Union Minister Road Transport and Highways

### EVM problem

**IT News**  
**Imphal, March 4:** Voting at 13/15 polling station located at Singjamei High School in Singjamei Assembly constituency has been delayed for 1 and half hours due to technical problem in the Electronic Voting Machine.

### KNF(P) arrested

**IT News**  
**Imphal, March 4:** A team of Imphal West Police Commando arrested a cadre of KNF(P) from Leilon Vaiphei Village in Kangpokpi district at around 12.00 noon today. According to police source the arrested cadre has been identified as Paothang Khongsai (42) s/o Paosei Khongsai of Saikul Monjang village, Kangpokpi District. One pistol with magazine and 1 round have been recovered from him. He has been handed over to Sekmai PS. Regards.

### Bomb found at candidates residence

**IT News**  
**Imphal, March 4:** A hand grenade was found today at the residence of AITC candidate Robindro for Thanga Assembly Constituency at Thanga today afternoon. The hand grenade was found by the workers of the candidate at around 2.30 pm today. Police team which rushed the spot safely retrieved the hand grenade.

## EC orders FIR against Manipur BJP office-bearers, 8 newspapers

**IT News**  
**Imphal, March 4:** The Election Commission (EC) on Friday ordered an FIR against office-bearers of the BJP's Manipur unit and certain newspapers for publishing advertisements without its approval. In a letter to the Chief Electoral Officer of Manipur, the EC has ordered that the FIRs under Section 188 of

IPC against be lodged against BJP state unit office-bearers and the newspapers which carried the advertisements on Friday in contravention of its orders and violation of RP Act. The EC had instructed all stakeholders to not publish any advertisements on 3 and 4 March without pre-screening and subsequent approval by state-level

MCMC committee. The newspapers which carried the advertisements are: Sangai Express (Manipuri and English editions), Poknapham, People's Chronicle, Naharolgi, Thoudang, Imphal Free Press, Echel Express and Huiyen Lanpao. The poll panel has also sought a compliance report by Monday.

## BJP candidate M Hemanta alleges MLA Brojen of gross involvement in corruption

**IT News**  
**Thoubal, March 4:** Vice president of BJP Manipur Pradesh, M Hemanta, who is also contesting as BJP candidate from Wangjing Tentha Assembly constituency has alleged MLA Paonam Brojen of the constituency as one of the most corrupted MLA. Talking to media persons Hemanta said that if BJP come to power Brojen will be sent to jail after proper investigation. Paonam Brojen was elected as the representative of Wangjing-Tentha Assembly Constituency in the 10th Manipur Legislative Assembly Election as MSCP candidate but later merged to INC and is contesting as INC candidate this time. The BJP Vice president alleged the MLA of

collecting huge amount of money from various persons in the constituency in the name of providing them government jobs, however, the MLA did not only provide job but also still fails to repay back the

money. He further alleged that the MLA had included the construction of Papal Bazar Shed, Tentha and Mairrenkhul da Waiting during 2010 to 2011 in his local area development fund.

## Special pilgrims train, launched, Northeast region

**ANI**  
**Guwahati, March 4:** In a bid to improve connectivity and to make northeast region a destination paradise, Indian Railway Catering And Tourism Corporation (IRTC) and the North East Frontier Railway (NFR) recently launched the "Aastha Circuit Train" a special pilgrim train for the Northeastern region here. The train would take travellers to various pilgrimage destinations in eastern India at affordable rates.

Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and Union Minister of State for Railways Rajen Gohain jointly flagged off the train from Kamakhya Railway Station. Thousands turned out to be a part of the historic day. The train started its journey from Kamakhya and headed for Puri via Kolkata and would return back after a trip of seven days and six nights. Pranav Jyoti Sharma, Chief Public Relations Officer of the Northeast Frontier Railway,

said, "The entire trip would cost Rs 6,161/- per person and would include breakfast, dinner, sleeper class accommodation and local transport. It will take them to all the destinations under this package." It indeed a great news for pilgrims, as they will use this train journey to see popular pilgrim spots such as the Gangasagar, Shri Swamy Narayan Temple, the Konark Temple, Kalighat and the Jagannath Temple etc. Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said, "This

is a great step indeed and for which I would like to thank our Prime Minister Narendra Modi. I would also like to thank our railway ministers of both state as well as the centre on behalf of our people of Assam. The initiative undertaken by the Railways for the development of Assam and the northeast as a whole is really appreciable and our people are very enthusiastic about it and are in full cooperation with it." The train would have various boarding stations, including

Kamakhya, Alipurduar, New Cooch Behar, New Jalpaiguri, Malda, New Farakka, Pakur, Rampurhat and Bolpur. De-boarding stations would be Rampurhat, Pakur, New Farakka, Malda Town, New Jalpaiguri, New CoochBehar and Alipurduar. This is for the first time that a dedicated tourist train is being originated from the North East. This train will enhance connectivity in the region and also improve ties with other parts of India.