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PERSPECTIVE

The inventor of the television would not let his own children watch TV.

Suspected spurious liquor claims 19 lives in Nagaland; SIT formed to trace supply chain

KOHIMA
At least 19 people have died in Nagaland's Mokochung and Tuensang districts over the past two days after allegedly consuming suspected illicit liquor, prompting police to launch an investigation into the source and distribution network of the alcohol.

Eight deaths were reported from Mokochung district and 11 from Tuensang, police said on Saturday. Authorities have formed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to investigate the deaths and identify those involved in the production and supply of the suspected adulterated liquor. The SIT is headed by Additional Superintendent of Police I Bunglang Chang, Senior Superintendent of Police Vesupra Kezo said.

Police have sent liquor samples to Guwahati for forensic examination to establish the substance involved and determine whether it was responsible for the deaths. "We have obtained some leads, but it is too premature to disclose details," Kezo said. Following the deaths, police conducted multiple raids across the affected areas. Nineteen people have been arrested and nearly 3,000 bottles of liquor seized as part of the investigation. Nagaland has had a prohibition law in force since 1990, banning the manufacture, sale and consumption of liquor in the state.

Police have urged residents to avoid unidentified, unlabelled or suspected illicit liquor. They have also advised anyone experiencing symptoms including dizziness, blurred vision, breathing difficulties or loss of consciousness after consuming alcohol to seek immediate medical attention.

The forensic findings are expected to help investigators establish the exact cause of the deaths and determine whether the liquor consumed by the victims was adulterated.

WHO SAID WHAT

Industries which pollute must also pay to compensate for it. Under the recently approved Assam Green Cess Policy, identified industries will pay a fee that will fund our greening initiatives.
~ **Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, CM, Assam**

Nagaland records 32 party-switching cases, highest in India: ADR

NEW DELHI

Nagaland recorded 32 cases of elected MPs and MLAs changing political parties between 2022 and 2026, the highest among states and Union territories during the period, according to an analysis by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and National Election Watch.

The ADR report, published on September 24, found that 111 sitting MPs and MLAs changed parties after being elected to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha or state assemblies. The figure includes 26 Lok Sabha MPs, seven Rajya Sabha members and 78 MLAs.

Nagaland accounted for all 32 cases involving MLAs. The report said the cases were linked largely to the political realignment involving the ruling Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) and the Naga People's Front (NPF).

According to the analysis, 25 legislators originally elected from the NDPP were among those who changed parties, while the NPF received 32 legislators, the highest number among parties receiving lawmakers during the period.

KRC TIMES
STAY ENRICHED

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APCL, Deendayal Port begin Rs 2,300-crore e-methanol project in Gujarat

GUWAHATI

Assam Petro-Chemicals Limited (APCL) and the Deendayal Port Authority (DPA) have joined hands to develop a Rs 2,300-crore e-methanol production facility at Kandla in Gujarat, marking a major expansion of the Assam government-owned company into the clean-energy sector beyond the state.

The foundation stone-laying and Bhoomi Pujan ceremony for the project was held at Deendayal Port in the presence of Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal.

Senior officials of APCL, DPA and other stakeholders also attended the programme.

The proposed facility will have a production capacity of 150 tonnes per day (TPD) of green e-methanol. The fuel is intended primarily for use in the maritime sector as a low-



er-carbon alternative to conventional marine fuels.

The project is expected to create around 3,500 direct and indirect employment opportunities, besides opening up new industrial and commercial opportunities associated with the production and use of e-methanol.

The initiative comes against the backdrop of India's efforts to reduce carbon emissions from the shipping sector and promote cleaner energy sources. E-methanol is being explored globally as a potential alternative marine fuel as the shipping

industry moves towards lower-emission operations.

For APCL, the project represents a significant expansion of its operational footprint beyond Assam. The state-owned enterprise will participate in a large-scale clean-energy project in Gujarat, potentially providing it with an opportunity to build expertise and establish a wider commercial presence in the emerging green-fuel sector.

The collaboration with Deendayal Port also places the project close to one of India's major maritime gateways, offering a strategic location for the production and potential distribution of marine fuel.

Speaking at the ceremony, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma described the project as an important milestone for Assam, particularly because a state-owned public sector undertaking is expanding its operations outside the state.

Sarma said the initiative reflected APCL's growing capabilities and its potential to contribute to India's transition towards cleaner energy.

The project is also being viewed as part of a broader shift in India's energy and industrial landscape, where public-sector enterprises are increasingly exploring low-carbon fuels and technologies.

With the shipping industry under growing pressure to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions, alternative fuels such as e-methanol are gaining attention as part of the transition towards cleaner maritime transport.

The proposed APCL-DPA facility, once operational, is therefore expected to serve not only as an industrial investment but also as a component of India's emerging green-fuel ecosystem.

For Assam, the project marks a notable step in taking the capabilities of one of its state-owned enterprises into a national clean-energy market, while for APCL, it could open a new avenue of growth beyond its traditional industrial base.

Manipur bandhs, blockades cause Rs 25-30 crore daily tax revenue loss: CM



IMPHAL

Frequent bandhs and blockades in Manipur are causing an estimated daily loss of Rs 25-30 crore in tax revenue, Chief Minister Y Khemchand Singh said, as he underlined the economic impact of prolonged disruptions in the violence-affected state.

Speaking at a Seva Sankalp Abhiyan programme at the Indian National Army Martyr's Memorial Complex Hall in Bishnupur district, Singh said the crisis that began in 2023 had had a severe impact on the state's economy, government revenue and livelihoods.

"Frequent bandhs and blockades called in the state have resulted in a loss of around Rs 25 crore to Rs 30 crore per day in tax revenue to the state government," the chief minister said.

Singh appealed to groups and individuals to resolve differences through dialogue and refrain from agitations that disrupt normal life and economic activity.

He also urged people advocating for the protection of Manipur to visit the state's hill areas and assess the situation on the ground rather than relying solely on statements made without visiting affected areas.

The chief minister said the prolonged crisis had particularly affected families dependent on daily wages. Following discussions during the recently concluded eighth session of the Manipur Assembly, the state government has decided to provide financial assistance of Rs 10,000 each to around 3,00,050 affected families.

The required budgetary provision has already been earmarked for implementing the assistance, Singh said.

The government will also introduce a special financial assistance scheme for women street vendors ahead of the Ningol Chakouba festival in November, he announced.

Women street vendors who have not yet registered for the scheme can enrol through their respective legislators, he said.

Singh said the month-long Seva Sankalp Abhiyan was being observed across the country to mark Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 25 years in public service and to promote the principles of public service and good governance.

Gauhati University student found dead



GUWAHATI

A Gauhati University student was found dead in Garal area of Azara hours after she allegedly told her mother over the phone that a friend had assaulted her at a homestay in Dharapur, police said.

The deceased was identified as Nimisha Thakuria, a student enrolled in a five-year integrated course at Gauhati University. According to the available information, Nimisha left home around 11 pm to spend the night with a friend at Rudra's Kitchen in Dharapur. She later called her mother and allegedly said that the friend had physically assaulted her.

The call ended shortly afterwards, and Nimisha's phone was subsequently found switched off, prompting her family to alert Azara police.

Police launched a search and later recovered her body near a hospital in Garal. The body was sent to Gauhati Medical College and Hospital for a post-mortem examination. The exact cause of death has not yet been established.

Police are investigating the circumstances surrounding her death, including the alleged assault and the events between her last communication with her family and the recovery of her body. Further details are awaited.

Northeast is India's gateway, not its frontier, says Gen Upendra Dwivedi

GUWAHATI

Former Army chief General Upendra Dwivedi (Retd) on September 25 described the Northeast as India's "true gateway" and urged young people to combine technological skills with adaptability, ability and a strong grounding in Indian values.

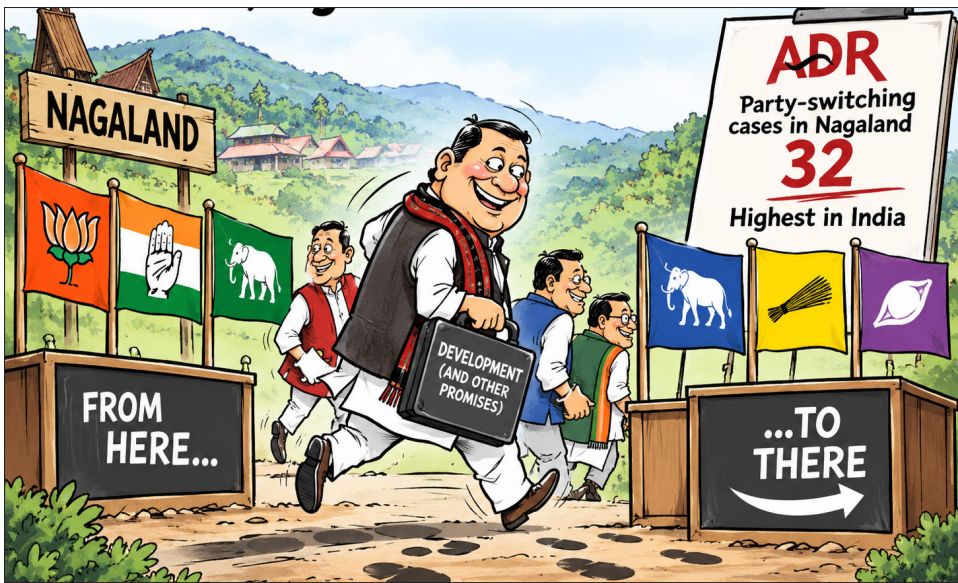
Dwivedi was speaking at Namami Bharatam, a collective singing programme organised by Vidya Bharati Northeast Region at the Srimanta Sankaradeva International Auditorium in Guwahati to mark the 150th anniversary of Vande Mataram. Addressing students and educators, Dwivedi said the Northeast should not be viewed as the geographical end of India but as the region from which the country begins. "The Northeast is not the place where India ends, but the place from where India begins. It is the true gateway to the nation," he said.

Dwivedi said he was addressing the gathering not only as a former Chief of Army Staff but also as an alumnus of Saraswati Shishu Mandir. He urged students to play an active role in nation-building and prepare themselves for the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

He identified attitude, adaptability and ability as three key qualities for young people as India works towards its goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047.

Dwivedi encouraged students to focus on finding solutions rather than merely identifying problems. He also advocated a continuous cycle of "learn, unlearn and relearn", while stressing the importance of understanding emerging technologies without losing touch with Indian values. He suggested a daily "Zero-Ten" routine, asking young people to spend the first 10 minutes of each morning away from mobile phones. The time, he said, could be used to reflect on personal goals, express gratitude and set priorities for the day.

The Namami Bharatam programme brought together students, teachers, alumni and members of civil society for a synchronised rendition of Vande Mataram. Vidya Bharati Northeast organisational secretary Dr Pawan Tiwari said the national song reflected India's cultural unity and highlighted the historical and cultural contributions of the Northeast. Tiwari referred to the spiritual traditions associated with Maa Kamakhya and Srimanta Sankaradeva and the military legacy of Ahom general Lachit Borphukan while emphasising the region's place in India's national consciousness.



West Bengal recorded the second-highest number with 20 cases, all involving Lok Sabha members. Telangana followed with nine cases, all involving MLAs originally elected from the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS).

Goa and Punjab recorded eight cases each. Meghalaya reported six MLA cases, while Manipur recorded five and Arunachal Pradesh four.

Maharashtra also recorded six cases, involving Lok Sabha members elected from the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) who subsequently moved to the Shiv Sena led by Eknath Shinde, according to the report.

Party-wise movement

At the party level, the NDPP recorded the highest number of exits with 25, followed by the All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) with 20 and the Congress with 19. The BRS accounted for nine cases, while the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) recorded seven each.

The NPF received the largest number of lawmakers who changed parties, with 32, followed by the BJP with 29 and the Nationalist Citizens Party of India with 20. The Congress received nine, Shiv Sena eight, NPP six and People's Party of Arunachal four.

ADR said its analysis covered four categories: individual defections, party mergers, resignations followed by victories in by-elections, and disqualifications followed by victories in by-elections.

The watchdog cautioned that the list may not be exhaustive because there is no systematically maintained and readily accessible official database tracking legislators who change political parties.

ADR calls for anti-defection reforms

ADR has proposed changes to the existing anti-defection framework. Among its recommendations is transferring the authority to decide disqualification petitions from presiding officers to the President in the case of MPs and governors in the case of MLAs, based on the Election Commission's advice.

It has also recommended setting a time limit for deciding disqualification petitions and restricting defectors from holding public office until they are re-elected.

The report is based on elections held between 2022 and 2026 and by-elections conducted during the period, with the data covering sitting legislators as of July 12, 2026.



VOLUME:1, ISSUE 884

HEALTHY
EARTH,
HEALTHY
PEOPLE

The message of World Environmental Health Day 2026 - "Standing with Science to Protect Communities through Environmental Health" - arrives at a moment when the traditional boundaries between environmental protection and public health are becoming increasingly meaningless. The air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we grow, the soil beneath our feet and the temperature in which we live are not merely environmental concerns. They are the basic infrastructure of human health.

For too long, development and health have been discussed as though they belong to separate policy compartments. They do not. When rivers are polluted, groundwater depleted, forests destroyed and cities turned into heat traps, the consequences eventually appear in clinics and hospitals. Environmental degradation is increasingly becoming a public-health crisis, even when its effects are not immediately visible.

The numbers are already compelling. The United Nations estimates that around 3.6 billion people experience inadequate access to water for at least one month every year. Since 2000, flood-related disasters have increased substantially, while droughts have also become more frequent and prolonged. Water insecurity is consequently no longer a distant environmental warning. It is already affecting food security, livelihoods, migration and human health.

Climate change is also becoming a direct threat to the human body. The World Health Organization has reported a sharp increase in heat-related mortality among older people in recent decades. Extreme heat can aggravate cardiovascular and respiratory illnesses and increase risks for people living with diabetes and other health conditions. Heat also affects mental well-being, productivity and the ability of communities to function safely.

This should force a fundamental change in the way health policy is understood. A health system cannot be judged only by the number of hospitals it builds or the number of doctors it employs. Hospitals are indispensable, but they mostly intervene after people become ill. Public policy must also address the environmental conditions that make people sick in the first place.

Clean air is preventive healthcare. Safe drinking water is preventive healthcare. Proper sanitation, nutritious food, green spaces, clean energy and protection from extreme heat are all forms of preventive healthcare.

The World Health Organization estimates that a significant share of the global disease burden is linked to environmental risks. Air pollution alone contributes to millions of premature deaths every year. The implication is difficult to ignore: treating pollution-related illness without tackling pollution itself is an expensive and ultimately incomplete strategy.

The idea of development must therefore evolve. More concrete, wider roads, taller buildings and higher consumption cannot by themselves be treated as evidence of progress. Development becomes meaningful when economic growth improves human well-being without destroying the ecological systems on which that well-being depends.

The latest Global Environment Outlook of the United Nations Environment Programme has similarly underlined the economic importance of investing in a stable climate, healthy ecosystems, sustainable land management and pollution reduction. Environmental protection is not simply an expense imposed on economic growth. In many cases, it is an investment that prevents far greater economic and social costs in the future.

India has a particularly important opportunity in this regard.

Water conservation, for instance, cannot remain confined to government schemes. Rainwater harvesting, restoration of ponds and wetlands, protection of river channels, scientific groundwater management, reduction of water wastage and wider use of water-efficient farming methods need to become part of everyday civic practice.

A restored pond is not merely an environmental asset. It can improve local water security, support biodiversity and reduce vulnerability during droughts and floods. Protecting a river is not simply about preserving a landscape; it is about protecting the water, agriculture and livelihoods that depend upon it.

Forests and biodiversity deserve the same integrated approach. Deforestation and habitat destruction alter ecosystems and can increase the risks associated with emerging infectious diseases, while the loss of biodiversity weakens ecological resilience. This is why the One Health approach - recognising the interdependence of human, animal and environmental health - has become increasingly important. Human beings cannot protect their health by treating nature as something outside themselves. This understanding should also change the way cities are planned. Every city should consider preparing an Environmental Health Budget alongside its conventional financial plans. Such a framework could measure clean-air levels, per-capita green space, tree cover, access to safe water, rainwater harvesting, waste management, protection from extreme heat and the condition of local biodiversity. Urban planning should ask not only how many roads or buildings are being added, but also whether residents are breathing cleaner air, experiencing less heat and gaining better access to safe water and green spaces. Schools have an equally important role. Environmental education cannot be reduced to planting a sapling once a year. Children should learn how their neighbourhood's rivers, ponds, groundwater, waste systems, trees and air quality function - and how their own choices affect them. Environmental responsibility becomes meaningful when it is connected to the place where people live.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“True ignorance is not the absence of knowledge, but the refusal to acquire it.”
- Karl Popper

US RUSSIA SANCTIONS
LAW PUTS INDIA'S
ENERGY SECURITY AND
STRATEGIC AUTONOMY
UNDER PRESSURE

RUCHI MEHTA

The United States' latest Russia sanctions law has opened a new front in its economic and geopolitical relationship with India, with Washington now possessing a statutory route to impose tariffs of up to 100 per cent on countries that continue to purchase Russian energy under specified conditions. For New Delhi, the issue goes beyond trade. It touches energy security, strategic autonomy and the extent to which one country can use access to its market to influence another country's foreign-policy choices.

US President Donald Trump signed the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026 into law on September 18, after it passed the Senate 86-11 and the House of Representatives 262-159. The White House said the law expands statutory sanctions, tariffs and prohibitions targeting Russia and extends existing sanctions on Iran.

The law does not automatically impose a 100 per cent tariff on Indian goods. Instead, it gives the US administration expanded authority to impose punitive duties on countries meeting specified criteria related to purchases of Russian crude oil and natural gas. This distinction is important because the actual impact on India will depend on how the Trump administration implements the law.

India has already indicated that it will protect its energy, trade and economic interests.

Initiative, Russia accounted for 30.3 per cent of India's crude-oil imports in financial year 2025-26, with purchases worth about \$40.8 billion out of total crude imports of \$134.7 billion. Russian supplies rose further during 2026, accounting for more than half of India's imported crude in July, according to GTRI-based estimates.

The importance of Russian crude has increased because Indian refiners have been able to obtain supplies at competitive prices amid disruptions in global energy markets. The conflict in West Asia has added another layer of uncertainty, making the availability, cost and transportation of crude particularly sensitive issues for a major energy-importing economy such as India.

Replacing Russian supplies would therefore not be an overnight exercise. India has several alternative suppliers, including Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, Brazil and Venezuela. But switching sources on a large scale could alter procurement costs, shipping patterns and refinery economics.

The consequences could extend beyond the oil sector. If Indian goods face substantially higher US tariffs, exporters could come under pressure across a range of industries, including textiles, engineering products, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and smaller manufacturing units. Such a development would add another complication to already difficult India-US trade negotiations.

The timing is significant. India

Russia from energy exports and increasing the economic cost of its war in Ukraine. Supporters of the law have argued that stronger sanctions and tariff powers can increase pressure on Moscow and its international partners. The administration has also described the tariff authority as a tool to encourage a negotiated resolution to the conflict.

The policy, however, carries potential complications for the global oil market. If Indian purchases of Russian crude are sharply reduced, the displaced Russian barrels will not necessarily disappear from the international market. They could be re-directed to other buyers through alternative trading networks. At the same time, restrictions on supply could contribute to higher global oil prices, potentially increasing costs for consumers and import-dependent economies.

For India, the central challenge is consequently to balance three interests: maintaining affordable and reliable energy supplies, protecting access to important export markets and preserving room for independent foreign-policy decisions.

China's position makes the situation even more consequential. Beijing is also a major buyer of Russian energy and is therefore exposed to the same broader US strategy. The law consequently has implications beyond the India-US relationship. It raises a wider question about the ability of Asian economies to determine their energy sources while

or geopolitical bloc. But there is

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

The vote is the foundation of Indian democracy.

From the vote flows the power of our Constitution, the authority of our laws, and the legitimacy of our public institutions - this chain defines modern India.

Today this chain is broken, and this has never happened in India before. By destroying the vote, this government and the Election Commission have attacked the expression of every single Indian.

Everything this government has done on the strength of stolen votes is illegal. An MP elected through vote chori holds an illegitimate seat, and every law passed with that MP's support is an illegitimate law.
~ Rahul Gandhi, Leader of Opposition, Lok Sabha



New Delhi has maintained that its crude purchases are guided by energy-security requirements, market conditions and supply availability, rather than by political endorsement of Russia's actions in Ukraine.

That position reflects a broader principle of Indian foreign policy: strategic partnerships with the United States need not require abandoning long-standing relationships with Russia or accepting the automatic extraterritorial application of US sanctions.

The economic stakes are substantial. According to data cited by the Global Trade Research

remaining deeply integrated into the US-led financial and trading system.

For New Delhi, the immediate response is likely to involve diversification rather than an abrupt rupture with Moscow. India can increase purchases from other producers when commercial conditions make that viable while continuing to assess the costs and risks associated with Russian supplies.

Such diversification would be consistent with India's longstanding effort to avoid excessive dependence on any single supplier

an important difference between diversification driven by market conditions and a forced reduction imposed through external tariff pressure.

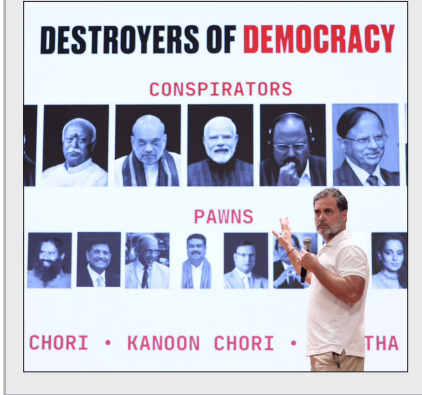
The dispute could also affect the broader India-US strategic relationship. The two countries have expanded cooperation in defence, technology, trade and the Indo-Pacific, partly in response to their shared concerns about China. Pressure over Russian energy creates a difficult contradiction: Washington seeks closer strategic alignment with New Delhi while simultaneously placing pressure on an area in which India has repeatedly asserted independent decision-making.

The new law therefore represents more than another chapter in the sanctions regime against Moscow. It tests the limits of economic statecraft in an increasingly fragmented global economy.

India is unlikely to view the issue solely through the lens of Russia. For New Delhi, the larger question is whether its energy policy can remain based on domestic requirements, market conditions and national interest without being dictated by external sanctions.

The coming months will show how aggressively Washington uses the new powers and how India responds. The outcome could influence crude-oil flows, export costs, bilateral trade negotiations and the broader trajectory of India-US relations.

Ultimately, the dispute is about the intersection of energy security, trade pressure and strategic autonomy. The United States wants to increase the economic pressure on Russia; India wants to secure affordable energy while retaining an independent foreign policy. How those two objectives are managed will determine whether the latest sanctions law becomes a temporary point of friction or a deeper challenge to the India-US relationship.



Northeast can become India's 'living lab' for technology, problem-solving: Himanta



GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on September 25 said the Northeast has the potential to emerge as one of India's "living laboratories" for technology and practical problem-solving, as he launched the North East Seva Innovation Challenge (NESFIC) in Guwahati.

Speaking at the launch of 'NESFIC-Ashtalakshmi for Viksit Bharat', Sarma said the initiative would create a platform for young innovators to identify problems faced by citizens, government departments and industries and develop solutions that could eventually be deployed on the ground.

"The Northeast can emerge as one of India's living laboratories for technology and problem-solving," he said, citing the possibility of solutions devel-

oped for flood management in Assam being adapted elsewhere in the country and low-cost healthcare technologies designed for remote communities finding wider applications.

Sarma said NESFIC was aimed not simply at encouraging startups to develop new products, but at directly connecting innovators with real-world challenges. "A startup does not always begin in a large office or a corporate laboratory. It can begin in a hostel room, a college workshop or an institutional laboratory," he said, while urging engineering colleges, polytechnics and ITIs across the Northeast to participate.

50 challenges identified

Under NESFIC, 50 real-world challenges have been identified, including 40 from government departments and 10 from industry organisations. The

challenges cover areas where technology-based interventions could address problems faced by citizens and institutions. Sarma said a key objective was to enable the government to become the first customer for young innovators.

He noted that startups often face difficulties entering government markets because conventional procurement processes can require turnover thresholds, prior experience and bank guarantees. Among the challenges identified by the Health and Family Welfare Department are the early detection of pregnancy-induced hypertension, improving access to obstetric ultrasound in remote areas, infection control in labour rooms, quicker identification and referral of sick newborns and early detection of congenital deformities.

"If a young engineer, doctor or startup can develop a solution that

enables an ASHA worker in a tea garden or a char area to identify a health danger at an early stage, it would represent innovation at its highest level," Sarma said.

The Housing and Urban Affairs Department has also identified urban drainage as an area requiring technological intervention, including systems that can automatically detect blocked culverts in Guwahati.

150 startups to be shortlisted

According to the roadmap announced by the chief minister, 150 startups will be selected at the Northeast Innovation Conclave in Guwahati in late November. Three startups will be shortlisted for each of the 50 identified challenges.

The selected startups will receive idea-stage support under the Assam Startup Policy and work with the re-

spective problem owners using relevant data and testing sites. They will also receive mentoring from partner institutions.

At the demonstration day scheduled for February next year, the best startup for each challenge will receive a minimum viable product grant of Rs 20 lakh. Deep-technology solutions will be eligible for grants of up to Rs 40 lakh.

Sarma said NESFIC could help connect the Northeast's existing strengths with emerging technologies and provide a pathway for innovative ideas to move from the concept stage to practical implementation.

The initiative, he said, is intended to create a stronger link between young innovators, government agencies, industries and the communities that ultimately use the solutions.

Zubeen Garg case: Singapore witness denies organising yacht gathering

GUWAHATI

Abhimanyu Talukdar, president of the Assam Association in Singapore, told the court hearing the case related to singer Zubeen Garg's death that he was not the organiser of the yacht gathering where the Asamese cultural icon drowned.

Talukdar deposed before Justice Soumitra Saikia on Thursday, rejecting speculation that he had created a WhatsApp group to organise the gathering on September 19.

"I have already said this before. It was not organised by me," Talukdar said, adding that the Special Investigation Team (SIT) was examining details including who created the WhatsApp group, when it was formed and when he was added.

Recounting the events of September 19, Talukdar said he confirmed his participation in the gathering at around 10.30 am and reached the yacht at about 2 pm.

He told the court that he saw Garg enter the water twice. The first time, the singer was wearing a life jacket, while he later attempted to enter the water without one. Talukdar said another person immediately went to assist Garg while he went inside the cabin to wash his hands. He said he was away for about five to six minutes. "When I came out, I noticed the situation and Garg was unconscious then," he said. According to Talukdar, Singapore Coast Guard police reached the location within 10 to 15 minutes after an emergency call was made. He said two armed police personnel trained in CPR were also present.

Asked about Garg's manager Siddharth Sharma and bandmate Shekharjyoti Goswami, who are accused in the case, Talukdar said both were with the group while Garg was being taken to hospital. However, he said he could not recall whether they were present when Garg entered the water.

Gauhati University poll row: AASU-backed candidate begins hunger strike



GUWAHATI

AASU-backed candidate Nayan Protim Bora has launched a hunger strike after his candidature for Gauhati University Students' Union general secretary was cancelled, sparking protests on the campus.

Bora and his supporters are demanding that Gauhati University disclose the grounds for rejecting his nomination. They have alleged that the university has failed to provide a clear explanation despite repeated requests.

Following the cancellation of Bora's candidature, ABVP-backed candidate Madhuriya Plabon Talukdar was declared elected unopposed to the general secretary's post.

The dispute intensified on Friday, September 25, when protesters staged demonstrations on the university campus and burnt tyres while pressing the authorities to clarify the decision.

Bora's supporters said the hunger strike would continue until the university provides an explanation for the cancellation of his candidature.

The university authorities have not publicly stated the reasons for rejecting Bora's candidature so far.

The development has added tension to the Gauhati University students' union election process, with supporters of the two student organisations taking opposing positions over the general secretary's post.

BJP unveils civic development manifesto ahead of Silchar Municipal Corporation polls



SILCHAR

The BJP released its Municipal Area Development Sankalp Patra ahead of the Silchar Municipal Corporation election, outlining the party's development priorities for the newly constituted 42-ward civic body.

Assam Finance and Forest Minister Jayanta Malla Baruah attended the programme in Silchar and addressed party workers and supporters during the release of the document.

The Sankalp Patra places urban development and civic infrastructure at the centre

of the BJP's campaign, with the party outlining its vision of transforming Silchar into a modern, well-planned and progressive city.

The document focuses on strengthening civic infrastructure and improving essential amenities for residents. The BJP has been

highlighting urban development and civic services as key issues ahead of the corporation's first election.

The programme was attended by BJP state president Dilip Saikia, MLA Kaushik Rai and other party leaders.

The Silchar Municipal Corporation election is scheduled for October 3, with polling to be held across the remaining wards of the newly constituted civic body.

The corporation has 42 wards, of which two have already been filled through uncontested elections.

The BJP has stepped up its campaign in the run-up to the civic polls, with its development document seeking to place infrastructure, urban planning and delivery of essential services at the forefront of its campaign.

Nagaland student body gives NHIDCL 72-hour ultimatum over delayed NH-29 project

KOHIMA

The Chakhesang Students Union (CSU) has issued a 72-hour ultimatum to the National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL), demanding termination of the contractor handling the delayed NH-29 Kohima-Jessami Road project and threatening a total blockade of the highway from September 30.

The apex student body of Nagaland's Phek district also sealed the contractor's base camp at North Kikrumba on September 25, alleging that the company had failed to complete the road work despite repeated extensions.

CSU president Povozo Soho said the union had been pursuing the issue for the past two years and had given the contractor several opportunities to meet its commitments.

"We cannot tolerate anymore," Soho said while addressing the



media at the contractor's base camp.

CSU general secretary Rhilo Chiero said the Chakhabama-Kikrumba package was awarded to the contractor on October 10, 2023, with January 4, 2026, set as the original completion deadline.

The deadline was subsequently extended by NHIDCL to September 24. The extended deadline expired on Thursday, but the union claimed that only 44.30 per cent of the physi-

cal work had been completed.

The CSU also alleged that the contractor had failed to deploy sufficient machinery and manpower and had not undertaken necessary maintenance work along the stretch.

In a memorandum submitted to the Executive Director (Projects) of the NHIDCL Regional Office in Kohima, the union said the prolonged delay had caused considerable hardship to people dependent

on the highway. It described NH-29 as a key lifeline for residents of Phek, Meluri and Kiphire districts in Nagaland as well as adjoining areas of Manipur. The student body also cited a six-point agreement signed on June 22 between the CSU, NHIDCL and the contractor, aimed at facilitating completion of the project. However, it alleged that the contractor failed to meet the commitments made under the agreement.

Following the alleged failure to achieve the agreed targets, the CSU said it sealed the contractor's base camp on Friday and would not permit further work under the package.

The union has demanded that NHIDCL terminate the existing contractor and invite fresh tenders for the project.

It warned that failure by NHIDCL to act within 72 working hours would lead to a total blockade of NH-29 from September 30.

Eknath Shinde likely to visit Manipur in October for temple reconstruction



IMPHAL

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and Shiv Sena (Eknath Shinde) chief Eknath Shinde is likely to visit Manipur in October to perform a bhoomi puja for the reconstruction of a century-old Shiva temple damaged during the ethnic violence in the state, party leaders said on Friday.

Shiv Sena's Manipur unit president M Tombi Singh said Shinde had agreed to perform the bhoomi puja at the Koubru Leikha Temple following a request from the state unit. The temple is located in Koubru Leikha village in Kangpokpi district.

"Our national president Eknath Shinde is likely to visit

Manipur in the second week of October," Tombi Singh told reporters in Imphal.

The party also announced plans to contest the upcoming Manipur Assembly elections, which are due next year.

Parminder Singh, Shiv Sena's North East in-charge, said the party intends to field candidates in 25 to 30 constituencies.

"We are contesting the elections. There is no doubt about it. Shiv Sena (Eknath Shinde) will be contesting 25 to 30 seats in upcoming Manipur elections," he said.

The party leaders also appealed to the Centre and the state government to take steps to restore peace and normalcy in Manipur. They called for the implementation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) before the next Census.

Parminder Singh said the party wanted the Assembly elections to be conducted in a free and fair manner and stressed that a peaceful environment was necessary ahead of polling.

The ethnic conflict that began in Manipur in May 2023 between the Meitei and Kuki communities has resulted in deaths, displacement and prolonged disruption across the state. Party leaders cited figures of at least 306 people killed and 49 reported missing, with thousands displaced by the violence.

Meghalaya steps up climate preparedness amid El Niño concerns



Quest!

A 390-year-old bonsai tree survived the bombing of Hiroshima. Later, the tree was gifted to the U.S. and it still lives in Washington, D.C.

SHILLONG

Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma has directed officials to strengthen Meghalaya's preparedness for possible climate-related disruptions, with water security, agriculture and vulnerable

catchment areas identified as key priorities.

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma reviewed the state's climate preparedness at a meeting of the Meghalaya State Council on Climate Change, stressing the need for advance planning despite uncertainty over the impact of El Niño.

Sangma said the pre-monsoon season had remained near normal but warned that changing weather patterns could create challenges in the months ahead.

"El Niño is a reality, but its impacts are difficult to predict," Sangma said in a post on X, underlining the need to focus on preparedness and adaptation.

The government is undertaking district-wise climate risk and vulnerability mapping to identify areas that may require additional intervention. Officials also discussed improving coordination between departments and establishing Block-Level Climate Action Teams.

Water security emerged as a major concern. The state plans to rejuvenate springs and protect other critical water sources, while plantation activities will be expanded in vulnerable catchment areas to strengthen local water systems.

The meeting also reviewed measures to improve agricultural resilience, including expanding natural farming through greater coordination among departments and farmer-to-farmer train-

ing. Officials discussed crop-related challenges, including soft rot affecting ginger.

Sangma said the period between November and March would be particularly important for preparedness and called for clear action plans and standard operating procedures for different climate scenarios.

He directed officials to immediately activate District Climate Adaptation and Resilience Task Forces and strengthen information, education and communication activities at the grassroots level. Elected representatives will also be involved in awareness programmes to help communities understand potential climate risks and appropriate responses.

The chief minister called for regular monitoring at district, block and village levels to assess the implementation and effectiveness of adaptation measures.

He also stressed the need to ensure adequate drinking water supplies if rainfall falls below normal, saying Meghalaya must remain prepared for challenging and potentially unprecedented conditions.

The state has previously implemented climate-focused initiatives under its State Action Plan on Climate Change, including measures related to water security, ecosystem conservation and community-led landscape management.

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‘Terrorist country is asking me’: EAM Jaishankar hits back at Pakistani journalist’s terrorism question at UN



NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Friday sharply responded to a Pakistani journalist who questioned him over alleged Indian sponsorship of terrorism in Pakistan. “A terrorist country is asking me that question. Come on,” Jaishankar said in a strong response to the question by the Pakistani journalist. The exchange took place at the UN headquarters after Jaishankar and Liberia’s Foreign Minister Sara Beysolow Nyanti addressed the press on the newly launched ‘Group of Friends on Safety

and Security of Shipping and Seafarers’. As the ministers concluded their remarks, the Pakistani journalist stood up and questioned Jaishankar: “When will your government stop sponsoring terrorism in Pakistan?”. Jaishankar responded briefly: “A terrorist country is asking me that question. Come on.” India’s Permanent Representative to the UN, P Harish, then told the journalist: “You have heard your reply. You have heard your response, loud and clear.” The exchange came a day after an Indian journalist posed a similar question to Pakistan

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif as he entered the UN building. The journalist asked Sharif: “When will you stop harbouring terrorists?”. Jaishankar’s response came during his visit to the UN for the 81st General Assembly, where India and Liberia announced the maritime-focused Group of Friends amid concerns over attacks on commercial shipping and risks faced by seafarers. The brief confrontation between the Indian minister and the Pakistani journalist was separate from the substantive maritime discussions at the press briefing.

Jairam Ramesh accuses EC of “illegal, unconstitutional” Form 6 changes, alleges hurdles for first-time Gen Z voters

NEW DELHI

Senior Congress MP Jairam Ramesh on Saturday accused the Election Commission of India (ECI) of making changes to the voter registration process that allegedly created hurdles for first-time voters, and demanded accountability from Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar over the issue. Reacting to the Election Commission’s move to organise special enrolment camps for young voters, Ramesh alleged that the poll body had earlier made it difficult for new voters to register by introducing changes in Form 6, calling the move “blatantly illegal and unconstitutional”. “Late night yesterday, a panicked Election Commission directed officers to organise special enrolment camps for young voters and give them ‘wide publicity’ through social media. But the CEC himself had earlier made it virtually impossible to add young voters through a blatantly illegal and unconstitutional change to Form 6,” Ramesh said in a post on X. He alleged that a new mandatory section was added to Form 6 seeking details about whether the applicant’s parents or grandparents were part of the previous Special Intensive Revision (SIR), creating a barrier for first-time Gen Z voters. “The change is completely illegal. Violation 1: In early July 2026 the online form was stealthily changed with no official notification. Violation 2: ECI does not have the power to amend Form 6. This power is only held by the Union Government as per The Representation Of The People Act, 1950. This is clear a huge overreach by the Election Commission. Violation 3: The form was changed without any amendment to the Rules that govern it under the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960. That can only be done by the Union Govt with proper intimation to Parliament. A statutory form, defined by the law, was unilaterally



changed by the CEC Gyanesh at the instance of the rattled PM-HM duo,” Ramesh said. Referring to The Indian Express report, he further alleged that “two ECs had called for this illegal and unauthorised change to be reversed so young and first-time voters can register without any harassment.” “The CEC has broken not just Constitutional conventions and practices but has also knowingly broken the law as passed by Parliament. His continuation in office is an affront to the people of India,” Ramesh further said. “A confirmed law-breaker in charge of implementing laws what has Indian democracy degenerated to. The Supreme Court must immediately take suo moto cognizance and hold him accountable. As the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi has said Gyanesh Kumar can still redeem himself by resigning and turning approver. The Youth of India especially will approve of such a move,” he added. The Congress leader’s remarks came amid a political row over the SIR exercise of electoral rolls following an Indian Express report saying that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had objected at least 14 times over 10 months to decisions and orders related to the SIR process. The Opposition parties, including Congress, Samajwadi Party,

Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Shiv Sena (UBT) and Left parties, have intensified their criticism of the Election Commission, alleging concerns over electoral transparency and demanding accountability. Congress workers staged demonstrations across several states, including Jammu and Kashmir, Assam, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Manipur, against the functioning of the Election Commission and its handling of the SIR exercise. In Assam, the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) held a protest rally from Rajiv Bhawan in Guwahati demanding the removal of CEC Gyanesh Kumar and an impartial review of decisions taken and alterations made to electoral rolls during his tenure. The party said that APCC president and Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi, along with several other leaders and workers, were detained by police during the protest. Earlier on Friday, Ramesh had also accused the government of unleashing a “brutal crackdown” on protests against the CEC, alleging that Congress leaders, workers, young citizens, students and social activists were detained across the country. “Today, citizens and Congress workers took to the streets to demand accountability for the subversion of their constitutional right to vote and the

unscrupulous actions of the Chief Election Commissioner,” Ramesh had posted on X. Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi also alleged that the issue involved evidence and should not be dismissed as a political allegation. “There are facts, there is evidence. It is there for the whole country to see. My brother has shown it in many different press conferences. He has put the evidence forward. Now it is very clear, 13 crore voters have been deleted,” she said. Meanwhile, the BJP has rejected the Opposition’s allegations, calling them attempts to divert attention from electoral defeats. Union Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal questioned the charges, saying that if the Election Commission was biased, the Opposition would not have won elections in states like Kerala. Union Minister and key NDA ally Chirag Paswan said the Election Commission should firmly present its position on the allegations to maintain public trust in the electoral process. “If such questions are being raised against the Election Commission, I believe it is also the responsibility of the Election Commission, especially the CEC, to firmly present its side,” Paswan said. Meanwhile, the Election Commission has maintained that internal technical notes and written queries are part of the normal functioning of a multi-member body and asserted that all final decisions related to the SIR process were taken unanimously with legal sanction. The ECI maintained that all final decisions taken by the Commission, including those related to the SIR exercise, were unanimous and carried the approval of all three commissioners. The controversy over SIR and the Election Commission’s internal functioning is expected to be taken up at the Congress Working Committee meeting scheduled for September 29 in New Delhi.

INTERNATIONAL

Trump rejects Iran’s 7-day ceasefire plan to reopen Strait of Hormuz



UNITED STATES

Iran offered a plan to reopen the strategic Strait of Hormuz, Tehran said Friday, but within hours reports indicated that US President Donald Trump rejected the proposal. The waterway key to the world’s oil supply is central to the conflict between the United States and Iran, which is at a stalemate after nearly seven months. But new mediation efforts at the

UN’s gathering of world leaders in New York this week offered some optimism of progress toward a deal. Iran’s Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi met for talks on Tuesday with Trump’s envoy Steve Witkoff, and previously set out conditions for ending the war and reopening the vital shipping channel. “Iran has conveyed to the United States, through Qatar, a concrete seven-day plan. If the necessary conditions are met, the strait can

be reopened, and normal maritime passage restored within seven days,” Araghchi said at the UN. “The choice now rests with the United States. Iran does not accept coercion, threats, or intimidation, and Iran will not surrender its sovereign rights under pressure. However, with hours of his comments The Wall Street Journal reported Trump had rejected the proposal, citing US officials familiar with the matter.

The report noted that the 80-year-old president was skeptical Tehran would meet his demands and added he sees a renewed bombing campaign as likely. Trump also posted an image to his Truth Social platform of a map showing the Strait of Hormuz circled and labelled “Trump Strait.” Earlier media reports suggested the new plan calls for a cessation of all hostilities in the Middle East for seven days, including in Lebanon. It also reportedly calls for the release of frozen Iranian assets estimated to be worth at least \$12 billion, as well as the lifting of sanctions on Iranian oil and an end to the US naval blockade of Iran. On the seventh day of the truce, Iran would reopen Hormuz. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said in an interview with broadcaster CBS that the ceasefire “process will begin from the very day they accept it.” “We had previously reached an agreement based on the MOU that was signed in Pakistan...if the United States agrees to proceed in that way, everything will return to the way it was before,” he added. Hossein Mohebi, a spokesman for the Revolutionary Guards, told AFP in an exclusive interview on Tuesday that ending hostilities in Yemen was also among Tehran’s demands. The US and Iran signed a memorandum of understanding in June that aimed to end the war, reopen the strait and launch talks on Iran’s nuclear program. But the deal broke down shortly afterward when Iran fired on commercial ships in Hormuz that it accused of deviating from its approved route through the waterway. Iran requires ships to obtain authorization before passage, citing security and sovereignty reasons. Ships that refuse to comply are regularly targeted, while the United States sporadically bombs Iranian coastal areas in retaliation.

From Gaza to Sudan to Nepal, more than 500 million children are in desperate need of education



UNITED NATIONS

In a stifling sixth grade classroom in war-torn Sudan, a very motivated teacher was giving a lesson to 120 very committed children. Among them: an 18-year-old girl uprooted three years ago by fighting, forced into marriage and motherhood too soon, but determined to finish her education. That wasn’t all, Maysa Jalbout, the director of Education Can’t Wait, recounted of her visit to the school a few weeks ago. Even with a classroom temperature of 44 degrees Celsius (111 degrees Fahrenheit) and no water or electricity, “She pleaded with me to make sure that her siblings and her cousins and her orphan friends are also able to attend school.” But the school was so small that hundreds more kids waiting outside couldn’t get in, Jalbout said. They asked her and the other visitors to deliver a message to build more schools – and she said that’s what she has been urging at the U.N.’s annual meeting of world leaders at the United Nations this week. The plight of the more than 500 million children in desperate need of an education has been one of the key issues on the sidelines of the meeting – and the appeal for money to make it possible is having some success. Gordon Brown, the former British prime minister is now the U.N. special envoy for global

education. He said Thursday that 273 million children are not in school and 270 million others are at school but aren’t learning enough to read and write or be proficient in arithmetic by age 11. Many of them are in areas affected by conflict or climate change, he said. “The message, I think, is clear,” he said. “Instead of the world developing only some of the potential of some children in some countries, we must be determined to develop the potential of all children at all times in every country.” Governments whose children are not in school must be reminded, he said, that they promised 20% of their spending would go to education, and to remind countries giving aid that in 2015 they signed up for U.N. development goals including achieving quality education for all children by 2030. “We’re so far away from the goal.” Brown said it’s disappointing that the numbers of children not going to school isn’t falling and the message is clear: “If you deny a child the basic right to education, you are doing something that will affect their whole life and, indeed, the life of the family around them.” But the gathering of global leaders did produce some results. At an event Wednesday, the Global Partnership for Education said \$3.5 billion was mobilized from partners and

funds to support over 90 lower income countries in transforming their education system to provide quality learning. It said \$2.1 billion came from confirmed and anticipated pledges from governments and private donors, and \$1.4 billion in co-financing – \$1 billion from development finance institutions and \$400 million from a growing coalition of philanthropic and private sector partners. Investments can reach where they’re needed most. Nigerian President Bola Tinubu, co-host of the campaign, said the funding empowers “dynamic and youthful nations like Nigeria to break down the barriers that keep our children, especially our girls, out of school and away from learning, so they can achieve their full potential.” Education Cannot Wait, which Jalbout heads, focuses on the 258 million school-age children worldwide affected by crises – “far greater than the number that we are able to reach.” She announced a \$3 million emergency investment for children in Gaza and the West Bank to help up to 13,000 of the most vulnerable children and adolescents – with priority given to those with conflict-related injuries and disabilities and to youngsters who have lost parents and are unaccompanied or separated.

IIT Guwahati develops bacterial treatment to tackle toxic textile dye wastewater



GUWAHATI

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati have developed a biological method to treat textile wastewater containing toxic azo dyes, potentially offering an eco-friendly alternative or complementary approach to conventional chemical and physicochemical treatment processes.

The study identified a novel bacterium, *Brevundimonas* sp. AJZ05, that was able to degrade 98.50 per cent of Direct Blue-6 (DB-6), a widely used synthetic textile dye. The researchers also found that the products formed after bacterial degradation were non-toxic, addressing an important concern associated with wastewater treatment — that removing colour alone does not necessarily eliminate chemical toxicity.

The research was supported by the Ministry of Education through the Prime Minister's Research Fellowship (PMRF), with additional support from the Department of Chemical Engineering and Technology at IIT (BHU), Varanasi.

Why textile dye wastewater is difficult to treat

Textile manufacturing generates large volumes of wastewater containing dyes and other chemical compounds. Among these, azo dyes are particularly difficult to remove because of their stable chemical structure.

Azo dyes contain an azo bond, a chemical linkage that contributes to their intense colour and stability. This structure can make the dyes resistant to conventional wastewater treatment processes, allowing coloured and chemically complex effluents to persist if they are not adequately treated before discharge.

Untreated textile effluents can affect aquatic ecosystems and may also pose potential risks to human health. The problem is not limited to the visible colour of the wastewater. Some compounds generated during the breakdown of dyes can themselves remain toxic.

Researchers therefore increasingly focus on treatment methods that do more than simply remove colour and instead break down the dye into less harmful substances.

According to the IIT Guwahati researchers, conventional chemical and physicochemical treatment methods can also require considerable energy and, in some cases, generate secondary pollutants. Biological treatment using microorganisms offers another route by using naturally occurring biochemical processes to break down complex pollutants.

Bacterium isolated from textile effluent To develop the biological treatment approach, the IIT Guwahati team isolated *Brevundimonas* sp. AJZ05 from a native textile effluent discharge site.

The bacterium demonstrated an ability to break down Direct Blue-6 through the production of azoreductase, an enzyme capable of attacking the azo bond responsible for much of the dye's colour and chemical stability.

The researchers investigated how the bacterial system could be optimised to maximise both dye degradation and production of the enzyme.

Instead of focusing on a single operating condition, the study used a statistical multi-objective optimisation technique based on Response Surface Methodology. This enabled the researchers to simultaneously optimise the conditions required for efficient degradation of DB-6 and azoreductase production. Under the optimised conditions, *Brevundimonas* sp. AJZ05 achieved 98.50 per cent degradation of the dye.

The result is significant because the effectiveness of a wastewater treatment process cannot be measured only by how quickly the visible colour disappears. A successful treatment process must also reduce the harmful chemical characteristics of the wastewater and avoid producing more hazardous compounds in the process.

Beyond colour removal One of the important aspects of the study is its focus on the toxicity of the products generated during dye degradation.

In conventional treatment, the disappearance of colour may give the impression that wastewater has been adequately treated. However, the researchers noted that decolourisation does not automatically mean detoxification.

The bacterial process investigated by the IIT Guwahati team was therefore assessed not only for its ability to degrade DB-6 but also for the nature of the resulting degradation products.

The researchers reported that the degradation products obtained after bacterial treatment were non-toxic. This finding strengthens the potential of the biological approach as a wastewater treatment strategy because the objective is not merely to break the dye molecule apart but to convert it into less harmful substances.

The study thus combines three important elements: high dye degradation, biological activity through azoreductase production and assessment of the toxicity of the resulting products.

A possible alternative to conventional treatment Textile industries commonly rely on physical, chemical or combined treatment processes to manage dye-containing wastewater. Depending on the wastewater composition and treatment technology, these systems can involve substantial chemical and energy requirements.

Biological treatment, by contrast, uses microorganisms or their enzymes to transform pollutants. Such approaches are being investigated as either standalone treatment options or as part of treatment systems in which biological processes complement existing technologies.

The IIT Guwahati study does not suggest that bacterial treatment can immediately replace all existing wastewater treatment systems. Rather, the findings demonstrate the potential of a specific bacterial strain under optimised laboratory conditions.

Moving from laboratory research to industrial application would require further assessment under real-world conditions, including variations in wastewater composition, temperature, pH, dye concentration and the presence of other industrial chemicals.

The stability and performance of the bacterial system at a larger scale would also need to be evaluated before it could be integrated into commercial wastewater treatment plants.

The role of microbial treatment Microorganisms have long been studied for their ability to degrade environmental pollutants. Their metabolic processes can transform complex organic compounds into simpler substances, making them useful in the treatment

of industrial wastewater.

The discovery of *Brevundimonas* sp. AJZ05 adds another bacterial candidate to this field of research.

The ability of the bacterium to produce azoreductase is particularly relevant to azo dye treatment. By targeting the azo bond, the enzyme provides a biological mechanism for breaking down the molecular structure responsible for the dye's characteristic properties.

The researchers' use of statistical optimisation also highlights the importance of identifying the conditions under which microbial treatment performs most effectively. Factors such as nutrient availability, pH, temperature and dye concentration can influence microbial activity and enzyme production.

Optimising these variables can potentially improve treatment efficiency while reducing the amount of time or biological material required for degradation.

Environmental significance



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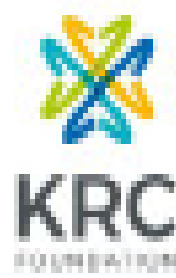
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