



Work Stopped at World's Tallest Railway Bridge in Manipur

World's Tallest Railway Bridge in Manipur May Not be Completed to Its Target

By Onkareshwar Pandey with Brown Nongmaithem, Courtesy : Indian Observer Post Imphal, March 15,

The tallest railway bridge of the world in Manipur may not be completed on time. The construction work on this prestigious and strategically most important bridge on the eastern border has been stopped for over three weeks. March 2020 was the deadline of completion of the Noney bridge and railway line till Tupul station near Imphal valley in Manipur. However, the project will surely be delayed, if the present pace of work prevails.

The Noney Bridge on river Ijai, is part of the new 111-km long Jiribam-Tupul-Imphal broad gauge line project and it will connect Manipur with the rest of the country. The bridge will be twice the height of Qutub Minar which is the tallest minaret made up of brick in the world!

The cost of Jiribam-Tupul-Imphal project is pegged at Rs 13,809 crore and the railway line will pass through steep hills, deep gorges and will cross over several rivers in the region.

The Northeast Frontier Railway is constructing this bridge at Noney in Manipur, as a part of a new broad gauge line, which is being constructed to connect the northeastern state with the rest of the country. The pillars have already been built.

On completion, the Noney bridge with a pier height of 141 meters (462.598 feet), will surpass the existing record of 139 meters of the Mala-Rijeka Viaduct in Montenegro in Europe.

The Noney Bridge is expected to exceed that height of European bridge upon completion and is expected to be over 142 meters tall.

The Northeast Frontier Railway has already managed to construct 100 meters tall pier in this railway bridge. However, the construction work has stopped since the last few weeks due to several reasons.

According to the local laborers, they have stopped working because of non-payments on time. The subcontractor told Indian Observer Post, that the

payments are not being released on time which has affected the construction work.

Nonavailability of the construction materials are also one of the major reasons of delay in the project, which comes from several places.

Steel Authority of India is supplying Steel for this bridge. Total 16,500 Tonne Steel is being used to complete the bridge. Stones are being transported from Pakur, Jharkhand. And Cement and other materials are being transported from Meghalaya and other states.

The total length of the bridge will be 703 meters. The piers of the bridge are constructed using hydraulic augers, the tall piers needed specially designed 'slip-form technique' to ensure efficient and continual construction."

There are self-erecting lifts at each pier to ensure safe and quick transport of men and construction material to the stop.

The construction work of the world's tallest railway Pier Bridge near Noney in Manipur, India was awarded in 2013, but it could not start on time due to some local issues. Finally, the construction work began on 28 July 2014. The railway is working on to this project that would provide rail connectivity to the capital of landlocked Manipur.

The project will have 45 tunnels in total, the longest being 10.280 Km long. This tunnel will be the longest railway tunnel in the Northeast.

The laborers have left the work site. And no senior official of the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) was seen on the ground when Indian Observer Post team visited the construction site three days ago.

There is also a plan to connect this line to Moreh, India to link Myanmar in the future and expected to bolster trade relation with the Asian countries.

It will also be helpful in military operations and tourism development in the state. The North East Frontier Railway Organisation is administering the whole Project and the Chief Engineer of NF Railway is in charge of the project. There are several gaps in the project. Even if the

construction of the railway bridge and line is completed, there are no facilities for tourists. Still, there is no plan to build hotels near railway station as of now. However, some houses in Noney will soon be open for tourists as the Manipur government plans to promote homestay in the picturesque town.

The Indian Observer Post team visited at the work site recently and talked to the villagers of the area and the laborers of the work site. They all have different stories to tell.

The laborers said that initially, the railways had started producing bricks out of waste soil in a manufacturing unit in Manipur as part of its ambitious project to provide Imphal rail connectivity, which started near the banks of Ijai river Noney. However, it was stopped when local residents protested against the Railway authorities for polluting the river water.

"The NF Railway with the help of NIT Silchar has turned the excess excavated soil into bricks that are being used for protective works of bridges, pitching of slopes, steps for going down along the embankment and lining of drains," alleged local residents.

"The Ijai River near Noney has become highly contaminated owing to direct discharge" from a construction site of a railway line," alleged Mrs Gaipulu Pannei, Secretary, Rongmei Lup Phuum.

"We all residents of Noney and many villagers residing along the riverside consume water directly from the streams, jeopardising our health. Henceforth, we raised voice against the Railway Authorities for polluting the muddy river water, polluted with toxic chemicals for excavating the earth," said Gaipulu Pannei.

The villagers had also earlier imposed a statewide bandh to stop these menace activities.

The construction of the railway alignment through the hilly terrain entails excavation of huge quantities of the earth (soil). The excess excavated soil is generally dumped into low-lying areas which eventually flow into the streams and then the rivers causing high water pollution.

However, taking into consideration of the villagers' anger and woes, the Railway authorities have made an attempt in minimising the dumping of soil into water bodies.

Indian Observer Post Imphal Correspondent visited the affected villagers to get a first hand report at the railway construction site along the Ijai River in Noney.

Pointing out that "the Ijai River is the main source of water for over 30 thousand from 2000 households people in Noney and about 10 surrounding villages," Gaipulu noted that "the people were faced with immense difficulties as the water source had become polluted in the last three to four years."

"Fishes and other species in the river are dying due to the pollution while paddy fields in Noney, Tupul, Sibilong, and Marangjing have also been badly affected," she added.

Rose Kamei, BJP Vice President, Tamenglong district also said that "the villagers have stopped using water from the Ijai River as the water is highly contaminated." Rose Kamei added, "The villagers have already made several complaints to the railway authorities in this regard, but to no avail."

Mrs Gaipulu Pannei, Secretary, Rongmei Lu Phuum, while welcoming developmental projects, asserted that "the people will oppose any kind of destruction of the environment."

However, according to Railway Authorities, "In the latest initiative, the Railways has decided to convert waste soil into traditional bricks, to be used in its construction project of the 111 km line to provide Imphal rail connectivity.

Usually, the Railways buys traditional bricks from factories and transports them to the site which turns out to be a costly affair. Experiments conducted by NIT Silchar in their lab led to a successful formula—the conversion of unused soil into bricks.

Gautam Singh, Deputy Chief Engineer, Construction, Northeast Frontier Railway, and in charge of the Jiribam-Imphal line could not be contacted even after several attempts for his comments.

District Level Medical Board to Examine Applications on March 19

DIPR Imphal, March 15,

The Deputy Commissioner/ District Election Officer Kangpokpi District, Smt. Lalithambigai K. IAS, on 13th March, 2019 notified to all the concerned that the District Level Medical Board will be examining the applications seeking for exemption from the election duty of the ensuing Lok Sabha Election, 2019 on Tuesday, March 19 2019 at the CMO's Office, Kangpokpi District. The DEO further stated that all the applicants seeking the exemption on Medical grounds shall be present at 10.00 am of the same day with required medical documents. The Medical Board shall also submit the report to the Office of the DEO Kangpokpi on or before March 20, 2019.

Editorial today Indian Politics after Puwama Terror Attack

Women Against crime appeals married men to restrain from joining Thabal Chongba



IT News Imphal, March 15,

Founder of the Women Against Crime, Robita Leima today appealed the married men to restrain from joining the Thabal Chongba festival. Thabal Chongba is a traditional Manipuri event celebrated during Yoashang festival where unmarried young boys and girl dance in the moonlights.

Speaking to media persons in a press conference held at the office of women against crime which is located at Canchipur, Robita Leima said that various crimes have been reported during the festival where many married men personating as a bachelor does various crimes. Robita warned married man from joining it. She also

appealed the various Meira Paibis and club to announce it publicly.

Robita Leima further said that the youths should not go in the dark taking chance of Thabal Chongba. She recalled that various incident of sexual crime has been happening where man called out the women in the night taking chance of Thabal Chongba.

She also appealed youths to wear decent clothes during the Thabal Chongba, which literary meaning is Thabal Moon Light Dance. Robita also appealed the organisers not to allowed person who are intoxicated to join it.

She further appealed the people of the state to minimise the crime during the said festival.

At least 49 killed, 20 seriously wounded in New Zealand mosque shootings

Reuter Wellington, March 15,

At least one gunman killed 49 people and wounded more than 20 during Friday prayers at two New Zealand mosques in the country's worst ever mass shooting which Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern condemned as terrorism. A gunman broadcast live footage on Facebook of the attack on one mosque and the city of Christchurch, mirroring the carnage played out in video games, after publishing a "manifesto" in which he denounced immigrants.

New Zealand was placed on its highest security threat level, Ardern said, adding that

four people in police custody, three men and one woman, held extremist views but had not been on any police watchlists.

The visiting Bangladesh cricket team was arriving for prayers at one of the mosques when the shooting started but all members were safe, a team coach told Reuters. Police Commissioner Mike Bush said 49 people had been killed at two mosques and one man in his late 20s charged with murder.

"It is clear that this can now only be described as a terrorist attack," Ardern said.

The video footage widely circulated on social media, apparently taken by a gunman

and posted online live as the attack unfolded, showed him driving to one mosque, entering it and shooting randomly at people inside.

Worshippers, possibly dead or wounded, lay huddled on the floor, the video showed. Reuters was unable to confirm the authenticity of the footage. One man who said he was at the AlNoor mosque told media the gunman was white, blond and wearing a helmet and a bulletproof vest. The man burst into the mosque as worshippers were kneeling for prayers.

"He had a big gun ... he came and started shooting everyone in the mosque, everywhere," said the man, Ahmad Al-

Mahmoud. He said he and others escaped by breaking through a glass door.

An anonymous post on Friday on the discussion site 8chan, known for a wide range of content including hate speech, said the writer was going to "carry out an attack against the invaders", and included links to a Facebook live stream, in which the Friday shooting appeared, and a manifesto.

The manifesto cited "white genocide", a term typically used by racist groups to refer to immigration and the growth of minority populations, as his motivation. The Facebook link directed users to the page of a user called brenton.tarrant.9.

Cycle rally under the theme "Sports for a change" to be held on March 17

IT News Imphal March 15,

With the aim to eradicate the various activities which demoralised the youth because of Yaoshang Festival and move forward into a more positive sporting spirit, Students' Association has been organising Kanglei Mega Sports Festival. Stating in a press release signed by Convenor, Organising Sub-Committee of

8th Kanglei Mega Sports Festival Sanjoy Khulakpam said that for this year The Kanglei Mega Sports Festival will be held from 20th of March till the 25th of March.

So as to create awareness of the said festival a cycle rally under the theme "Sports For A Change" will be held on the 17th of March which will flag off from Kangla around 8 in the morning, he added. He further appealed the people of the state to join the said cycle rally.

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I have lost my class X original mark sheet and certificate bearing roll no 21373 issued by Board of Secondary Education Manipur, along with exchange card on my way between Khwairamband Keithel and Thangal Bazar on 14th March 2019.

Sd/-
PHEIREMBAM RAJKUMAR SINGH
S/o Ph Gourahari Singh of Jiri

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I have lost my original mark sheet, certificate bearing roll no 9139 of class X issued by Board of Secondary Education Manipur along with exchange card on my way between Khwairamband Keithel and Thangal Bazar on 13th March 2019.

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Oinam Romesh Singh
S/o O Rajen Singh of Thanga Oinam Leikai