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PERSPECTIVE

People who regularly help others are significantly happier and less likely to become depressed as they get older.

AIUDF Chief Badruddin Ajmal Announces 1 Crore Flood Relief Package for Assam

GUWAHATI
Amid the worsening flood crisis in Assam, All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) president Badruddin Ajmal has announced a flood relief package of up to ₹1 crore, including an immediate allocation of ₹50 lakh through the Ajmal Foundation to support affected families across the state.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, Ajmal expressed concern over the severe flooding triggered by rivers and tributaries flowing above danger levels, resulting in widespread inundation, loss of life and displacement of thousands of people.

To review the situation firsthand and monitor relief operations, the AIUDF chief is scheduled to visit the worst-affected districts of Sivasagar, Charaideo and Jorhat on Wednesday. According to the statement, the Ajmal Foundation has already sanctioned ₹50 lakh for immediate relief measures. Ajmal said the assistance could be enhanced depending on the extent of the damage and future requirements. “The foundation is prepared to increase the total relief assistance if the situation demands. We will continue extending support to affected families irrespective of political affiliation,” he said. Ajmal also stated that volunteers of the Ajmal Foundation have already begun relief operations in several flood-hit areas of Upper Assam, distributing cooked food, dry rations and other essential supplies to affected residents.

The announcement comes at a time when Assam is grappling with one of the most severe flood situations in recent years.

According to the latest report of the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), 21 additional deaths were reported in the last 24 hours, taking the overall flood-related death toll to 31.

WHO SAID WHAT



Democracy is not merely a system of governance; it is a shared article of faith that unites India and North Macedonia. ~ Smt Droupadi Murmu, President of India.

Assam Engineer Part of Skyroot’s Historic Mission as Startup Targets Global Space Market

GUWAHATI

Fresh from becoming the first private Indian company to successfully place a rocket into orbit, Hyderabad-based Skyroot Aerospace is now preparing to expand its presence in the global satellite launch market by developing more advanced launch vehicles with greater payload capacity and operational flexibility.

The landmark achievement has a strong Assam connection. Guwahati-born aerospace engineer Ved Prakash, a Guidance, Navigation and Control (GNC) engineer with Skyroot Aerospace, was part of the team behind the company’s historic orbital mission launched on July 18, a breakthrough widely regarded as a defining moment for India’s private space sector.

Speaking about the company’s future plans, Prakash said Skyroot is focused on building next-generation rockets capable of carrying heavier payloads and deploying satellites into a variety of orbital paths to meet the growing demands of both domestic



and international customers.

“Different satellites serve different purposes and require different orbital placements. Communication, weather and defence satellites cannot all be deployed into the same orbit. Our goal is to develop launch vehicles that offer greater precision, flexibility and payload capacity,” he said.

One of Skyroot’s major strengths, according to Prakash, is its use of advanced lightweight

materials that reduce the overall weight of rockets without compromising structural integrity.

“The rockets are lighter because of the materials used, but they are engineered to withstand the demanding conditions of space missions. This allows us to improve efficiency while maintaining reliability,” he explained.

Founded by former Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) scientists, Skyroot Aero-

space has emerged as one of the leading players in India’s growing private space industry. The company has also benefited from the expertise of several retired space scientists who continue to guide its technological development.

Following the success of its maiden orbital mission, Skyroot is now looking beyond India and positioning itself as a commercial launch provider in the international market. The company plans to increase launch frequency and attract customers from around the world.

“Our motto is to ‘open space for all’. We are expecting launch assignments from international clients and are working towards increasing the frequency of launches in the coming years,” Prakash said.

The successful debut mission has drawn particular attention because first launches by private space companies often encounter technical setbacks. Prakash pointed out that even SpaceX, now among the world’s most successful private space firms, did

not achieve success on its first orbital attempt.

Industry observers believe Skyroot’s achievement marks a significant milestone in India’s space journey, demonstrating the growing capabilities of the country’s private aerospace sector following the liberalisation of space activities.

As India seeks to strengthen its position in the rapidly expanding global space economy, Skyroot’s success is expected to encourage greater private investment, innovation and competition in satellite launch services. For Assam, the accomplishment also highlights the contribution of the state’s young engineering talent to some of the country’s most advanced technological ventures.

With ambitious plans for larger payloads, diversified launch capabilities and an expanding international client base, Skyroot Aerospace is aiming to establish itself as a key player in the global commercial space industry while advancing India’s emergence as a major spacefaring nation.

KRC TIMES

STAY ENRICHED

VOLUME:1, ISSUE 829

SILCHAR WEDNESDAY, JULY 22, 2026. EAST AND NE INDIA EDITION | e-mail: krctimes@gmail.com ,www.krctimes.com

46 KCP-PWG Cadres Surrender in Manipur, Marking Largest-Ever Homecoming of the Outfit

IMPHAL

In a major boost to peace and rehabilitation efforts in Manipur, 46 active cadres of the proscribed Kangleipak Communist Party (People’s War Group) [KCP-PWG], including four women, surrendered before security forces on Tuesday in what officials described as the largest mass surrender by the outfit to date.

The “homecoming ceremony” was held at the Mantripukhri Garrison in Imphal East district in the presence of Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh, Home Minister Govindas Konhoujam, senior Army and Assam Rifles officers, police officials and representatives of various security agencies.

The surrendered cadres handed over a significant cache of arms, ammunition and explosives. The weapons surrendered included 28 firearms, among them three AK-series rifles, four AK-56 rifles, an INSAS Ex-Calibur rifle, a Self-Loading Rifle (SLR), a 9 mm carbine, three .303 rifles, an RPG launcher, three pistols and 11 country-made guns.

Security agencies also recovered 16



magazines, nine RPG shells, 23 hand grenades, seven improvised explosive devices (IEDs) weighing around 15 kg, detonators, communication equipment and 342 rounds of ammunition.

Officials noted that the scale of the surrender was unprecedented for the KCP-PWG, whose previous surrender events generally involved between five and 12 cadres. The development is being viewed as a significant setback

for the insurgent outfit and a positive step towards restoring normalcy in the state.

Speaking on behalf of the surrendered cadres, KCP-PWG chairman Laishram Ranjit Meitei said years of hardship, uncertainty and growing disillusionment with armed struggle had led the group to abandon militancy and return to the mainstream.

“Our cadres had become deeply

frustrated and faced numerous hardships. We decided to return in the interest of peace and for the welfare of our society and community. We hope the government will support us with vocational training, machinery and financial assistance for self-employment,” he said.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Singh said the return of the cadres reflected a growing desire for peace and reconciliation in a state that has witnessed prolonged unrest and ethnic violence since May 2023.

“Guns and violence can never bring development. Today’s homecoming is a significant step towards restoring lasting peace and strengthening the reconciliation process in the state,” he said. Home Minister Konhoujam highlighted the rehabilitation measures available under the Centre’s surrender policy for insurgents in the Northeast. He said the objective was to help former militants reintegrate into society through financial support and skill-development initiatives.

“Each surrendered cadre will receive Rs 4 lakh, which will remain in a fixed deposit for three years. This is

not a loan but a rehabilitation grant. While the government cannot promise employment, we will provide support for self-employment and skill development so that they can begin a new life,” he said.

Under the Revised Scheme for Surrender-cum-Rehabilitation of Militants in the North East States, 2018, each surrendered cadre is entitled to a one-time rehabilitation grant of Rs 4 lakh, kept in a fixed deposit for three years, along with a monthly stipend of Rs 6,000 during the rehabilitation period. Security officials said the surrender represents a significant milestone in ongoing efforts to encourage insurgents to renounce violence and join the democratic process. The People’s War Group emerged as a splinter faction of the Kangleipak Communist Party following ideological differences within the parent organisation.

The mass surrender is expected to strengthen confidence-building measures and support the broader peace process in Manipur, where authorities continue to pursue reconciliation and rehabilitation initiatives alongside security operations.

No Shortage of Funds for Flood Relief, CM Sarma Assures During Upper Assam Visit

GUWAHATI

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday assured flood-affected residents of Upper Assam that there would be no shortage of funds for relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction, asserting that the Centre would continue to fully support the state’s disaster response efforts.

Beginning his ground assessment of flood-ravaged areas in Upper Assam, the Chief Minister visited Charaideo district and interacted with affected families, reviewing the extent of damage caused by the ongoing floods.

Addressing reporters, Sarma said the government was committed to extending all possible assistance to those who had suffered losses due to the disaster.

“Almost 100 per cent of the financial assistance for flood relief and erosion management comes from the Central government. Therefore, there will be no shortage of funds,” he said. Responding to questions on whether Assam would receive a special relief package from the Centre, Sarma maintained that the existing mechanism already ensured substantial financial support from the Union government. “In Assam, the Centre and the State are not functioning as two separate governments. Whatever we spend on relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction is largely reimbursed by the Centre. Our responsibility is to utilise the funds effectively and seek additional assistance when-

ever necessary,” he said.

The Chief Minister’s remarks came amid criticism from Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi, who had earlier questioned the effectiveness of the government’s flood response during a visit to flood-hit areas of Jorhat. Gogoi alleged that available disaster management funds and resources had not been utilised adequately.

Sarma, however, said rescue and relief operations were being carried out in a coordinated manner by multiple agencies, including the Indian Army, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and various state government departments.

“There has been extensive damage to homes and property. Many people have lost livestock, textbooks and important documents. The government will help all affected families to the fullest extent possible,” he said.

The Chief Minister acknowledged that rescue efforts continued to face significant challenges in several marooned areas that remain inaccessible due to widespread inundation.

“We are aware that many people are still stranded in floodwaters. The Army, NDRF and SDRF teams are working tirelessly. Helicopter rescue operations were also attempted in some places, but there are areas where access remains extremely difficult because the entire region is submerged,” he said.

G S Rao Given Additional Charge as Tripura DGP; Probe Into Dhankar’s Death Continues

AGARTALA

The Tripura Government has entrusted senior IPS officer G S Rao with the additional charge of Director General of Police (Head of Police Force) following the death of state DGP Anurag Dhankar, even as authorities continue investigations into the circumstances surrounding the senior officer’s demise. Speaking to reporters after a wreath-laying ceremony at the Tripura Police Headquarters on Tuesday, Rao said the investigation was progressing and that no Special Investigation Team (SIT) had been constituted so far.

“The investigation has already begun. The police are carrying out their duties to ascertain the facts behind the incident,” Rao said. When asked whether an SIT would be formed, he replied that no such decision had been taken yet, though he acknowledged that a specialised team could be an effective approach if required.

“As of now, no special team has been formed. However, it is certainly one way to approach the investigation,” he said.

According to an official notifica-

tion issued by the General Administration (Personnel and Training) Department, Rao, a 1999-batch IPS officer of the Tripura cadre currently serving as Additional Director General of Police (Armed Police), has been assigned the additional charge of DGP (Head of Police Force) with immediate effect until further orders. The order stated that Rao, being the senior-most IPS officer presently serving in the state following Dhankar’s death, would oversee the functioning of the Tripura Police on an interim basis. Earlier in the day, Chief Minister Manik Saha paid tribute to Dhankar at the Civil Secretariat and assured that the investigation would be conducted strictly in accordance with legal procedures. Addressing the media, Saha said preliminary findings indicated that the officer died by hanging, although the final forensic report was still awaited. “He was found inside the bathroom. We waited for the forensic team to arrive because, in such cases, the body should not be brought down before forensic examination. The forensic experts then took charge of the situation,” the Chief Minister said.



VOLUME:1, ISSUE 829

HUNGER STRIKE

Few forms of political protest evoke as much moral force and public emotion as the hunger strike. It is a method that places the human body at the centre of political dissent, transforming personal suffering into a public appeal for justice. Yet it is also a method that has long divided political thinkers and constitutionalists. Is a hunger strike a noble instrument of conscience, or does it undermine democratic institutions by exerting pressure outside established constitutional processes?

The debate is not new. It was articulated with remarkable clarity by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in his historic address to the Constituent Assembly on November 25, 1949. As India prepared to adopt its Constitution, Ambedkar warned against relying on methods such as civil disobedience, non-cooperation, satyagraha and hunger strikes in a democratic republic. He famously described these methods as the "grammar of anarchy" when constitutional avenues for redress remained available.

Ambedkar's concern was rooted not in hostility to protest but in his faith in constitutional democracy. He feared that fasting unto death could create overwhelming moral and emotional pressure on governments and society, making rational democratic deliberation difficult. When a respected public figure risks death to secure political demands, governments often find themselves trapped between conceding to pressure and risking public unrest. Such situations can inflame passions, destabilize public order and weaken institutional decision-making.

His warning remains relevant even today. Democracies cannot function if every disagreement is settled through emotional coercion rather than debate, legislation and judicial review. Constitutional institutions exist precisely to mediate competing interests and resolve conflicts peacefully. When these institutions are bypassed, democratic governance can become vulnerable to pressure tactics rather than public reason.

Yet Ambedkar's argument also raises an equally important question: what happens when citizens lose faith in the responsiveness of those very institutions?

Democracy is not merely about periodic elections. It is also about accountability, transparency and the willingness of governments to engage with public concerns. Constitutional mechanisms derive legitimacy from their ability to address grievances fairly and effectively. When citizens perceive that their voices are being ignored, that public debates are stifled, or that institutions are failing to respond, frustration inevitably seeks alternative channels of expression.

History offers numerous examples of non-violent resistance emerging precisely from such circumstances. Mahatma Gandhi transformed fasting into a moral instrument designed not to compel through force but to awaken the conscience of society. His fasts were intended to provoke reflection, encourage dialogue and draw attention to injustice. They succeeded because they appealed to shared moral values rather than physical coercion.

The effectiveness of such methods, however, depends largely on the character of both the protester and the state. As civil rights activists have often observed, non-violent resistance works best when those in power possess the willingness to listen and respond. A government confident in its democratic legitimacy should not fear peaceful dissent; it should engage with it. Conversely, indifference to public concerns can deepen alienation and intensify social tensions.

This broader context explains why contemporary hunger strikes continue to resonate with many citizens. Across the country, concerns ranging from education reforms and examination irregularities to unemployment, inflation, governance failures and environmental challenges have generated significant public debate. Whether one agrees with every criticism or not, the underlying demand is often the same: accountability from those entrusted with public power.

The recent hunger strike undertaken by education reform advocate Sonam Wangchuk has become a focal point of this discussion. Wangchuk, known for his work in education, sustainable development and environmental conservation, has chosen the path of non-violent protest to draw attention to issues he considers critical to the future of the nation. His approach reflects a tradition of peaceful civic engagement deeply embedded in India's democratic history.

What makes such protests significant is not merely the duration of a fast or the individual leading it. Their importance lies in the questions they raise. Are citizens being heard? Are institutions functioning effectively? Is there sufficient space for dialogue between the government and society? These are questions that every democracy must confront honestly.

At the same time, hunger strikes should not become a substitute for democratic processes. A mature democracy requires strong institutions, vibrant parliamentary debate, an independent judiciary, a free press and active civil society participation. Public protest can draw attention to issues, but durable solutions ultimately emerge through institutional action and democratic consensus.

The challenge, therefore, is not to choose between constitutionalism and protest. It is to ensure that both reinforce rather than undermine each other. Governments must remain open to criticism and responsive to legitimate public concerns. Citizens, in turn, must continue to exercise their democratic rights responsibly and peacefully.

Ambedkar's warning against the "grammar of anarchy" was a defence of constitutional democracy, not a rejection of public conscience. Equally, Gandhi's embrace of non-violent resistance was not an attack on democracy but an appeal to its highest moral ideals. The tension between these two perspectives continues to shape India's democratic journey.

Ultimately, a hunger strike becomes neither an act of anarchy nor an unquestionable moral virtue by its very nature. Its legitimacy depends on the cause it advances, the means it employs and the democratic context in which it occurs. When undertaken peacefully, transparently and as a last resort to seek accountability, it can serve as a powerful reminder that democracy is not sustained by institutions alone but also by the conscience of its citizens.

A healthy democracy does not fear such reminders. It listens, engages and responds. That, perhaps, is the true test of constitutional governance in any age.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The word 'now' is like a bomb through the window, and it ticks. -

Arthur Miller

WEST ASIA ABLAZE AGAIN: INDIA'S EMERGING DIPLOMATIC ROLE



DR. D.K. GIRI

Barely 30 days ago, the flames of war in West Asia appeared to have subsided. Today, however, the region has once again been engulfed in conflict. On June 14, 2026, the United States and Iran signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at ending hostilities. The agreement established a 60-day timeline to resolve the underlying disputes between the two sides. Those hopes have now collapsed, and explosions are once again echoing across Tehran, Tel Aviv, and the Gulf region.

The ceasefire did not fail because of a single missile strike. It collapsed because its foundations were weak from the very beginning. In my view, there were three primary reasons for its failure: unresolved core disputes, flaws in implementation, and mediation by inappropriate actors.

A ceasefire that does not address the underlying causes of a conflict merely serves as preparation for the next war. Iran considers uranium enrichment for nuclear fuel a sovereign national right. Hardline elements in Tehran regard any concession on the issue as a compromise of national honor. The United States and Israel, on the other hand, remain committed to a policy of "zero enrichment." For Washington and Jerusalem, any Iranian nuclear capability is viewed as an existential threat. The MoU failed to identify any practical middle ground between these opposing positions and ultimately collapsed under the weight of these contradictions.

Nearly 20 percent of the world's oil supply passes through the Strait of Hormuz, a maritime corridor only about 33 kilometers wide. Iran claims special rights over the strait, while the United States advocates international oversight and unrestricted maritime navigation.

The global economy cannot afford to leave the world's energy lifeline at the mercy of any single retaliatory power. At the same time, humiliating a sovereign nation through military pressure is not a sustainable solution. Unfortunately, the MoU largely ignored this crucial issue.

Political leaders in Washington, Tehran, and Jerusalem all face domestic pressures that make compromise difficult. In the United States, Congress and influential pro-Israel groups such as AIPAC exert significant influence. In Iran, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and business interests shape policy. In Israel, coalition politics and public opinion play a similar role.

As a result, every compromise was portrayed as surrender, and every hardline statement eroded whatever trust had been built during negotiations.

Ceasefires do not succeed through press releases alone. They require robust military and diplomatic mechanisms, yet the agreement lacked such safeguards. There was no effective inspection system to monitor Iran's nuclear facilities, no penalties for violations, no deployment of independent international observers, and no emergency hotline connecting military commanders on both sides.

The situation deteriorated further because public statements by senior leaders frequently contradicted one another. Diplomacy depends on consistency and predictability. When negotiators move from praise to criticism within a matter of hours, trust quickly evaporates. Similarly, when a country's president, foreign ministry, and military establishment send different messages, the opposing side tends to hear only the most aggressive voice.

Consequently, both sides used the ceasefire period not to consolidate peace but to strengthen their military preparedness. Drone deployments increased, missile stockpiles were replenished, and proxy organizations received additional resources.

History offers many examples of such developments. During the Cold War, arms control negotiations often ended up accelerating arms races rather than reducing them. The objective was frequently strategic balance rather than genuine peace.

The process of peacebuilding cannot be entrusted to actors whose own credibility is questionable. During this ceasefire, Pakistan unexpectedly attempted to present itself as a mediator. A country that has faced scrutiny from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), struggles with internal contradictions, and has long been accused

of harboring terrorist groups was suddenly portrayed as a peacemaker.

While this may have brought Islamabad temporary international attention, it offered little tangible benefit to Tehran.

Iran itself is not a fully unified power center. Alongside the state apparatus, proxy organizations such as Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Houthis continue to operate. If the Iranian government announces a ceasefire while its allied groups continue launching rockets, the question naturally arises: whom should the international community trust?

Moreover, diplomacy cannot be built on a foundation of revenge. Iran's deep hostility toward Israel and Israel's determination to prevent a nuclear-capable Iran have reduced negotiations to strategic maneuvering rather than genuine confidence-building.

Why West Asia Matters to India Although West Asia may appear geographically distant from India, it is strategically part of India's extended neighborhood. Instability in the region directly affects several critical Indian interests.

Approximately 60 percent of India's crude oil imports and 70 percent of its liquefied natural gas (LNG) supplies pass through the Strait of Hormuz. If the route were disrupted, global crude oil prices could rise to as much as \$120 per barrel, placing severe inflationary pressure on the Indian economy.

Around nine million Indians live in Gulf countries and remit nearly \$50 billion annually to India. Ensuring their safety remains a major responsibility for New Delhi.

Strategic projects such as Iran's Chabahar Port and the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) are key pillars of India's future trade strategy. Any prolonged regional conflict could jeopardize both initiatives.

Furthermore, if Iran becomes consumed by internal instability and Pakistan comes under increasing pressure, terrorist organizations could find greater opportunities to operate.

India therefore cannot afford to remain a passive observer, nor can it hide behind the rhetoric of neutrality while ignoring its own interests. In times of conflict, absolute neutrality is often a myth.

The author invokes a lesson from the Mahabharata, recalling how Lord Krishna advised his elder brother Balarama that remaining indifferent in a struggle between righteousness and wrongdoing is

not always appropriate.

An Opportunity for Indian Diplomacy Pakistan's limited credibility as a mediator creates an important opportunity for India. New Delhi's greatest diplomatic asset is that it maintains trusted relations with Washington, Tehran, and Jerusalem simultaneously—a position enjoyed by very few countries.

India could propose a four-point peace initiative.

1. A Practical Peace Framework Instead of issuing routine statements, India could prepare a detailed peace proposal and share it with all stakeholders.

The guiding principle should be "complete weaponization restraint, not zero uranium enrichment."

Under such an arrangement, Iran would be allowed to maintain a peaceful nuclear program under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) supervision, while the United States and Israel would receive credible and verifiable assurances that Iran would not develop nuclear weapons.

2. Securing the Strait of Hormuz India, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman could establish a joint maritime patrol mechanism to ensure the security of the Strait of Hormuz.

Such an arrangement would prevent any single state from exercising exclusive control while safeguarding global energy flows.

3. Leveraging Relations with Both Iran and Israel

India need not adopt a defensive posture regarding its close ties with Israel.

New Delhi can clearly communicate to Tehran that it maintains friendly relations with both Israel and Iran and is therefore uniquely positioned to serve as a bridge between the two sides.

4. Protecting National Interests

India should activate crisis-management mechanisms for overseas Indians, accelerate development of Chabahar Port and the IMEC project, and build a strategic petroleum reserve capable of meeting at least 120 days of demand.

Economic Opportunities Amid Crisis

Every war disrupts global supply chains. During such periods, India has an opportunity to emerge as a stable, reliable, and long-term alternative for global markets.

Sectors such as pharmaceuticals, engineering goods, food products, and digital services could benefit from renewed momentum under the vision of "Make in

India for the World."

When other nations are distracted by conflict, India can expand its global market share through its manufacturing capabilities and reputation for reliability.

Rather than merely waiting for circumstances to improve, India must proactively manage risks with strategic foresight.

Lessons from a Failed Ceasefire This failed ceasefire offers three important lessons to the international community.

First, agreements lacking effective verification and monitoring mechanisms ultimately pave the way for renewed conflict.

Second, in a multipolar world, leadership will belong to those powers capable of maintaining dialogue with all sides and earning their trust.

Third, the episode once again demonstrates the timeless truth that every war is ultimately a failure of diplomacy.

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

Global hunger declined for a third consecutive year in 2025, proving that progress is possible.

Yet 645 million people still faced hunger & 2.1 billion experienced food insecurity.

The right to food must become a reality for all. ~ United Nations



Today, the United States follows a largely transactional approach, China is increasingly assertive and expansionist, and Russia remains preoccupied with other strategic challenges.

In this environment, India stands out as a major power with deep civilizational links to West Asia, extensive economic interests in the region, and no historical baggage of colonialism or territorial expansion.

The U.S.-Iran agreement failed because it attempted to freeze the conflict temporarily without addressing its root causes. It lacked both an effective monitoring mechanism and the moral authority necessary to gain the trust of all parties. India should learn from this experience. Rather than limiting itself to routine expressions of concern, New Delhi should be prepared to offer concrete and practical solutions.

A weak and unstable ceasefire can sometimes be more dangerous than the absence of a ceasefire altogether because it creates an illusion of peace while allowing all sides time to rearm.

An old Indian saying captures the situation well: "No performance is sometimes better than a poor performance."

The need of the hour is for India to emerge not as a supporter of one side or another, but as a responsible power committed to building peace. In a world increasingly consumed by conflict, true leadership will ultimately belong to the nation that shows the path to peace rather than the path to war.



Supreme Court Seeks Responses on Plea to Start Appeal Process for Assam NRC Exclusions

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday issued notices to the Centre, the Assam government and other concerned authorities on a petition seeking the commencement of the appeal process for individuals excluded from Assam's final National Register of Citizens (NRC).

A Bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalaya Bagchi and Vipul M. Pancholi was hearing a plea filed by the Assam State Jamiat Ulama, which contended that despite provisions in law allowing appeals against exclusion from the NRC, the mechanism has yet to be operationalised.

During the hearing, counsel appearing for the petitioner argued that thousands of people excluded from the final

NRC continue to face uncertainty and hardship due to the prolonged delay in initiating the appeal process.

The petitioner informed the court that a similar matter relating to NRC appeals was already pending before the Supreme Court and sought urgent intervention to ensure that affected individuals are provided an opportunity to challenge their exclusion.

Taking note of the submissions, the Bench issued notices to the Union Government, the Government of Assam and the office of the State NRC Coordinator, seeking their responses on the matter.

The court also directed that the petition be tagged with the connected case already pending before it so that both matters can be considered together.

Apart from seeking activation of the appeal mechanism, the petition has also



sought directions for the issuance of national identity cards to individuals whose names were included in the final NRC. The plea invoked Section 14A of the Citizenship Act, 1955, read with Rule

13 of the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003, which provides for the preparation of the National Register of Indian Citizens and the issuance of national identity cards.

The NRC update exercise in Assam, conducted under the supervision of the Supreme Court, culminated in the publication of the final register on August 31, 2019. The exercise was aimed at identifying genuine Indian citizens residing in the state and distinguishing them from illegal migrants.

According to official data, around 3.30 crore people applied for inclusion in the NRC. Of these, approximately 3.11 crore applicants were found eligible and included in the final register, while 19.06 lakh individuals were excluded.

Since the publication of the final NRC, questions have persisted regarding the process available to excluded persons to challenge their omission. The delay in operationalising the appeals mechanism has been a matter of concern for several organisations and affected families.

With the issuance of notices, the Supreme Court has now sought formal responses from the Centre, the Assam government and NRC authorities. The matter will be heard along with the related pending petition after the respondents file their replies.

The case is expected to have significant implications for the future course of the NRC process in Assam and for the rights of those who remain outside the final register pending an opportunity to appeal.

Assam revises Mising Autonomous Council Electoral Roll schedule amid flood disruptions

GUWAHATI

The Assam State Election Commission has revised the schedule for the preparation and publication of electoral rolls for the upcoming Mising Autonomous Council (MAC) Election 2026, citing disruptions caused by the ongoing flood situation across the state.

In a notification issued on Tuesday, July 21, the Commission stated that the electoral roll preparation process could not be completed according to the earlier timeline as flood-affected areas posed significant challenges to carrying out the exercise. The revised schedule has been issued to ensure the smooth completion of the electoral roll process while providing adequate opportunity for eligible voters to register and seek corrections.

Invoking its powers under Rule 16 of the Mising Autonomous Council (Election) Rules, 2005, the Commission announced that the draft electoral roll will now be published on July 29, 2026. The last date for filing claims and objections has been fixed as August 13, while the disposal of claims and objections will be completed by August 20.

According to the revised programme, the final electoral roll for the Mising Autonomous Council Election 2026 will be published on August 24, 2026.

The Commission clarified that all other provisions and conditions contained in its earlier notification dated June 30, 2026, will remain unchanged.

The revision comes as Assam continues to grapple with recurring floods that have disrupted normal administrative functioning in several districts, prompting authorities to adjust election-related timelines to facilitate the completion of statutory procedures.

IIM Guwahati Launches First MBA Academic Session with Inaugural Batch of 52 Students

GUWAHATI

The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Guwahati on Monday formally commenced its academic journey with the inauguration of its first MBA programme, welcoming an inaugural batch of 52 students and marking a significant milestone in Assam's higher education landscape.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma inaugurated the first academic session of the institute, which has recently been established as India's 22nd Indian Institute of Management.

Education Minister Ranaj Pegu accompanied the Chief Minister during the programme and later shared details of the event on social media platform X. MLA Himangshu Shekhar Baishya was also present at the inaugural ceremony.

The launch of the MBA programme marks the beginning of academic activities at the premier management institution and is expected to provide aspiring students in the region access to world-class management education.

SC Asks Sonam Raghuvanshi to Surrender or Face Hearing on Meghalaya's Plea Against Bail in Raja Murder Case

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court gave Sonam Raghuvanshi, the prime accused in the murder of her husband Raja Raghuvanshi during their honeymoon in Meghalaya, two options while hearing the Meghalaya government's challenge to the bail granted to her by a trial court and subsequently upheld by the Meghalaya High Court. A Bench comprising Justices M.M. Sundresh and P.B. Varale indicated that it could either decide the state government's appeal against the bail order on merits after hearing Sonam's arguments or direct her to surrender while the Court considers the matter and witnesses are examined.

"You have two options. Either we will pass an order on merits or we will ask you to surrender, let the public witnesses be examined - meanwhile we will decide the matter on merits," the Bench orally observed during the proceedings.



Seeking time to obtain instructions from his client, Sonam's counsel told the Court that he would respond when the matter is taken up again on Thursday. The hearing also saw the Bench raise questions regarding Sonam's conduct following the alleged murder and seek clarification on her contention that the "grounds of arrest" had not been communicated to her. Appearing for the Meghalaya government, Solicitor General

SUSHANTA ROY

DIPHU :Incessant heavy rainfall across Assam has pushed the flood situation in Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong into a critical state.

Rising water levels in key rivers, including the Kopili and Jamuna, have submerged roads, displaced hundreds of families, and severed vital transport routes across both hill districts.

Hundreds of families, particularly in the Dongkamukam and Donka Revenue Circles have been affected by rising floodwaters and flash floods.

Major transport corridors, including segments of the Boithalangshu-Hojai route and several subways constructed under the Assam Mala Project, are heavily submerged, cutting off key communication links.

In response to worsening conditions, the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) of Karbi Anglong issued an immediate, indefinite order closing all waterfall picnic spots and tourist destinations across the district to ensure public safety.

The order, issued by District Commissioner-cum-Chairperson of the DDMA, Aranyak Saikia, highlighted the urgent need for preventive action to safeguard lives and property.

The closure follows a recent incident where rescue teams, including the SDRF and local emergency services, had to evacuate stranded picnickers and vulnerable residents trapped by sudden water surges.



While Karbi Anglong has recorded relatively fewer casualties compared to other flood-hit regions in Assam, the human toll across the broader flood wave remains severe.

Statewide fatalities have reached between 10 and 15, with Karbi Anglong reporting one confirmed death and a few individuals missing after being swept away by drowning currents.

Disaster management agencies have stepped up emergency protocols across the affected regions; the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) has deployed its elected Members (MACs) to carry out ground assessments, distribute immediate relief materials, and coordinate response efforts with the district administration.

The District Disaster Response Force (DDRF) has been conducting flood awareness campaigns and mock-drill exercises in vulnerable, flood-prone areas such as the Donka Revenue Circle.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma confirmed that the government has intensified relief and rescue operations statewide as the deluge impacts over 1.70 lakh people across 12 districts.

BJP Tripura Announces Major Organisational Reshuffle

AGARTALA

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Tuesday carried out a major organisational reshuffle in Tripura, announcing a new state committee and reconstituting the leadership of its various frontal organisations in a move aimed at strengthening the party's organisational structure ahead of future political challenges.

The revamped committee, approved by the BJP's national leadership following consultations with senior party functionaries, was announced through an order issued by Tripura BJP president and MLA Abhishek Debroy.

The appointments have been communicated to National General Secretary (Organisation) B.L. Santosh, Tripura BJP in-charge Dr Rajdeep Roy and State General Secretary (Organisation) G.R. Raju. As part of the restructuring, Arindam Deb has been appointed president of the BJP Yuva Morcha, while Mousumi Das has been named president of the Mahila Morcha.

The party also announced new heads for its other frontal organisations. Abhijit Debbarma will lead the Scheduled Tribe (ST) Morcha, Sukanta Ghosh will head the OBC Morcha, Pradip Baran Roy has been entrusted with the Kisan Morcha, and Billal Mia will lead the Minorities Morcha.

In the state unit, six leaders have been appointed as vice-presidents. They are Tapas Bhattacharya, Amit Rakshit, Ratan Ghosh, Uttara Debbarma, Tapas Majumder and Ajanta Bhattacharjee.

The BJP has also named MLA Bhagaban Ch. Das, Bipin Debbarma and Chandan Debnath as General Secretaries of the state unit.

The newly appointed state secretaries are Bhumika Nanda Reang, Kamal Dey, Nabadal Banik, Mimi Majumder, Malina Debnath and Rathindra Jamatia.

Meanwhile, Nagadhiraaj Datta has been appointed Treasurer, M.K. Nath will serve as Joint Treasurer and Mihir Sarkar has been named Office Secretary.

Party leaders said the reconstituted committee reflects the BJP's strategy of combining experienced leadership with emerging faces to further strengthen its organisational presence across Tripura.

The reshuffle comes at a time when the BJP is focusing on expanding its grassroots outreach and consolidating its support base across the state. Party sources said the new team has been tasked with enhancing organisational coordination, strengthening booth-level structures and preparing the party for upcoming political and electoral engagements.

According to the official order, all appointments take immediate effect. The BJP leadership expressed confidence that the revamped organisational structure would help the party reinforce its position in Tripura and accelerate its outreach among different sections of society.

Health Department Raids Clinic of Alleged Fake Doctor in Cachar's Bhagabazar, Probe Underway

SILCHAR

The Health Department on Monday conducted a special raid at a clinic in Bhagabazar Manipuri Market in Assam's Cachar district following allegations that it was being operated by an unqualified individual posing as a doctor.

The operation was carried out around 10 am by a special medical team from Silchar amid growing concerns over alleged irregularities in the clinic's functioning.

The inspection team included Dr Mrs Chikdar, Sakat Chakraborty, Cherab Uddin, the officer in charge of Bhagabazar Primary Health Centre, and other officials of the Health Department.

According to preliminary findings, the clinic was allegedly being run by Daren Sinha of Manipuri Market without the requisite registration, licences and official permissions mandated for medical practice.

Health officials alleged that Sinha had been presenting himself as a medical practitioner and treating patients despite



reportedly lacking a recognised medical degree and other necessary professional credentials.

Authorities said the raid was launched following allegations that medicines were being sold without valid prescriptions and that several norms governing medical services were being violated.

The action gained urgency after a video circulated widely on social media in recent days, alleging that a child developed physical complications after being administered an incorrect injection at the clinic. The incident sparked concern among residents and prompted multiple complaints to the Health Department.

Following the complaints, officials initiated an inquiry and conducted the raid to

verify the allegations.

During the inspection, authorities examined records and collected documents related to the clinic's registration, operating licence, medical qualifications and other mandatory paperwork.

Officials said the scrutiny of documents and other evidence is currently underway. If the allegations are substantiated, legal proceedings will be initiated against the individual concerned in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

"The investigation is ongoing, and all documents are being verified. Appropriate action will be taken if any violations are established," a health official associated with the inquiry said.

The incident has generated widespread concern in the Bhagabazar area, with residents demanding strict action against unauthorised medical practitioners operating in rural and semi-urban regions. However, the Health Department emphasised that the allegations remain under investigation and no final conclusion has been reached at this stage.

Officials urged the public not to draw premature conclusions until the inquiry is completed and the facts are fully established. The case has once again highlighted concerns over the presence of unqualified practitioners in some parts of the state and the risks posed to public health by unauthorised medical treatment.

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World ‘extremely turbulent’, no nation can face challenges alone: Jaishankar urges deeper India-ASEAN cooperation



NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Wednesday called for deeper cooperation between India and ASEAN, saying the current global environment demands stronger partnerships as no country or grouping can tackle emerging challenges on its own.

Speaking at the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference with India 2026 in Manila, Jaishankar said the world was facing unprecedented uncertainty, making collaboration critical to ensuring regional stability and economic resilience.

“The theme, ‘Navigating Our Future Together’, captures the sentiment which many of us feel today. The world is extremely turbulent, and it is increasingly evident that no single nation or even grouping can deal with it on its own,” the External Affairs Minister said

during his opening remarks at the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference with India 2026 on Wednesday.

“Let us contemplate the near future and consider how best our cooperation can serve our respective interests. In this era of volatility and disruption, the most visible stress is on supply chains,” he added.

Jaishankar, who is in the Philippines on a two-day visit, also acknowledged the role of the Philippines as the country coordinator in advancing the India-ASEAN Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

He said ensuring resilient supply chains and safeguarding maritime trade were key priorities amid growing global disruptions.

“Energy, food and health security can no longer be taken for granted. Because we are all so dependent on maritime trade, that too could

become a source of anxiety. Observing international law in that regard is therefore vital. Coincidentally, 2026 is the ASEAN-India year of maritime cooperation,” he said.

The minister noted that while geopolitical uncertainty persists, India and ASEAN remain optimistic about their future and should focus on expanding cooperation across key sectors.

“It is a timely reminder of what we can do for a more stable and secure future. At the same time, both India and ASEAN are optimistic about their prospects. Our eyes must therefore be firmly fixed on opportunities, even while addressing challenges.”

Jaishankar said the India-ASEAN partnership spans trade and investment, mobility and talent, technology, digital innovation and artificial intelligence, green growth, sustainability, and connectivity.

“It is only through deeper cooperation that we can de-risk and diversify.”

Emphasising the strategic importance of the partnership, he said India and ASEAN, together representing nearly two billion people, have a shared responsibility in shaping a stable regional order.

“India and ASEAN have traditionally worked for the welfare of the larger region. This is a world in transition, and India and ASEAN, who account for 2 billion, must navigate it together if it is to remain safe and steady,” Jaishankar said.

During his visit, Jaishankar will also participate in the Quad foreign ministers’ meeting with his counterparts from Australia, Japan and the United States. The grouping last met in New Delhi in late May, when US Secretary of State Marco Rubio travelled to India.

NEW DELHI

The Congress on Wednesday launched a sharp attack on Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over his criticism of Rahul Gandhi, calling him “insensitive, incompetent, inveterate liar” and asserting that there will soon be a full accounting of “Mantri Pradhan’s abysmal record” as minister.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said that at a time when Pradhan has disappointed the aspirations of millions of students, he refuses to resign and instead continues to demonstrate his unchecked arrogance and pettiness through social media posts.

Ramesh’s remarks came after Pradhan asserted on Tuesday that the government is committed to discussing issues related to the NEET and addressing every genuine concern of youngsters on the floor of Parliament.

Pradhan also slammed Gandhi for staging a dharna outside Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s residence and accused him of exploiting students as “political tools” to “manufacture” disruption during the Monsoon session of Parliament.

Hitting back at Pradhan, Ramesh said, “Mantri Pradhan is an indifferent, insensitive, incompetent, and inveterate liar like the Pradhan Mantri. At a time when he has disappointed the aspirations of millions of students, he refuses to resign and instead continues to demonstrate his unchecked arrogance and pettiness through social media posts.”

The fact is that the call for Pradhan’s resignation is not premised on one issue but a whole host of failures and corruption that has characterised his tenure as Union Minister of Education, Ramesh alleged.

Citing examples of corruption, Ramesh said the continuous failure of the National Testing Agency (NTA) on Pradhan’s watch - which includes the multiple paper leaks and paper cancellations of 2024, and the NEET-UG and UGC-NET Sociology paper leak in 2026.

“The Minister’s response has been one of arrogance and petty politics, including official denials that any paper leak took place, and a refusal to



acknowledge the recommendations made by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education to strengthen the NTA because it has members of the Opposition in it,” the Congress leader said.

Protests calling for Education minister Dharmendra Pradhan’s resignation in New Delhi.

Ramesh also cited alleged corruption in the procurement of the On Screen Marking System (OSM) for the CBSE’s Grade 12 Board Examinations.

A company which has a known track record of failure was awarded the contract after the CBSE revised the tender three times with modifications that benefited COEMPT, Ramesh claimed.

“It took an 18-year-old CBSE student himself to bring this scandal to light. The Government appointed a one-member commission to investigate the scandal - and though the commission’s deadline of one month has passed, there is no update on what this panel has found,” he said.

Ramesh said the appointment of Vice Chancellors was solely based on their political affiliation and the implicit green signal from the Ministry to commit acts of corruption.

Students and faculty from many of India’s premier institutions - Banaras Hindu University, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi University, Allahabad

University - have credibly accused their institutional leadership of corruption and a dictatorial attitude, he said.

Faculty appointments are reportedly being sold to the highest bidder, with the ‘price’ starting at Rs. 30 lakh, Ramesh alleged.

At least two Central Universities - North Eastern Hill University in Shillong and Tezpur University in Assam - have witnessed such vociferous protests against their Vice Chancellors that they have had to leave campus and operate remotely, he said.

These are all persons that have been handpicked by “Mantri Pradhan” and Pradhan Mantri to oversee the gutting of India’s higher education system, Ramesh said. He further alleged that there was abundant corruption in other autonomous bodies and institutions of the Ministry. There has been a bribery scandal in the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) which has led to the filing of a CBI charge-sheet against a Professor at JNU, who was recruited by this regime’s favourite Vice Chancellor and then appointed by the very same VC to the NAAC as well, he said.

The CBI has also filed a charge-sheet alleging corruption against the Chancellor of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, who was also previ-

ously appointed as Chairman of the University Grants Commission by the Modi Government, Ramesh said.

The Indian Council for Historical Research has also been mired in reports of financial irregularities, he added.

“This is the tip of the iceberg. There will be a proper accounting of Mantri Pradhan’s abysmal record as Minister soon,” Ramesh said.

Protests calling for Education minister Dharmendra Pradhan’s resignation in New Delhi.

On Tuesday Gandhi, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and several other senior leaders sat on a dharna outside the prime minister’s residence here and demanded Pradhan’s resignation over the police action against students protesting on the NEET paper-leak issue.

In a post on X, Pradhan said, “LoP Shri @RahulGandhi and @INCIndia continue to shamelessly exploit students as political tools to manufacture disruption during the Monsoon Session of Parliament. They chose to stage a dharna outside the Hon’ble Prime Minister’s residence, causing inconvenience to the public and disregarding established security protocols.”

“Even after the Government conveyed its readiness for a comprehensive discussion, the Congress chose political spectacle over democratic debate. Their objective was never solutions for students, it was disruption for political headlines. For Rahul Gandhi, this is not about students. This is about manufacturing confrontation after every genuine avenue for discussion has been opened,” he said.

The education minister, who is at the centre of the controversy, said the students of India deserve far better than being treated as “props in a political campaign”.

“Our government remains 100 pc committed to discussing NEET and addressing every genuine concern of our youth on the floor of the House. The students of India deserve far better than being treated as props in a political campaign. They deserve certainty over chaos, solutions over slogans and responsibility over disruption.

INTERNATIONAL

Ukraine’s Zelenskyy fires military chief after protests, names replacement

KYIV

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Tuesday fired Gen. Oleksandr Syrskiy as commander-in-chief of Ukraine’s armed forces and named his replacement, following days of mass protests in Kyiv, the country’s capital, and other cities across the nation demanding his removal.

It was the second major change Zelenskyy has made under street pressure, after protests last summer forced him to undo a law weakening Ukraine’s anti-corruption watchdogs.

Zelenskyy appointed Mykhailo Drapatyι as the new army chief, according to a statement on social media. “Our shared wish is one — victory over the enemy and conditions at the front and in pressure on Russia that would force Russia toward peace,” Zelenskyy said.

The Ukrainian leader said he made the decision after a series of meetings with military commanders. They began shortly after protests broke out demanding the reinstatement of former Defense Minister Mykhailo Fedorov, seen by demonstrators as a driver of military modernization, and the removal of Syrskiy, who they said embodied the army’s old, Soviet-style command culture.

Zelenskyy thanked Syrskiy for his achievements in Ukraine’s fight against Russia and praised him for the defense of Kyiv and for operations in Kharkiv and Kursk.

“I am grateful to Oleksandr Syrskiy and to every one of our warriors for Ukraine’s strong front-line positions,” he said. “I am grateful to Mykhailo Drapatyι for holding that same view.”

Drapatyι wrote in a Facebook post that serving Ukraine “has always been an honor for me, and during this war for independence, it means absolute



responsibility.” He thanked Syrskiy for his consistent work strengthening the Ukrainian military.

“I grew up in it,” he added, referring to the army. “I will work responsibly, with focus and with respect for the people defending our state today.”

Zelenskyy said Drapatyι and other commanders must present an updated defense strategy, including continued reform of the corps system, faster weapons and drone deliveries, stronger air defense against Russian strikes and a clearer mobilization plan.

Zelenskyy met separately with Fedorov on Tuesday and offered him what he called a respected position in the government that would unify the country’s technology sector. It wasn’t clear if Fedorov accepted the offer — or whether the latest moves would satisfy protesters and calm the streets.

Fedorov congratulated Drapatyι, calling the appointment “new hope in the fight of free people for freedom and justice” and “a voice for change that could not go unheard.”

Fedorov had criticized Syrskiy publicly before his dismissal, saying the general was blocking his reform efforts and needed to be replaced for Ukraine not to fail in its resistance against Russia. He said Ukrainians’ high expectations must now be met with a clear vision for ending the war, decisive action to preserve soldiers’ lives, expand robotic warfare at the front, strike asymmetrically and exhaust Russia’s economy.

Fedorov called Syrskiy to thank him for defending the Kyiv region, the Kharkiv operation and other battles, calling it “already an important part of Ukraine’s history” but adding that the country must “move even faster and write new chapters, correcting all previous mistakes.”

The crisis began last Thursday, when Zelenskyy overhauled his wartime government, replacing his prime minister and firing Mykhailo Fedorov as defense minister after just six months in the post.

Zelenskyy cited an unworkable rift

between Fedorov and Syrskiy, telling reporters that as the two couldn’t resolve their dispute, he would “have to resolve it.”

Following his dismissal, Fedorov publicly accused Syrskiy of blocking military reforms and fostering a top-down command culture, criticism that echoed complaints from soldiers and veterans over heavy casualties in costly front-line assaults.

The reshuffle immediately drew thousands of protesters into the streets of Kyiv and other cities, framing Fedorov’s removal as Zelenskyy siding with an entrenched military old guard over a reformer.

The backlash promptly spread to inside the military: the Air Force’s deputy commander resigned in protest, warning the move would weaken Ukraine’s air defenses; veterans and soldiers on leave joined the protests in Kyiv and other cities, and numerous public figures among soldiers spoke out publicly against Syrskiy on social media. Syrskiy has long been associated with a Soviet-style, top-down command culture, and many protesters said they wanted a new generation of generals who would place a higher priority on preserving soldiers’ lives.

Within the military, Syrskiy has earned the gruesome nickname of “Butcher,” which particularly spread during his command of the defense of Bakhmut, one of the war’s longest and costliest battles.

His already precarious public standing eroded further after Ukrainian outlet Babel published an investigation in June detailing allegations of abuse within the Skelia assault regiment, a unit closely associated with Syrskiy that has reportedly suffered higher-than-average battlefield losses. The investigation documented dozens of deaths among recruits.

Trump announces steep tariffs on generic drug imports from 2028; India pharma exports may take a hit



WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday announced a phased tariff regime on imported generic medicines beginning August 2028, a move aimed at shifting pharmaceutical manufacturing back to the United States.

The policy is expected to have significant impacts for India, the world’s largest supplier of generic medicines and the biggest exporter of such drugs to the US.

In a post on Truth Social, Trump said generic drug imports would continue to attract zero tariffs for two years from August 1, 2026, before facing sharp increases.

“Effective August 1st, 2026, all Generic Drugs being brought into the United States will continue to have a TARIFF of ZERO PERCENT for two years, after which the TARIFF will be raised to 100 per cent for one year, and 200 per cent thereafter,” Trump said.

“This is done to RESHORE Generic Pharmaceutical Production into America, with a penalty to those Companies that decide not to build Plant and Equipment within the stated period of time given to them,” Trump said.

The president said the objective of the policy was to safeguard Americans while encouraging companies to manufacture within the US.

“The Policy on Patented, Branded, or Innovative Drugs, which has been so successful, will remain as it is,” he said.

India exported pharmaceutical products worth USD 9.7 billion to the US in 2025, accounting for 38 per cent of its total global pharma exports of USD 25.8 billion, according to the Global Trade Research Initiative. Indian-made generic medicines are widely used in the US to treat conditions including hypertension, diabetes, cancer, infectious diseases and mental health disorders.

Trump’s announcement comes amid a broader push by his administration to expand tariff measures. Earlier this week, US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer told The New York Times that Washington was preparing new tariffs to replace levies struck down by the Supreme Court earlier this year.

The administration is also planning fresh tariffs of 10 to 12.5 per cent on imports from as many as 60 countries, including India, citing investigations into alleged forced-labour practices and unfair trade policies.

Emphasising the economic rationale behind the tariff strategy, Greer said: “This is not a foreign policy shop. This is an economics shop here. And so when I look at someone like the European Union that blocks American agricultural goods for specious, nonscientific reasons, that’s a problem. Friend or foe, that’s an issue.”

ANURAG DHANKAR:

Beyond the Uniform Was a True Gentleman, Let an Impartial Investigation into His Suicide



JAYANTA DEBNATH

There are certain articles in a journalist's life that one never wishes to write. This piece on the untimely death of Tripura Director General of Police (DGP) Anurag Dhankar (1994 Batch IPS) is one such painful article.

To me, Anurag Dhankar was not just the DGP of the state of Tripura. Through my long career in journalism, I had the opportunity to observe and know him closely. He was an extremely courteous, humble, composed, and simple human being, a genuinely gentleman. I never saw any trace of arrogance in him despite the high office he held. From an ordinary journalist to a constable, he spoke to everyone with the same warmth and respect. He hailed from a remote village in Uttar Pradesh and therefore easily understood the hardships of ordinary people. Even in the most difficult situations, I never saw him lose his composure.

In short, Besides being an efficient administrator, he was an extraordinarily good human being.

Today, that man is no more. On July 20, 2026, he died by suicide by hanging himself in the bathroom of his office using a dupatta belonging to his wife. The man who bore the highest responsibility for maintaining law and order in Tripura, who had worked with dedication, honesty, and professionalism for more than three decades since 1995 to ensure the safety of the people of Tripura and the country, was given a Guard of Honour by the State on July 21, 2026. The State Government observed mourning, countless fellow officers bid him farewell with tears in their eyes, and Tripura Chief Secretary JK Sinha, IAS wept over his sudden demise. Yet, amid all this, one question continues to trouble the minds of the people of Tripura: how did such an officer die by hanging? That too, inside the bathroom of his own office?

Irrespective of political affiliations, everyone agrees that Anurag Dhankar had a distinguished career. A 1994 batch IPS officer of the Tripura cadre, he discharged every responsibility with dedication, from SDPO to DGP. He served in the CBI, CISF, the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Kosovo, as a Special Investigating Officer in the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, and also played an important role in the investigation of the Punjab National Bank

fraud involving Nirav Modi. The death of such a skilled investigating officer has itself become a mystery today. In particular, his unnatural death inside the bathroom of his own office has naturally raised numerous questions. These questions do not arise out of any political motive but from the natural curiosity of a citizen and the expectation of justice.

So far, various media reports have stated that two of his mobile phones are yet to be traced. While there has been considerable discussion surrounding an alleged suicide note, the investigating agencies have not yet officially confirmed its existence. Forensic experts have conducted a preliminary examination of the scene and have stated that their final opinion will depend on the post-mortem findings and scientific examination. A few days before his death, he had attended a meeting with the Union Home Minister in Delhi along with the Superintendents of Police of the border districts. Although various sources have claimed that he had been under mental stress since returning from that visit, no government agency has yet reached any definite conclusion on these issues.

None of these pieces of information are established facts. They are all matters of investigation. That is precisely why what is most needed today is an investigation in which the public can have complete confidence.

Acting DGP GS Rao has announced the formation of an investigation committee comprising several senior police officers. Chief Minister Prof. (Dr.) Manik Saha has also assured that every aspect will be investigated in accordance with the law and the truth will be brought to light. BJP State President Abhishek Debroy has likewise stated that every issue, including the alleged suicide note, will come under investigation. These assurances must now be translated into reality.

However, Leader of the Opposition and CPIM State General Secretary Jitendra Chaudhury and Senior Congress leader Sudip Roy Barman are demanding a judicial inquiry under the leadership of the Chief Justice of the Tripura High Court. They believe that he was under immense professional pressure and that his inability to bear that pressure led him to choose the path of suicide. According to them, the BJP government has not allowed officers and bureaucrats in Tripura to function independently. They allege that the interference of a former police officer influenced all of his decisions. In their view, the backbone of the police force has been completely broken.

In my opinion, the State Government should accord the highest priority to investigating these allegations and the mysterious death of the DGP. All scientific evidence con-



necting with the incident must be preserved. The two missing mobile phones should be recovered at the earliest and their digital data thoroughly analysed. CCTV footages of his office and residence, call records, emails, forensic reports, post-mortem findings, and the statements of every individual who came into contact with him before and after the incident must be examined with the highest level of professionalism. If necessary, his wife may also be questioned, because after her husband's death she did not respond to any questions from media representatives despite repeated attempts. Although many opposition leaders have alleged that she was not allowed to speak to the media. Therefore, the investigation must be conducted in such a manner that all allegations, suspicions, and counterclaims are thoroughly examined, leaving no room for future doubts. If necessary, in the interest of restoring complete public confidence, the Government may also legally consider the possibility of a broader or independent investigation.

This investigation is not against any individual, any political party, or any institution. Nor is it solely for ensuring justice to a deceased IPS officer. Just as we have a responsibility towards his family, we also have a responsibility to preserve the morale of the entire Tripura Police force. Police personnel, too, have the right to know how and why their leader met such an untimely death. Our foremost duty is towards his colleagues, so that in the future no one can point a finger and say that the mysterious death of the DGP of this state was never properly investigated.

Most importantly, Anurag Dhankar's death has taught us

another important lesson. Behind every uniform is a human being. He too had mental stress, family problems, administrative challenges, and personal emotions. Therefore, the mental well-being of police personnel and senior administrative officers must now receive far greater attention. Seeking medical assistance for mental health is not a sign of weakness. Rather, it is one of the biggest lifestyle diseases of our time, and it deserves the highest priority.

Anurag Dhankar spent his entire career striving to ensure justice for others. Today, the time has come to ensure justice for him by uncovering the truth behind his own death.

The Guard of Honour accorded by the State, the one day of State mourning, and the tears shed by thousands of people are all expressions of profound respect for him. But the greatest tribute Tripura can pay to him will be a fearless, impartial, transparent, scientific, and expeditious investigation that answers every question and places the truth before the people.

Anurag Dhankar will never return. But if the truth comes to light, it will, to some extent, ease the pain of his loved ones as well as his police force, restore people's faith in the Government of Tripura, and convince future generations that in Tripura the truth is never suppressed, no one is above the law, and a dutiful police officer was not denied justice even after his death.

Tribute, Anurag Dhankar. May your soul rest in peace. And may truth prevail.

(The author is a senior journalist and Editor of Tripurainfo.)

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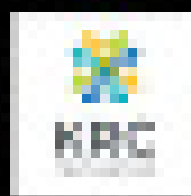


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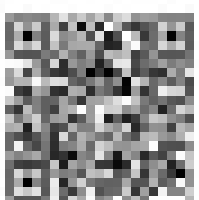


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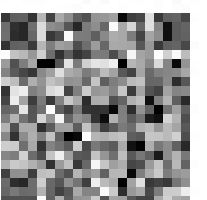


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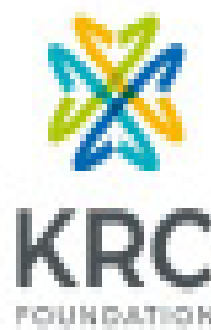
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