

Minister's brother allegedly threatens to shoot betel leaves transporter; 2 loaded vehicles taken forcibly

IT News
Imphal, April 26,

Betel leaves transporters and suppliers today staged a protest demonstration at Thangal Keithel after two drivers of two loaded vehicles were allegedly threatened to shoot by the brother of Forest and Environment Minister Th. Shyamkumar.

Forest Minister Th. Shyamkumar announced ban on betel leaves in the state on April 13. But was suspended following a Manipur High Court order of April 19. Speaking to media persons, drivers of DI-Tata vehicles which were working under R.S. Transport Agency, identified as Waikhom Daniel Singh (42) of Wangkhei and AShyam (38) of Langjing Aochuba said that they reached Sekmai Forest beat office at around 8 pm yesterday. After getting transit pass for both the vehicles they proceeded towards Imphal.



On reaching Koirengai they submitted Xerox copies of the transit pass to the Forest Beat Office of Koirengai. As they reached the Godown located at Thangal Keithel MG Avenue, near city police station, two persons came in a Ford car, and questioned them how they brought the betel leaves to the two drivers. The driver Waikhom Daniel said that both the person who questioned them how they

brought the betel leaves identified themselves as Ravi, brother of Forest Minister Th. Shyamkumar and Ranjit, PRO of the same Minister. The driver said that they came after getting transit pass (TP) from the forest department. Still then the brother of the Minister questioned them how could they come after getting TP. The driver Daniel, then showed the TP to the persons, but the Minister's brother

questioned how could he get the TP in his name, which is not relevant. After a bit argument, the PRO then said that they can't load down the betel leaves at the godown. When argued, the PRO of the Minister allegedly told them he didn't care the TP and said that they are taking the two vehicles. When the driver told them to give them the TP, the brother of the Forest Minister took out a

gun from the front of his car, probably a license gun but a small one. He threatened to shoot him.

Daniel said that he went ahead telling them to kill him if he like.

"Many times we have been tortured, harassed and threaten. If these big people keeps showing these kinds of attitude then how drivers like us surviving on hand to mouth", Daniel said.

"We didn't not organise this protest. Showing solidarity to us the betel leaves agent and distributor came all by themselves and joint us here as they have taken our betel leaves loaded two vehicles bearing registration No. NL-05 A 6808 and NL-07 A 6950", he added.

The drivers and the agent of betel leaves demanded punishment of the two. Meanwhile, City police had reported the matter to the higher authority.

Diarrhoea epidemic in Chandel district

IT News
Chandel, April 26,

Diarrhoea patients from various part of Chandel district have flooded Chandel District Hospital since the last couple of days. The epidemic seems to be spreading in the district as more patient of Diarrhoea case are being admitted till today.

A Doctor from the District Hospital while talking to media said that almost all patient admitted so far are Diarrhoea case some with typhoid cases associated.

Diarrhoea is characterized by abnormally loose or watery stools. It is caused by bacteria, viruses, or parasites. Doctors say that the recent epidemic in Chandel district may have been rooted from the drinking water as well as the improper sanitation. While appealing the people keep water body clean, the doctor draw the attention of the government authority to the issue.

Social Activist Ts. Betol Anal, is also admitted due to Diarrhoea in the hospital. Doctors said that some Diarrhoea patient admitted have also been associated with typhoid case.

Ts. Betol Anal while talking to reporters said that since 2015 flood and landslide, people of the area could not used clean drinking water and the Chakpi River cannot be clean till today.

As the epidemic is likely to be rooted from drinking water, the social activist drew the authority of the PHED to make sure that those undergoing treatment at the hospital gets proper drinking water.

Ts. Betol further said that the Water Supply Scheme at Chandel has stopped functioning since the last 2 years and 8 months and people are buying drinking water at Rs. 130 per 500 litres. "We cannot guarantee how safe is the water we are buying", he added.

'Our real concern is to see that fair trial is conducted in Kathua case'

Agency
New Delhi, April 26,

The Supreme Court today said, its real concern is to see that a fair trial was conducted in the Kathua gangrape and murder case. A bench, headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra, said if it finds the slightest possibility of lack of fair trial, it will transfer the case out of Kathua.

The bench said, the trial should be fair not only for the accused but also for the victim's family and the protection to them and their lawyers should be ensured. It also considered the issue of alleged obstruction by lawyers in administration of justice in the case and said, if the lawyers are at fault, they would be dealt in accordance with law.

Government employees continues protest demanding 7th Pay Commission

IT News
Imphal, April 26:

Employees of Economics and Statistics Department today staged a sit-in protest at the directorate of Economics and Statistics complex at Lamphel while Forest Department stage at the gate of the Manipur Forest Department, Sanjithong demanding implementation of the 7th pay Commission's in the state. Speaking to media persons, S Pravin Kumar, General Secretary of Directorate of Economics and Statistics Department Employees' Welfare Association said that among the 19 states led by the ruling BJP government, 18 states has already passed the 7th pay commission whereas Manipur is the only remaining states that sign of 7th pay could hardly be imagine. Being in the north-eastern region, base on the 7th pay scale most of the price of

essential commodities have rising sky-high which is inappropriate with the present salary of the employees.

The current salary is just a state pay less from 6th central pay is not even in-totto, he added.

Pravin also said that with their current small salary they are unable to meet the expenditure of the daily needs and the fees in the private sector that has also been raise, is creating high tension running their families.

Their only demands is to implement the 7th pay, but the government seems to have snatch the rights of the employees with non-implementation of the commission which very unfortunate, he added.

Pravin further said that the employees are not raising any issues against the government though they have speared so many months for positive conclusion of their



demands and several talks with the JAC and the State Government also took place but not a single development for the employees till date except date back months after months in the name of discussion of the implementation of the commission in the state.

The employees don't want to suffer as they are the one who will be working the pending works even if strike is call off, so "Why is the Manipur government unable to announce the 7th pay

commission like the other states?" Pravin asked.

The employees of both the departments fully support the agitation taken up by the Joint Administrative Council (JAC) of All Manipur Trade Unions' Council (AMTUC) and All Manipur Government Employees' Organisation (AMGEO) and will continue the protest and strike until their demands to implement the 7th pay is accomplish.

The protestors held up placards reading "Don't play delaying tactics to employees,

we demand 7th central pay in-totto".

Mention may be that the implementation of the 7th Pay Commission's recommendations was made since October 8, 2016, following a resolution of a general body council meeting. Though Chief Minister N Biren has made an appeal to suspend the cease-work strike, the employees continued to intensify the agitation by staging demonstrations outside their respective offices since April 5.

40 Litres of DIC Liquor Seized

IT News
Imphal, April 26:

A team of Narcotic Cell Imphal East under the supervision of Kh Devkumar Singh, OC Narcotic Cell Imphal East seized around 40 litres of DIC local liquor from two persons for illegal possession yesterday around 6:30 pm.

The two arrested persons have been identified as Saikhom Gope Singh (58 yrs), son of (Late) S Chaoba Singh and one Yelangbam Amarijit (34 yrs), son of Y Surchandra Singh of Naharup Mayai Leikai, Imphal East.

The liquors were seized during a liquor drive conducted with local Meira Paibi members of Naharup Mayai Leikai, Imphal East and around the Naharup Mayai Leikai near Hanging Bridge area in Imphal East at around 6pm.

The arrested persons along with the seized local liquors have been handed over to Excise Department, Porompat for further legal action.

Naga accord is nearly final: No change in state boundary, removal of AFSPA, flag last hurdle

Agency
New Delhi, April 26

The Central government and Naga armed groups are said to have finalised the substantive portions of the peace accord which is likely to be signed before the monsoon session of Parliament. The final draft of the accord, which hopes to finally bring India's oldest insurgency to a close, is now looking to jump the final hurdle: an agreement over the Naga demand for a separate flag for the state. The government is also apprehensive about a violent reaction in the Manipur Valley to the signing of the accord.

The accord, official sources told *The Indian Express*, does not change the boundary of states; provides autonomous Naga territorial councils for Arunachal and Manipur; a common cultural body for Nagas across states; specific institutions for state's development, integration and rehabilitation of non-state Naga militia and the removal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act.

When contacted by *The Indian Express*, the Centre's interlocutor, R N Ravi, who signed the framework agreement with National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak-Muivah) or NSCN-IM in August 2015, said: "Yes, we are pretty close to finalising the (Naga Peace) accord".

Ravi has been closely associated with the Naga peace process for decades in various capacities as an Intelligence Bureau officer before taking over as the Centre's interlocutor in July 2014.

Sources said the final draft is almost ready and it is only "a matter of crossing the Ts and dotting the Is." It could be taken to the Cabinet before being signed in Delhi "in a couple of months if there is no slip between the cup and the lip".

Talks between Ravi and Naga bodies, the Naga National Political Groups (NNPGs) — comprising the representatives of six influential Naga rebel groups — and NSCN-IM are currently taking place in Delhi. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday.

Although the Centre is dealing with seven Naga armed groups, sources said it will sign "only one single accord with all of them". Sources said the contentious issue of Naga autonomy has been settled amicably with India's federal structure emphasising "shared sovereignty" between the states and the Centre.

One issue still being negotiated is a "symbolic one", sources said, wherein Naga groups are demanding a separate flag for the state. The Centre has, however, made it clear to the Naga groups that it will not be able to concede that demand in the peace accord. Given the long and contentious history of the Naga insurgency,

this could turn out to be a tricky issue.

Sources said the accord does not involve any change in the boundaries of the states, thereby allaying fears in Manipur about the deal. It preserves the paramountcy of the Manipur state government while providing for an autonomous Naga territorial council in the state.

Besides Manipur, there will be an autonomous Naga territorial council in Naga-majority areas of Arunachal Pradesh but not for Assam. The accord also provides for a common cultural body for Nagas across states which will be statutory in nature. This body, which is envisaged as a socio-political platform, with "no political role", will have representatives from all Naga tribes.

The accord also contains certain structural changes in the Nagaland legislature — a bicameral legislature and increase in the number of parliamentary and assembly seats from the state. It will also lead to formation of some specific institutions for development of the state as a commitment from the Centre.

The Naga armed groups will stand disbanded after the accord and the non-state armed militia who are eligible will be absorbed in central or state forces. Those who are not eligible will be rehabilitated by the government. The accord also promises the removal of AFSPA from

Nagaland as a logical consequence of these actions.

After the draft is finalised, the BJP, which is the ruling party in Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh, will have to be brought on board. As the ruling party at the Centre, some sections of BJP have concerns about making too many concessions to Nagaland, a Christian-majority state.

Sources said that with the general elections scheduled for 2019, the accord has to be signed before the monsoon session of Parliament so that it can be implemented in time. The accord will need some Constitutional amendments which will have to be passed by the Parliament and state assemblies after a due process.

The more substantive issue before the Centre pertains to fears of a violent reaction in Manipur Valley where there is a genuine sense of insecurity about the deal. The Centre and Manipur government are exploring ways to assure residents of Manipur Valley (which has 60% of state's population with 10% of state's land) that their land will be secure. As of now, while anyone can buy land in the Valley, the sale of land is restricted in the hills, an area dominated by Nagas. A law for Manipur restricting the sale of land in the Valley could be announced simultaneously with the signing of the accord.