

Union cabinet approves Grant for setting up the North East Natural Gas Pipeline Grid

IT News
Imphal, Jan 9

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has given its approval of 60% Capital Grant for for setting up the North East Natural Gas Pipeline Grid to the Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited.

A report by Pree Information Bureau said that the North East Gas Grid project of Indradhanush Gas Grid

Limited with viability Gap Funding/ Capital Grant at 60% of the estimated cost of Rs 9265 crore (including interest during construction). Quantum of VGF would be capped at 60% of estimated project cost and would not be linked with upward capital cost variation. MoPNG shall identify milestones for major activities for this project and link the same for releases of capital grant of the project.

The report added that for effective monitoring of the project implementation, a Committee comprising of officials from Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Development of North East Region, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, and Department of Fertilizers, may be formed, which would periodically review the progress in implementation of the project and take steps to smoothen out any issues in execution.

Total length of pipeline is 1656

KM and tentative project cost is Rs 9265 crore. As per the plan, Gas Pipeline Grid would be developed in the eight states of the North-Eastern region i.e. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.

The Capital Grant will provide natural gas supplies to various types of consumers viz. Industrial, PNG(Domestic), CNG (Transport) etc. and would immensely help in substituting the liquid fuels. The pipeline grid would ensure reliability and uninterrupted natural gas supplies to the consumers which otherwise gets severely affected due to various reasons in this part of the country.

Availability of Natural gas across the region is expected to boost industrial growth without impacting the environment and would offer better quality of life to the people in general due to use

of cleaner and green fuel. The project will Reduce usage of kerosene, wood etc. due to increased usage of environment friendly fuel natural gas thereby improving the environment in the region north-eastern region i.e. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura, thereby improving the standard of living of peoples living in the region. The PIB report said that this project will boost Exploration & Production activities and connect regional gas sources with pipeline network for early monetisation of natural resources in the region.

Possibility of installing bottling plants for LPG can be explored for reducing transportation cost. Uninterrupted supply of LPG and other value added products can be ensured in the region which will bring energy security to the people in the area.

Bharat Bandh: By and large peaceful; but affects normalcy

Raju Vernekar
Mumbai/Imphal, Jan 8

The all India strike organised by 10 Central trade unions, six bank unions, 60 teachers' organisations and nearly 175 farmers' organisations, as a protest against the "anti-worker, anti-people and anti-national policies" of the Modi-II Government brought activities to screeching halt in several parts of the country including Manipur, Assam, Odisha, Puducherry, Kerala, Telangana, Punjab, when banking services took a hit and roadway services were affected, on Wednesday.

The call for the strike was given by the Central trade and bank unions after their meeting with the Central Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar, held last week to resolve multiple issues related to PSU mergers and disinvestment proved futile. This was the fourth nationwide strike called by the trade unions since the Narendra Modi-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government came to power in 2014.

While a bus was vandalised in Cooch Behar in West Bengal, some Congress and CPI leaders were taken into custody for taking part in the "Bandh" in Andhra Pradesh. The strike was near total in Kerala with vehicles, including state-owned KSRTC and private buses keeping off the roads. Very few private vehicles and autorickshaws were seen plying on roads.

In Manipur, the bandh has affected normalcy in the state crippling all sort of business sectors, including Khwairambandh Keithel. Almost all shops and private entrepreneurs remain closed at Paona Bazar and Thangal Bazar in Imphal. Commercial vehicles stay off the roads except some few.

In Andhra Pradesh, the rallies were taken out by the Left parties and trade unions in major towns and cities. In Vijayawada, a rally was taken out from Radham Centre to Lenin Centre. Banking services such as ATMs and branch services were affected, but online

transactions such as NEFT, IMPS remained unaffected. The bank workers were protesting against the merger of public sector banks.

In Mumbai in Maharashtra, employees of the Mumbai Municipal Corporation held protest demonstration at Azad Maidan whereas college teachers wore black band while on duty.

The employees of the Bharat Petroleum Corporation staged demonstrations outside its headquarters in South Mumbai as a protest against proposed disinvestment despite the corporation is being running in huge profit.

The local transport services were by and large unaffected since autos, taxis, BEST buses operated normally in Mumbai. The street corner meetings were held in many districts in Maharashtra including Kolhapur and Sangli. Addressing the gathering former MP Raju Shetty lambasted the Union Government for its policy to import food grains affecting livelihood of farmers.

UPF to organize "National Reconsolidation Day 2020"

IT News
Imphal, Jan 8

United Peoples' Front, Manipur (UPF) of Keishamthong Nambal Mapal Laishom Leirak Machil is organizing the "National Reconsolidation Day 2020" on Thursday, 9th January 2020 to commemorate the "186th Death Anniversary of Iningthou Chinglen Nongrenkhomba" at Lamyamba Shanglen, Palace Compound Imphal East. According to a press release signed by W. Second, President UPF, the organisation has been observing the day as the National Reconsolidation Day in recognition of the efforts of the late King Gambhir Singh (Chinglen Nongrenkhomba) in remobilizing the defence of the state and successfully driving out the Burmese army who have been occupying the valley for the last seven years known as 'the Seven Years Desertation' in the history of the state.

RPF and MNPF claim responsibility of the attack to 4 AR camp at Khongtal village in Chandel district

IT News
Imphal, Jan 8

Armed rebel group Revolutionary People's Front (RPF) and the Manipur Naga people's front (MNPF) in a joint statement today claimed attack to 4 Assam Rifles camp at Khongtal Village in Chandel district at around 6.30 am yesterday.

A statement signed by Bangkim, Assistance Secretary, Publicity of the RPF and Thomas Numai, Assistance Publicity Secretary, MNPF said that the attack carried out by PLA (army wing of RPF) and MNPA (Army wing of MNPF) cause many casualty to the AR side. It further added that 252 Mobile battalion of the PLA and the MNPA, on the other hand had also attack column

of Indian army reinforced from Sajik Tampak side using bomb trap. The joint statement claimed casualty and injury to the side of the AR troop. The statement further added that the place where the attack was carried out is being dominated by the Indian army and because of their presence the villagers of the area in between Sajik Tampak till Myanmar border are being harassed by the army present there. It said that the rights of the villagers are being suppressed by the army by not allowing free movement even for earning day today livelihood. They were compelled to take passed from the army authority for going out of their village. These army always look upon the villagers as rebel group or

those supporting the rebel movement. The villagers felt that their rights have been suppressed under a colonial rule and have been waiting for a day when they could restore their freedom.

The joint statement also alleged the army for using the villagers posing as armed rebel group and force them poppy plantation at the area. The rebel group also question the government to spell out the reason for not destroying the poppy plantation being carried out saying that the government might have afraid of the army.

The statement while calling upon the people for freedom struggle said that armed struggle is the only means to restore the freedom of this region.

IT News
Imphal, Jan 8

Youth's Forum for Protection of Human Rights (YFPHR) urged the the Department of Environment and Ecology Wing, Government of Manipur and Department of Forest, Government of Manipur for the urgent intervention with regard to the Illegal Mining of Stone at Tinglong Lajang, Kangpokpi (near Kotland Area before reaching Tupul), Filling up of rivers and streams along the Imphal-Jiribam Road and Imphal Moreh road, in Manipur.

A statement said that the Illegal mining of stone and mud from the hills has tremendously decreased the Greenery Hills and large scale deforestation has contributing to rapid increase on climate

change which will have a serious impact on the living creature on earth. In other words Right to life is under threat due to unchecked unsustainable developmental projects.

"Environment and Life are interrelated. The existence of life on earth depends on the harmonious relationship between ecosystem and environment. Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development and that they are entitled to healthy and productive life in harmony with nature," the statement said.

Large scale Unsustainable Development Projects like (Road Expansion, Railway Projects, Power Grid Lines, Construction of Dams) being initiated in the state are observed to be major factors of deforestation, water

pollution, air pollution, destruction of environment at large scale, displacement etc which further contribute to climate change and need a serious consideration immediately by the people and the aforementioned departments.

The YFPHR demanded to take up immediate measure to stop illegal mining of stone and mud immediately across the state; to stop polluting water bodies, air and environment; to adopt proper sustainable planning before initiating any so called developmental projects in the state; to save and protect river, streams, forest and hills for sustainable wellbeing of civilization and to conduct a thorough assessment on illegal mining of stone and mud, Filling up of rivers and streams and large scale deforestation.

FIR against girl holding a 'Free Kashmir' poster at Gateway of India

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, Jan. 8

Mumbai police on Tuesday registered 4 FIRs against 350 persons, including 31 named students, activists and members of public, who took part in the Gateway of India protest to denounce the JNU violence on Monday.

The FIRs included the FIR registered at Colaba police station against Mahek Mirza Prabhu, a Mumbai-based storyteller and performer, for holding "Free Kashmir" placard during the protest. "We have filed case against Prabhu under Section 153b (Imputation, assertions prejudicial to national interest) under IPC. We are trying to get in touch with her, when needed we will call her for statement," a police officer said.

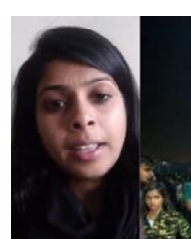
The opposition parties, including BJP, in Maharashtra alleged that the poster connoted support to separatists in Kashmir and as such the action was "anti national". However Mahek said that "she was residing in Mumbai and not in Kashmir. All that she was protesting was suspension of internet services and disruption of communication in Kashmir for nearly 150 days. I intend to communicate that the people of Kashmir should be able to enjoy freedom like us. But I was trolled for simply talking about Internet freedom in Kashmir".

Two FIRs each were registered at Colaba and Mata Ramabai police stations, both located in South Mumbai. The police evicted all the protestors from Gateway of India and asked them to protest at Azad Maidan

(3 kms away from Gateway of India), which is designated protest site as per a court order. Besides the agitation was causing traffic jams near Hotel Taj Intercontinental national and international tourists.

The protestors were booked for unlawful assembly since they had no permission to stage agitation at Gateway of India. The 31 protestors against whom the FIRs were lodged included former student of JNU Umar Khalid, Suvarva Salve and Feroze Mithiborwala and teacher from Tata Institute of Social Science (TISS). Later the protestors in Mumbai called off their agitation. The FIR was lodged also against ABVP activists who held protest demonstrations at Hutatma Chowk in South Mumbai. In significant development,

students and teachers held a protest meeting at IIT Bombay Campus at Powai in North East Mumbai and decided to



continue to meet daily in the evening for 10 days to take a stock of the JNU developments. As of now two FIRs stand filed by Delhi police against 20 JNU students for allegedly vandalising the server room of

the college and attacking staff members. The FIRs were filed against JNU student Aishwarya Ghosh and others on 5 January,



which is when the violence broke out, when masked armed men reportedly attacked students and some of the teachers. Those named in the FIR include: Ghosh, Geeta Kumari, Vivek Kumar Pandey,

Surya Prakash, Satish Chandra Yadav, Saket Moon, Sarika Chaudhary and Aneeksha Priyadarshini.

According to the JNU security department, on 1 January, a group of students wearing masks on their faces forcibly entered the office of the centre for information system located in a building near the Administration Building. "They switched off the power supply and evicted all the technical staff working there and made servers dysfunctional. They obstructed and stopped the public servants from doing the duties. They pushed, threatened, abused, and chased the staff out of the office ad server room. Subsequently, they locked the room and squatted at the door and did not let the staff enter the server room," the

university officials alleged in the complaint.

In the complaint filed by the JNU administration, the university alleged that the accused were involved in physical violence and pushed the women guards, verbally abused them and threatened them of dire consequences if they opened the lock of university's communication and information (CIS) office. In yet another incident on Tuesday, 10 activists were injured when activists of NSUI and ABVP clashed during protest against campus violence in Ahmedabad. They included Gujarat NSUI General Secretary Nikhil Savani and others. In the meanwhile Hindu Raksha Dal has claimed the responsibility for the JNU assault.