

## **The Echo of India**

### **Tugapur PHC ailing from shortage of staff nurse**

Shortage of paramedical staff is taking a toll on patients of remote pockets of Tugapur and adjoining villages in North Andaman. For residents of several hamlets in the area, the Health Department has provided a Primary Health Centre at Tugapur with in-patient facility. But for shortage of staff nurse, needy patients of the villages are presently referred to the District Hospital at Mayabunder for even minor ailments.

According to reports, the PHC Tugapur had adequate number of staff nurses until the transfer of one of the incumbents a couple of months ago. But after being relieved from the health centre, the substitute of the transferred employee did not report to the PHC Tugapur following which the PHC's management has completely stopped the in-patient facility. Villagers of Tugapur and adjoining area, according to reports, are in an agitated state and are planning to hold public protest against the indifference of the Health Department.

“Shortage of paramedical staff particularly staff nurses at the PHC has severely affected health services here. Existing staff were transferred to other stations, but relieved of duty without the substitute reporting for duty. Such practice has been the main reason for the mess in the Health Department particularly in remote pockets of these islands. For instance, one of the staff nurses posted at PHC Tugapur was transferred to some other station around three months ago, but as her substitute didn't report for duty, the health centre started reeling under shortage of para-medical staff. Currently, no in-patient facility is being offered at the PHC as the hospital management is unable to manage shift-wise duty of staff nurses. Senior citizens, women and children are forced to suffer hardships as they have to travel for kilometres after being referred to Dr RP Hospital for treatment. The Health Department should take immediate action to post the substitute staff nurse at the Tugapur PHC in the interest of the villagers,” said some residents of Tugapur.