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**PERSPECTIVE**  
"A moving man will surely meet his luck"

## Fish Output in Northeast Jumps to 6.41 Lakh Tonnes, NFDB Flags Supply Gap

**GUWAHATI**  
Fish production across India's Northeast has recorded a sharp rise over the past decade, increasing from around 4.03 lakh tonnes in 2014-15 to nearly 6.41 lakh tonnes in 2023-24, according to the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB). NFDB member Rajnish Kumar said the sector has grown at an annual rate of about 10 per cent, reflecting the impact of targeted policies and interventions that are positioning the region as a key contributor to India's Blue Economy. Despite the growth, Kumar noted that the Northeast continues to face a persistent supply deficit, requiring imports of an estimated 43,000 to 90,000 tonnes of fish annually. He attributed this to high consumption levels, with nearly 90-95 per cent of the population being fish consumers. Highlighting state-level challenges, Kumar said Meghalaya produces about 20,000 metric tonnes of fish against a demand of 32,000 metric tonnes. To address these gaps, an industry event, AquaEx Northeast 2026, will be held on June 12-13 at the Maniram Dewan Trade Centre in Guwahati. The event is expected to bring together around 50 exhibitors, including scientists from the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, along with progressive farmers, technology providers, processors, financial institutions, and policymakers. NFDB Governing Body member Anup Sarma described fisheries as a "sunrise sector" in the region, citing multiple welfare and development initiatives implemented across pre-harvest, harvest, and post-harvest stages.

**WHO SAID WHAT**

"In the next 6 to 12 months, we'll be doing our first implants for vision, where even if somebody is completely blind, we can write directly to the visual cortex."  
"Long term, you would have very high resolution and be able to see multispectral wavelengths... you could see in infrared, ultraviolet, radar. It's like a superpower situation." - Elon Musk, American Entrepreneur

## Manipur State Museum to Add Royal, Traditional Textiles Galleries Under Upgrade Plan

**IMPHAL**  
The Ministry of Culture has approved the upgradation of the Manipur State Museum with the addition of two new sections—a Royal Gallery and a Traditional Textiles Gallery—aimed at strengthening the state's cultural infrastructure. Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh on Friday chaired a high-level meeting at the Secretariat to review the proposed expansion and modernisation of the museum. In a social media post, he said the long-pending upgrade would be pursued to align the institution with contemporary standards while preserving Manipur's rich cultural heritage. A detailed presentation was made by former Union Culture Secretary Raghvendra Singh in the presence of Arts and Culture Minister Kh. Loken Singh, Chief Secretary Puneet Kumar Goel, and Additional Chief Secretary Anurag Bajpai. The Chief Minister said the recommendations would guide efforts to strengthen museum development in the



Officials noted that the museum has faced challenges in recent years, including reduced visitor

## BJP Will Fully Implement CAA, Bangladeshi Hindus Have Nothing to Fear: Himanta Biswa Sarma

### No Bengali Hindus in Assam Detention Centres, Ready to Resign if Proven Otherwise: Sarma

**IMPHAL**

Fresh violence erupted in Ukhrul district of Manipur on Friday, leaving one person dead and at least two others injured, while several houses were reportedly set ablaze in Mulam village under Litan Police Station. According to a press communiqué issued by the Tangkhul Naga Long (TNL), a Naga Village Guard (NVG) member, identified as 29-year-old Hoshokmi Jamang from Chatric Khullen village in Kamjong district, was killed in the early hours near Sinakeithei village. TNL alleged that Jamang was ambushed by suspected Kuki cadres operating under Suspension of Operations (SoO), along with other armed militants, while on patrol between Sirarakhong and Sinakeithei following reports of suspicious movement in



the area. The organisation described his death as an act of sacrifice while defending his land and extended condolences to his family. In a separate incident, Mulam village reportedly came under attack around dawn, triggering panic among residents and marking a sharp escalation in tensions. A statement issued by the Mulam Village Authority described the incident as a "full-scale armed attack" beginning around 5:30 am, involving heavy and indiscriminate firing along with arson. The authority stated that an initial blank shot was heard around 1 am near the village but did not immediately raise alarm due to a recent pattern of unrest in the area. Two persons sustained severe injuries and were rescued, while there were unconfirmed reports of additional casualties, including one possible fatality. Terming the attack "unprovoked and premeditated," the Village Authority said the targeting of a civilian settlement marked a grave escalation. It also pointed to a series of recent incidents, including firing at farmers on April 19 and April 21, which had already heightened fear and disrupted daily life. The authority further alleged that prior warnings had been issued to neighbouring areas, including Toungou and Sirarikhong, urging intervention and de-escalation, but claimed that these appeals went unheeded. Appealing for urgent government intervention, the Village Authority warned that continued inaction could result in further loss of innocent lives. Official confirmation from authorities regarding the incidents was awaited at the time of filing this report.

## Tear Gas Fired as Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity Rally Turns Tense



**IMPHAL**

A massive rally organised by the Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity in Imphal turned tense on Saturday after clashes broke out between protesters and security forces, prompting the use of tear gas to disperse the crowd. The rally began around 1 pm, with large groups assembling across multiple locations in the valley districts, including Lamlong Bazar, Lambi Khongmangkong, Kakwa Keithel, Tiddim Ground, Hao Ground and Oriental College. Protesters from Keishamthong, Wangoi and Khangemballi also joined the mobilisation in significant numbers. Participants later converged and marched towards Tiddim Road, intending to proceed to the residence of Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh to submit a memorandum outlining six key demands. These included restoration of peace and normalcy, ensuring civilian safety, action against those responsible for recent violence, and safeguarding the territorial integrity of Manipur. Tensions escalated as the rally advanced, leading to a confrontation

between demonstrators and police personnel. Security forces fired tear gas shells at multiple locations to bring the situation under control. The situation remained particularly volatile near Khwairamband Ima Keithel, where large numbers of protesters had gathered awaiting updates from their representatives, who had gone to meet the Chief Minister at his official residence. Crowds were also reported near Johnstone School, adding to the build-up in central Imphal. Tear gas was again used in the Ima Keithel area as security forces attempted to disperse agitating groups amid rising tension. Earlier in the day, normal activity had resumed at the Ima Keithel market. However, following the clashes, panic spread in the area, forcing vendors and shoppers to flee. Several women vendors, including those who had travelled from distant areas, were seen leaving on foot as the situation deteriorated. No major injuries were reported at the time of filing this report, though the situation remained tense, with authorities keeping a close watch on developments.

## NIT Silchar Prohibits Prayers, Religious Gatherings in Hostels and Common Areas

**SILCHAR**

The National Institute of Technology Silchar has issued an order banning prayers and religious gatherings in hostels and common areas across its campus, with immediate effect. The directive, issued by the Office of the Dean of Students' Welfare following approval from the competent authority, applies to hostel boarders, mess workers, and all individuals associated with hostel facilities. According to the order dated April 24, no person residing in or linked to hostel premises will be allowed to organise or participate in prayer meetings, religious assemblies, or similar activities in open spaces and shared areas within hostels or elsewhere on campus. The administration warned that any violation of the directive would be treated seriously and could invite disciplinary action. Copies of the order have been circulated to key officials, including the Director, Registrar, Associate Deans of Students' Welfare, wardens, assistant wardens, estate authorities, housekeeping staff, mess caterers, and students to ensure compliance. While the institute has not specified the reasons behind the move, the directive appears to focus specifically on regulating activities in common-use spaces rather than restricting private personal religious practices. The development is expected to draw attention within the campus community, as the institute hosts a diverse student population from across the country.

## Two Civilians Injured as Assam Rifles Convoy Allegedly Forces Way Through Village Barricades in Manipur's Ukhrul



**UKHRUL**

Tension gripped parts of Manipur's Ukhrul district on Saturday after an Assam Rifles convoy reportedly forced its way through barricades erected by villagers in Talui, with local sources claiming that two civilians sustained injuries in the incident. According to local inputs, the convoy was moving from Ukhrul headquarters around 1:00 pm when it encountered barriers set up by residents at the entrance of Talui village. The barricades had reportedly been put in place by villagers to monitor vehicular movement amid the prevailing tense situation in the hill district. Sources alleged that as the convoy proceeded through the area, multiple rounds of gunfire were heard, triggering panic among residents and creating a

tense atmosphere in the civilian locality. Local accounts further stated that residents attempted to halt the convoy again near Hoomi village, where additional firing was allegedly reported. As per initial claims, the injured include a woman from Talui and a man from Hoomi. Both were rushed to Ukhrul District Hospital, though their condition was not immediately known at the time of filing this report. There has been no official statement from the Assam Rifles or district authorities so far, and the sequence of events could not be independently verified. The incident comes against the backdrop of continuing tensions in parts of Manipur, where the movement of security forces and restrictions in civilian areas remain highly sensitive.

## Tripura Removes IFS Officer After Rs.60 Lakh Cash Seizure; Accused Sent to Police Remand

**AGARTALA**

The Tripura Forest Department has removed Indian Forest Service (IFS) officer Gaurav Ravindra Wagh from his post as Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), South Tripura, after a man allegedly linked to him was arrested with nearly Rs 60 lakh in cash at Agartala Railway Station. The arrested individual, identified as Rajendra Chintaman Kankachila, was produced before a court and remanded to police custody until April 29 for further investigation. In an official order, R.K. Samal directed Wagh to report to the office of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of Forest Force until further orders. The charge of DFO, South Tripura, has been handed over to Kamal Bhowmik as additional responsibility. Wagh has been instructed to join the Forest Headquarters by April 25. According to officials, the Special Branch and the Government Railway Police detained Kankachila during a checking operation at the railway station. Investigators suspect he was preparing to board a train to Kolkata when the cash was

recovered. Sources said the accused arrived at the station in a black Scorpio vehicle bearing the nameplate of the South Tripura DFO. During security checks, one bag was reportedly inspected while another was initially not opened, raising suspicion among officials. He was subsequently detained and the cash seized. During questioning, the accused allegedly claimed that Wagh was a distant relative. Authorities said this claim is being verified as part of the ongoing probe. Officials confirmed that the accused has been booked under the Prevention of Corruption Act, with investigators examining the source of the seized money and any possible links to the forest officer. "We have produced him before the court, and the court has sent him to police remand until April 29. We are investigating the matter," an official said. The case has drawn significant attention in Tripura, with authorities closely monitoring developments amid the high-value cash seizure and potential official connections under scrutiny.



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## FROM TWO SEATS TO A NATION'S FAITH

**A**s dawn broke over India, a sea of saffron light illuminated the headquarters of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) across the country, each lamp reflecting not just celebration, but a journey of Sangharsh, Sankalp and Seva. The radiance was not merely electric; it was deeply emotional, symbolizing the rise of a movement that grew from the margins to become the heartbeat of a resurgent India.

Founded on April 6, 1980, the BJP emerged with a vision rooted in nationalism, cultural ethos, and grassroots strength. In its formative years, stalwarts like Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Lal Krishna Advani gave the party a distinct ideological voice. At the beginning of electoral politics in 1984, the party could just win two Lok Sabha seats by A.K. Patel from Mehsana, Gujarat and C. Janga Reddy from Hanamkonda, Andhra Pradesh. This was not a defeat but a defining moment of resolve for Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

From those humble beginnings, the BJP has today grown into the largest political party in the world, commanding a dominant presence in the Lok Sabha and a strong influence in the Rajya Sabha. Governing over a dozen states either independently or in alliance, the BJP's footprint now spans the entire nation.

The 1990 Rath Yatra, led by Lal Krishna Advani, proved to be a turning point, galvanizing public support and strengthening ideological clarity. Alongside him, Atal Bihari Vajpayee provided statesmanship and vision, while a young Narendra Modi worked tirelessly at the organizational level, shaping the party's future.

The BJP first formed a government at the Centre in 1996, but it was in 1998, under Vajpayee's leadership, that the "Atal Yug" truly began. India conducted the Pokhran-II nuclear tests, asserting its sovereignty on the global stage. The Kargil War victory (1999) demonstrated unmatched courage, while projects like the Golden Quadrilateral (2001) laid the foundation of modern infrastructure.

A new era dawned in 2014, when Narendra Modi led the BJP to a historic mandate. Governance became synonymous with transparency, efficiency, and inclusivity. Landmark schemes like Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana brought millions into the banking system, while Swachh Bharat Abhiyan transformed cleanliness into a people's movement.

Importantly, the BJP government has also taken historic steps for social justice and empowerment of Muslim women. The enactment of the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019, which criminalized instant triple talaq, ensured dignity and legal protection for Muslim women. Measures like raising the legal age and rights awareness, access to financial inclusion through Jan Dhan accounts, housing under PM Awas Yojana, and scholarships have contributed to their socio-economic upliftment.

The BJP's governance has also created iconic national symbols. The towering Statue of Unity in Gujarat stands as a tribute to national unity, while the Char Dham Highway Development Project has revolutionized connectivity to sacred Himalayan shrines, boosting both faith tourism and regional growth. Building of the world's highest railway bridge at Karta has not only connected Jammu and Kashmir with rest of the India but also bridged the socio-economic gap and strengthened ties of people.

The abrogation of Article 370 in 2019 marked a historic step towards full integration of Jammu & Kashmir, unlocking new avenues of development and stability. The realization of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya fulfilled a long-cherished civilizational aspiration. In 2021, India carried out the world's largest vaccination drive, showcasing its administrative strength. Hosting the G20 Summit in 2023 elevated India's global stature, while in 2024, the BJP secured a third consecutive term at the Centre, reflecting the trust of the people.

The BJP government has also taken several meaningful steps to honour and strengthen the Sikh community's heritage and sentiments. Under the leadership of Narendra Modi, the courage and sacrifice of the Chaar Sahibzaade has been given national recognition with the observance of Veer Bal Diwas, ensuring that future generations remember their unparalleled martyrdom. The spiritual and cultural ethos of Sikhism found a historic moment when Gurbani Kirtan was broadcast from the Red Fort (Lal Quila), symbolizing national respect for the faith. In a remarkable humanitarian gesture, the government facilitated the safe evacuation and return of the sacred Guru Granth Sahib from Afghanistan amidst crisis, reflecting deep reverence and commitment towards Sikh sentiments. From commemorating Guru Nanak Dev Ji's 550th Prakash Parv at a global scale to improving connectivity through the Kartarpur Corridor, the Modi government has consistently demonstrated its resolve to honour Sikh traditions, protect their legacy, and integrate their pride into the national narrative.

To sum up, it's the Modi government which irrespective of caste, creed, region or religion works for the nation and its people. Under Modi's leadership the country has witnessed massive development, zero tolerance against corruption and terrorism. It's working towards building a great nation which is going to lead the world from the front and show how good governance can help nations sail smoothly even during the worst of crises and how people are made to progress and prosper with the right kind of policies and government initiatives.

The new Parliament building symbolizes a confident India shedding colonial legacies. On national security, decisive actions from Uri to Balakot have reinforced India's zero-tolerance stance on terrorism. The finishing of Naxalism and firm internal security measures reflect a governance model rooted in stability and strength. Politically, the BJP continues to expand, with growing influence in states like West Bengal and beyond and its effect will be seen in days to come. Unlike dynastic parties, the BJP is powered by its Karyakartas, driven by the ethos of "Seva Se Sangathan, Sangathan Se Rashtra."

At 47, the BJP is not merely a political party, it is a movement that has redefined governance, nationalism, and development. It has demonstrated that India can lead globally, manage crises effectively, secure its interests, and maintain strong international relations. As lamps continue to glow across the nation, they illuminate a path forward of hope, strength, and Rashtra Nirman. The journey continues, with the BJP steadfast in its commitment to building a stronger and self-reliant Bharat.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

Energy is contagious: either you affect people or you infect people.

- T. Harv Eker

# HORMUZ AT EDGE-TESTS OF DIPLOMACY AND ECONOMICS



PROF. D. MUKHERJEE

The Middle East entered a new phase of geopolitical instability on 28 February 2026 when the United States and Israel carried out coordinated strikes on Iran, targeting military infrastructure, missile capabilities, and senior leadership. The initial attacks reportedly resulted in the death of Iran's Supreme Leader and were followed by swift Iranian retaliation through missile and drone strikes on Israel, US bases, and allied facilities across the region. This conflict was not sudden but the outcome of years of rising tensions over Iran's nuclear ambitions, its regional proxy networks, and the breakdown of earlier nuclear agreements. Limited confrontations in 2024 and 2025 had already weakened deterrence, making a larger conflict increasingly probable. Within days, the war disrupted global systems, causing airspace closures, shipping interruptions, and volatility in energy markets. The Strait of Hormuz quickly emerged as a critical flashpoint due to its importance for global oil transit. After more than forty days, the conflict has significantly reshaped West Asian geopolitics, leaving the world uncertain whether it will end quickly or develop into a prolonged war. Further, mediation by Pakistan has been eclipsed by note of interrogation by many countries including Iran and Israel and peace initiative meeting held on 11th April seems to be ended in smoke.

The first month of the conflict has resulted in considerable military and civilian losses across several countries, although exact figures remain uncertain due to wartime reporting limitations. Early strikes and counter-attacks reportedly caused over a thousand deaths, with civilian casualties recorded in both Iran and Israel. Iranian missile attacks on Israeli cities led to deaths and thousands of injuries despite advanced missile defence systems, while significant infrastructure damage has occurred in both countries. The United States has also suffered military losses, including aircraft and personnel casualties as the conflict spread to bases in Iraq and the Gulf. Oil, shipping, and aviation infrastructure across the Gulf region have been targeted, affecting even non-warring states. Meanwhile, Europe and Asia have experienced economic impacts through rising energy prices, shipping costs, and supply chain disruptions, showing the global economic consequences of modern warfare.

Two competing strategic timelines now shape the geopolitical narrative of the war. The leadership of the United States has indicated that the conflict could end within weeks, suggesting limited military objectives aimed at weakening Iran's military capacity and pushing negotiations. Iran, however, has signalled readiness for a prolonged war of attrition lasting several months. If the shorter timeline materialises, the conflict may conclude with negotiations, possibly leading to revised nuclear agreements and regional security arrangements. If the longer timeline unfolds, the war could expand into a wider proxy conflict involving Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen,

and Gulf shipping routes, evolving into a prolonged asymmetric confrontation. It is also possible that both timelines may prove partially correct, with intense fighting ending early but low-intensity conflict continuing for months.

The United States and Israel are acting as military allies with the strategic aim of limiting Iran's nuclear and missile capabilities and reducing its regional influence. Iran, while unable to defeat the United States militarily, can impose economic and strategic costs through missiles, proxy forces, and control over maritime chokepoints such as the Strait of Hormuz. Russia and China have taken cautious diplomatic positions, supporting negotiations. India remains neutral while focusing on energy security, and European countries support diplomatic de-escalation despite economic impacts.

The economic impact of the war may outweigh its military effects. The Strait of Hormuz, a vital global trade chokepoint, is central to oil and supply chains. Even limited disruption can raise oil prices, increase shipping costs, and trigger inflation across Europe and Asia. This highlights a broader vulnerability in globalisation, where conflict in key routes affects the entire world economy, increasing pressure for diplomatic resolution.

For the war to end through negotiation, any settlement must address the core strategic interests of the main parties involved, particularly the security concerns of Israel, the strategic and technological objectives of Iran, and the regional stability goals of the United States and other global powers. Conflicts of this scale rarely conclude with total military victory; they usually end through political arrangements that allow each side to safeguard its key interests while avoiding the appearance of defeat. A central issue in the conflict is Iran's nuclear programme. Any diplomatic resolution would likely include restrictions on nuclear development, international inspections, and renewed agreements on enrichment limits and monitoring systems. Closely related is Iran's missile programme, which remains a major security concern for Israel and its allies, and could therefore become part of broader arms limitation negotiations. Israel would likely seek long-term security guarantees against missile attacks and proxy conflicts, possibly through defence cooperation agreements or regional security arrangements. Iran, in turn, would likely demand gradual removal of economic sanctions, making sanctions relief a major bargaining element in negotiations. Maritime security, especially in the Strait of Hormuz, would also be central to any agreement, along with humanitarian measures such as prisoner exchanges, reconstruction assistance, and civilian protection. Historically, such conflicts often end through negotiated deterrence frameworks rather than decisive victory.

In conflicts where regional wars carry the risk of wider escalation, global leadership becomes essential. Wars rarely remain confined to their original region; they often spread

through economic disruption, proxy conflicts, refugee flows, and strategic alliances. For this reason, world leaders must act quickly, not only to stop the fighting but also to prevent the conflict from expanding into a broader geopolitical confrontation. One of the most important diplomatic platforms available is the United Nations Security Council, which can convene emergency sessions, propose ceasefire resolutions, and facilitate internationally supervised negotiations. While such interventions may not immediately end hostilities, they often create diplomatic space for dialogue. In addition to formal diplomacy, neutral mediation by countries such as India, Turkey, Qatar, and Switzerland could help maintain communication between the parties and support negotiations. Ensuring maritime security in the Strait of Hormuz would also be a priority to prevent disruption of global oil and shipping routes. Humanitarian ceasefires, prisoner exchanges, and reconstruction assistance could serve as confidence-building measures, while back-channel diplomacy, particularly between the United States and Iran, may play a decisive role in de-escalation. Oil-producing countries may also need to coordinate production to stabilise global energy markets.

Despite diplomatic efforts, the risk of wider conflict remains a strategic concern. Modern global wars rarely begin with formal declarations; they develop gradually through regional conflicts, economic warfare, cyber-attacks, and alliance involvement. Escalation could occur if Iran directly attacks US bases, if Israel strikes Iranian nuclear facilities again, if Hezbollah opens a full front from Lebanon, or if the Strait of Hormuz is blocked. The most serious scenario would involve direct military involvement by major powers such as Russia or China. In response to such risks, many countries are increasing defence readiness, strengthening air defence, building strategic energy reserves, diversifying supply chains, expanding naval patrols, and improving cyber security. Modern wars now extend beyond battlefields into financial systems, communication networks, and digital infrastructure. The greatest danger is therefore not immediate world war but gradual escalation across military, economic, cyber, and maritime domains. Preventing such escalation has become a global priority, as the consequences of a wider conflict would affect not only the Middle East but the entire international political and economic system. More than forty days after the Middle East war began on 28 February 2026, the conflict has already altered geopolitics, energy markets, trade routes, and global strategic relations. Its effects now extend far beyond the battlefield, influencing oil prices, shipping costs, inflation, defence planning, and diplomatic relations among major powers. Whether the war ends quickly or continues for months will depend not only on military developments but also on economic pressure, domestic political factors, and international diplomacy.

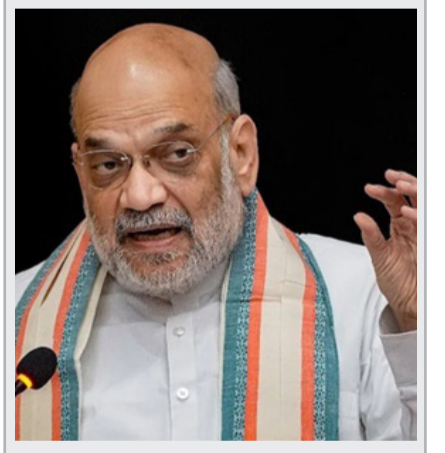
A clear military victory for any side now appears unlikely; a negotiated strategic balance is a more realistic outcome, as seen in earlier Middle Eastern conflicts where wars ended through negotiated deterrence rather than surrender.

After the first month, neither the United States, Israel, nor Iran has achieved decisive victory, yet none is politically ready to concede, creating a strategic stalemate. If the war ends within weeks, it will likely do so through negotiated de-escalation following limited military objectives. If it continues for months, the conflict may evolve into a prolonged regional confrontation involving proxy forces, maritime tensions, cy-

### DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

**I want to make it clear that the next Chief Minister of Bengal will be a Bengali, and will be a BJP worker.**

**- Amit Shah, Union Home Minister**



ber operations, and economic pressure rather than direct warfare. The greater danger lies not in how long the war lasts but in whether it expands. Disruption of trade routes, energy supplies, and strategic waterways such as the Strait of Hormuz could transform a regional war into a global crisis.

Diplomacy must therefore move faster than military escalation. Ceasefire negotiations, monitoring of nuclear and missile programmes, protection of shipping routes, gradual sanctions negotiations, regional security dialogue, and humanitarian reconstruction efforts could form the basis of a long-term stability framework. Countries such as India, Turkey, Switzerland, and Qatar could play mediating roles. Ultimately, the conflict is not only a test of military strength but of economic endurance and international diplomacy, and its outcome may shape global geopolitics for years. A short war, a long war, or a wider war – the Middle East conflict now tests diplomacy, economics, and global stability.

(The author is Chief Education Officer & Principal Secretary-Office of Chairman, International Institute of Medical Science & Technology Council (IIMSTC), Bengaluru, Karnataka, India)

## COCOMI Announces Statewide Agitation, Seeks Answers on Security, IDPs and SoO in Manipur

IMPHAL

The Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI) on Friday announced a statewide agitation, posing six key questions to the Manipur government and demanding time-bound responses on issues ranging from security to rehabilitation of displaced persons.

Addressing a press conference at its Lamphel office, COCOMI spokesperson Nahakpam Shanta said the move marks a "final round of calibrated agitation" following a series of protests launched in the aftermath of the Tronglaobi bomb blast incident.

He said the agitation, scheduled for April 25, will see partic-



ipation from local clubs, civil society organisations, and community groups across the state. Demonstrators are expected to assemble at 1 pm and submit a memorandum to authorities and elected representatives outlining six core demands.

Among the key issues raised, COCOMI has sought clarity on whether the government intends to halt what it described as a "proxy war" allegedly targeting indigenous communities. It has also asked for concrete measures and a defined timeline to tackle narco-terrorism in the state.

The organisation further demanded updates on the April 7 incident in which five individuals, including two minors, were

killed, seeking a timeline for identifying and arresting those responsible.

Another question pertains to an alleged incident involving the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), where three civilians were reportedly killed. COCOMI has called for a formal inquiry into the matter.

On rehabilitation, the committee flagged delays in resettling internally displaced persons (IDPs), noting that many remain in relief camps despite earlier assurances reportedly conveyed by the Chief Secretary during Governor's rule that all displaced persons would be rehabilitated by March 31. It has demanded a revised deadline and a clear re-

habilitation roadmap. The final issue relates to the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreements with certain armed groups operating in Manipur. COCOMI questioned whether the government is considering scrapping these arrangements, which have remained contentious since May 2023. Shanta said the agitation would continue until the government provides "clear answers and visible action" on all six issues.

The announcement comes amid sustained tensions in Manipur, with civil society organisations stepping up pressure on the administration over security, accountability, and the rehabilitation of those affected by the ongoing unrest.

### Record Turnout Marks Phase IV of RMLCF Tobacco-Free Campaign in Kohima



KOHIMA

Phase IV of the RMLCF Tobacco-Free Campaign witnessed its highest-ever participation on Friday, with 404 attendees joining the programme held at the Kevilhohu Rio Auditorium within G. Rio School.

The event brought together 369 students and 35 teachers from 20 schools, including two government and 18 private institutions. Organisers said the strong turnout reflects growing awareness among young people and a shared commitment to promoting a tobacco-free future.

The campaign opened with a keynote address by Dr. Reysalu Lase Vizo, who highlighted the harmful effects of tobacco use and stressed the importance of informed health choices. The session focused on prevention, awareness, and the long-term benefits of avoiding tobacco.

The second session saw active student engagement through group discussions and presentations, where participants shared ideas and solutions to curb tobacco use among youth and encourage healthier lifestyles.

Organisers described the programme as an effective platform for learning, dialogue, and youth-driven action, underlining the growing role of students in advancing a tobacco-free movement in Nagaland.

### AAP Rajya Sabha Shift to Bolster BJP, Says Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma



GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the reported realignment of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) members in the Rajya Sabha would significantly strengthen the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), describing the development as politically consequential at the national level.

Reacting to reports that a section of AAP's Rajya Sabha MPs

may merge with the BJP, Sarma said the move would "add a lot of strength" to the ruling party, underlining the importance of strategic alignments and internal cohesion in shaping parliamentary dynamics.

Separately, commenting on the reported 91.91 per cent voter turnout in the first phase of the West Bengal Assembly Elections, the Chief Minister said the high participation reflects a strong public appetite for political change in the state.

"The public has voted in large numbers for change and to form a BJP government in West Bengal. We will win 110 seats in the first phase itself, and overall, the BJP will form the government by winning around 200 seats," he asserted.

Sarma's remarks come amid heightened political activity across states, with parties recalibrating strategies and alliances ahead of key electoral contests.

### Nagaon Court Awards Life Term to 20 in Abhi-Neel Lynching Case After 8-Year Trial



NAGAON

In a significant verdict after nearly eight years, the Nagaon Sessions Court on Friday convicted 20 persons in the Abhi-Neel mob lynching

case, sentencing them to life imprisonment and imposing a fine of Rs 20,000 on each.

The judgment was delivered by Sessions Judge Dibyajyoti Mahanta following the conclusion of the trial.

Those convicted include Biswa Ram Swargiary, Pantheng Basumatary, Alpha-joz Timung, Inosen Engti, Raikom Timung, Ratneswar Terrang, Phukan Lekhte, Anos Timung, Pres Timung,

Rupsing Kro, Dhono Mech, Babu Singh Kro, Bikram Hanse, Sikari Rongpi, Babu Rongpi, Bidyasing Rongpi, Mensing Kro, Dipjyoti Basumatary, Wares Rongpi, and Onda Mech.

The case, which had drawn widespread attention in Assam, pertains to the mob lynching of two youths-Abhi and Neel-triggering public outrage and demands for justice.

Following the verdict, the victims' family expressed dissatisfaction with the outcome. Their legal counsel indicated that they may challenge the ruling before the Gauhati High Court, seeking further legal recourse.

The conviction marks a major development in one of the state's most closely followed criminal cases, even as the possibility of an appeal keeps the legal battle ongoing.

### Agartala Press Club Urges Enhanced Security for Journalists, Flags Misuse of Press Stickers



AGARTALA

The Agartala Press Club on Friday

called for stronger security measures for media personnel across Tripura, raising concerns over attacks on

journalists and the growing misuse of press identification stickers.

A delegation from the Press Club met Director General of Police Anurag to discuss key issues affecting journalists in both hill and plain areas of the state.

Speaking to reporters, Press Club president Pranab Sarkar said the delegation stressed the need for prompt arrests in cases where journalists have been targeted. "We have demanded overall security for journalists. In some places, media personnel have come under attack, and we discussed the importance of swift action against those responsible," he said.

The delegation also highlighted the increasing misuse of press stickers, urging authorities to take strict action against individuals falsely posing as journalists.

Among other demands, the Press Club sought the provision of special-

ised all-season press jackets, particularly for photojournalists who often work late-night assignments in challenging conditions. It also called for enhanced police patrolling in Agartala and other sub-divisional towns to ensure the safety of media personnel.

Concerns over the spread of misinformation on social media by individuals posing as content creators were also raised, with the delegation urging the police to take steps to curb such activities.

Sarkar said the issues, discussed during the club's managing committee and annual general meetings, were formally presented to senior police officials. He added that the DGP assured the delegation that appropriate action would be taken.

The delegation included Vice President Chitra Roy and Joint Secretaries Kamal Chowdhury and Abhishek Dey.

### Nagaland to Roll Out NEPEX 2026, 'Operation Night Guard' to Test Disaster Readiness



KOHIMA

The Nagaland State Disaster Management Authority (NSDMA), under the guidance of the National Disaster Management Authority, has announced the launch of NEPEX 2026 along with a new initiative, "Operation Night Guard," to strengthen disaster preparedness and emergency response across the state. Speaking at a press briefing at the Nagaland Civil Secretariat in Kohima, NSDMA Secretary Sentiwapang Aier said the exercise marks the eighth edition of the state-level drill aimed at testing response systems and inter-agency coordination during crises.

The multi-phase exercise has already begun with a capacity-building programme earlier this month. This will be followed by a Table Top Exercise (TTE) on April 29 at the State Emergency Operations Centre, while the main mock drill is scheduled for April 30 between 8:00 am and 12:00 noon across Nagaland. The drill will simulate disaster scenarios including earthquakes, landslides, and extreme weather events.

In a first for the exercise, helicopter services from Thumbay Avia-

tion Pvt Ltd will be integrated to enhance aerial emergency response, with support from the Ministry of Home Affairs. Adding a new dimension, "Operation Night Guard" will be conducted on the evening of April 30 from 6:30 pm, featuring siren alerts and a temporary blackout to test public response and warning systems. The simulation will include scenarios such as drone attacks, fires, and structural damage. Joint CEO Johnny Ruangmei said the exercise will model a 7.7 magnitude earthquake with its epicentre at Piphema, assessing preparedness for large-scale destruction, casualties, and communication breakdowns.

Deputy Commandant General Medozhalie Pienyu said a 15-minute blackout will be observed from 6:30 pm to 6:45 pm across 10 districts, during which residents will be required to switch off all non-essential lights.

Officials clarified that the drill is a simulation and not a real prediction, urging citizens to remain calm while actively cooperating. The initiative reflects the state's continued push to build resilience and strengthen disaster response mechanisms.

## Tripura to Enforce Damage Recovery Law After Post-Poll Violence, Over 200 Left Homeless

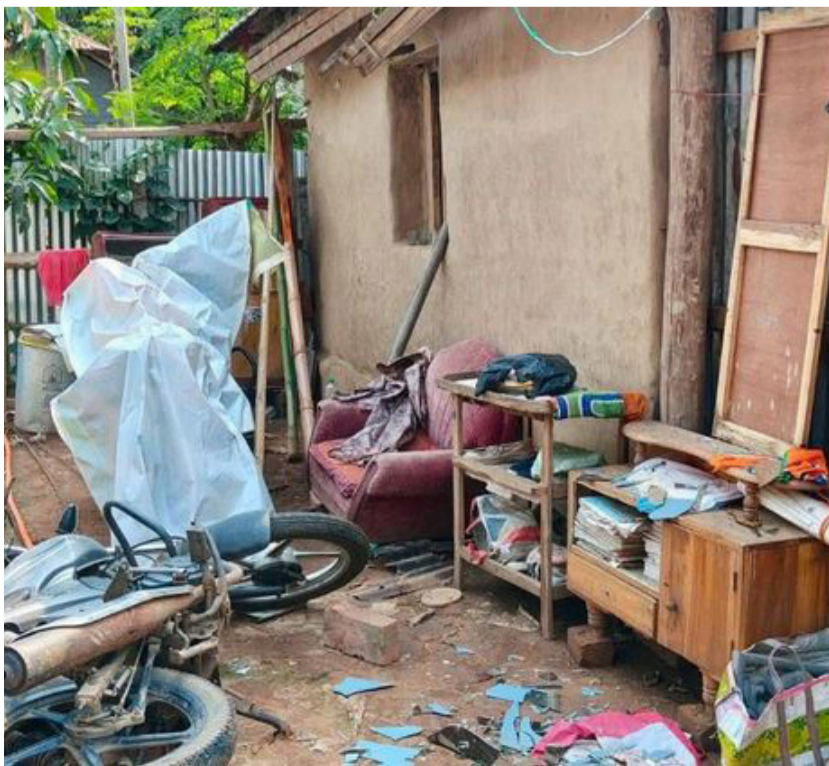
AGARTALA

In a firm response to recent post-poll violence, the Tripura government has decided to strictly enforce the Tripura Recovery of Damages to Public and Private Property Act, 2021 to ensure accountability and recover compensation for losses caused during unrest. The decision follows violence reported after the declaration of results for the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council elections on April 17, which left over 200 people homeless and caused widespread damage to homes, vehicles, shops, and other public and private property.

Officials said the 2021 law empowers the state to recover damages arising from riots, protests, strikes, and similar disturbances. While the legislation had been in place, authorities acknowledged it had not been strictly implemented until now.

Quest!

36 million years ago, penguins were about 5 feet tall.



Under the Act, Claims Tribunals will be constituted to assess losses and determine compensation.

A Claims Commissioner-of at least Additional District Magistrate rank will oversee the process. Police are required to submit detailed reports to the tribunal within three months of any such incident, following which compensation will be fixed and recovered from those found responsible. Criminal proceedings against the accused will continue in parallel under existing laws.

Chief Minister Manik Saha recently visited affected areas to review the situation and meet victims. He has sanctioned Rs 64.5 lakh from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund to support relief and rehabilitation efforts.

Officials said the government intends to invoke the Act in full measure as a deterrent against future violence, signalling that individuals involved in the destruction of property will be held financially liable.

The move is being seen as a key administrative step by the BJP-led government to restore normalcy and prevent a recurrence of politically driven violence in the state.

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## NDA just 17 seats short of two-thirds majority in Rajya Sabha after AAP defection

NEW DELHI

With seven MPs of AAP in the Rajya Sabha switching sides on Friday, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) moved a step closer to attaining a stronger position of hitting the two-thirds majority mark in the House, required for specific voting purposes and the passage of constitutional amendment legislation.

However, the ruling alliance is still 17 members short of the magical number in the Upper House. With the dramatic shift by the Aam Aadmi Party MPs, the NDA now enjoys the support of 145 MPs in the Upper House. The two-thirds majority mark in the 244-member House now stands at 163.

The BJP, which is leading the alliance, is still 10 seats short for a simple majority in the House.

A position that poses a challenge to the party.

After Rajya Sabha Chairman CP Radhakrishnan approves the merger of the AAP Parliamentary Party into the BJP, the ruling party will now have a total of 113 MPs. At present, the BJP has 106 MPs.

The ruling party is also likely to get the support of seven nominated members and two independent MPs, which puts the number of those who are in the BJP's support at 122, exactly the halfway mark.

Sources said that the seven AAP MPs, who had jumped ship, may get the approval as they comprise more than two-thirds of the AAP Parliamentary Party in Rajya Sabha.

Once the NDA gets a two-thirds majority in the Upper House, it won't be difficult for

the alliance to clear crucial legislations requiring constitutional amendments.

The NDA does not have a two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha either, even though it enjoys a simple majority. It needs the support of 363 MPs for a special majority in the Lower House.

It is pertinent to mention here that the crucial Constitution (31st Amendment) Bill to implement a 33% reservation for women in legislatures in 2029 and increase the number of Lok Sabha seats to 816 was defeated in Lok Sabha on April 17 after the NDA failed to get a two-thirds majority.

This was the first time during the term of the current NDA government that a constitution amendment bill was defeated for a lack of numbers.

## 'BJP will win over 110 of 152 seats in first phase': Amit Shah predicts sweep in Bengal polls



KOLKATA

The Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday claimed that the BJP would win in 110 out of 152 assembly constituencies in the first phase of West Bengal polls held across 16 districts on Thursday, prompting a sharp rebuttal from the ruling Trinamool Congress.

Speaking to reporters in

Kolkata, Shah, who has been campaigning in the state as the BJP's star campaigner after Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said, "The BJP will bag more than 110 out of 152 seats in the first phase polls held on Thursday."

He further claimed that the BJP would form the government in West Bengal with an absolute majority

next month, adding that a Bengali leader educated in a Bengali-medium school would become the Chief Minister.

Asserting that voters had turned out in large numbers seeking change, Shah said the "Anga, Banga and Kalinga" regions would see BJP governments next month, referring to ancient kingdoms of

eastern India. He also cited the reported over 92 per cent voter turnout in the first phase.

The second phase of polling for the remaining 142 seats in south Bengal, including Kolkata, Howrah, Hooghly, and North and South 24 Parganas, will be held on April 29.

Shah thanked the Election Commission and security forces for ensuring no deaths during polling, noting that 1,278 people were injured in the 2016 elections and 1,681 in 2021.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of balanced development between eastern and western India would be realised if the BJP comes to power in the state. Shah also alleged large-scale illegal land encroachment in Bengal and promised action similar to Assam if voted to power.

Criticising Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Shah said her remarks on women's safety reflected governance failure and claimed that even teenage girls would be able to move freely at night under a BJP government.

He also targeted Trinamool Congress national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee, alleging "syndicate raj" and "bhaipo tax" in the state, and accused the TMC government of institutionalised corruption involving scams worth over Rs 10,000 crore since 2011.

Responding to Shah's claims, Abhishek Banerjee, speaking at a rally in Howrah, said the Trinamool Congress had already crossed the 100-seat mark in the first phase. He said the BJP was "gripped by panic" and cited his earlier poll predictions as evidence of his accuracy.



## INTERNATIONAL

## US pushes for direct talks in Islamabad as Iran demands indirect mediation



ISLAMABAD

Iran's foreign minister arrived in Islamabad on Friday and US envoys headed to the Pakistani capital in a bid to kickstart a new round of peace negotiations amid a fragile ceasefire.

The White House said emissaries Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner would engage in an "in-person conversation" with Iranian representatives, but Iranian state media said that direct talks were not in the cards.

Despite President Donald Trump's announcement on Thursday of a three-week ceasefire extension in Lebanon, Israeli strikes in the south of the country killed six people on Friday, the Lebanese health ministry said.

While Trump expressed confidence at the prospect of a lasting peace in Lebanon, sealing a deal to end the wider Middle East war is a thornier proposition, even as urgency mounts to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, a vital conduit for the world's oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG).

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said Witkoff and

Kushner would head to Pakistan on Saturday "to engage in talks...with representatives from the Iranian delegation."

"The Iranians reached out, as the president called on them to do, and asked for this in-person conversation," Leavitt said, adding that the talks would "hopefully move the ball forward towards a deal."

Leavitt said Vice President JD Vance, who led a first round of negotiations in Islamabad two weeks ago that concluded without a deal, would not be joining for the time being, but was on "standby to fly to Pakistan if necessary."

It remained unclear late Friday whether the Iranian side would meet directly with the US envoys.

Iranian state television said Araghchi has no plans to meet with the Americans and Islamabad would serve as a bridge to "convey" Iranian proposals to end the conflict.

Pakistan's foreign ministry said Araghchi had arrived in Islamabad to discuss "ongoing efforts for regional peace and stability" with Pakistani

officials, without directly referencing talks with Witkoff and Kushner.

An Iranian spokesman said Araghchi would visit Oman and Russia after the Pakistan stop to discuss efforts to end the war launched against the Islamic Republic by Israel and the United States on February 28.

Since the last round of talks, efforts to bring the two sides back to the table have hit an impasse, with Iran refusing to participate as long as a US naval blockade on its ports remained in place.

Iran has imposed a de facto blockade of its own on the Strait of Hormuz, allowing only a trickle of ships to pass through the vital waterway, throwing global energy markets into turmoil.

Oil prices slid on Friday amid hopes that fresh peace talks would see an end to Tehran's disruption of trade through the strait.

European Council President Antonio Costa said Friday that the strait "must immediately reopen without restrictions and without tolling." "This is vital for the entire world," Costa said.

Major Wall Street indices closed at fresh records on Friday as markets cheered the latest batch of earnings reports and US and Iranian officials headed to Pakistan.

The United States continued meanwhile to build up its forces in the Middle East with the arrival of its third aircraft carrier in the region, the USS George H.W. Bush.

Trump spoke in glowing terms on Thursday of peace prospects for Lebanon after meeting with Israeli and Lebanese envoys, voicing hope for a three-way meeting with the Lebanese and Israeli leaders.

The two countries have been officially at war for decades and until last week had not met so directly since 1993.

Mohammed Raad, the head of the Hezbollah's parliamentary bloc, urged the Lebanese government to withdraw from direct talks with Israel and warned that a lasting peace deal of the kind sought by Trump "will in no way enjoy Lebanese national consensus."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has vowed to destroy the Iran-backed movement, said: "We have started a process to reach a historic peace between Israel and Lebanon, and it's clear to us that Hezbollah is trying to sabotage this."

In south Lebanon's Tyre, Mohamad Ali Hijazi was searching a mountain of rubble for mementos of family members killed in an Israeli airstrike minutes before the ceasefire took hold. "I'm trying to find my mother's hairbrush...and a bottle of perfume that she loves," said Hijazi, 48 -- some of the last things he sent her from France, where he has long lived with his wife and two daughters.

"My life has been destroyed. I haven't slept for five days," he told AFP, repeatedly fighting back tears.

## BRICS Delhi meet sees Iran, UAE align on 'deep concern' over West Asia tensions



NEW DELHI

BRICS Deputy Foreign Ministers and Special Envoys on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) met in the capital on Friday, with members including Iran and the UAE expressing "deep concern on the recent conflict in the Middle East" in a chair's statement issued after the talks. Secretary (South) in the Ministry of External Affairs, Neena Malhotra, chaired the meeting. According to the MEA, participants had a "constructive exchange of views on the current regional developments."

The discussions come amid continuing tensions across West Asia, including the US-Iran conflict, Israel-Hezbollah hostilities in Lebanon and a wider regional churn involving Gulf states.

The statement said

deliberations covered the Palestine issue and the situation in Gaza, including the "provision of humanitarian aid" and the role of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). Members also reiterated a "zero-tolerance approach to terrorism."

On Lebanon, the grouping "welcomed the ceasefire" and underlined the "unacceptability of attacks" on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), even as sporadic hostilities have continued despite truce arrangements.

The consultations extended to "post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation in Syria," the need for a "political settlement in Yemen," and "stability and development in Iraq."

The political process in Libya and efforts at "addressing the human-

itarian crisis in Sudan" were also discussed, as per the statement.

The meeting brought together envoys from the expanded BRICS grouping, including Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, along with Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates, with key West Asian countries represented in the consultations.

Significantly, the outcome was issued as a chair's statement rather than a joint statement.

Unlike a joint statement, which is formally negotiated and endorsed by all participating countries, a chair's statement reflects the host's summary of deliberations without implying full consensus on all issues.

The MEA statement added that members "agreed to meet again under China's Chairship in 2027."

# HEALING AND POWER: THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP UNITY IN MANIPUR'S 2027 BATTLE

**S**ince May 2023, Manipur has endured one of the most turbulent phases in its recent history—marked by ethnic tensions, displacement, political uncertainty, and an unrelenting battle of narratives. As the state struggles to restore normalcy, a parallel contest has unfolded in the public sphere: one of perception, propaganda, and political positioning. At the heart of this evolving situation lies a crucial question—can unity within the ruling establishment translate into lasting peace on the ground and electoral success in 2027?

**The Narrative War Since 2023**  
Over the past three years, competing narratives have shaped public opinion in Manipur. Various groups—political actors, civil society organisations, and ethnic stakeholders—have attempted to frame the crisis in ways that align with their respective interests. Allegations of misinformation and propaganda have been persistent, with claims that certain sections are deliberately attempting to deepen divisions within communities and weaken political institutions.

Among these claims is the argument that sections hostile to the Meitei community have consistently pushed narratives aimed at undermining both social cohesion and the internal stability of the ruling party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Whether these assertions are entirely accurate or partly exaggerated, what remains undeniable is that Manipur's fragile environment has made it particularly vulnerable to rumours and political speculation.

**Rumours and Political Undercurrents**  
In recent months, speculation surrounding a possible rift between incumbent Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh and his predecessor N. Biren Singh has gained traction. Social media chatter and informal political discourse have suggested disagreements, leadership tussles, and even the possibility of new political formations.

One recurring rumour has been that Biren Singh might float a new regional party—an idea often accompanied by speculative names and imagined political strategies. However, there has been no credible evidence to substantiate such claims. Observers note that these narratives often gain momentum in politically sensitive environments, especially when elections approach and stakes rise.

Equally telling is how routine political activities are sometimes amplified into signs of major upheaval. A personal or political visit to New Delhi by a senior leader can quickly be interpreted as a "summons" from the central leadership, fuelling speculation of imminent change. Such interpretations, while attention-grabbing, often lack factual grounding.

**Governance vs. Distraction**  
For Manipur, the stakes extend far beyond political gossip. The state continues to grapple with urgent humanitarian and governance challenges. Thousands of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) remain in relief camps, awaiting rehabilitation and a safe return to their homes. Infrastructure in conflict-affected areas requires rebuilding, and trust between communities must be painstakingly restored.

Chief Minister Y. Khemchand Singh now faces the formidable task of steering the state through this recovery phase. His responsibilities are multifaceted: maintaining law and order, accelerating development projects, facilitating dialogue among communities, and ensuring that displaced populations are rehabilitated with dignity.

In such a scenario, persistent rumours and political distractions risk diverting attention from these pressing priorities. Governance, particularly in a post-conflict environment, demands focus, coordination, and clarity of purpose—qualities that can be undermined by internal discord or even the perception of it.

**The Role of Leadership Continuity**  
Political analysts often emphasise the importance of continuity during periods of transition. In Manipur's case, the



relationship between the current and former chief ministers is seen as particularly significant. N. Biren Singh, who led the state during a period of intense unrest, retains considerable political influence and public recognition, especially among sections of the Meitei community.

Y. Khemchand Singh, on the other hand, represents the administrative present—tasked with translating policy into action and delivering tangible outcomes on the ground. Together, their roles are complementary: one embodying political experience and legacy, the other administrative authority and execution.

Any perceived rift between the two could have implications not only for governance but also for the BJP's electoral prospects. Political history in the Northeast has repeatedly shown how internal divisions can quickly escalate into broader organisational challenges, sometimes altering electoral outcomes.

**The 2027 Electoral Horizon**  
With the 2027 Manipur Assembly elections drawing closer, political calculations are already underway. For the BJP, which has built its base in the state over the past decade, maintaining unity will be critical. The party's success has been closely tied to both local leadership and support from the central leadership.

Figures such as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah have played key roles in shaping the party's national and regional strategies. Their involvement in Manipur's peace process and governance framework underscores the importance the Centre attaches to the state.

At the same time, voters in Manipur are increasingly focused on outcomes rather than rhetoric. Issues such as peace restoration, economic recovery, employment opportunities, and rehabilitation of displaced families are likely to dominate the electoral discourse. In this context, internal cohesion within the ruling party could significantly influence public perception.

**Centre-State Coordination**  
Coordination between the central and state governments has been a defining feature of the BJP's governance model. In Manipur, this coordination is particularly crucial given the complexity of the crisis. Security operations, peace negotiations, and rehabilitation initiatives often require alignment between multiple agencies and levels of government.

There have been indications that the central leadership has encouraged consultation and cooperation between current and former state leaders. Such an approach is not unusual; it reflects an effort to leverage experience while ensuring administrative efficiency.

However, questions of protocol and political hierarchy can sometimes complicate these arrangements. A former chief minister, by virtue of experience and stature, occupies a unique position within the political ecosystem. Balancing this with the authority of the incumbent leadership requires careful handling and mutual respect.

**Public Expectations and Political Reality**  
For the people of Manipur, the priorities are clear. After years of instability, there is a strong desire for peace, normalcy, and economic recovery. Communities affected by violence are looking for concrete assurances—safe resettlement, compensation, and long-term security.

Political observers note that voters are increasingly wary of divisive narratives and speculative politics. Instead, there is growing demand for accountability and results. This shift in public expectation places additional pressure on political leaders to demonstrate unity and effectiveness.

Rumours about new political parties or leadership changes may generate temporary interest, but they are unlikely to resonate with voters unless accompanied by credible plans and tangible benefits. In fact, excessive speculation could backfire, reinforcing perceptions of instability.

**The Risks of Division**  
History offers numerous examples of how internal divisions within political parties can weaken governance and electoral performance. In regions like Manipur, where political alignments are often fluid and influenced by local dynamics, even minor disagreements can have outsized consequences.

A fragmented leadership risks sending mixed signals to both the public and administrative machinery. It can slow decision-making, create confusion, and provide opportunities for opposition forces to capitalise on perceived weaknesses. Conversely, a united leadership can project stability and confidence—qualities that are particularly valuable in a post-conflict environment. It can also strengthen the government's ability to implement policies effectively and respond to emerging challenges.

**A Defining Moment for Manipur**  
As Manipur navigates this critical phase, the emphasis on unity is not merely a political slogan but a practical necessity. The challenges facing the state—peacebuilding, rehabilitation, and development—are too complex to be addressed in isolation.

For the BJP, the coming months will be crucial in shaping both governance outcomes and electoral prospects. Demonstrating cohesion between key leaders, maintaining focus on ground-level issues, and countering misinformation with transparency will be essential.

For the broader political landscape, the situation underscores the importance of responsible discourse. In a state recovering from conflict, narratives can either contribute to healing or deepen divisions.

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