

Manipur Fire Service Personnel Launch Indefinite Strike, Demanding Action Against Assailants



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In a show of solidarity, Manipur fire service personnel commenced an indefinite cease-work strike on Tuesday to protest against the assault on their colleagues by personnel belonging to the 16 Jat Regiment. Firefighters are demanding immediate action against the individuals responsible for the incident, which involved a lathi charge on the firemen. Salam Jiban, the Sub-Officer of Manipur Fire Service Headquarters, stated that the strike was initiated in response to the assault on five firemen near the City Convention Centre, located just a few meters from the new check post in Imphal East. He emphasized that the fire personnel were simply carrying out their duty to extinguish a fire in the New Checkon area. The strike will continue until security personnel from the 16 Jat Regiment involved in the assault are suspended.

Adding to the mounting concerns, the All Manipur Working Journalists' Union (AMWJU) issued a statement on Monday condemning the Jat Regiment for assaulting three journalists who were covering up the Checkon incident. The union demanded the suspension of the personnel responsible for the attack. Major Surchandra of the 16 Jat Regiment, who personally attempted to resolve the issue, left the fire service headquarters in Imphal disheartened, as the protesting firemen rejected his verbal apology to the Joint Director of Manipur Fire Service, N. Nabachandra.

Yesterday, fresh tensions arose in the Checkon area of Imphal East when four armed individuals from the Kuki community attempted to forcibly remove women vendors from the tribal market, where they were conducting their usual business during the curfew relaxation hours. As the women vendors resisted these intimidation attempts, both sides engaged in a heated exchange, leading to the intervention of other people present at the scene. Subsequently, a large crowd gathered at the market, prompting the four men to flee. However, numerous people remained in the area, refusing to leave.

In response to the escalating situation, a significant number of security forces, including the Manipur Police and Rapid Action Force (RAF) personnel, swiftly arrived at the scene to restore order. To disperse the crowd, shots were fired into the air as some individuals began setting fire to houses in protest. Fortunately, no injuries were reported during the incident. Consequently, curfew relaxation hours in Imphal East were curtailed as a precautionary measure.

Later, the police apprehended the three men involved in the threatening behavior towards the women vendors, one of whom was a former MLA. Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh announced their arrest during a press conference held in Imphal.

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Assam Times Staff. editor@assamtimes.org

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