

## Mortal remains of 38 Indians killed in Iraq being flown back home

Agency  
New Delhi, April 2,

The mortal remains of 38 of the 39 Indians, killed by the Islamic State terrorists in Iraq, are being flown back home from Baghdad. Minister of State for External Affairs, General VK Singh who is bringing back the

mortal remains, himself loaded the coffins in the special aircraft.

AIR correspondent reports that the aircraft left Baghdad at around 8 in the morning. It is expected to arrive Amritsar in the afternoon, where General Singh will oversee the process of handing over the mortal remains to their families.

Indian Ambassador to Iraq, Dr Pradeep Singh Rajpurohit said, the work to fly back the mortal remains of one more

Indian is in progress.

General Singh, had reached Baghdad yesterday.

Talking to reporters, he condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and expressed the government's stance in fighting the menace.

General Singh also met with the President of the Martyr's Foundation Najiha Al Shimmari and thanked her and the Iraq government for their co-operation in identifying

and handing over the bodies to India.

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj had recently told Parliament that 40 Indians were abducted by the terror group from Mosul in Iraq in June 2014, but one of them escaped posing as a Muslim from Bangladesh. The remaining 39 Indians were taken to Badoosh and killed. The remains were later found in a mass grave on the outskirts of Mosul.

## CBSE official KS Rana suspended in paper leak case

Agency  
New Delhi, April 2,

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has suspended its official KS Rana in connection with the exam paper leak case.

The action against the official came after he was found lax in supervising the examination centre.

In a tweet, Secretary, School Education, Anil Swarup said, following the arrest of two teachers and the head of a coaching institute by Delhi Police for their role in the leak of Class 12th Economics paper, the Board conducted the probe and took action against Rana.

Mr Swarup said, on the direction of HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar to take swift action against culprits, the Board suspended the official. He said, a formal inquiry has also been instituted.

Meanwhile, the three arrested have been sent to a two-day police custody. Briefing reporters, Joint Commissioner of Police, (Crime Branch), Alok Kumar said, they were produced before a local court in Delhi which sent them to a two-day police custody.

## Inauguration Postponed

DIPR  
Imphal, April 2,

As per a notice issued by the Secretariat, Law & Legislative Affairs Department, Government of Manipur, the inauguration of the Special Court, (ND&PS) (Fast Track Court) at Uripok, Chairap Court Complex scheduled to be held on 2nd April, 2018 at 10.00 am is postponed to 4th April, 2018 due to the sudden demise of R.K. Dorendra Singh, Former Chief Minister, Manipur.

The State Government has decided to observe 3 days State Mourning w.e.f. 31-03-2018 to 02-04-2018.

## Condolence pours over the untimely demise of Sr. Journalist Khelen Thokchom

IT News  
Imphal, April 2,

Various sections of people and organisations from across the region continue to condole the untimely demise of Senior Journalist Khelen Thokchom. Late Khelen Thokchom left for heavenly abode on April 1 morning.

Proscribed group United Liberation Front (UNLF) in a press statement condole the untimely demise of Sr. Journalist Khelen Thokchom. A statement said that Khelen Thokchom, as a journalist had highlighted the story of the oppressed people of the region across the globe. He was a journalist who had tried to change the system towards the right direction. The UNLF also paid respect terming him as a journalist who always follows the ethics of journalism. The statement said, the UNLF shares the pains and sorrow of the departed family and pray for the soul to rest in peace.

A press statement of the Press Advisory Committee of the Manipur Legislative Assembly held a condolence



meeting at the media room of the office at 10.30 am today. The condolence service was chaired by P. Ibochou Singh, Chairman of the Press Advisory Committee. The meeting deeply condoles the sudden and untimely demise of Khelen Thokchom, Special Correspondence Telegraph who is also a member of the Press Advisory Committee. A 2 minutes silence was observed as a mark of respect to the departed soul. The committee also shared the grief and sorrow of the family

and pray for the departed soul to rest in peace.

Members of the Thoubal District Journalists' Union also observed 2 minutes silence as a mark of respect for the departed soul. Late Khelen Thokchom was the founder editor of Sangai Express (both English and Manipuri Edition) and later work as a special correspondent of Telegraph Daily.

The union also shared the pains and sorrow of the family members.

IT News  
Imphal, April 2

Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) today paid fitting tribute to three former Chief Ministers of the state – Moirang Koireng Singh, Rishang Keishing and RK Joychandra and inaugurated three rooms dedicated in their names at Congress Bhavan, BT Road Imphal.

Of the three room inaugurated today – a is dedicated to M. Koireng Singh, another to Rishang

Keishing which is to be utilised as library and the third to R.K Joychandra, which is to be utilised as media room.

Before the inauguration of the three rooms, floral tribute were paid to the three former Chief Ministers by congress workers and supporters. The floral paying ceremony was led by MPCC President TN Haokip, Congress leaders Okram Ibohi and G. Gaikhangam.

Speaking on the occasion, MPCC President TN Haokip said that the three rooms

dedicated to the three former chief ministers of the state is for making good use of the young congress leader. While appealing to support the Library, Haokip appealed the youth to make good use of the Library by reading books. Recalling the importance of Social Media in today's world, Haokip appealed young Congress workers to use social media for good cause. To the veteran congress workers, Haokip appealed to learnt it from the younger generation.

## Mizoram govt signs peace pact with rebel group

Agency  
Aizawl, April 2,

Mizoram government and Manipur-based Hmar People's Convention (Democratic), HPC (D) today signed a peace pact in Aizawl.

Earlier, today morning, Additional Secretary (Home), Lalbiakzama said, all arrangements are in place for the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding at 4:30 PM. According to report HPC (D) is the only active rebel outfit in the state and the peace accord could bring lasting peace in the region. A consensus was reached on the terms of the deal last month after talks between the representatives of the state government and HPC (D) delegates.

## Nationwide protests on SC/ST ruling

Agency  
New Delhi, April 2,

Nationwide protests have been called by Dalit groups over the Supreme Court ruling on SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

In Punjab, hundreds of protesters from various Scheduled Caste (SC) organisations forced shopkeepers and other establishments in Jalandhar, Amritsar and Bathinda to shut down.

According to reports, demonstrators also entered the Jalandhar Cantt railway station, shouting slogans and burnt effigies on the tracks. Some highways and roads were also blocked. Traffic in and around the cities is also affected. The final practical examinations of Class 10 and 12 of Punjab School Education Board, which were scheduled to be held today, will now be held on April 11.

In Rajasthan, protesters have blocked trains and buses, damaged Railway properties and blocked the

highways at various places.

They have vandalized properties and put buses and private vehicles to fire at Alwar and other places. There are incidents of stone pelting and clashes between groups at Barmer, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Alwar, Jodhpur, Sikar and Bikaner. ADG (Law and Order) NRK Reddy told AIR that additional police forces have been deployed in many cities including Jaipur and Jodhpur. He also told that police was forced to Lathi Charge and use tear Gas at many places to deal with the situation.

In Delhi, the protesters gathered at Mandi House and blocked the road outside the metro station. Traffic was brought to a halt causing inconvenience to commuters. Heavy police force was deployed at Mandi House in view of the protests.

Police have also closed the traffic movement on Sansad Marg from Patel Chowk to Jantar Mantar.

## Petrol, Diesel prices hiked further. Diesel at record high, Petrol at 4-year high

Agency  
New Delhi, April 2

Petrol and diesel prices went up further on Monday as oil marketing companies raised rates amid firming global crude prices. Oil marketing companies revise petrol and diesel prices every day at 6 am according to the daily price revision process. In Delhi, petrol retail at over 4-year high level while diesel prices were at record high. The price of non-branded petrol was increased by 10-11 paise per litre in metro cities today while diesel by 11-12 paise. Petrol retail at Rs. 73.83 in Delhi, the highest since September 14, 2013, when rates had hit Rs. 76, according to Indian Oil website. In other metro cities, petrol retail at Rs. 76.54 in Kolkata, Rs. 81.69 in Mumbai and Rs. 76.59 in Chennai.

On the other hand, diesel retail at Rs. 64.69 a litre in Delhi, Rs. 67.38 in Kolkata, Rs. 68.89 in Mumbai and Rs. 68.24 in Chennai.

Besides the global crude prices and rupee-dollar exchange rate, domestic petrol and diesel prices depend on government taxes, both at the central and the state level. India imports bulk of its energy requirements. Global crude prices have risen to \$70 a barrel. An agreement between the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, Russia and others that started more than a year ago has continued to reduce supply. The deal is due to expire at the end of 2018, but Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman told Reuters that OPEC and Russia were working on an agreement to cooperate for another 10 to

20 years, though that does not specifically mean cuts will continue for that long.

The Oil Ministry had earlier this year sought a reduction in excise duty on petrol and diesel to cushion the impact rising international oil rates. Finance Minister Arun Jaitley had raised excise duty nine times between November 2014 and January 2016 to shore up finances as global oil prices fell, but then cut the tax just once in October last year by Rs. 2 a litre. Subsequent to that excise duty reduction, the Centre had asked states to also lower VAT but only a few states reduced rates.

The central government had cut excise duty by Rs. 2 per litre in October 2017, when petrol price reached Rs. 70.88 per litre in Delhi and diesel Rs. 59.14. Because of the

reduction in excise duty, diesel prices had on October 4, 2017 come down to Rs. 56.89 per litre and petrol to Rs. 68.38 per litre. However, a global rally in crude prices pushed domestic fuel prices far higher than those levels. The October 2017 excise duty cut cost the government Rs. 26,000 crore in annual revenue and about Rs. 13,000 crore during the remaining part of the current fiscal year.

State-owned oil companies - Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation - in June last year dumped the 15-year old practice of revising rates on the 1st and 16th of every month. Instead, they adopted a daily price revision system to instantly reflect changes in cost. Since then, prices are revised on a daily basis.

## Govt files review petition against Supreme Court ruling on SC/ST Act

Agency  
New Delhi, April 2,

The government today said, it has filed a comprehensive review petition in the Supreme Court over its recent ruling on the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

Talking to reporters outside Parliament, Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said, senior lawyers of the government will argue the case with full legal preparation as the ruling needs to be reconsidered. He asserted that the BJP-led NDA is committed for the welfare of Dalits and Scheduled Tribes.

The Minister said, BJP has the largest number of SC, ST and OBC MPs and MLAs and this

shows the support of these sections to the ruling party.

In its order, the apex court had recently introduced the provision of anticipatory bail in the Act while directing that there will be no automatic arrest on any complaint filed under the law.

Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan said the government is committed to the progress of Dalits.

Addressing media in New Delhi, Mr Paswan said the anger of SC/ST youth on the issue of SC/ST protection act is understandable. He, however, criticised the Congress for politicising the issue. He said he could not understand why some political parties are making an issue out of it.