

Villagers repair Mahadev-Tolloi road



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In what was the first of its kind in Western Ukhrul, more than 700 hundred residents of eight villages, namely Ringui, Sirarakhong, Teinem, Phalee, Somdal, Tallui, Zalenbung and Lamlai Chingphei on Wednesday joined hands to repair the Mahadev-Tolloi road which has turned from bad to [worse](#) in the backdrop of the government's prolonged apathy towards maintenance of the road.

Organized under the aegis of the Mahadev-Tolloi Road Youth Committee (MTRYC) with the theme "Western Tangkhul Participatory Youth [Social](#) Work," the major repair work covered the most pitiable 33 km stretch from Mahadev junction to Sirarakhong locality along the 78 km highway.

Executives of MTRYC and VA members of respective villages had started surveying works since Monday ahead of the earth filling works by the villagers. During a spot visit today, several hundred villagers equipped with hoes, spades and others were seen working hard filling up deep potholes with earth and cobbles.

The road had been constructed by the BRO/BRTF, [as](#) part of Construction Improvement IN CL 9(ODR) whose forest clearance started in 2003. After inordinate delay, the work was completed in 2010, at an estimated cost of Rs [7](#),412 lakhs.

"Now [ten](#) years down the line since blacktopping, the road is now in a deplorable condition owing to continued negligence of the government and the authorities concerned," an organizing member Matuiching Ahum told media persons on the sidelines of the social work.

Stating that the concerned authorities had been apprised umpteen times of the matter to no avail, Ahum said that the concerned villagers took up the social work by pooling in resources on their own to save the road from perpetual neglect.

He further disclosed that [as](#) per a mutual undertaking, BRTF has been freely accessing all natural resources [found](#) within an area of 30 metres above and below the whole stretch of the road in exchange for the construction and maintenance of the pathway.

"But since the BRTF authorities have reneged on the agreement by failing in maintenance, we are now going to [claim compensation](#) for all the resources enjoyed by the BRTF, Ahum added.

The villagers said that road particularly, the stretch from Mahadev junction to Ringui is dotted with major potholes, and attributed the deplorable condition of the road to absence of proper drainage system.

"During the rainy season this year, two accidents had claimed three lives due to the poor condition of the road," said a villager and added that unless the government takes long term measures, the road will remain dangerous for commuters.

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Ukhrul, Manipur

BY LESTER MAKANG

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