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PERSPECTIVE
When a man Controls his focus, he becomes Unstoppable

Meghalaya ties up with Starlink to boost connectivity, plans Shillong tech hub
SHILLONG

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma on Thursday said the state government has partnered with Starlink to enhance digital connectivity, particularly in remote areas, and position Shillong as a technology hub.

Sangma said the collaboration would help expand access to advanced satellite-based internet services across the state, improving connectivity in underserved regions.

The chief minister said the initiative is expected to strengthen key sectors such as healthcare, education and rural livelihoods by enabling better access to digital services.

He said the state has witnessed significant transformation through technology and expressed hope that the partnership would help bridge connectivity gaps and improve quality of life in remote areas.

Referring to the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Meghalaya government and Starlink India, Sangma said the agreement marks an important step towards introducing advanced satellite connectivity in the state.

He added that improved internet access would support healthcare delivery, enhance learning opportunities for students and create better livelihood options for farmers and rural communities.

Sangma also said the government is working towards developing Shillong into an information technology and innovation hub in the Northeast, aimed at creating opportunities for youth and building a robust digital ecosystem. The initiative is part of the state's broader push to leverage technology for inclusive growth and development.

WHO SAID WHAT

I've many promises to fulfill after May 4th. Will fulfill it all with your blessings
~ Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, CM Assam

UPPL releases 'people's manifesto' for BTR, vows peace accord rollout and inclusive growth



KOKRAJHAR
The United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) on Thursday unveiled its election manifesto ahead of the April 9 Assam Assembly polls, promising implementation of the BTR Peace Accord, 2020, and an inclusive development roadmap for the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR).

The manifesto was released by UPPL president Pramod Boro at the party's central office in Kokrajhar. He described it as a "people's manifesto", prepared after consultations with stakeholders and aimed at reflecting the aspirations of communities across the region.

Expressing confidence of a strong electoral outcome, Boro

said the party is hopeful of playing a key role in forming a "people-centric government" in Assam.

The document places emphasis on sustaining peace and harmony through dialogue and inclusive governance, proposing the formation of subdivision-level peace committees. It also commits to expediting

the implementation of the BTR Peace Accord, 2020, and strengthening institutional mechanisms, including the creation of 60 MCLA constituencies and provision for direct central funding to the BTR administration.

On land-related issues, the party promised distribution of land pattas to eligible landless families and resolution of pending disputes. It also proposed promotion of Rabha, Koch-Rajbongshi and Santali languages as mediums of instruction in schools, along with support for religious institutions across communities.

In education and healthcare, the manifesto outlines plans for scholarships, establishment of a Central University in Baksa and an NIT in Udalguri, and improvement of healthcare services through better staffing, ambulance facilities and cancer care support.

The party also announced a range of social welfare measures, including financial as-

sistance for senior citizens, support for persons with disabilities, and schemes for pilgrims. Youth-focused initiatives such as skill development centres, fellowship programmes and employment-linked training also feature in the document.

For economic development, UPPL pledged to boost infrastructure through construction of roads, bridges and irrigation systems, along with promotion of industrial parks. It also proposed measures to enhance agricultural productivity, including steps to increase farmers' income, expand irrigation coverage, adopt modern farming techniques and improve market access.

Environmental protection forms another key component, with commitments to conserve national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, address human-elephant conflict and promote eco-tourism in the region.

Polling for the Assam Assembly elections is scheduled for April 9.

Rahul Gandhi calls Himanta 'remote controlled', terms him "mini Modi"

Rahul Gandhi promises Article 244(A) rollout, attacks BJP over land issues in Karbi Anglong

GUWAHATI/BOKAJAN

Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Thursday sharpened his attack on the BJP leadership, alleging that Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma is "remote-controlled" from Delhi and describing him as a "mini Narendra Modi".

Addressing a gathering, Gandhi claimed that Sarma functions under the direction of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah. He further alleged that Modi himself is influenced by former US President Donald Trump.

Emphasising Assam's diversity, Gandhi said the state represents a mosaic of communities and identities, asserting that each group should have equal participation in governance. He contrasted the Congress party's decentralised approach with what he termed the BJP's centralised model of governance.

Referring to Article 244A of the Constitution, Gandhi said the provision enables



autonomous governance structures and empowers local communities, adding that it was introduced to ensure decision-making remains at the grassroots level rather than being controlled from Guwahati or Delhi.

He also alleged that land in Assam is being handed over to large corporate groups, naming business leaders Mukesh Ambani, Gautam Adani and Baba Ramdev, and

claimed that large tracts have been allocated for industrial projects.

Gandhi further criticised a recent India-US agreement, alleging it could adversely affect agriculture, energy security and small businesses, including MSMEs. He claimed that opening the sector to foreign competition would hurt farmers and that procurement commitments could impact domestic enterprises.

Escalating his criticism, Gandhi alleged that policy decisions were being influenced by external pressure, reiterating his claim of a top-down chain of control in governance.

He also accused the Assam Chief Minister of being among the most corrupt in the country, alleging that he acts strictly on instructions from the central leadership.

Gandhi said such a system, in his view, undermines democratic functioning by concentrating power at the top instead of empowering people at the grassroots.

Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on

Thursday promised full implementation of Article 244(A) to ensure greater autonomy for indigenous communities in Assam, while targeting the BJP government over alleged land transfers and corruption.

Addressing an election rally in Karbi Anglong in support of Congress candidate Raton Engti, Gandhi said the constitutional provision would empower local communities with self-governance.

"Once Article 244(A) is implemented, no one from Guwahati will rule the people of Karbi Anglong. The power to take decisions will rest with you," he said.

Describing the provision as a safeguard for indigenous rights, Gandhi said it reflects the Congress party's commitment to decentralised governance and grassroots decision-making. Stepping up his attack on the BJP, Gandhi accused Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma of corruption and alleged that governance in the state is being controlled by the Centre. He further claimed

that land in Assam was being taken from people and handed over to large corporate groups, naming industrialists Gautam Adani, Mukesh Ambani and yoga entrepreneur Baba Ramdev. Gandhi alleged that substantial tracts of land had been allocated for corporate projects. He also said a Congress government would take action against alleged corruption. "Those who are speaking loudly now will fall silent. Action will be taken," he added.

Outlining welfare measures, Gandhi said the party would provide monthly financial assistance to women and Rs 1,250 to senior citizens. He also promised permanent land pattas to 10 lakh indigenous people and a cashless health insurance cover of Rs 25 lakh per family.

With campaigning intensifying ahead of the April 9 Assembly elections, Gandhi's remarks highlighted the Congress party's focus on autonomy, land rights and welfare issues in tribal regions of Assam.

Himanta promises Orunodoi expansion after polls, two beneficiaries per large family



GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday said the flagship Orunodoi welfare scheme will be expanded after the Assembly elections, with provisions to increase coverage for eligible households.

Addressing election rallies across Tamulpur, Udalguri, Nalbari and Kamrup districts, Sarma announced that the existing one-family-one-beneficiary norm would be relaxed for larger families.

He said such households would be allowed to have two women beneficiaries under the scheme. "As Orunodoi is linked to ration cards, these families will be issued two ration cards so that two women from the same household can benefit," he said.

The chief minister also said newly married women in eligible families would be brought under the scheme. "When a son gets married, the bride will be included. That will be our wed-

ding gift," he added.

Sarma further assured that all eligible women currently left out of the scheme would be covered after the polls.

Under the Orunodoi scheme, eligible women receive a monthly financial assistance of Rs 1,250 directly in their bank accounts, with nearly 40 lakh beneficiaries currently covered across the state.

Highlighting the government's welfare measures, he said eligible families are receiving free food grains and would also be provided essential commodities such as lentils, salt, sugar and mustard oil.

Targeting the Opposition, Sarma accused the Congress of pursuing a "pro-illegal immigrant" agenda and alleged that its slogan of a "greater Assam" was aimed at accommodating illegal migrants.

Polling for the Assam Assembly elections is scheduled for April 9.

Singapore Police Close Probe into Singer Zubeen Garg's Death, Rule Out Foul Play

SINGAPORE

The Singapore Police Force has formally concluded its investigation into the death of Assamese singer Zubeen Garg, confirming that the incident was an accidental drowning with no evidence of foul play.

According to official findings, the incident occurred on September 19, 2025, during a private yacht outing near Lazarus Island. Garg had initially entered the water wearing a life jacket but later removed it after returning to the yacht. He subsequently re-entered the water alone without a life jacket, despite being offered one.

While attempting to swim back to the yacht, he became unresponsive. Those onboard swiftly rescued him and administered CPR before alerting authorities. The Police Coast Guard responded to the emergency and transported him to Singapore General Hospital, where he was declared dead.

Post-mortem and toxicology reports confirmed drowning as the cause of death. Investigators noted a high level of alcohol (ethanol) in his blood, sufficient to cause severe intoxication and impair coordination and reflexes. Other substances detected were within prescribed therapeutic levels, consistent with his known medical conditions, including epilepsy and hypertension.

The findings were reviewed under the Coroner's Inquiry process, and on March 25, 2026, the state coroner ruled the death as accidental, fully aligning with the police investigation. Authorities also clarified that there was no evidence of any allergic or anaphylactic reaction contributing to the incident.

Owaisi Storms Assam Campaign Trail, Backs AIUDF; Slams CM Sarma Over 'Misuse of Power'



GUWAHATI

The Assam Assembly election campaign gathered fresh momentum on April 1 with the arrival of Asaduddin Owaisi, who launched a sharp political offensive against the ruling dispensation while extending full support to Badruddin Ajmal's All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF).

Owaisi, on a two-day visit to the state, is scheduled to address more than eight rallies across key constituencies in support of AIUDF candidates, signalling a more aggressive push by the party in the ongoing electoral battle.

Speaking to reporters upon his arrival in Guwahati, the AIMIM chief targeted Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, accusing him of "misusing the constitutional post" and undermining secular values. He further alleged that the Chief Minister was displaying "hatred towards Muslim minorities," remarks that are likely to intensify the already polarised political discourse in the state.

Dismissing speculation about

a split in minority votes, Owaisi asserted that AIUDF remains a strong political force in Assam. He emphasised that the party is not the property of any individual leader, including himself or Ajmal, but belongs to the people—particularly the poor and marginalised—describing it as a collective political platform.

Meanwhile, AIUDF candidate from Rupahihat, Aminul Islam, expressed confidence in the party's electoral prospects, claiming that the "atmosphere is very favourable" for AIUDF across several constituencies. Welcoming Owaisi's constituency support, Islam said the AIMIM leader's presence would energise party workers and strengthen grassroots mobilisation.

He predicted that constituencies across Middle Assam would largely swing in favour of AIUDF and asserted that the party is poised to defeat both the BJP and the Congress in the region. Launching a strong attack on the opposition, Islam alleged that there is "no difference" between the BJP and the Congress in Assam, accusing the Congress of indirectly aiding the ruling party by "supplying leaders."

Islam also targeted senior Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi, claiming that voters are increasingly recognising what he described as a nexus between the Congress and the BJP, which he said has weakened the Congress's position in the state.

Manipur doctor averts mid-air medical emergency on Air India Tokyo-Delhi flight

NEW DELHI/IMPHAL

A Manipur-based doctor helped avert a mid-air medical emergency aboard an Air India flight from Tokyo to New Delhi, stabilising a passenger and preventing a possible diversion, officials said on Thursday.

Dr Loni Liriina, a critical care specialist at the American Oncology Institute in Imphal, responded to an onboard announcement seeking medical assistance during Flight AI357, around two hours before landing.

According to the doctor, the cabin crew appeared concerned as a young woman passenger complained of severe chest pain and breathlessness. Initial assessment indicated a heart rate of about 160 beats per minute, low blood pressure and oxygen saturation levels of around 80 per cent, suggesting acute respiratory distress.

With limited medical resources available onboard, Dr Liriina, assisted by another doctor on the flight, administered emergency care including oxygen support and nebulisation.

The passenger, who had a history of childhood asthma but was not on medication, stabilised within 20 to 30 minutes, the doctor said.

Cabin crew had briefly considered diverting the flight, but the situation was brought under control in time, allowing the aircraft to continue its journey.

The flight later landed safely in New Delhi, with the passenger reported to be in stable condition.

Dr Liriina, who hails from Senapati district and is currently based in Imphal, said in-flight medical emergencies are not uncommon but timely intervention by trained professionals can be crucial in such situations.



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WHEN THE WORLD ITSELF FEELS LIKE A PRANK



"In an age of viral news, AI and instant reactions, April Fool's Day is no longer just a joke, it is a reflection of our times."

Imagine waking up to a shocking headline, forwarding it instantly to friends and then realizing a few minutes later that it was just an April's Fool's prank. For decades, April Fool's Day has been about harmless deception, playful tricks, light-hearted lies and laughter shared among friends. But in 2026, something has changed. The line between a joke and reality is no longer as clear as it once was.

The origins of April Fool's Day are often linked to the shift from the Julian Calendar to the Gregorian Calendar in the 16th century, when those who continued celebrating the New Year in early April were mocked as "Fools". Over time, this mockery evolved into a tradition of pranks. For generations, the format remained simple- school jokes, fake stories, harmless surprises. The intention was clear, to make people laugh. But today, the tools have changed. A prank no longer requires planning. It requires a smartphone. A rumour no longer travels by word of mouth. It travels at the speed of a click. And sometimes, it does not even need to be a prank at all.

In an era of artificial intelligence, edited videos and viral forwards, the idea of being "fooled" has taken on a new meaning. What was once limited to a single day now feels like a daily challenge. A message appears on a screen. A video looks convincing. A headline seems urgent. And the mind reacts before it reflects. Even global brands like Google, once known for their elaborate April Fool's jokes, have grown more cautious in recent years, aware that in a world already dealing with misinformation, the difference between humor and confusion is delicate.

April Fool's Day also reveals an interesting generational shift. Millennial's remember it as a day of innocent fun- classroom pranks, friendly tricks and shared laughter.

Gen Z, however, experiences it differently. Growing up in a digital ecosystem up in a digital ecosystem, they create and consume content at lightening speed. Memes, reels and satirical posts blur the line between humor and reality. And yet, they are also more alert. They question, verify and often hesitate before believing perhaps because they have seen how easily perception can be shaped.

In 2026, April Fool's Day faces an unusual competition: real-world events themselves. Statements, announcements and headlines today often arrive with such intensity that they can feel almost theatrical. Few public figures illustrate this better than Donald Trump. Known for his direct and unpredictable communication style, his words have repeatedly sparked instant global reactions, moving markets, dominating headlines and igniting debates within minutes. At times, the reaction carries an unusual undertone: "Is this serious... or something else?" Not because it is a prank, but because the world today has reached a point where reality itself can feel like one.

Imagine this: Its 1st April 2026. The world wakes up to a breaking headline: "Major global announcement by Donald Trump". Social media explodes. News channels go into overdrive. Experts start analyzing within seconds. And then comes the twist... Half the world thinks it's an April Fool's prank. The other half thinks it's absolutely real. And that's the real genius of the moment- when people can't decide whether something is a joke or reality anymore. Because in today's world, the most powerful move is not just making a statement, it's making people question it.

What could be the next big April Fool style moment? Not necessarily a prank, but something that feels like one.

1 A surprising announcement that sounds too dramatic to be true.

1 A statement that divides opinion instantly.

1 Or a move that dominated headlines before anyone can verify it.

In the age of attention, the real game is not just truth vs lie- it is speed vs understanding. And leaders who understand this don't need April Fool's Day. They create moments that feel like it, any day of the year.

April Fool's Day is no longer just about laughter. It is a quiet reminder, to pause before believing, to verify before sharing and to think before reacting. Because in today's world, the cost of being fooled is no longer just embarrassment. It can influence opinions, shape narratives and affect decisions.

There was a time when April Fool lasted for a day. Today, the challenge is to not be fooled every day. Wisdom in 2026 is not just about knowledge. It is about discernment. To recognize what is real. To question what appears unreal. And still, to retain the ability to smile.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"That man is richest whose pleasures are cheapest." - Thoreau

HORMUZ AND THE GHOST OF 1980: CAN THE UNITED STATES WIN A GROUND WAR TODAY?



COL (DR.) ASHWANI KUMAR, MID,VSM (RETD.)

History does not repeat itself but it often returns in altered form. In April 1980, under Jimmy Carter, the United States launched Operation Eagle Claw, a mission meant to rescue American hostages from Tehran. It failed not in combat, but in coordination undone by weather, mechanical breakdowns, and fragile planning.

At Desert One, the mission collapsed before it could even reach its objective.

The lesson was stark and enduring, power without control over environment and logistics is fragile.

More than four decades later, the same region stands at the center of global tension. But the battlefield has expanded from the deserts of Iran to the waters of the Strait of Hormuz. The question now is not whether the United States can strike but whether it can sustain a ground war.

From Failure to Precision and the Illusion.

Thereafter The United States learned from its failure. In 2011, under Barack Obama, it executed Operation Neptune Spear, eliminating Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad with clinical precision. It was a mission defined by intelligence dominance, unified command under United States Special Operations Command, and narrow, clearly defined objectives.

Yet this success carried within it a subtle illusion that the efficiency of short, surgical operations could be extended to prolonged wars. Experience in Iraq and Afghanistan has already shown the limits of that assumption.

Precision wins battles. Time decides wars.

Hormuz: The Real Center of Gravity.

Any future conflict involving Iran inevitably converges on Hormuz. This narrow maritime corridor is one of the world's most critical energy arteries. A significant portion of global oil and a major share of Asia's energy imports flows through it daily.

Iran's advantage here is not about overwhelming naval strength. It is about positional dominance,

Control over the northern coastline.

Proximity to shipping lanes. Capability to disrupt traffic through mines, drones, and missile systems.

Iran does not need to close the strait entirely. It only needs to make it uncertain. In modern warfare, denial is often more powerful than control.

Logistics: The War Behind the War.

No army, however advanced, can operate without supply. A US ground campaign in Iran would depend on long and vulnerable logistical chains stretching across the Gulf.

If Hormuz becomes contested: Supply lines are disrupted Naval escorts are stretched Operational tempo slows

This creates a structural vulnerability. Even if American forces dominate tactically on land, their ability to sustain operations becomes uncertain.

Wars are sustained by logistics, not by firepower alone.

Terrain and Resistance: Iran's Enduring Strength.

Iran is not an easy battlefield. Its geography mountains, deserts, and dense urban centers favours defense. Its military doctrine is built around asymmetry, dispersal, and endurance.

Any invading force would face:

Decentralized resistance Guerrilla tactics.

Urban warfare conditions that neutralize technological superiority.

This transforms the conflict from a rapid campaign into a prolonged struggle one where time works against the attacker.

A War Without Strategic Comfort.

Unlike past conflicts, a US ground war in Iran would unfold in a region with limited tolerance for prolonged foreign intervention. Proxy forces, regional tensions, and global economic stakes would complicate every phase of the conflict.

This is not a war that can be fought in isolation. It is a war that would ripple across regions and economies.

India's Strategic Stake: Energy and Stability.

For India, the Strait of Hormuz is not a distant concern it is

a lifeline. A significant portion of India's crude oil imports transits through this narrow corridor.

Any disruption would have immediate consequences,

Rising energy prices Inflationary pressure

Strain on economic growth. India's response must therefore remain balanced and pragmatic,

Diversifying energy sources. Maintaining diplomatic engagement with all sides.

Strengthening maritime preparedness.

For India, stability in Hormuz is not a strategic option it is an economic necessity.

The Return of the Ghost.

Operation Eagle Claw failed because complexity overwhelmed capability. Today, the scale is far greater, but the underlying risks remain familiar.

Replace helicopters with supply chains. Replace desert storms with maritime disruption.

Replace mission failure with strategic overreach.

The ghost of 1980 does not lie in the past, it lingers in every miscalculation of terrain, logistics, and time.

Waterloo Revisited: A Slow Unraveling.

If the United States enters a prolonged ground war in Iran, the risk is not a sudden defeat. It is something more subtle and more dangerous.

A modern "Waterloo" would emerge as,

Extended deployments without decisive gains

Rising costs with diminishing returns

Strategic fatigue replacing initial dominance

Victory would not be lost in battle but in sustainability.

To conclude Geography Still Rules Power.

From Desert One to Hormuz, one truth remains constant, geography humbles power.

The United States retains unmatched military capability. But Iran holds strategic depth, terrain advantage, and influence over a critical global chokepoint. The United States can win battles. It can dominate engagements.

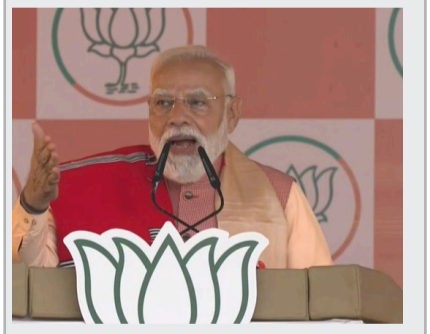
But a prolonged ground war in Iran risks becoming a conflict it cannot decisively conclude.

Author's Note.

Wars of the 21st century are

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

This time in Assam, there will be a hatrick of victories. The people of the country and the people of Assam gave me their blessings and gave me the opportunity to score a hatrick at the Centre as well. In this election, the Assam Congress is also going to score a hatrick of defeats. When the results of this election come, the entitled heir of the Congress family will complete a century of defeats. ~ Narendra Modi, PM



no longer decided by who strikes first, but by who endures longer. America has the strength to project power across continents. Iran has the capacity to absorb, adapt, and extend conflict in time and space.

For the world especially energy dependent nations like India the stakes are immense. The Strait of Hormuz is not merely a passage of oil, it is a passage of stability.

If restraint prevails, conflict may remain limited. If not, Hormuz could become the epicenter of a global economic shock. And once again, the deserts and waters of Iran may remind the world that even the mightiest powers must reckon with geography, logistics, and time.

Disclaimer: The views expressed are solely those of the author, and are based on open source information and personal analysis. They do not reflect the official position of any institution or government and are intended purely for informed discussion, not as policy advice or prediction.

CM Sarma Predicts 90-100 Seats for NDA in Assam Polls, Says Opposition May Be Restricted to Around 20

GUWAHATI

Himanta Biswa Sarma has projected a sweeping victory for the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the upcoming Assam Assembly Elections 2026, estimating that the alliance could secure between 90 and 100 seats in the 126-member Assembly, while the Opposition may be limited to around 20.

Detailing constituency-level assessments, the Chief Minister said the NDA is well-positioned to retain key seats across regions, including Lower Assam and the Bodoland Territorial Area Districts (BTAD). He expressed confidence that senior leader Chandramohan Patowary would win from Tihu even if the margin narrows,



and asserted that Nalbari district would remain firmly in the NDA's control, with all three seats expected to go to the alliance.

Referring to Upper Assam, Sarma acknowledged that Sivasagar could witness a closely contested triangular fight, particularly involving Akhil Gogoi of the Rajgor Dal. However, he maintained that the NDA would ultimately prevail in the constituency.

On the Opposition's prospects, Sarma said the Congress is unlikely to cross the 20-seat mark. He projected that the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) may secure five to six seats, while the Asom Jatiya Parishad (AJP) could fail to open its account. The Rajgor Dal, he added, may win only one seat, likely in

Dhing. The Chief Minister also expressed confidence in individual candidates, stating that Narayan Deka would win his seat. In Lower Assam, he identified Dhubri, Golokganj and Bongaigaon, including Abhayapuri, as constituencies where the NDA is expected to perform strongly. In Barpeta district, Sarma projected victories for the alliance in Barpeta, Bhawanipur and Bajali constituencies. He further claimed that the NDA would sweep all seats in the BTAD region, reinforcing its dominance in the Bodoland belt.

With the Chief Minister projecting an emphatic mandate, the electoral contest in Assam is expected to intensify as campaigning gathers pace ahead of polling.

Assam Budget Crosses Rs. 2 Lakh Crore, Records 85% Fund Utilisation: CM Sarma

GUWAHATI,

Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday highlighted Assam's fiscal performance for 2025-26, describing it as a phase of "disciplined spending and growth-oriented governance," marked by a sharp expansion in budget size and record levels of public expenditure.

In a post on X, the Chief Minister said the state's budget outlay has risen to ₹2 lakh crore in 2025-26 from ₹1.69 lakh crore in the previous financial year, reflecting both increased fiscal ambition and improved execution capacity.

According to the government, Assam recorded total public expenditure of around ₹1.7 lakh crore during the year—the highest since Independence. Sarma noted that while it took more than seven decades for the state to cross ₹1 lakh crore in expenditure, the jump to nearly ₹1.75 lakh crore was achieved within just four years, indicating a rapid expansion in fiscal capacity. A significant share of spending—about ₹26,500 crore—was directed towards capital expenditure, the highest in the state's history. The government said investments in infrastructure, including schools, colleges, hospitals, roads, bridges and digital systems, are expected to yield long-term economic benefits and strengthen growth fundamentals. The Chief Minister also pointed to an 85 per cent fund utilisation rate, describing it as a sign of improved governance and administrative efficiency. He said that in earlier years, limited capacity and planning constraints often resulted in under-utilisation of funds and delays in project execution. In contrast, departments are now fully utilising allocations, with some even seeking additional funds due to stronger project pipelines and enhanced execution frameworks.

Sonowal attacks Congress over 'neglect' of Digboi, highlights refinery upgrade



DIGBOI

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal accused the Indian National Congress of decades of neglect in Digboi, particularly citing delays in modernising the historic refinery, while pitching the development record of the BJP-led government ahead of the Assam Assembly elections.

Addressing a campaign rally at the Balian public auditorium in support of BJP candidate Suren Phukan, Sonowal said the Centre had taken steps to enhance the ca-

capacity of the Digboi Refinery and improve infrastructure in the region.

He contrasted this with what he described as prolonged inaction under previous Congress regimes, asserting that development initiatives under the BJP were driven by "performance and delivery."

Phukan, addressing the gathering, echoed the development plank and expressed confidence of victory, stating that voters would base their decision on tangible work rather than electoral promises.

Party sources said Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma is scheduled to address another rally at Digboi's Jubilee Ground on April 2, as the BJP intensifies its campaign in Upper Assam.

The rally witnessed a significant turnout and featured cultural performances, including traditional Bihu and Jhumur dances, with party leaders briefly joining performers at the conclusion of the event.

Tipra Motha Chief Pradyot Debbarman Sparks Row with 'Greater Tipraland' Claim Over Bangladesh Regions

AGARTALA

Pradyot Kishore Debbarman has triggered a political controversy after asserting that regions of Bangladesh, including Cox's Bazar, Chittagong and Khagrachari, could one day become part of what he described as "Greater Tipraland."

Addressing his first election rally following the announcement of the poll schedule, the Tipra Motha leader said that if "Thansa" (unity) among indigenous communities remains strong, "nothing is impossible." He claimed that "one day Bangladesh will break and Greater Tipraland will be formed," adding that the regions mentioned "were once ours and we will take them back."



Describing these areas as "alienated today," Debbarman said that unity and the protection of "Thansa" could make such aspirations achievable in the future. He further remarked that control over Chittagong would transform the region's economic prospects, stating that "money will flow" and livelihoods would improve. The idea of "Greater Tipraland" is a political concept advocated by Debbarman,

referring to areas historically inhabited by indigenous communities of Tripura.

Outlining his party's roadmap, Debbarman announced that Tipra Motha would launch a "massive movement" across Tripura over the next 18 months under the slogan "Chini Ha Chini Sasan" (our land, our rule). He said the campaign would focus on protecting the rights of indigenous communities, particularly youth and future generations. He also urged voters to reassess their political choices, calling for support only for leaders who can guarantee long-term security, employment and development.

Taking a swipe at the ruling BJP, Debbarman questioned assurances made by Chief Minister Manik Saha regarding

implementation of the Tiprasa Accord, saying that "work has to be done before asking for votes." On alliances, he ruled out any tie-up with the BJP, stating that there would be "no compromise" on the interests of indigenous people despite internal suggestions that an alliance could bring political and financial benefits.

Debbarman also referred to the killing of Anjel Chakma, saying he had directed party workers to stage protests, and alleged that inducements such as food, liquor and money were used to influence voters during elections.

Urging people to reject such practices, he called on voters to instead demand jobs, infrastructure and a secure future, as Tipra Motha intensifies its campaign ahead of the polls.

Manipur Congress alleges Rs. 600 cr fund delay, questions 'truncated' Cabinet

IMPHAL

The Manipur Congress on Wednesday criticised both the Centre and the state government, alleging delays in fund disbursement and raising concerns over what it described as an "inadequately sized" Council of Ministers under Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh.

Addressing the media in Imphal, Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Keisham Meghachandra Singh claimed that a significant portion of funds allocated in the 2025-26 Budget remains unreleased despite the financial year drawing to a close.

He alleged that nearly ₹600 crore earmarked for various Central and state schemes had not been disbursed as of March 31, impacting beneficiaries and stalling key development and welfare programmes across the state.

Warning of broader implications, Meghachandra said continued delays



could derail ongoing projects and deepen financial stress in a state already grappling with economic and administrative challenges.

The Congress leader also ques-

tioned the size of the current Cabinet, arguing that the limited number of ministers hampers governance efficiency and accountability. He pointed out that Manipur present-

ly has a four-member Council of Ministers, including two Deputy Chief Ministers, which he termed insufficient given the state's complex administrative requirements. Citing provisions of the 91st Constitutional Amendment Act, Meghachandra noted that while the number of ministers in a state cannot exceed 15% of the Assembly's strength, there is also a mandated minimum of 12 ministers. He contended that concentrating multiple portfolios in the hands of a few ministers leads to administrative overload, weakens governance, and results in inadequate representation of Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, and various regional groups.

The remarks come amid continuing political scrutiny of governance and fiscal management in Manipur, with opposition parties pressing for greater transparency and administrative responsiveness.

Tripura ADC polls: 10 security personnel injured in BJP-Tipra Motha clash in Dhalai



AGARTALA

At least ten security personnel were injured after clashes broke out between supporters of the Bharatiya Janata Party and Tipra Motha Party during a poll rally in Tripura's Dhalai district, underscoring rising tensions ahead of the ADC elections.

The violence occurred on Tuesday in the Lambo area of Kamalpur when a BJP procession, led by local MLA and former minister Manoj Kanti Deb, came under attack while campaigning for the party's candidate in the Asharambari constituency under the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC).

According to party leaders, the rally had passed through Halahali when it was allegedly targeted by a group suspected to be supporters of Tipra Motha. BJP representatives claimed the attack was unprovoked, with attackers pelting stones and bricks at the procession.

Video footage from the scene showed intense stone-pelting, with security personnel from the Tripura State Rifles (TSR) and Tripura Police attempting to control the situation. Police sources confirmed that at least ten personnel sustained injuries during the clashes

and were taken to a nearby hospital for treatment.

Several vehicles accompanying the rally were also damaged, including the car of Manoj Kanti Deb, whose windshield was partially shattered.

Eyewitnesses alleged that the attackers were armed with sticks and attempted to block the rally's movement through the area. BJP leaders said four to five vehicles in the convoy were vandalised in the violence.

The incident comes amid heightened political friction in the run-up to the ADC elections. The Asharambari seat has drawn particular attention following the defection of Ananta Debbarma, a former Tipra Motha leader and ex-militant, who is now contesting on a BJP ticket.

Debbarma had earlier served as an Executive Member in the Tipra Motha-led TTAADC council formed after the 2021 polls, making the contest symbolically significant. Security has since been stepped up in the area, with authorities maintaining close vigil to prevent further escalation. Officials said the situation is currently under control, though tensions remain high in parts of the district.

'Assam Polls About Honest vs Dishonest Politics, Not BJP vs Congress': Pawan Kherra

GUWAHATI

Senior Congress leader Pawan Kherra on Wednesday launched a sharp attack on Himanta Biswa Sarma, alleging that the state government has "consistently misled the public" over the past decade, and framing the upcoming elections as a battle between "honest and dishonest politics."

Addressing a press conference in Guwahati, Kherra used a "lie detector" analogy to question the Chief Minister's credibility. "If what Himanta Biswa Sarma says is false, the red light turns on; if it is true, the green light turns on. But in the past 10 years, the green light has never appeared," he said.

Kherra also took aim at Sarma's political trajectory, referring to his association with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and questioned his ideological positioning.

Raising governance concerns, Kherra alleged that the BJP-led government in Assam has failed to deliver on key promises, including granting tribal status to six communities and generating employment opportunities. "Only a small fraction of people have secure jobs today. Commitments made to tea garden workers remain unfulfilled," he claimed.



On illegal immigration, Kherra accused the government of presenting a misleading narrative. Citing comparative figures, he said that while nearly 88,792 illegal immigrants were expelled during the UPA tenure over a decade, only about 2,566 have been deported under the NDA in nearly

five years. He also criticised the state's healthcare system, alleging severe shortages in medical personnel. "There is a 97 per cent shortage of surgeons and a 94 per cent shortage of physicians in Assam," he claimed, adding that the situation contradicts official

claims of development.

Kherra further alleged that thousands of government schools have been shut, raising concerns about public education. He also questioned transparency, claiming disproportionate asset growth among individuals linked to the ruling establishment, though without citing specific instances.

Referring to allegations involving Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi, Kherra challenged the BJP to produce evidence and take legal action if warranted, instead of making unsubstantiated claims.

On the death of Assamese singer Zubeen Garg, Kherra said that seeking justice should not be politicised, asserting that raising such demands is a public responsibility.

In a broader critique, Kherra argued that the electoral contest in Assam reflects an internal split in political values rather than a traditional BJP-versus-Congress battle. "This is a fight between the Congress of the honest and brave, and the Congress of the dishonest and the cowards," he said, in an apparent reference to Sarma's past association with the party.

He also accused the BJP of diverting attention from core issues such as livelihood, inflation and governance by focusing on topics like identity politics and the Uniform Civil Code.

Extending his criticism to the Centre, Kherra alleged that economic decisions under the Modi government reflect misplaced priorities, warning that rising prices during the election period could worsen afterward.

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West Asia conflict: PM reviews supply chains, price stability, diversification for LPG and LNG in CCS meeting



NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday chaired the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security to review India's preparedness amid the ongoing West Asia conflict, directing officials that "all efforts must be made to safeguard the citizens from the impact of this conflict."

The second such review in recent days held at 7 Lok Kalyan Marg focused on mitigating disruptions across key sectors, including energy, agriculture, shipping, aviation, logistics and MSMEs.

The government assessed supply chains and explored contingency measures to ensure stability in essential commodities and services. Supply diversification for LPG and LNG, fuel duty reduction and power sector measures were reviewed to ensure stability of essential supplies.

A key focus area was energy security. Cabinet Secretary T V Somanathan briefed the meeting about the action taken to ensure supply of petroleum products, particularly LNG/LPG, and sufficient power availability. Measures such as exempt-

ing certain gas-based power plants from pooling mechanisms and increasing coal supplies to thermal stations were reviewed to ensure uninterrupted electricity during peak summer demand.

The government noted that "enough coal stock exists" to meet power needs in the coming months.

On the agriculture front, the Prime Minister reviewed fertilizer availability, particularly ahead of the Kharif and Rabi seasons. Efforts are underway to maintain urea production and coordinate imports of DAP and NPK fertilisers. States have been asked to intensify monitoring and take "strict action" against diversion and black-marketing, official. "The prime minister assessed the availability of critical needs for the common man. He discussed the availability of fertilisers in the country and steps being taken to ensure its availability in the Kharif and Rabi seasons. He said that all efforts must be made to safeguard the citizens from the impact of this conflict," an official release said.

"Further, interven-

tions proposed to be taken for emerging challenges in various other sectors such as agriculture, civil aviation, shipping and logistics were also discussed," said the release.

The meeting also took stock of price trends and assessed that retail food prices have remained stable over the past month. Control rooms have been set up for real-time monitoring and coordination with States and Union Territories under the Essential Commodities Act framework.

Emphasising communication, Modi stressed the need for "timely and smooth flow of authentic information" to prevent misinformation and rumours during the evolving crisis.

Prime Minister Modi also reviewed the availability of essential goods for citizens and directed all ministries to take "proactive measures" to minimise disruptions.

Broader efforts, including diversification of global supply chains and diplomatic initiatives to ensure safe maritime routes, were also discussed as part of India's response strategy.

TMC, other parties used Muslims for votes in Bengal but did nothing for them: Asaduddin Owaisi



KOLKATA

AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi on Wednesday alleged that the ruling TMC and other parties used Muslims of West Bengal for votes but did nothing for the community's development.

Owaisi, while addressing a poll rally at Naoda in Murshidabad district in support of candidates of Humayun Kabir-led Aam Janata Unnayan Party (AJUP), also claimed that in the past 50 years, members of the Muslim community had voted for the Congress, Left Front and the TMC, but their condition did not improve.

"For the sake of Muslims in West Bengal getting greater representation in political decision-making, and for their true development, we have joined hands with Kabir. Together, we will give a jolt to

Mamata Banerjee and her party," he asserted.

"The time has come to elect leaders from the Muslim community, who can ensure your economic development," Owaisi said.

"Muslims form about 30 per cent of the population here. But how many Muslims are in state government jobs? Around seven per cent. The time has come to stop the exploitation of Muslims. To ensure that, elect leaders from yourselves who can only ensure our economic development while following the secular, inclusive spirit of India which is being violated by both BJP and TMC," he told a large gathering.

Accusing West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee of practising hypocrisy regarding discrimination and atrocities against Muslims, he alleged

that she has a tacit understanding with BJP and "her game plan stands exposed now before everyone."

He quashed the charges of the Trinamool Congress that AIMIM and AJUP are in the electoral fray to cut down the vote share of the TMC and help the BJP win.

"Both the BJP and the TMC are the same to us. They are two sides of the same coin. As I repeatedly said, our alliance wishes Muslims to have a voice and fight for their rights," he said.

"When hundreds were killed in the Gujarat riots in the early 2000s, Mamata Didi, who was then a BJP ally, did not utter a single word. The same Mamata Banerjee hurled papers at the Lok Sabha Speaker in 2005 while making allegations of large-scale infiltration in West Bengal during the Left Front rule," Owaisi said.

Now, Modi and Amit Shah are speaking in the same language to disenfranchise Muslim citizens. Can Mamata Didi disown her earlier comments when she speaks at rallies? the Hyderabad MP asked.

"You had voted for other parties in the past. This time, vote in favour of your brother Kabir and his party and the AIMIM candidates who will be fielded as part of the alliance to consolidate the entire Muslim vote and expose the hypocrisy and nexus between the TMC and the BJP," he told the crowd.

Kabir, a suspended TMC MLA who later floated the AJUP, said the overwhelming presence of members of the community at the rally was indicative of the disillusionment and anger towards the TMC.

In an apparent reference to TMC national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee, he said, "The prince, who was born with a silver spoon and has no grassroots political experience, moves around with 100 security personnel, and exhorted people at a rally in Naoda that if anyone is unhappy with his party's candidate, he should think that Abhishek is the real candidate."

"I do, hereby, declare that our candidate will defeat the TMC candidate in Naoda by 50,000 votes. We take it as a challenge as Abhishek has staked his personal honour for winning the seat and we will defeat his candidate," Kabir said.

He said the alliance plans to contest 182 seats in the 294-member assembly, and "will teach both TMC and BJP a lesson they deserve".

The AIMIM-AJUP combine enters the electoral fray at a time when West Bengal's minority vote bank, long considered the backbone of the TMC's electoral dominance, is showing signs of churn.

Minority voters influence the outcome in more than 110 of the 294 assembly constituencies.

Elections to the 294-member West Bengal assembly will be held in two phases - April 23 and April 29. Votes will be counted on May 4.

INTERNATIONAL

Trump says Iran war nearing end, warns of 'extremely hard' strikes on Tehran for 2-3 weeks

WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump on Wednesday made his case for attacking Iran in his first nationwide address more than a month into the war, insisting the United States was close to victory as his approval rating sinks.

In an evening speech from the White House, Trump broke little new ground on how the war would end and vowed two to three weeks further of "extremely hard" strikes against Iran.

"We are going to finish the job, and we're going to finish it very fast. We're getting very close," he said in remarks that largely rehashed his daily streams of social-media postings and rapid media interviews.

But with his approval rating hitting new lows and Americans feeling a pinch from soaring oil prices, Trump offered a retroactive explanation on why he joined Israel in the attack launched on February 28.

Trump said that the United States was aiming to crush Iran's military, end the clerical state's support for regional armed groups and prevent it from obtaining a nuclear bomb, a prospect that the UN nuclear watchdog and many observers say was not imminent.

"I'm pleased to say that these core strategic objectives are nearing completion," Trump said in a 19-minute televised speech before flags in the White House's Cross Hall.

"In these past four weeks, our armed forces have delivered swift, decisive, overwhelming victories on the battlefield, victories like few people have ever seen before," Trump said.

Israel on the first day of the conflict killed Iran's longtime supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and Trump boasted how "their leaders - most of them" in Iran are dead.

But Iran has also responded by taking control over the Strait of Hormuz,



the passageway into the Gulf for one-fifth of the world's oil, which was open before the war.

Gasoline prices in the United States have surged above \$4 a gallon (over \$1 a liter) for the first time in years, while consumer confidence has weakened, dragging down Trump's already fragile standing on the economy.

Recent polling shows Trump's overall approval rating slipping below 40 percent, with disapproval climbing above the mid-50s, with the war itself deeply unpopular with segments of his own Republican Party.

President Donald Trump speaks about the Iran war from the Cross Hall of the White House on Wednesday, April 1, 2026, in Washington.

President Donald Trump speaks about the Iran war from the Cross Hall of the White House on Wednesday, April

1, 2026, in Washington.

Trump again threatened that if Iran does not reach a negotiated settlement with him, the United States would "hit each and every one of their electric generating plants."

Attacks on civilian energy infrastructure are widely considered to be illegal under the laws of war and could constitute a war crime.

"Over the next two to three weeks, we are going to bring them back to the Stone Ages, where they belong," Trump said. Trump said little in his address about actual diplomacy.

Earlier Wednesday, Trump claimed a major breakthrough, saying Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian - an elected moderate long considered in the shadow of the military and clerical establishment - was seeking a ceasefire. This was swiftly denied by Iran's

foreign ministry, which also accused Washington of making "maximalist and irrational" demands.

Boasting of American military might, the 79-year-old former real estate developer used one of his favorite analogies: "We have all the cards. They have none."

He offered conciliatory words to Gulf Arab allies that have been hit by Iranian retaliatory fire, saying he would not let them "get hurt or fail."

But he again berated European allies that have balked at supporting his war, on which he did not consult them in advance, as he noted that they are more dependent on Gulf oil.

The countries that "receive oil through the Hormuz Strait must take care of that passage," Trump said, urging them to "build up some delayed courage."

TELAVIV

The Israeli military said it carried out "wide-scale" strikes on Tehran on Wednesday, as Iranian state media reported blasts across the capital, with the conflict in West Asia now in its second month.

A brief military statement said Israeli forces had "completed a wide-scale wave of strikes targeting infrastructure sites of the Iranian terror regime in Tehran."

Iran's state broadcaster IRIB said areas in northern, eastern and central Tehran were under attack. The broadcaster said on Telegram that explosions were heard in the capital's north, east and centre, reporting "attacks on Tehran" without immediately providing more details.

is not over," he said in a televised statement on Tuesday. "We will continue to crush the terror regime."

Hours later, US President Donald Trump presented a differing view saying that American forces would end operations in Iran "very soon", evoking a timeline of two to three weeks as his administration pursues talks while continuing its aerial campaign.

Asked about the impact of high fuel prices since the war began, Trump told reporters: "All I have to do is leave Iran, and we'll be doing that very soon, and they'll come tumbling down."

"Go get your own oil": Trump tells other nations as US-Israeli strikes hit key Iranian sites

Meanwhile, President

up again.

The comment, which boosted US markets and led oil prices to fall, came after a day of heavy strikes on Iran and followed a warning from the powerful Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps to retaliate against leading US tech firms such as Google from Wednesday if more Iranian leaders were killed in "targeted assassinations."

However, Tehran's retaliatory attacks targeting Gulf states continued on Wednesday as Kuwait's civil aviation authority said that the country's international airport had come under an Iranian drone attack that led to "a large fire" at fuel tanks.

Bahrain's interior ministry also said a fire broke out at a business facility



The attacks come amid Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu saying that the country would press ahead with its military campaign against Tehran. "The campaign

Masoud Pezeshkian said that Iran has the "necessary will" to end the war with the US and Israel, emphasising that Tehran was seeking guarantees the conflict would not flare

"as a result of the Iranian aggression", while Saudi Arabia said it shot down several drones. A tanker was also hit in the waters off Qatar, a British maritime security agency said.

Nagaland University-led study uses GIS to map environmental degradation in Kohima

Comprehensive geospatial analysis revealed rapid land-use change, climate shifts & seismic vulnerability, offering critical insights for sustainable development & environmental management in the North East Hill Region



LUMAMI, NAGALAND

Researchers from Nagaland University and PNG Gov. PG College Ramnagar, Nainital, had used advanced Geographic Information System (GIS) modelling and remote sensing techniques to investigate environmental change and degradation in Kohima district, providing important scientific insights into the fragile geo-ecological conditions of India's North East Hill (NEH) region.

The researchers hope the findings will contribute to improved environmental monitoring, climate resilience planning and sustainable development in the North East Hill region and the broader Indian Himalayan landscape.

A video byte of Prof. MS Rawat, Nagaland University, explaining the research can be viewed and downloaded from the following link - https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tSKPEJ9533wA03N5tpmgkQ_s842pZebn/view

The research addressed growing concerns about environmental degradation in the Himalayan and North East Hill regions caused by both natural processes and human activities. These include rapid urbanization, deforestation, shifting cultivation practices, and climate change, which together contribute to increasing risks such as landslides, floods, droughts and extreme weather events.

Highlighting the university's continued commitment to study issues of great importance to the North East region, Prof. Jagadish K. Patnaik, Vice-Chancellor, Nagaland University, said, "Nagaland University has undertaken a significant research

initiative using Geographic Information System (GIS) technology to map environmental degradation in Kohima. The study presents a comprehensive geospatial analysis highlighting rapid land-use changes, emerging climate trends, and seismic vulnerability in the region. These findings provide valuable insights for policymakers, planners, and stakeholders, contributing to informed decision-making for sustainable development and effective environmental management in the North East Hill Region."

The findings were published during December 2023 in Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10661-023-12055-2>), a peer-reviewed journal that publishes research on monitoring, assessment, and management of environmental quality, brought out by the prestigious Springer Nature.

The paper was co-authored by Dr. Khrieketouno Belho and Prof. M. S. Rawat from the Department of Geography, School of Sciences, Nagaland University, along with Dr. Pradeep Kumar Rawat from the Uttarakhand Open University Study Centre. The research was supported by Nagaland University through a Non-NET Fellowship awarded to Dr. Khrieketouno Belho and by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India.

Elaborating on the research significance even now in 2026, Prof. M.S. Rawat, Department of Geography, Nagaland University, said, "Geo-environmentally and anthropogenically, the region is highly fragile due to continuous seismotectonic activities, landslides, slope failures, fragmented unstable geology, geomorphology and steep rugged topography as well as very high frequency of natural hazards and disasters. The region is passing through alarming and threatening conditions due to a high rate of land use degradation

which is accelerating other associated global environmental problems such as climate change and its adverse impacts. It is therefore, essential to mitigate the current environmental change and degradation. If necessary, measures are not taken as soon as possible, it may lead to severe subsequent impacts. This study contributes a holistic approach to tackling such kind of environmental issues."

Highlighting the steps needed to be taken up now to arrest the environmental degradation, Prof. M. S. Rawat added, "It has been the need of the hour to adopt the most effective and reliable geospatial technology and action oriented management strategy so that the risk of environmental degradation could be mitigated."

Using an integrated GIS database modelling system, the researchers analysed environmental change through three major modules—Geodiversity Informatics, Land Use Informatics and Climate Informatics.

This approach allowed the team to examine multiple interconnected environmental parameters, including geological structures, land-use patterns, vegetation cover, rainfall, temperature and ecological habitats.

Dr. Pradeep Kumar Rawat from the Uttarakhand Open University Study Centre added, "Our study found that Kohima district is undergoing rapid environmental transformation. Natural landscapes such as forests, scrublands and water bodies had declined from 93.93 per cent to 81.86 per cent over the past two decades, while built-up areas, agricultural land and wasteland increased steadily due to expanding human activity. We also documented a rise in average temperatures at a rate of about 0.13°C per year, along with declining annual rainfall and fewer rainy days."

Further, Dr. Khrieketouno Bel-

ho, Department of Geography, School of Sciences, Nagaland University said, "Geo-environmentally, the North East Hill Region is highly vulnerable to monsoon hazards. The Socio-economic and demographic set up is also highly vulnerable to climate change impacts. We believe that this study constitutes an important and internationally significant contribution to the understanding of the geo-environmental and ecological problems caused by the geocological, anthropogenic and climate change pressures in the region."

In addition, the study highlighted the region's geological fragility. Analysis of earthquake records from 1982 to 2022 revealed that more than 1,100 seismic events occurred in Kohima district, averaging around 27 micro earthquakes per year with less than 4 to 2 magnitudes. Most of these were linked to tectonic faults and geological lineaments that contribute to landscape instability, erosion and landslides.

According to the researchers, these combined factors indicate three major forms of environmental degradation in the region—geodiversity degradation, ecological degradation and climatic degradation. Together, these changes were increasing the likelihood of extreme rainfall events, floods, erosion and other geohydrological hazards that can affect ecosystems, agriculture and human settlements.

The study emphasized the need for evidence-based planning and sustainable land management strategies in the environmentally sensitive Himalayan region. By integrating geospatial technologies with environmental data, the research provides a comprehensive framework that policymakers and planners can use to better understand environmental risks and develop climate adaptation strategies.

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