

## 24-hour bandh paralyzed Imphal-Saikul

### PDCC demands punishment of PWD engineers who go hand-in-glove with contractors in stealing public money

IT News

Imphal, Feb 1

Traffic along the Imphal-Saikul road has been severely disrupted as Peace and Development Coordinating Committee (PDCC) imposed 24-hour bandh along this road demanding action against PWD engineers who went hand-in-glove with contractor implementing work order for construction of a new Bridge at Yumnam Patlou in Imphal East district.

"When a VDF or constables or grade IV employees were suspended and panelized for accepting tips of Rs. 100, why the N. Biren Singh government is taking no action against the PWD engineers and the contractors who work hand-in-globe and steal public money amounting to lakh of rupees", Thoudam Hemjit, General Secretary of PDCC told reporters. Since early morning a large number of people came to the street at Pangei area and stopped all short of vehicular movement. Shops and other



business establishment remain close and Saikul too remains cut off from Imphal due to the 24 hours bandh. Hemjit further said that after government officials felt the need for construction of a new bridge as the 70 years old slapped culvert was outdated on April 14, 2016, a work order for construction of a new bridge was issued. However, for reason best known to the authority of the PWD the construction work was never seen taken up until 2017.

"On December 26, 2017 we called a bandh demanding

immediate construction of the bridge", Hemjit said and added and following the bandh there was an agreement reached between the PWD Engineer as the later assured to start construction.

"The construction did begin, but as it was done in complete violation of the work scheduled we complain the matter to the PWD authority", Hemjit said. He added that instead of constructing a new bridge as scheduled in the work order the contractor in understanding with the

engineer repaired the bridge by expanding at both sides to look like new construction. After the matter was brought to the notice of the Chief Minister on one Meeyamgi Numit day, the Chief Minister instructed the PWD authority to look into the matter and take action to the contractor's concern. But the instruction was never honoured.

However, on Jan 18, 2020 the Executive Engineer of the PWD invited the PDCC member to inspect the conditions of the pillar of the bridge. On Jan 20, 2020 the contractor cemented the bridge in the presence of the Engineer. When asked the engineer replied that he and his department did not know the cementing work.

It is an open secret that the EE and the Contractor are openly looting the public money and the government is not taking up any action against them.

Seems like corruption is banned for VDF, Constable and grade four employees only, Hemjit added.

## Employees' strike severely affects banking transactions

IT Correspondent  
Mumbai/Imphal

Over 31 lakh cheques worth nearly Rs 23,000 crore remained uncleared across the country following two day strike by 10 lakh employees of public sector banks all over the country, which began on Friday and continued on Saturday.

With this strike, banks would remain closed till Sunday and the banks will open only on Monday, February 3.

No transactions including deposits and withdrawals could take place since most of the bank branches remained closed. Resultantly cash deposit, withdrawal, cheque clearances, instrument issuance and loan disbursement were affected.

The impact of the strike was seen most in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Gujarat, Karnataka, Bihar and Kerala since a grid for clearance of cheques in Mumbai, Chennai and Delhi remained non-functional AIBEA General Secretary C H Venkatachalam said.

Transaction in Banks in Manipur too has been severely affected. In churachandpur bank employees staged protest in front of their bank.

Many banks, including State Bank of India (SBI), had informed customers in advance that operations may be impacted to some extent due to the strike. However private sector lenders including ICICI Bank and



HDFC Bank were operational. The bank employees have struck work since their demand for pay hike is pending since November 2017. The meeting in this regard held on 13 January this year also remained inconclusive. Earlier the employees were given a hike of 15 per cent. For the period 1 November 2012 to 31 October 2017.

During discussions, the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) on Thursday improved its offer, but this was not acceptable to the unions. IBA in a statement said that despite the revised offer of up to 19 per cent hike, including performance linked incentive, made by it during the meeting the unions decided to go ahead with the all-India bank strike.

There are several demands to hold the strike including the merger of special allowance with basic pay, updation of pension, improvement in the family pension system, five-day banking, allocation of staff welfare fund based on operating profits and

exemption from income tax on retirement benefits without a ceiling.

All the government schemes such as Jan Dhan, Mudra, Adhar Linkage, Social Sector Insurance Scheme, Social Sector Pension Schemes, Digital India, Pradhan Mantri Awas

Yojana etc. are centred around banking. These schemes have drastically increased the workload at the counter. On the other side banks have not filled in vacancies arising out of death, resignation, retirements and promotion, UFBU maintained.

The strike call has been given by the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), an umbrella body of nine bank unions, including All India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC), All India Bank Employees' Association (AIBEA) and National Organisation of Bank Workers (NOBW). Unions claimed that about 10 lakh staff and officers of public sector banks and some private sector banks are participating in strike.

## Critical and normal patient visiting SHIJA hospital face inconveniences as road leading to the hospital closed; DC staffs have no knowledge about the closure

IT News

Imphal, Feb 1

The main road leading to one of the premier private Health service providers – the Shija Hospital and Research Institution has been blocked today since early morning. An eyewitness said that even Ambulance was told to take another road that is leading to the hospital which is never convenient as the

road infrastructures leading to Shija Hospital are in the most deteriorating condition besides the length.

Imphal Times contacted the Imphal West DC office through telephone no 03852451188, to enquire about the reason for blocking the road. However, a lady employee working in the DC office, who picked the called said that she did not know why the road is being blocked and for what

reason. She also stated that she had no idea whether the party blocking the road had taken permission from the district administration or not. Shija Hospital is the hope of much critical illness and almost all people chose the hospital as they hope the hospital as severe. A patient who went for routine checked up have to turn back to find another route to reached the hospital. The police station (Lamphel)

which is close to the place where the road blocked were also not seen at the place. Many costly cars were seen parked at the side where the road was blocked and many patients in need of treatment expressed frustration to Imphal Times on why the road is being closed and why should the district administration allow permission for such road blocked at that important route.

## Nirbhaya case: President rejects mercy plea of convict Vinay Sharma

IT Correspondent  
New Delhi, Feb 1

President Ram Nath Kovind has rejected the mercy plea of Nirbhaya rape convict Vinay Sharma. He was one of the four men on death row in the Nirbhaya rape case. With this, there are no petitions pending in

the President's office in the case. Yesterday, a Delhi court postponed the execution of death warrants of all four convicts in the case till further order.

Meanwhile, another one of the convicts in the 2012 Nirbhaya case, Akshay Thakur filed a mercy plea today.

Director General (Prison) Sandeep Goel has said that the convict has filed a mercy plea before President Ram Nath Kovind. Thakur and three other convicts were to be hanged today, but a city court indefinitely postponed their hanging.

## Evacuees return from Wuhan (China)

By Raju Vernekar  
Mumbai/Delhi, Feb 1

324 passengers, comprising 211 students and 110 working professionals and three minors, who returned from China's Wuhan province, the epicentre of deadly coronavirus, by Air India's special flight, landed at Delhi airport on Saturday morning. AI's special flight which had left Delhi airport at 1.17 PM on Friday, returned at 7.30 AM on Saturday. The rescue team comprised five doctors from Ram Manohar Lohia hospital, one paramedical staff, five cockpit crew members, and 15 cabin crew members, an Air India spokesperson said.

Another special flight to evacuate Indians from Wuhan, was in the process of

departing from the Delhi airport on Saturday, with a different set of crew and same doctors' team at the time of filing this report. The rescue team is again headed by Capt Amitabh Singh, Director Operation, Air India.

The evacuees who returned from Wuhan, were taken to the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) Chhawla Camp in south-west Delhi, that houses ITBP headquarters. They will be kept in isolation for 14 days at the camp for medical observation. ITBP has created a 600-bedded facility at an unoccupied residential unit reserved for its personnel. A team of 25 doctors, 15 from Safdarjung hospital and 10 from ITBP is at the facility. Besides special arrangements have been made to host

children and women at the facility.

The Indian Army too has created similar facility near Manesar, Gurgaon, Haryana, where the students can be monitored for any signs of infection for a duration of two weeks by a qualified team of doctors and staff members. If any person is suspected to be infected, that individual will be shifted to the isolation ward at the Base Hospital in Delhi Cantt. The building complex has operational kitchens and bathrooms apart from modern amenities like Wi-Fi.

The stranded people include 27 Indian students pursuing M.B.B.S degree course, in Wuhan University of Science and Technology, Hubei. They hail from Assam, Delhi, Maharashtra, West Bengal and

J & K. The 7 students from Maharashtra hail from Pune, Pimpri –Chinchwad, Latur, Yavatmal, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli and Nanded.

In a related development, the family of 22 year old Manir Hossain, from Tripura claimed that their son Manir died due to coronavirus in Malaysia. Hailing from Puthal Rajnagar in South Tripura, Manir had gone to Malaysia two years back for job. His parents have contacted Sepahijala administration to bring his mortal remains to India. However Tripura officials have denied to have any knowledge of Manir being died due to coronavirus saying that there had been no communication from Malaysian authorities. Still Manir's medical history will be checked, they have

said. At Mumbai airport, authorities have began making passengers coming from China and Hong Kong to undergo thermal scanning before they enter immigration. A team is "conducting universal thermal screening for all passengers of flights coming directly from China and Hongkong. For other international arriving flights, only the self declared passengers are screened using thermal camera," the airport officials said and added that "In case the passenger has symptoms of Coronavirus infection, he/she is being quarantined and sent to designated hospital. Thermal scanners use heat sensors and can spot people with high temperature levels.

IndiGo and Air India have

suspended some flights to China and Hong Kong. Cathay Pacific has suspended some flights to mainland China but is operating to Hong Kong. "Rwandair" has suspended flights from its capital Kigali to Guangzhou. The union Shipping Ministry has also advised all ports to scan people disembarking from ships to prevent spreading of the coronavirus through sea route. "India has already issued advisories and put processes in place on coronavirus. The situation is monitored closely at the top level," Sandifer Pal Singh, joint secretary in the shipping ministry said during the Annual Shipping Conclave, organised by the Bengal Chamber in Kolkata on Friday. The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) has

banned export of all varieties of personal protection equipment including clothing and masks used to protect the wearer from air borne particles and/or any other respiratory masks or any other personal protective clothing (including coveralls and N95 masks) with immediate effect till further orders. DGFT said in a notification.

While World Health Organisation has declared global emergency to fight against the coronavirus, the death toll in China due to the outbreak of the disease has risen to 259 with total confirmed cases surging to 11,791 amid stepped up efforts by a number of countries to evacuate their nationals from Hubei province, officials said on Saturday.