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PERSPECTIVE

Life is about moving on.

Manipur MP Sharda Devi Seeks Swift Central Clearance for State Proposals, Prioritises IDP Rehabilitation

IMPHAL Rajya Sabha MP from Manipur, A Sharda Devi, on Wednesday urged the Centre to expedite the approval of key proposals submitted by the state government, placing particular emphasis on the welfare and rehabilitation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) affected by the ongoing crisis in the state.

During a meeting with Union Minister for Women and Child Development Annapurna Devi at Parliament House in New Delhi, Sharda Devi discussed a range of development-related issues concerning Manipur in the context of its continuing socio-political challenges.According to the BJP leader, she requested the Union minister to facilitate the early clearance of proposals and demands submitted by the Manipur government to ensure timely implementation of development initiatives and relief measures.In a post on social media following the meeting, Sharda Devi said she stressed the need for greater Central support and prompt intervention to address the hardships faced by communities impacted by the prolonged unrest.

The discussions also focused extensively on the rehabilitation and welfare of internally displaced persons, many of whom continue to live in relief camps after being displaced by the violence that erupted in the state.

Sharda Devi, who also serves as the president of the Manipur BJP, said the Union minister assured her that the Ministry of Women and Child Development would extend all possible assistance to the people of Manipur. She added that Annapurna Devi also assured her that the issues and proposals raised during the meeting would receive due consideration.

WHO SAID WHAT



Congress party has miserably failed to give any substantive suggestion on the The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill. They were doing politics throughout all along. Opposition parties are exposed completely.

~ Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs

Residents Stage Symbolic ‘Tribute’ to Executive Engineer Over Dilapidated Silchar Medical Road, Demand Immediate Repairs



SILCHAR

Frustrated by the prolonged neglect of the badly damaged Silchar Medical Road, residents of Meherpur staged a unique and symbolic protest on Wednesday, offering “tributes” to the Executive Engineer of the concerned department to draw attention to what they described as official apathy towards one of the town’s most crucial road links.

The demonstration, held along the Meherpur stretch of the Silchar Medical Road, saw local residents adopt an

unconventional form of protest to voice their grievances over the deteriorating condition of the road, which serves as a vital access route to the Silchar Medical College and Hospital (SMCH).

As part of the protest, demonstrators erected a symbolic structure in the name of the Executive Engineer and paid floral tributes while draping it with a traditional Assamese gamosa. The symbolic gesture, usually reserved for paying respects, was intended to portray what the protesters called the “death” of administrative responsibility towards public infrastructure.

Residents said the protest was born out of years of frustration, alleging that repeated requests and written representations to the concerned department had failed to produce any tangible results. According to them, despite several complaints highlighting the worsening condition of the road, authorities have neither initiated comprehensive repair work nor provided a timeline for restoration.

“The road has become almost impossible to use, especially during the monsoon. Every year we are forced to suffer, and despite repeated appeals, nothing changes,” one of the protesters said. The residents alleged that the Silchar Medical Road has deteriorated significantly over the past several months, with deep potholes, broken stretches, and persistent waterlogging making daily commuting a hazardous experience.During the ongoing rainy season, the condition has worsened considerably, with rainwater accumulating in large craters, making it difficult for motorists to judge the depth of potholes. Commuters said vehicles frequently lose balance, increasing the risk of accidents, particularly during night hours.Pedestrians are equally

affected, with many finding it difficult to walk along the damaged road due to muddy conditions and stagnant water. Local shopkeepers also claimed that the poor road condition has adversely affected business as customers avoid the area during heavy rainfall.

The protesters stressed that the issue extends far beyond local inconvenience because the road serves as one of the primary access routes to the Silchar Medical College and Hospital, the largest government healthcare institution in southern Assam.

Hundreds of patients, doctors, nurses, medical students, hospital staff and visitors use the route every day. Ambulances transporting critically ill patients are also forced to navigate the damaged stretch, often resulting in delays and discomfort for patients.

Residents argued that maintaining such an important road should be a priority for the authorities, given its direct connection to emergency healthcare services.

“This is not just a neighbourhood road. It is the lifeline to the medical college and hospital. Patients and ambulances should not have to struggle through potholes to reach a hospital,”

another protester said.

Repeated appeals allegedly ignored. According to the demonstrators, several memoranda and complaints have been submitted to the concerned engineering department over the past months requesting urgent repair work.

However, they alleged that the administration has failed to respond adequately, forcing residents to resort to symbolic public demonstrations to attract official attention.

The protesters maintained that their objective was not to target any individual personally but to send a strong message about the consequences of administrative inaction on public infrastructure.The residents demanded that the government and the concerned department immediately undertake permanent repairs rather than temporary patchwork, which they said gets washed away during every monsoon.They also called for better monitoring of road maintenance projects and greater accountability from officials responsible for maintaining public infrastructure.

According to the protesters, repairing the Silchar Medical Road

would not only improve daily commuting but also ensure safer movement of emergency vehicles, reduce the risk of accidents, and ease traffic congestion in the area.

The unusual nature of the demonstration attracted considerable attention from passers-by and commuters. Many stopped to witness the protest, while others recorded videos and photographs on their mobile phones, which quickly began circulating on social media.

The symbolic “tribute” protest sparked discussions among local residents about the deteriorating state of civic infrastructure in parts of Silchar and the need for timely maintenance of public roads.

As of the time of filing this report, the concerned department had not issued any official statement responding to the residents’ allegations or indicating when repair work on the Silchar Medical Road would begin.

With the monsoon continuing and the road remaining in poor condition, residents have warned that they will intensify their agitation if immediate corrective measures are not taken by the authorities.



KRC TIMES

STAY ENRICHED

VOLUME:1, ISSUE 834 | SILCHAR WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 2026. EAST AND NE INDIA EDITION | e-mail: krctimes@gmail.com ,www.krctimes.com

Assam announces Rs 15,000 flood relief, waives postmortem requirement for ex-gratia claims

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday unveiled a comprehensive relief package for flood-affected families in the state’s worst-hit districts, announcing Rs 15,000 in direct financial assistance, simplified compensation norms for families of flood victims, and special support for students whose education has been disrupted by the disaster.

Addressing the public through a Facebook Live session, Sarma said the floods have claimed 68 lives so far, while seven people remain missing, most of them from Nazira in Sivasagar district.

Rs 9 lakh ex-gratia without post-mortem

In a major relief measure, the chief minister announced that the families of those who died in the floods would receive Rs 9 lakh in ex-gratia assistance, comprising Rs 5 lakh from the Assam Chief Minister’s Relief Fund and Rs 4 lakh from the Central government.

To ease the burden on grieving



families, Sarma said a postmortem report would no longer be mandatory for claiming compensation.

He also announced a special provision for the seven people reported missing from Nazira. If they remain untraced after one month, their families will become eligible for the ex-gratia payment based on a missing certificate issued by the concerned Circle Office.

Rs 15,000 DBT for over one lakh

The chief minister said that while relief materials have been distributed extensively, many families urgently require financial assistance to restore their homes and replace essential belongings lost in the floods.

Accordingly, the government will provide Rs 15,000 through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) to every flood-affected family in Charaideo,

Sivasagar, Golaghat and Jorhat.

The one-time assistance is intended to help beneficiaries purchase clothes, utensils and other household essentials, besides supporting cleaning and restoration work after floodwaters recede.

According to the chief minister, more than one lakh families are expected to benefit from the interim relief.

Early Orunodoi payment with enhanced support

Sarma also announced additional assistance for beneficiaries of the Orunodoi welfare scheme in the four worst-affected districts.

Instead of the scheduled release on August 3, the monthly instalment will be credited on August 1, with beneficiaries in Charaideo, Sivasagar, Golaghat and Jorhat receiving Rs 2,500 each. Combined with the special flood assistance, eligible households will receive Rs 17,500 in immediate financial support.

He added that Orunodoi beneficiaries in other flood-affected parts of Assam would also receive their payments, though at the regular en-

titlement.

Education support for flood-hit students

Recognising the impact of the floods on education, the chief minister announced a dedicated assistance package for students in Charaideo and Sivasagar.

School students will receive new uniforms and free textbooks to replace those damaged in the floods. Higher Secondary students will be provided Rs 1,000 to purchase books, undergraduate students pursuing BA and BSc courses will receive Rs 3,000, while postgraduate students will be given Rs 5,000 to replace study materials lost during the disaster.

The announcements come as Assam continues recovery efforts following one of the state’s worst flood spells in recent years. Although water levels have begun receding in several districts, over 4.45 lakh people remain affected, 631 villages are still inundated, and nearly 28,700 displaced residents continue to stay in relief camps and relief distribution centres across the state.

Manipur postal staff protest torching of 37 mail bags, seek action against culprits



IMPHAL

Employees of the Head Post Office in Imphal staged a protest on Tuesday demanding the immediate arrest of those responsible for burning 37 mail bags in Manipur’s Ukhrul district and sought action against the security personnel escorting the postal vehicle at the time of the incident.

Holding placards and raising slogans, the protesters condemned the destruction of postal consignments and urged the authorities to ensure accountability for those involved in the attack as well as the officials responsible for safeguarding the mail.

The protest followed Monday’s incident in which a postal van transporting consignments for the Ukhrul, Somdal and Kamjong post offices was intercepted near Shangkai Kuki village under Litan Police Station. According to postal officials, the mail bags were seized and set ablaze by individuals enforcing a counter-economic blockade.

Speaking on the sidelines of the protest, Ukhrul Postmaster Wungreipam Rimai said the Ukhrul Head Post Office lost 32 mail bags, including 23 parcel bags, two speed post bags, three ordinary mail bags and two registered

letter bags.

He added that Somdal Post Office lost four mail bags-one parcel bag, two speed post bags and one ordinary mail bag-while Kamjong Post Office lost one mail bag, taking the total number of destroyed bags to 37.

According to postal authorities, the burnt consignments contained personal parcels and several important documents, including ATM cards, passports, educational certificates and registered mail, besides food items, clothing and other essential goods meant for residents of the hill districts.The Ukhrul Head Post Office has lodged a First Information Report (FIR) with Litan Police Station, seeking a thorough investigation into the incident and the identification of those responsible.

Postal employees described the attack as a serious disruption of an essential public service and called for stronger security measures to ensure the safe movement of mail in conflict-prone areas.

Following the incident, postal authorities announced that mail services to Ukhrul district have been suspended indefinitely until further instructions from higher authorities, citing security concerns.

PASSENGERS STRANDED INSIDE INDIGO AIRCRAFT FOR HOURS

SILCHAR

Passengers on an IndiGo flight at Silchar Airport were left waiting inside the aircraft for several hours on Tuesday after the flight was delayed without any official confirmation on its departure or cancellation, leading to frustration and uncertainty among travellers.

According to passengers, the aircraft remained grounded for an extended period while they were asked to stay onboard. Despite the prolonged delay, they claimed no clear explanation was provided regarding the reason for the disruption or the expected departure time.

The extended wait reportedly caused considerable inconvenience, particularly for families travelling with young children, elderly passengers and those with connecting travel plans.

Several passengers alleged that communication from the airline during the delay was inadequate, with limited updates on the flight’s status. They said the lack of timely information added to the anxiety and confusion as the wait continued.

Passengers urged IndiGo and airport authorities to adopt more transparent and proactive communication during operational disruptions, saying regular updates would help reduce uncertainty and improve the travel experience during unavoidable delays.

The incident has once again brought attention to the importance of effective passenger communication and adherence to customer service protocols during flight disruptions.

As of the latest reports, neither IndiGo nor the authorities at Silchar Airport had issued an official statement explaining the cause of the delay or clarifying the status of the flight.

NIA takes over probe into deadly IED blast that killed Assam Rifles jawan in Nagaland



DIMAPUR

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has taken over the investigation into the July 13 improvised explosive device (IED) blast in Nagaland’s Chumoukedima district that claimed the life of an Assam Rifles personnel and left four others injured.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, the Nagaland Police Headquarters said the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), through an order dated July 27, entrusted the investigation into the blast case registered at Chumoukedima Police Station to the NIA.

The case relates to the explosion at Khopanala in Chumoukedima village on July 13, in which security personnel

came under attack during an operational movement.

According to the MHA, the Centre concluded that the incident involved a scheduled offence under the provisions of the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008, warranting investigation by the country’s premier anti-terror agency.

Invoking powers under Sections 6(5) and 8 of the Act, the ministry directed the NIA to assume charge of the investigation, citing the seriousness of the offence and its implications for national security.

The transfer of the case is expected to facilitate a comprehensive investigation into the planning, execution and possible network behind the IED attack, including identifying those responsible and any links to militant or extremist groups operating in the region.

Nagaland Police said the state government and the police department would extend full cooperation to the NIA and ensure a smooth transfer of records, evidence and other materials required for the investigation in accordance with legal procedures.

The July 13 blast, which killed an Assam Rifles jawan and injured four others, had triggered heightened security operations across the area as agencies intensified efforts to trace those involved in the attack.



VOLUME:1, ISSUE 834

STRENGTHENING
INDO-CHINA TIES



The meeting between External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on the margins of the ASEAN-related gatherings in Manila was, on the surface, a routine diplomatic engagement of the sort that fills a foreign minister's calendar. Beneath that surface, however, lay a candid and instructive stocktaking of where India and China now stand - a relationship inching back from the deep freeze of 2020, but still burdened by unresolved economic grievances that warmer optics cannot simply wish away. Jaishankar is right to acknowledge what has genuinely improved. Over the past few months, the two countries have taken real, tangible steps towards normalisation: the resumption of direct flights after a five-year hiatus, an updated visa regime that eases the movement of people between the two nations, the restarting of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra for Indian pilgrims, and the re-commencement of border trade. None of these measures is transformative on its own. Together, though, they represent the scaffolding of a functioning relationship - the everyday connective tissue of flights, pilgrims, traders and travellers - without which no amount of high-level diplomacy can produce durable trust. That these channels have reopened at all, barely a year after troops stood eyeball to eyeball along the Line of Actual Control, is no small achievement.

Yet Jaishankar was equally right not to let the goodwill of the moment obscure the harder economic realities that continue to strain ties. Chief among these are China's curbs on exports of critical commodities - rare earth metals, fertilisers, and heavy machinery such as tunnel boring machines - which have hit Indian industry hard over the past two years.

Beijing's officials have described the situation as mere "collateral damage" from measures aimed squarely at the United States. New Delhi, understandably, is unconvinced and views these restrictions as deliberate and discriminatory trade barriers. When a country finds itself starved of inputs essential to its infrastructure and manufacturing base, the distinction between "collateral" and "deliberate" damage becomes rather academic. India is entitled to expect predictability in its supply chains, not to be exposed to the fallout of a geopolitical contest being fought elsewhere.

The more structural problem, though, is the sheer scale of the trade imbalance between the two economies. Bilateral trade in FY26 touched \$151 billion, yet Indian exports to China amounted to a mere \$16.6 billion - a lopsidedness that has pushed the trade deficit to an all-time high. This is not a sustainable foundation for a "normal" relationship between two of the world's largest economies. Fair market access for Indian goods, a genuine narrowing of this gap, and a Chinese willingness to treat India as a market worth cultivating rather than merely exploiting, must all be part of any serious rebalancing. Jaishankar's insistence on raising these concerns directly with Wang Yi was not a diplomatic formality; it was a necessary corrective to a relationship that risks becoming normalised in atmosphere while remaining deeply abnormal in substance.

There is, nonetheless, real reason for cautious optimism, and Jaishankar's appreciation of China's support during India's BRICS presidency this year points towards it. India and China are, between them, home to more than a third of humanity, and both are increasingly central players in a reordering global economy - India as an indispensable market and manufacturing alternative, China as an established technological and export powerhouse. Neither can credibly sideline the other. The two countries already sit together at multiple multilateral tables, from BRICS to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, cooperating on matters of shared interest even as they compete elsewhere. That existing habit of cooperation is precisely what ought to be built upon.

The lesson from both the Manila meeting and the broader pattern of engagement since the 2024 Kazan Understanding between Prime Minister Modi and President Xi is a simple one: sustained talks, not sporadic gestures, are what convert a thaw into a genuine reset. Flights, visas and pilgrimages restore the human dimension of the relationship; addressing rare earth curbs and the trade deficit restores its economic credibility. But if India and China are serious about turning their combined demographic and economic weight into a stabilising force in a fractious world, the path forward runs unmistakably through patient, mutually respectful negotiation - not through the assumptions only.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others.

- Marcus Tullius Cicero

IF CONGRESS WANTS DEBATE, PARLIAMENT IS WAITING



AMIT MALVIYA

Sonia Gandhi's article, "An Education System's Collapse, Young India's Trauma", is long on rhetoric but remarkably short on accountability. It seeks to indict the Government while ignoring the most important fact: Parliament is in session, the prime minister has announced a Bill to strengthen India's legal framework against paper leaks, and Congress, led by the article's author, has spent the last four days disrupting proceedings instead of debating the legislation.

There is an obvious contradiction here. One cannot demand parliamentary deliberation through a newspaper editorial while preventing it inside Parliament. Laws are made in the House, not on opinion pages. Editorials do not prosecute those who leak examination papers, restore students' lost academic years or strengthen institutions. Legislation does. If Congress believes it has a better solution to protect India's students, it should bring its amendments to Parliament instead of substituting slogans for serious legislative engagement.

The central accusation in Sonia Gandhi's article is that the Modi government has deliberately evaded accountability on education. The record suggests the opposite. When the NEET examination was compromised, the government did not defend a tainted process. It cancelled the examination, conducted one of the largest re-examinations in India's history for over 22 lakh candidates, ensured admissions were not delayed, transferred the investigation to the CBI, secured arrests, and announced stronger legal safeguards, including fast-track courts.

Accountability is measured by action, not speeches. Cancelling a compromised examination, protecting honest students, prosecuting offenders and strengthening the law is what accountability looks like.

The article repeatedly invokes the figure of 152 paper leaks over the past twelve years, including nine involving the National Testing Agency. Yet the arithmetic undermines its conclusion. If only nine of the 152 incidents involved the NTA, then 143, nearly 94 per cent, occurred under state examination boards and recruitment agencies across governments of every political persuasion, including those in Congress-ruled states.

Paper leaks did not begin in 2014; they have plagued India's examination system for decades. The difference is that India now has, for the first time, a dedicated national law against organised examination fraud. The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 introduced stringent imprisonment and penalties of up to ₹1 crore. When the 2026 examination was compromised, it was cancelled, re-conducted under the heaviest security architecture ever deployed, and followed by arrests and prosecutions. Previous governments largely responded with investigations and re-examinations; this

Government has sought to build a permanent institutional framework to prevent them.

Equally selective is Sonia Gandhi's criticism of the National Testing Agency. She argues that it lacks parliamentary accountability while omitting that the proposal for a national testing agency was first conceived by the UPA Government in 2013. The Modi Government operationalised it and is now taking the next step through the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, before a Joint Parliamentary Committee, to replace multiple regulators with a statutory framework created through Parliament. In other words, the Government is legislating precisely the accountability that the article claims is absent.

The editorial's treatment of education spending is equally misleading. It points to a decline in education's share of the Budget while ignoring that education has received the highest allocation in India's history—1.39 lakh crore in 2026-27, including ₹55,727 crore for higher education. As the overall Union Budget expands, percentage shares naturally change. What matters is actual investment in scholarships, institutions, research, digital learning and educational infrastructure, all of which have expanded over the past decade.

The claim that the Modi Government has shut nearly one lakh public schools is similarly devoid of context. School administration is a State subject, and governments of different political parties have consolidated schools with low enrolment into neighbouring institutions with better infrastructure.

That is an administrative response to demographic change and migration, not evidence of a centrally directed assault on public education.

The article's assertion that graduate unemployment averages around 40 per cent also deserves scrutiny. Official Periodic Labour Force Survey data places graduate unemployment far lower, while the frequently cited 40 per cent figure comes from a narrow age cohort in a specific study. Graduate employment remains a structural challenge rather than one unique to the last decade. Meanwhile, India has seen over 2.35 lakh recognised startups, millions of startup-linked jobs, employment through Production Linked Incentive schemes, and a major expansion of Skill India and PMKVY.

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of the article is its treatment of police action.

Sonia Gandhi writes that pellet guns were "undoubtedly" authorised by the Union Home Minister. That allegation has been denied and remains before the courts.

Public figures have a responsibility to distinguish between allegations and established facts. Similarly, the article alleges that the NTA relies on politically affiliated "mediocre" experts and that authorities profit from the examination system, without supporting evidence.

Most strikingly, the editorial ignores the broader transformation underway in Indian education through the National Education Policy, digital learning platforms,

scholarship reforms, expansion of premier institutions and Skill India.

None of these structural reforms

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

From Independence to 2014, India had only 51,000 MBBS seats. Today, in just 12 years, we have added extra 90,000 MBBS seats. More than 150% increase. AIIMS was just 7, today we have 23. There are more than 20 IITs and IIMs. This is PM Modi's contribution. This is PM Modi's expansion.

~ Tejasvi Surya, National President, BJP
Yuva Morcha, MP Bengaluru South LS



finds meaningful mention in the article.

India's education system undoubtedly faces challenges, and no government should pretend otherwise. But criticism acquires credibility only when solutions and acknowledgement of facts accompany it. At a time when Parliament is considering legislation that directly addresses examination malpractice, the country deserves serious debate rather than selective outrage. The Government has responded to failures with legal reform, institutional strengthening and technological safeguards. The Opposition has responded by obstructing Parliament while demanding debate elsewhere.

The invitation remains open. If Congress has a better law to protect India's students, let it bring its proposals to Parliament. That is where democratic accountability is exercised, reforms are enacted, and students' futures are secured. Editorials may shape opinion, but only Parliament can change the law.

Amit Malviya, National head of BJP's information & technology dept and co-in-charge of West Bengal



Assam Opposition demands Rs 10,000 crore flood relief package as government confirms 68 deaths

GUWAHATI
The Opposition on Tuesday pressed the Assam government to seek a special Rs 10,000 crore financial package from the Centre for flood relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction, as the state informed the Assembly that 68 people have died in this year's devastating floods.

The demand was raised during Zero Hour, with legislators from the Trinamool Congress (TMC), Congress and the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) alleging delays in rescue and relief operations, particularly in the worst-affected districts of Charaideo, Sivasagar and Jorhat.

TMC MLA Sherman Ali Ahmed described the floods as one of the worst natural disasters to hit Assam



in recent years, claiming that rescue teams and relief supplies failed to

reach many stranded residents in time. He urged the Centre to sanction a special package of Rs 10,000 crore to help affected families rebuild their lives and appealed to the Assembly Speaker to lead an all-party delegation to the flood-hit districts for an on-ground assessment.

Congress MLA Jakir Hussain Sikdar said Upper Assam had witnessed one of its worst floods in nearly a century and called on the state government to seek enhanced central assistance. He demanded that the disaster be declared a national calamity to facilitate additional funding and urged the government to provide one-time financial assistance to every affected household.

AIUDF MLA Mazibur Rahman also criticised the disaster response,

alleging that agencies responsible for flood management had failed to act effectively. He called for a comprehensive review of Assam's flood preparedness and disaster management strategy.

Responding to the discussion, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pijush Hazarika described the floods as "unprecedented and unnatural," attributing the crisis to incessant rainfall in Assam and heavy inflows from neighbouring Nagaland.

The minister acknowledged that authorities were unable to reach every affected person during the peak of the floods but said elected representatives across party lines had worked together to support relief efforts.

Hazarika informed the Assem-

bly that the floods have claimed 68 lives, including 30 in Sivasagar, 20 in Charaideo, nine in Jorhat, two in Golaghat and seven in other districts.

He said a central assessment team is currently visiting flood-affected areas to evaluate the extent of the damage and assured the House that the state government would extend all necessary assistance to help affected families recover and restore their livelihoods.

The minister also noted that the flood situation has begun to improve, with no fresh fatalities reported over the past 24 hours, the number of affected people declining to around 4.45 lakh, and water levels receding in several districts, although relief and restoration efforts continue in the worst-hit areas.

Assam, Mizoram yet to fix date for next border talks as dialogue continues

AIZAWL
Assam and Mizoram are yet to finalise a date for the next round of official-level talks on their long-pending inter-state boundary dispute, although both governments remain in regular contact to schedule the meeting proposed to be held in Aizawl.

A senior official from the Mizoram Home Department said discussions between officials of the two neighbouring states are ongoing, with both sides working to identify a mutually convenient date for the talks. "We have suggested possible dates for the proposed meeting and are awaiting a response from the Assam government," the official said. The next round of talks was agreed upon during the previous official-level meeting held in Guwahati on April 25, 2025, where both sides decided that the subsequent meeting would take place in Aizawl. However, more than a year has passed without the meeting being convened, with officials attributing part of the delay to the Assam Assembly elections held earlier this year. Despite the delay, officials said the understanding reached during the Guwahati meeting to maintain the status quo along the disputed boundary has largely been respected, with no major violations reported. The 164.6-km Assam-Mizoram border has remained relatively peaceful in recent years, although sporadic incidents continue to occur in some contested stretches.

Both state governments have continued efforts to resolve the decades-old boundary dispute through sustained political engagement and official-level dialogue. The push for a lasting settlement gained renewed urgency following the deadly clash on July 26, 2021, near Vairengte along the inter-state border. The confrontation, involving police personnel from both states, resulted in multiple casualties and injuries, significantly escalating tensions between Assam and Mizoram.

Tripura CM urges united fight against hepatitis, calls for awareness-driven action

AGARTALA
Marking World Hepatitis Day, Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Tuesday called for collective efforts to eliminate hepatitis through greater public awareness, preventive healthcare and timely treatment, reaffirming the state's commitment to building a hepatitis-free future.

Speaking at a programme organised at Rabindra Satabariki Bhavan in Agartala, Saha described hepatitis as a persistent public health challenge that requires sustained action from both the government and the public.

He stressed that the spread of the disease can be significantly reduced through increased awareness, early diagnosis and access to appropriate medical treatment. The chief minister urged people to remain informed about hepatitis, adopt healthy lifestyles and seek medical attention without delay whenever symptoms arise.

Highlighting the importance

Nearly 1.5 Lakh Meghalaya Voters Flagged Under ASDD Category in Electoral Roll Revision

SHILLONG
Nearly 1.5 lakh electors in Meghalaya have been identified under the Absent, Shifted, Dead and Duplicate (ASDD) category during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, according to the latest status report released by the office of Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) B.D.R. Tiwari.

The report stated that 1,49,656 electors, representing 6.37 per cent of the state's total electorate of 23,49,645, have been classified under the ASDD category as the revision exercise nears completion.

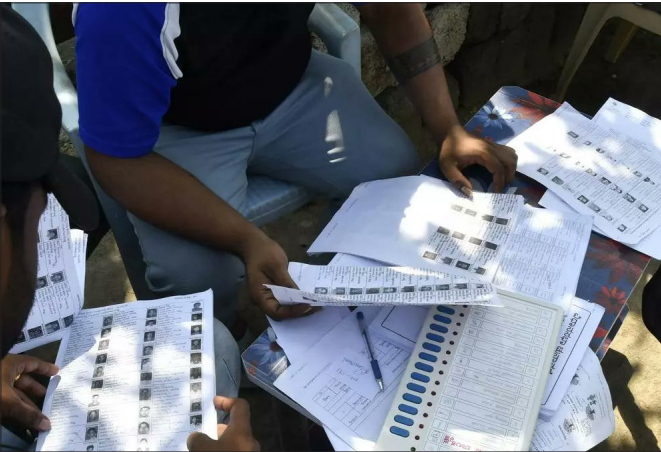
Among those identified, 74,851 electors have been marked as deceased, 37,914 as shifted, 28,826 as absent, and 5,899 as duplicate entries. Another 2,166 electors reportedly declined to submit their enumeration forms.

The update was released a day before the conclusion of

of enumeration forms have been distributed across the state, while 22,78,071 forms, accounting for 96.95 per cent, have already been digitised.

However, 2,24,435 forms, or 9.55 per cent of the total, are yet to be geographically mapped. Ri-Bhoi district has the highest proportion of unmapped forms at 23.45 per cent, followed by South West Khasi Hills with 14.53 per cent.

Officials said 10 of Meghalaya's 12 districts have completed 100 per cent distribution of enumeration forms. East Khasi Hills remains the state's largest electoral district, with 6,32,146 registered electors. The Special Intensive Revision is aimed at updating and improving the accuracy of Meghalaya's electoral rolls ahead of future elections by removing ineligible entries and ensuring that all eligible voters are correctly enrolled.



Assam Floods Impact Over 88,000 Livestock; Charaideo Reports Nearly 10,000 Animal Deaths

GUWAHATI
The ongoing floods in Assam have severely affected the state's livestock sector, with more than 88,000 animals impacted across six of the worst-hit districts, according to the latest official data. Figures released by the authorities show that 88,240 livestock have been affected, including 45,895 large animals, 26,335 small animals, and 16,010 poultry, underscoring the widespread impact of the floods on rural livelihoods and the agricultural economy. Golaghat recorded the highest number of affected livestock with 24,723 animals, followed by Jorhat (23,163), Nagaon (19,738), Sivasagar (10,279), Charaideo (9,964) and Dibrugarh (373).

The floods have also caused heavy livestock losses, with 9,973 animal deaths reported, all from Charaideo district. The fatalities include 2,042 large animals, 2,225 small animals, and 5,706 poultry, making Charaideo the



worst-hit district in terms of livestock mortality. The losses are expected to have a significant impact on farming households that depend on cattle, goats, poultry and other livestock as a primary source of income and sustenance. To mitigate the impact, the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department has intensified relief

operations in flood-affected areas by supplying fodder, providing veterinary treatment and conducting disease surveillance to prevent outbreaks among livestock.

Meanwhile, BJP MLA Mrinal Saikia has urged the Assam government to provide direct financial compensation to families that have

lost livestock and poultry in the floods.

Speaking to reporters in Guwahati, the Khumtai legislator said the disaster has dealt a severe blow to the rural economy, particularly to households engaged in animal husbandry and poultry farming. "The flood has completely shattered the economies of several districts in Assam, particularly the rural economy. The government must compensate people for losses in the poultry and livestock sectors," Saikia said, while appreciating the relief measures already initiated by the state government. His appeal comes as Assam continues to battle one of its worst flood seasons, with the state's flood-related death toll rising to 68, according to the latest bulletin issued by the Disaster Reporting and Information Management System (DRIMS). Authorities continue relief, rehabilitation and damage assessment efforts as floodwaters recede in several parts of the state while conditions remain critical in others.

Gaurav Gogoi Says Revised Anti-Paper Leak Bill Will Not Prevent Future Exam Scandals

NEW DELHI/GUWAHATI
Congress MP and Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi on Tuesday criticised the Centre's proposed amendments to the anti-paper leak law, arguing that the legislation enacted in 2024 had failed to stop examination leaks and that the revised law would be equally ineffective.

Initiating the debate on the Public Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026 in the Lok Sabha, Gogoi questioned the government's claim that tougher legal provisions would curb examination fraud.

Referring to the NEET-UG 2026 paper leak, he said the government had introduced the original anti-paper leak law in 2024 after the previous NEET controversy, describing it at the time as a "historic step."

"The 2026 leak proved that the law was a failure and it will fail again," Gogoi said during the debate.

The Centre introduced the amendment Bill in Parliament days after nationwide protests over the NEET-UG 2026 paper leak culminated in the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

The proposed amendments seek to strengthen the existing law by increasing the maximum punishment for those involved in paper leaks to 10 years' imprisonment and a fine of up

to Rs 50 lakh.

Gogoi also criticised the government's handling of the student protests, alleging excessive police action against demonstrators.

He claimed that protesters were subjected to pellet guns and electric batons and questioned the treatment of women participants during the demonstrations.

"Students were compelled to hit the streets. Their pain needs to be understood," he said.

The Congress leader also took aim at BJP members for applauding Pradhan in Parliament following his resignation.

"When he came here, he was welcomed as if he had returned after fighting with Pakistan. Do you have no shame?" Gogoi remarked.

Questioning the government's broader approach to examination reforms, Gogoi accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of encouraging ministers to focus on social media instead of addressing systemic issues such as the functioning of coaching centres, examination paper-setting mechanisms and the alleged role of printing press mafias in paper leaks.

He also sought an update on the recommendations of the high-powered expert committee headed by former ISRO chairman K. Radhakrishnan, which was constituted after the 2024 NEET controversy to recommend reforms to the examination system.

National Study Flags Guwahati Schools Among Highest-Risk for Adolescent Substance Use

GUWAHATI
More than one in five adolescents surveyed across six districts in India are at moderate-to-high risk of substance use, with schools in Guwahati emerging among the most vulnerable, according to a new study published in The Lancet Regional Health-Southeast Asia.

The study, conducted across 108 government and private schools involving over 6,000 adolescents, found that 21.4 per cent of participants fell into the moderate-to-high substance use risk category. Among them, 10.3 per cent were classified as being at moderate risk and 11.1 per cent at high risk, while 78.6 per cent were considered to be at low risk.

Researchers surveyed students from six districts-Kamrup in Assam, Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh, Nagpur in Maharashtra, Rajkot in Gujarat, Deogarh in Jharkhand and Puducherry-to assess regional variations in adolescent substance use risk.

The findings revealed that schools in Guwahati and Deogarh recorded the



highest proportion of adolescents in the moderate- and high-risk categories, while schools in Nagpur and Puducherry showed predominantly low-risk profiles.

According to the study, there was a 35.1 percentage-point difference in substance use risk between Guwahati and Nagpur. Researchers estimated that nearly 40 per cent of this gap could be explained by differences in school environments, socio-demographic and economic factors, and personality traits.

The research was carried out by scientists from institutions including the

All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Gorakhpur, and the Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research (JIPMER), Puducherry. The team assessed substance use risk using the World Health Organization's Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (WHO ASSIST), while personality traits were evaluated through the Substance Use Risk Profile Scale (SURPS).

The study identified several modifiable factors associated with a higher likelihood of substance use among ado-

lescents. These included easier access to addictive substances, increased digital exposure and risky behavioural environments. Conversely, stronger social engagement and supportive peer networks were found to reduce the risk.

Researchers also observed that male adolescents had lower odds of higher substance use risk than females, a finding they said warrants further investigation. The authors noted that India has limited research examining adolescent multi-substance use through standardised assessment tools such as WHO ASSIST, resulting in insufficient evidence on how risk varies across regions and social settings. The study recommended stricter enforcement of regulations to limit adolescents' access to addictive substances, stronger media literacy programmes to counter harmful digital influences, and wider implementation of peer-led interventions such as the Community Based Peer-Led Intervention (CPLI) under the School Health Programme to help prevent substance use among schoolchildren. The researchers said the findings underscore the need for targeted, evidence-based interventions, particularly in high-risk regions such as Guwahati, where a combination of social, environmental and behavioural factors appears to be driving greater vulnerability among adolescents.

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Denied admission, student hacks IIT-Kanpur website, says ‘All I need is just a fair chance’



KOLKATA

A student who allegedly hacked the websites of IIT-Kanpur and IIT Madras after being denied admission to IIT-Kanpur's newly launched Bachelor of Cyber Security programme may get another opportunity to join the institute, with the administration considering evaluating his technical skills instead of pursuing legal action.

The student reportedly left a message on the IIT-Kanpur website stating, "Site is hacked. All I need is just a fair chance."

The incident came to light earlier this week after the student claimed on social media that he had breached the websites of both institutes following his rejection from the undergraduate cybersecurity programme. He later shared screenshots of the alleged intrusion on X and Reddit, stating that his inten-

sion was not to cause harm but to showcase his cybersecurity abilities.

According to his posts, the student had completed the application process, paid the required fee, uploaded all documents and submitted evidence of his cybersecurity work. However, he claimed he was not shortlisted and was denied an opportunity to participate in the hackathon that was part of the admission process.

IIT-Kanpur Director Manindra Agrawal told that the student was not shortlisted due to a lack of prior cybersecurity experience.

"The admission process for this academic session has already concluded, so admission is not possible now. However, we will invite the student to the institute, assess his technical skills through a proper test and, if he proves his competence, give him an opportunity in the next admis-

sion cycle," Agrawal said.

He confirmed that the student had gained access to certain sections of the official websites of IIT-Kanpur and IIT Madras.

Agrawal said senior faculty members and engineers had been asked to interact with the student and explain that unauthorised access to computer systems is illegal and should not be repeated.

An IIT-Kanpur official, requesting anonymity, said the institute had initially considered filing an FIR but decided to first verify the student's claims and assess his technical abilities before taking further action.

The official added that IIT-Kanpur has previously supported young cybersecurity talent. Earlier this year, the institute offered a position at its C3iHub to a student who had identified vulnerabilities in the CBSE's online screen-marking portal.

India condemns Strait of Hormuz attacks at UNSC, calls for immediate de-escalation in West Asia

NEW DELHI

India on Tuesday expressed deep concern over the renewed escalation in West Asia and strongly condemned recent attacks on commercial vessels transiting the Strait of Hormuz, urging an immediate de-escalation and the restoration of free and unimpeded navigation through international waterways.

Addressing a UN Security Council open debate on the Situation in the Middle East, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish, said the resurgence of hostilities after a brief lull was alarming and called for a return to dialogue and diplomacy.

Terming West Asia a region of "immense importance" to India, Harish said, "after a brief pause in the ongoing conflict in the region, there has been a worrying resumption of attacks and escalation of hostilities. This is deeply concerning and India calls for an immediate de-escalation of tensions."

India strongly condemned the attacks on merchant vessels, including GFS Galaxy, MT Al Bahiyah and MT Mombasa, during their transit through the Strait of Hormuz earlier this month.

Harish noted that the attacks directly affected Indian nationals.

"Several Indian citizens were injured, including some seriously, one Indian tragically lost his life, and one is missing, in these attacks. India has consistently condemned acts of violence targeting seafarers and disrupting free and safe navigation through international waterways like the Strait of Hormuz," he said.

Reiterating India's position, Harish said the country strongly supports diplomacy as the only path to restoring peace and stability in the region.

"The targeting of commercial shipping and civilian infrastructure in the region must end, and free and unimpeded navigation and commerce through the international waterways in the region, in keeping with international law, must be restored at the earliest," Harish said.

The remarks came amid continued tensions in West Asia. According to



the United Nations, Iran declared the Strait of Hormuz closed again on July 11 following attacks on commercial vessels.

The UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific said daily vessel transits, which had exceeded 100 before the conflict and recovered to 49 by July 7, dropped sharply to between eight and 15 by mid-July.

Highlighting India's strategic interests in the region, Harish said the country's trade, energy security and diaspora were closely linked to West Asia. India has annual bilateral trade of around \$180 billion with the region, cumulative foreign direct investment exceeding \$31 billion, and receives more than \$52 billion in remittances annually from Gulf Cooperation Council countries. Nearly 10 million Indians live and work in the Gulf.

"Their safety and well-being are a key priority for us," he said.

India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish.

EAM Jaishankar raises safety of Indian seafarers with Russia's Lavrov after Black Sea attack

Harish, who delivered the statement in English, switched to Arabic as he spoke about the situation in the Gaza Strip, India's development assistance to the Palestinian people and India's long standing support for the two-state solution.

Speaking in Arabic, Harish told the Security Council that the world's focus on the Strait of Hormuz must not divert "our attention away from the dire humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip". The loss of civilian lives and destruction of civilian infrastructure are pressing concerns that the international community must act on immediately, with a deep sense of urgency, he said.

Continuing in Arabic, Harish

said that India is firmly committed to efforts that make a tangible impact on the daily lives of the Palestinians and Delhi's development assistance amounts to around USD 175 million, ranging from development projects, humanitarian assistance and contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), among others.

"India has been a top emerging donor of UNRWA and we have given operational flexibility to the UN Agency for utilising our contributions," he said.

Earlier this month, at the Palestine donor group meeting in Brussels, India announced its commitment to establishing a speciality hospital, an artificial limb fitment centre and a vocational training institute for Palestine. India's ongoing projects include the construction of the Palestinian Institute of Diplomacy, he said.

He added that the international community should simultaneously press ahead for a sustainable and durable political solution, even as it works on alleviating the humanitarian distress of the Palestinian people.

"India believes that a sovereign, independent and viable State of Palestine living side by side in peace with Israel, within secure and recognised borders, is essential to a comprehensive and lasting solution," he said in Arabic.

On Yemen, India reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to the unity, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the West Asian country and rejected any interference in its internal affairs.

"We further condemn attacks by Houthis on maritime navigation. The protection of the Bab al-Mandab Strait and the Southern Red Sea is a shared international responsibility and is a global interest," Harish said.

On Lebanon, India said UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) peacekeepers serve in challenging circumstances, pursuing UN Security Council mandates and therefore, must never become targets. India has strongly condemned all attacks on UNIFIL peacekeepers, stressing that their safety and security are a priority.

INTERNATIONAL

US bans foreign-made humanoid robots, targeting China over national security

HONG KONG

The Federal Communications Commission in the U.S. said on Tuesday it would ban the import of foreign-made humanoid robots in a move that targets China, arguing they pose a national security risk.

The decision could strain bilateral relations as the technology race between the two world leaders advances. China makes substantially more humanoid robots than the U.S. and other competitors, and analysts estimate that Chinese humanoid robots' global market share has reached roughly 85%.

The FCC's ban includes new imports of humanoid robots, quadrupeds – often referred to as four-legged robot dogs – as well as foreign-made power inverters.

In making the decision, the FCC said these advanced robots produced in foreign countries pose supply chain vulnerabilities to the U.S. as well as cybersecurity and national security risks.

FCC chairperson Brendan Carr said in a statement that the move was to "secure America's critical supply chains."

The United States has been taking steps to keep Chinese technology out with recent bans on imports, including of Chinese-made drones. The U.S. is also weighing restrictions on Chinese open-source artificial intelligence models, at a time when Chinese AI is rapidly gaining ground.

"It's a steady drumbeat of potential flashpoints heading into (the) Trump-Xi summit planned for September," said Samm Sacks, a senior fellow at the New America think tank focused on Chinese technology policies. U.S. President Donald Trump is expected to meet Chinese leader Xi Jinping in September following their mid-May meeting in Beijing.

Last year, China accounted for around 85% of humanoid deployments globally, according to Barclays. Morgan



Stanley analysts forecast China's humanoid robot market could reach \$15 billion by 2030.

"Chinese manufacturers have been scaling production and reducing costs faster than most overseas competitors," said analyst Kangyuxiao Li at Morningstar.

"Restricting their access to the U.S. removes an important future market and protects U.S. developers from potential price competition," he said.

"However, it will not materially slow China's overall humanoid development, given the size of its domestic manufacturing base and opportunities in other export markets."

Of the around 15,000 humanoid

robots shipped globally in 2025, Unitree and AGIBOT, two of China's largest advanced robotics companies, each shipped more than 5,000, while their U.S. counterparts like Tesla and Figure AI each shipped a few hundred or less, according to the technology research and advisory group Omdia.

When it comes to global markets, China is also targeting Europe, for example, as a key market for its advanced robots including humanoids, Omdia said.

China has pushed back and defended its technological advancements as an opportunity for the world, rather than a threat, as countries including the U.S. raise concerns over how a

"China Shock 2.0" could hurt their economies.

The latest U.S. ban could also potentially impact collaborations between U.S. and Chinese technology companies, said Lian Jye Su, a chief analyst at Omdia.

Nvidia, for example, in June revealed a humanoid robot reference design which uses the humanoid chassis of Chinese robot maker Unitree.

The Pentagon recently placed Unitree alongside several major Chinese technology companies on its list of firms that it said have ties to or aid the Chinese military, a claim that Beijing said it "firmly opposes."

Zelenskyy has a ‘good meeting’ with Trump at the White House as he seeks more cooperation with US



WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy met Tuesday ahead of Sen. Lindsey Graham's funeral, with the two leaders discussing ways for Ukraine to produce its own powerful weapons and "other ideas that could help" in its ongoing war against Russia.

The sit-down in the Oval Office, which was closed to the media, followed a consequential meeting at the NATO summit earlier this month in Ankara, Turkey, where Trump announced that the US will give Ukraine a license to make Patriot defense systems – a long-running request from Kyiv to counter Russian missile attacks.

In a post on social media after the meeting, Zelenskyy thanked Trump for the "good meeting" and the Republican administration's efforts to aid Kyiv in the long-running war, which began more than four years ago when Russia invaded Ukraine.

"The President and I discussed licenses for Patriot interceptor production and several other ideas that could help," said Zelenskyy, who also noted that he offered condolences to Trump for the death of Graham, a close ally. "We also spoke about diplomacy – it's important that the diplomatic process be reinvigorated."

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said both the Zelenskyy meeting and a separate, later sit-down with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu were "positive and productive."

Trump welcomed Zelenskyy to the White House as the Ukrainian leader traveled to Washington to honor Graham, whose final act as a public official was visiting Kyiv and securing an agreement on a package of sanctions that seek to punish countries that purchase Russian oil, gas and other exports. In a Fox News Channel interview on Tuesday, Trump recalled Graham's hawkishness and said the Republican South Carolina senator's support for Ukraine never wavered. Trump said Graham had suggested it was time to make a deal with Iran but had no similar suggestion for the Russia-Ukraine war. "Ukraine, he's very militant about," Trump said on "Fox & Friends." "I mean, Lindsey liked war, to be honest with you."

The Trump administration's embrace of Zelenskyy comes as a far-right activist with the US president's ear had a recent, widely publicized change of heart on Russia's war against Ukraine.

Laura Loomer, known primarily for her incendiary social media posts and her influence with Trump, has been traveling through Ukraine, witnessing Moscow's barrage firsthand and interviewing Zelenskyy while admitting she was "bamboozled by Russian propaganda."

Loomer said she spoke to Trump after she met with Zelenskyy in Ukraine last week and she expects to meet with the U.S. president once she returns from her trip.

"It's looking good for Ukraine,

right?" Loomer said during an interview with The Associated Press. "Going into this meeting next week at the Oval Office is looking pretty good."

Ahead of the meeting, Zelenskyy also warned that Russia has been aiding Iran as the war persists by capturing satellite imagery of U.S. bases in the Gulf region that later appear in Iran. The Ukrainian president also asserted that there was a "clear correlation" between Russia's images and subsequent Iranian strikes.

"The purpose is clear," Zelenskyy said earlier this month. "None of us in the world should turn a blind eye to one very simple fact: Evil always seeks ways to make things worse and spread further." But on Monday, Trump downplayed any impact of potential Russian assistance for Iran.

"I don't think they've been doing it, certainly not at a high level," Trump told reporters on Air Force One as he traveled to Michigan. "And if they have, it has been very un-impactful."

Still, he said he would raise the issue with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Zelenskyy has a busy itinerary during his latest visit to Washington. Besides his White House meeting, Zelenskyy will head to the Capitol to meet with senators on Tuesday evening after Graham's funeral at Washington National Cathedral, according to a person with knowledge of the meeting who was not authorized to discuss it publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Republican leadership is hoping to advance Graham's sanctions legislation this week, although the Senate is juggling several other priorities before lawmakers leave Washington for their August recess. The bill has dozens of backers from both major political parties and is seen as the main policy tribute to Graham, who died unexpectedly this month from a tear in his aorta. It imposes tariffs on goods from the world's top five purchasers of Russia oil or natural gas, including China and India.

Upper Assam's Devastating Floods Raise Urgent Questions on Disaster Preparedness and Accountability

The unprecedented floods that swept across Upper Assam have left behind a trail of destruction that extends far beyond submerged homes and damaged infrastructure. Even as floodwaters gradually recede, thousands of people remain stranded, villages continue to be isolated under thick layers of sand and silt, and fundamental questions are being raised about the effectiveness of Assam's disaster management system.

The disaster has sparked a wider debate: could the scale of devastation have been reduced if timely warnings, better coordination, and modern forecasting technologies had been effectively deployed? More importantly, who bears responsibility when a natural disaster turns into a humanitarian catastrophe because of administrative shortcomings?

A Disaster of Unprecedented Scale
According to official reports and media accounts, nearly six lakh people across more than 850 villages in Upper Assam were affected by the floods. Districts including Charaideo, Sivasagar, Jorhat, Dibrugarh and Golaghat witnessed some of the worst destruction.

The crisis became even more alarming when Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma publicly acknowledged that rescue teams were unable to reach significant portions of the worst-hit areas. Nearly 30 percent of Nazira constituency and around 20 percent of Sivasagar remained inaccessible during the peak of the disaster.

Weeks later, many roads continue to be buried beneath thick deposits of sand and silt, cutting off entire communities from transportation and basic services. Relief operations remain difficult in several pockets, while families struggle to rebuild lives from scratch.

Human Stories Behind the Statistics
Behind every official figure lies a personal tragedy.

Residents of flood-hit villages describe how water levels rose within minutes, giving families virtually no opportunity to save belongings or evacuate safely.

One elderly resident from Nazira recalled how floodwater entered her home while she was preparing dinner. Having never previously experienced flooding, the family initially believed the rising water would remain confined to nearby roads. Instead, within minutes, nearly four feet of water entered the house.

Unable to rescue furniture, clothing, savings or valuables, the family climbed into a grain storage structure to survive the night. When the waters finally receded, their house, courtyard and garden had disappeared beneath thick layers of mud and silt.

Similar stories have emerged across Upper Assam, where homes, paddy fields, livestock, fisheries and small businesses have been destroyed in what many residents describe as the worst flood they have ever witnessed.

The Central Question: Was Enough Warning Given?

The debate surrounding the floods increasingly centres on preparedness rather than rainfall alone.

Heavy rainfall in Nagaland's Mon district—located upstream of several rivers flowing into Assam—was reported days before the floodwaters reached Upper Assam. Meteorological reports indicated rainfall levels many times higher than the seasonal average.

This raises a crucial question: if upstream districts were receiving exceptionally heavy rainfall, why were downstream communities in Assam not warned earlier?

Modern disaster management increasingly depends not only on responding to disasters but on forecasting risks before they reach vulnerable populations. Around the world, integrated weather monitoring systems combine rainfall data, river gauges, satellite imagery and hydrological models to estimate when floodwaters will arrive and how severe they may become.

Critics argue that if such technological capabilities exist within Assam's disaster management framework, they should have translated into timely evacuation orders and community alerts.

Technology Versus Ground Reality

Over the past decade, successive Assam governments have repeatedly highlighted efforts to modernise disaster management.

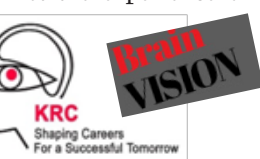
Election manifestos and state budgets have promised:

- improved flood forecasting;
- remote sensing technologies;
- satellite-based river monitoring;
- strengthened emergency response systems;

- district-level quick response teams;
- advanced weather alert mechanisms;
- integrated river basin management;
- digital disaster monitoring platforms.

Budget speeches have also referred to investments in emergency operation centres, community preparedness programmes, mock drills, and technological platforms designed to improve disaster response.

Yet the experience of residents in Upper



Embrace the storm;
sometimes the rain
washes away what the sun
couldn't reach.

Assam has prompted difficult questions.

If sophisticated monitoring systems exist, why were many residents caught completely unaware?



Why were evacuation efforts unable to begin before floodwaters entered villages?

Were technological resources available but inadequately coordinated?

Or do critical gaps remain between planning documents and implementation on the ground?

These questions have become central to public discussion following the disaster.

A Long History of Unfulfilled Flood Promises

Flood management has remained one of Assam's biggest governance challenges for decades.

Political manifestos over successive elections have repeatedly pledged ambitious interventions including:

- dredging of the Brahmaputra;
- erosion control in vulnerable districts;
- protection of Majuli;
- scientific river research;
- riverbank plantations;
- insurance schemes for flood victims;
- rehabilitation programmes;
- improved disaster management systems.

Several proposals—including large-scale dredging of the Brahmaputra and construction of riverbank infrastructure—received considerable political attention.

However, many of these initiatives either remained incomplete or were later reconsidered.

Government records have previously indicated that planned dredging projects did not progress as originally announced, while subsequent statements from the Union Government clarified that no comprehensive dredging programme had been approved in the proposed form.

Similarly, many long-term recommendations concerning river management, erosion control and scientific studies have progressed slowly despite recurring annual floods.

Funding Concerns Continue

Questions have also resurfaced regarding financial assistance for flood recovery.

The Assam government has repeatedly sought greater central assistance following major flood events.

The author notes that while Assam has experienced annual flood disasters, allocations from national disaster relief mechanisms have often been viewed as inadequate relative to the scale of damage.

Comparisons have been drawn with larger relief packages sanctioned for natural disasters in other states.

Although disaster funding depends on multiple technical assessments and established national guidelines, the debate over equitable allocation of relief resources continues to generate political discussion.

Was the Disaster Entirely Natural?

Initially, public discussion focused on reports of a possible cloudburst in Nagaland's Mon district.

However, meteorological authorities later clarified that while extremely heavy rainfall occurred, it did not meet the technical definition of a cloudburst.

Environmental experts suggest that multiple factors may have contributed to the severity of flooding, including:

- exceptionally heavy upstream rainfall;
- river channel conditions;
- sediment movement;
- deforestation;
- infrastructure development;
- land-use changes;
- possible impacts of sand and stone extraction along river systems.

Residents have pointed to the unusually thick deposits of sand and silt left behind across villages as evidence that massive quantities of sediment were carried downstream during the floods.

These observations have strengthened calls for an independent scientific investigation into the causes of the disaster.

Such a study could help determine whether environmental degradation, river management practices and watershed changes amplified the impact of heavy rainfall.

The Question of Accountability

Whenever disasters expose weaknesses in preparedness, accountability inevitably becomes part of the conversation.

Natural hazards cannot always be prevented, but effective governance seeks to minimise loss of life through forecasting, communication and timely evacuation.

The scale of destruction in Upper Assam has therefore prompted demands for an independent review of:

- disaster preparedness;
- coordination between Assam and Nagaland authorities;
- effectiveness of early warning systems;
- emergency communication mechanisms;

- deployment of rescue resources;
- implementation of disaster management protocols.

A transparent assessment could help identify operational failures and recommend improvements before future flood seasons.

Rehabilitation Must Go Beyond Immediate Relief

Emergency relief addresses only the first phase of disaster response.

The larger challenge lies in rebuilding livelihoods.

Across Upper Assam, thousands of families have lost:

- homes;
- agricultural land;
- standing crops;
- fisheries;
- livestock;
- shops;
- household assets;
- roads and community infrastructure.

Many agricultural fields remain covered under thick deposits of sand, making cultivation difficult without extensive restoration.

Experts argue that rehabilitation should therefore extend beyond temporary relief camps and food assistance.

A comprehensive reconstruction package could include:

- financial assistance for rebuilding homes;
- restoration of agricultural land;
- compensation for livestock losses;
- revival of fisheries;
- support for small businesses;
- reconstruction of rural roads;
- desilting of villages;
- livelihood restoration programmes;
- long-term resilience planning.

A Case for Special Financial Assistance

Given the extraordinary scale of destruction, many observers believe Assam should seek a substantial reconstruction package from the Union Government.

Past precedents exist where major natural

disasters elsewhere in India have received significant central assistance for rebuilding infrastructure and restoring livelihoods.

Whether similar support is extended to Upper Assam may become an important indicator of the priority accorded to long-term recovery in one of India's most flood-prone regions.

Should central assistance prove insufficient, the debate may also shift toward whether the state government should independently mobilise additional financial resources for reconstruction.

Looking Beyond the Immediate Crisis

The Upper Assam floods represent more than another seasonal disaster.

They have exposed recurring structural challenges involving river management, disaster preparedness, inter-state coordination, environmental governance and rehabilitation planning.

As climate change increases the frequency of extreme rainfall events across the eastern Himalayan region, floods of this magnitude may become more common.

That reality makes investment in real-time forecasting, integrated river basin management, stronger coordination with neighbouring states, and community-based early warning systems increasingly essential.

Equally important is a transparent post-disaster review that objectively examines what worked, what failed, and what reforms are necessary.

For thousands of families whose homes and livelihoods have been washed away, recovery will take years. Beyond rebuilding infrastructure, the tragedy presents an opportunity to strengthen disaster governance so that future floods do not inflict the same level of human suffering.

Ultimately, the legacy of this disaster will not be determined solely by the amount of relief distributed, but by whether meaningful lessons are learned and lasting reforms are implemented to better protect vulnerable communities across Assam.

KRC TIMES

July 2026
Nainital

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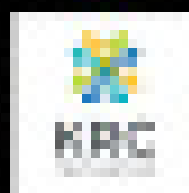


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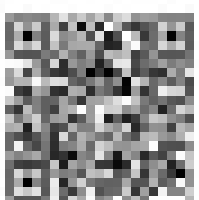


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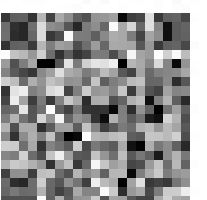


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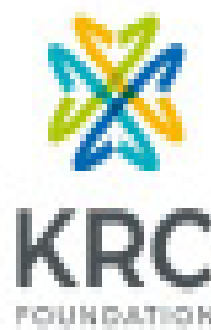
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