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Kaziranga Crash: Overcrowding, Driver's Medical Condition Under Probe; Families to Get Rs 7 Lakh Each

Traveller was carrying 41 passengers against its permitted capacity of 26 and had 10 previous traffic challans; CM says investigators are examining dashcam footage and forensic evidence

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GUWAHATI: Overcrowding and the possibility of a sudden medical emergency affecting the driver have emerged as key areas of investigation into the Kaziranga road accident that claimed 26 lives in Assam. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday announced a total ex-gratia assistance of Rs 7 lakh for the next of kin of each victim.

The assistance comprises Rs 5 lakh announced by the state government and an additional Rs 2 lakh from the Revenue and Disaster Management Department. Sarma announced the relief package after visiting the accident site and inspecting the mangled remains of the passenger vehicle.

Outlining the preliminary findings, the Chief Minister said the traveller was carrying 41 passengers despite having a permitted capacity of only 26. The vehicle also had 10 previous traffic challans, raising questions about its compliance with road safety regulations.



Investigators are examining why the vehicle suddenly veered into the path of an oncoming vehicle and collided head-on, even though the road ahead appeared relatively clear in preliminary video footage.

Sarma said possible intoxication, a stroke or another medical condition affecting the driver's ability to control the vehicle were among the possibilities being examined. He stressed that the driver's medical condition would have to be thoroughly investigated before any conclusion could be reached.

The Chief Minister also confirmed the authenticity of dashcam footage circulating on social media. According to him, the recording was uploaded to the cloud and subsequently shared with the authorities by the vehicle's company. The footage reportedly shows a cyclist near the accident site, a detail that investigators will also examine.

Compliance with speed restrictions along the Kaziranga stretch is another aspect under scrutiny. Sarma said most vehicles were fitted with speed-limiting devices, but their functioning could be affected if connecting cables were damaged or disconnected. He added that the driver, who regularly operated on the route, was expected to be familiar with the speed restrictions in the area.

Meanwhile, the death toll remained at 26, with several injured passengers undergoing treatment at Jorhat Medical College and Hospital and hospitals in Golaghat and Bokakhat. Specialised doctors were brought in from Guwahati to assist with the treatment of the injured and the post-mortem process.

Ten post-mortem examinations had been completed by noon on Saturday, while the remaining procedures were underway. The administration was arranging to transport the bodies to their respective families after completion of the formalities.

Sarma said ministers would also visit the bereaved families and extend government assistance after the last rites. The investigation is expected to establish the precise circumstances behind the crash, including the role of overloading, the driver's condition and possible violations of traffic safety norms.

PERSPECTIVE

Dancing often increases happiness.

World Meetei Council Calls on Political Parties to Clarify Stand on ST Status

KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

IMPHAL: The World Meetei Council (WMC) has called on all political parties in Manipur to clearly state their position on the demand for inclusion of the Meitei community in the Scheduled Tribe (ST) list ahead of the upcoming Assembly elections.

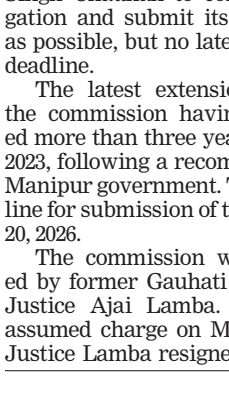
Addressing a press conference at Thangjing Hall of the Manipur Press Club on Friday, WMC Manipur Unit president Urikhingbam Kunjo urged the public to socially boycott and deny votes to parties that fail to take a firm stand on the issue.

Kunjo said ST status was essential to safeguard the interests and identity of the Meitei community and ensure constitutional protection. He expressed concern that, in the absence of such safeguards, wealthy outsiders could acquire the limited land available in the valley, potentially affecting the demographic composition and future of the indigenous population.

Maintaining that the demand should not be pushed aside amid the ongoing crisis in Manipur, Kunjo said conflict-affected Meiteis could not afford to ignore the issue. While acknowledging the role played by civil society organisations, Meira Paibis and local clubs in addressing the prevailing challenges, he argued that securing ST status remained the only permanent solution.

Referring to the violence that began on May 3, 2023, Kunjo also levelled allegations against the Government of India, claiming that the Kuki aggression was part of a government-backed plan. He further alleged that the state government could have contained the violence on the first day had it imposed a curfew promptly and deployed additional security forces in Churachandpur.

WHO SAID WHAT



Diabetes causes severe health impacts over time, including a significant increase in the risk of heart attacks, strokes and blindness. ~ WHO

Cachar Drug Haul: Yaba Worth Rs 60 Crore Seized from Dumper, One Arrested



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SILCHAR: In another major crackdown on drug trafficking along the Mizoram-Assam corridor, Assam Rifles and the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), Silchar, have seized yaba tablets valued at approximately Rs 60 crore from a dumper truck in Cachar district. One person has been apprehended in connection with the seizure.

According to an Assam Rifles statement, the joint operation was launched in the Borkhola area following intelligence inputs about the transportation of a large consignment of narcotics from Mizoram into Assam.

When the security team attempted to intercept the dumper, the vehicle allegedly tried to flee, triggering a pursuit. The personnel eventually managed to stop it and conduct a detailed search.

The search led to the recovery of a large quantity of yaba tablets allegedly concealed inside a specially constructed cabinet within the body of the dumper. The arrangement was reportedly designed to prevent the contraband from being detected during routine checks.

The seized narcotics have an estimated market value of around Rs 60 crore, the statement said. The apprehended person, along with the drugs and the vehicle, was subsequently handed over to DRI Silchar for further investigation and legal proceedings.

Investigators are expected to examine the source of the consignment, its intended destination and the network allegedly responsible for transporting the drugs.

The latest seizure is the second major narcotics recovery in Cachar in the past 15 days, highlighting the continuing challenge of drug trafficking along the Mizoram-Assam route.

On October 30, Assam Rifles and DRI Silchar had seized 20 kg of crystal methamphetamine, valued at approximately Rs 40 crore, at Dholai Bazar in Cachar. Three people were apprehended in that operation.

A preliminary assessment had suggested that the earlier consignment originated in Mizoram and was routed through Silchar for onward transportation to mainland India. The latest recovery has renewed attention on the use of the inter-state corridor for moving large consignments of narcotics.

Children's Day: Children's dreams and aspirations at heart of Assam's development, says Himanta



KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday extended Children's Day greetings to children across the state, reiterating that their happiness, dreams and aspirations would remain central to the government's development priorities.

In a message shared on social media platform X, Sarma said the government was working towards ensuring a stronger foundation and a brighter future for every child in Assam. He highlighted initiatives aimed at improving facilities for children, ranging from classrooms to playgrounds. "The happiness, dreams and aspirations of our children must always remain at the heart of everything we do," the Chief Minister wrote, while extending his love and best wishes to children on the occasion.

Sarma's message underscored the importance of creating an environment in which children can access better educational opportunities and recreational facilities, enabling them to grow and realise their potential.

Children's Day is observed across India on November 14 to mark the birth anniversary of the country's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, who was widely associated with his affection for children.

Security Forces Launch Manhunt

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IMPHAL: Security forces have launched search operations in Manipur's Ukhrul district after unidentified armed assailants shot dead four people in an ambush on two vehicles along National Highway 202 on November 13.According to Manipur Police, the attack took place around 1 pm near New Heaven under Litan Police Station, when the assailants opened fire on a Maruti Swift car and a Bolero pickup vehicle travelling along the Imphal-Ukhrul road. All four victims sustained bullet injuries and died at the spot.The deceased have been identified as Kapangkhui RS and Haoleia RS, both residents of Shangshak village, and August Ngalung and Khanmila, who belonged to Tashar village.

Following the attack, additional personnel from Manipur Police, the Border Security Force (BSF), the Army and Assam Rifles were deployed in the area. Search operations have been launched to identify and apprehend those responsible, while security has been strengthened to prevent further incidents.

In a separate security operation on November 13, a joint team comprising Imphal East district police commandos, 2 JAK LI and 8 Bihar Regiment arrested an active cadre of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (Progressive), or PREPAK (Pro).

The arrested individual was identified as Nongthombam Lenin Meitei, alias Buibui, aged 20. He was apprehended at Yourabung near Kharasom Lamkhai under Lamlai Police Station. Police said the operation was conducted following intelligence inputs corroborated by 2 JAK LI.

In another operation, police recovered 745 bottles of codeine-based cough syrup during routine vehicle checking at Ithai Khunou Mayai Leikai in Bishnupur district on November 12.

A red Maruti Swift was intercepted during the checking, and its occupant, identified as Md Waris, 29, a resident of Kwakta Bazar Ward No. 6, was arrested. He was subsequently handed over to Kumbi Police Station for further legal action.Meanwhile, security forces are continuing area-domination exercises and search operations in fringe and vulnerable locations across Manipur. Intelligence-based combing and cordon-and-search operations are also being conducted to apprehend individuals allegedly involved in extortion and other criminal activities.As part of security arrangements for the movement of essential commodities, the movement of 150 loaded vehicles along National Highway 37 and another 128 along National Highway 2 was facilitated under security cover. Convoys are being provided along vulnerable stretches to ensure safe transportation.Police have also established 110 nakas and checkpoints across the hill and valley districts.Manipur Police has appealed to the public not to believe rumours or circulate unverified videos and audio clips. Citizens have been asked to verify suspicious content through the Central Control Room at 9233522822.

Police have also warned that uploading or circulating fabricated information on social media could invite legal action. The public has further been urged to surrender looted arms, ammunition and explosives to the police or the nearest security forces unit.

Manipur Violence Probe Gets Seventh Extension, Final Report Now Due in May 2027

Centre extends deadline for inquiry commission headed by Justice Balbir Singh Chauhan; panel is examining the sequence of events, administrative lapses and the response to the 2023 clashes

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IMPHAL: The Centre has granted a seventh six-month extension to the Commission of Inquiry investigating the 2023 ethnic violence in Manipur, pushing the deadline for submission of its final report to May 20, 2027.

A Union Home Ministry notification, published in the Gazette, directed the three-member commission headed by former Supreme Court judge Justice Balbir Singh Chauhan to complete its investigation and submit its findings as early as possible, but no later than the revised deadline.

The latest extension comes despite the commission having been constituted more than three years ago, on June 4, 2023, following a recommendation by the Manipur government. The previous deadline for submission of the report was May 20, 2026.

The commission was initially headed by former Gauhati High Court Chief Justice Ajai Lamba. Justice Chauhan assumed charge on March 1, 2026, after Justice Lamba resigned with effect from February 28.



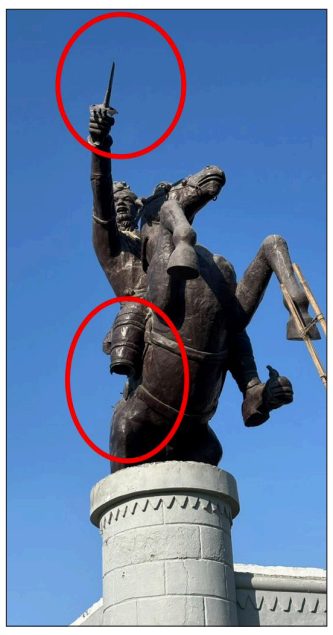
The panel is tasked with examining the sequence of events and circumstances surrounding the outbreak of ethnic violence on May 3, 2023. The prolonged conflict between Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities has claimed more than 260 lives, left hundreds injured and displaced thousands of people. Widespread arson and attacks on homes and properties also marked the violence.

The immediate trigger for the clashes was a tribal solidarity march organised in the hill districts to oppose the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe status. However, tensions had already been building over issues including the eviction of villagers from different locations and reserve forest areas.

Under its terms of reference, the commission is examining whether there were administrative failures or dereliction of duty by public authorities and other individuals. It is also reviewing the adequacy of preventive and response measures taken during the violence, besides considering complaints and representations submitted by individuals and organisations.

With the deadline now extended until May 2027, the commission has another six months to complete its examination of the events and submit findings that could shed light on the circumstances behind one of the most prolonged episodes of ethnic violence in the Northeast.

Desecration of Maharaja Gambhir Singh's Statue in Manipur Condemned, Swift Action Sought



KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

IMPHAL: The desecration of the brass statue of Maharaja Gambhir Singh at Langthabal in Manipur and the theft of a portion of the monument have drawn strong condemnation, with calls for the immediate arrest of those responsible.

In a statement, the incident was described as an affront to Manipur's historical legacy and cultural heritage. The authorities concerned have been urged to act swiftly and decisively to identify and apprehend those involved.

The statement also called for exemplary action against the perpetrators in accordance with the law, stressing that acts of vandalism and theft targeting historical monuments cannot be treated lightly.

Emphasising the need to safeguard the state's cultural heritage, it said the protection of historical monuments was a collective responsibility and should remain an uncompromising priority.

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NEPAL'S POLITICAL TRANSITION MUST DELIVER MORE THAN PROMISES

Rebuilding disaster-hit communities, restoring institutional credibility and strengthening economic cooperation with India will define the success of Balendra Shah's government. Political change must now translate into accountable governance, economic resilience and tangible benefits for ordinary citizens.

Nepal is entering a crucial phase of its political and economic journey. The government led by Prime Minister Balendra Shah has come to power amid strong public expectations of change, institutional reform and economic renewal. The political transition has created an opportunity to address longstanding governance failures and set the country on a more stable development path. But the real test of the new administration will not be the promises it makes or the political symbolism surrounding its rise. It will be measured by its ability to deliver visible improvements in people's lives.

Three challenges will largely determine Nepal's future: rebuilding areas devastated by floods and landslides, restoring confidence in public institutions and establishing a more productive economic partnership with India. These priorities are closely connected. Without credible institutions, reconstruction funds may fail to reach their intended beneficiaries. Without economic resilience, disaster recovery will remain incomplete. And without constructive regional partnerships, Nepal may struggle to unlock its considerable economic potential.

Reconstruction must become an exercise in resilience

The devastating floods and landslides along the Bhotekoshi-Trishuli river corridor have exposed the country's vulnerability to increasingly unpredictable climate events. Homes, roads, bridges, hydropower installations and electricity transmission networks have suffered extensive damage. Beyond the immediate destruction, the disasters have disrupted livelihoods, trade, transportation and access to essential services.

Rebuilding damaged infrastructure is necessary, but simply restoring what existed before would be an inadequate response. Nepal needs a comprehensive reconstruction strategy that places climate resilience, environmental sustainability and long-term safety at its centre.

Every major reconstruction project should be supported by independent technical assessments, transparent procurement procedures and regular monitoring. Public expenditure and international assistance must be properly accounted for. Delays, cost overruns and failures in implementation should attract clear institutional accountability.

India's timely humanitarian assistance during the crisis demonstrated the importance of regional cooperation in responding to natural disasters. That cooperation must now evolve into a more comprehensive partnership involving disaster preparedness, early-warning mechanisms, resilient infrastructure and cross-border coordination.

Hydropower development, electricity transmission and transport connectivity can also contribute to Nepal's economic recovery. The country must use reconstruction as an opportunity to strengthen its infrastructure rather than merely replace damaged assets.

Institutional credibility is essential for democratic renewal

Political change has little meaning if it does not strengthen democratic institutions. A government elected on the promise of reform must demonstrate that accountability, constitutional safeguards and institutional independence are fundamental to its approach to governance.

Recent developments involving the judiciary have raised concerns that deserve careful institutional scrutiny. Allegations concerning senior judicial functionaries must be examined through impartial procedures, with evidence and due process determining the outcome. Denials must receive fair consideration, and political commentary must not be allowed to replace independent investigation.

The credibility of the judiciary, constitutional institutions and regulatory bodies is essential to maintaining public confidence. Reform should strengthen these institutions, not concentrate excessive discretion in the executive.

Financial governance presents another major challenge. Nepal's continued presence on the Financial Action Task Force's increased monitoring list, commonly known as the Grey List, carries consequences that extend well beyond regulatory compliance. It can affect investor confidence, international banking relationships, cross-border transactions and the country's reputation as an investment destination.

Getting off the Grey List must therefore become a national economic priority. Passing new laws alone will not be sufficient. Nepal must demonstrate that its anti-money-laundering and counter-terrorist-financing mechanisms work effectively.

Particular attention is required in sectors vulnerable to illicit financial activities, including banking, cooperatives, casinos, real estate and precious-metal businesses. Financial intelligence agencies and investigative institutions need adequate resources, professional expertise and operational independence.

Informal financial channels, including hundi, also require sustained regulatory attention. Better coordination between financial regulators, law enforcement agencies and prosecutors is essential to ensure that suspicious transactions lead to effective investigations and, where warranted, successful prosecutions and asset recovery.

For a country seeking greater foreign investment, tourism revenue and international economic integration, financial credibility is not a peripheral concern. It is a foundation of economic development.

Nepal's relationship with India is shaped by geography, history, cultural connections, an open border and extensive people-to-people ties. Yet the economic potential of this relationship remains considerably underutilised.

The opportunity before the two governments is to move beyond periodic diplomatic engagements and build a predictable, results-oriented partnership based on trade, investment, energy, infrastructure, tourism and digital connectivity.

Prime Minister Balendra Shah is expected to make his first bilateral visit to India from November 22. Preparations have been under way following discussions in Kathmandu involving Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri. The visit offers an important opportunity to establish a practical economic agenda and rebuild confidence through concrete commitments.

Hydropower is among the most promising areas of cooperation. Nepal possesses considerable hydropower potential, but converting that natural advantage into economic prosperity requires investment, transmission infrastructure, reliable market access and long-term power-purchase arrangements. Cooperation with India can help Nepal expand electricity exports, generate revenue and create employment.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"It is a great good fortune, as Stendhal said, for one "to have his passion as a profession."

~ Maurice Merleau-Ponty

INDIA'S DATA PROTECTION LAW: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY



A. AHMED

The phased implementation of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, marks an important shift in India's digital governance framework. But recent data breaches involving public sector banks have exposed the vulnerabilities that remain. With fresh provisions taking effect, organisations must move beyond regulatory formalities and build a culture of data security, transparency and accountability.

India's rapid digital transformation has brought convenience, efficiency and new economic opportunities, but it has also created unprecedented challenges in protecting personal information. From banking and healthcare to e-commerce, telecommunications and government services, millions of citizens share sensitive information through digital platforms every day. Names, telephone numbers, residential addresses, identity details, financial records and health information have become part of an expanding digital ecosystem. The question is no longer whether personal data is being collected, but whether it is being adequately protected and responsibly used.

Recent data breaches involving two major public sector banks have brought this concern into sharp focus. Incidents reported at the State Bank of India in October 2026 and Bank of Baroda in July 2026, involving allegations that customer information had been exposed and offered for sale on the dark web, have raised serious questions about the security of financial data. Such incidents are particularly concerning because banking information is closely connected to an individual's financial identity and economic security.

Against this backdrop, the phased implementation of India's Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (DPDP Act), assumes considerable significance. The legislation seeks to establish a framework that balances the legitimate needs of organisations to process personal information with the fundamental interest of individuals in protecting their privacy. However, the effectiveness of the law will ultimately depend not merely on its provisions but on how seriously businesses, government departments and digital platforms implement them.

A new framework for personal data protection

The DPDP Act establishes rules governing the processing of digital personal data. Its central principle is that organisations must collect and use personal information for lawful and clearly defined purposes. Such processing must generally be based on the individual's consent or fall within the categories of legally recognised legitimate uses under the Act.

The legislation introduces specific responsibilities for different participants in the data ecosystem. An individual whose personal information is being processed is identified as the 'Data Principal'. The organisation that determines the purpose and means of processing is known as the 'Data Fiduciary', while an entity processing information on behalf of the Data Fiduciary is referred to as the 'Data Processor'.

This distinction is important because responsibility for protecting personal information cannot simply be transferred to an outside service provider. Organisations engaging third-party vendors, cloud platforms or technology companies must ensure that appropriate safeguards are maintained throughout the data-processing chain.

The Act also recognises several rights of individuals. These include the right to obtain information about personal data being processed, seek correction and erasure, access grievance redressal mechanisms and nominate another individual to exercise their rights in specified circumstances.

These provisions are intended to give citizens greater control over their digital identities. However, the exercise of these rights will depend on whether organisations establish accessible, responsive and effective systems to deal with individual requests.

The law also places responsibilities on Data Principals, including the obligation not to impersonate another person, suppress material information while providing personal data and file false or frivolous complaints. Violations of specified duties can attract penalties of up to Rs 10,000.

Data breaches and the cost of non-compliance

The most significant aspect of the legislation is the responsibility it places on organisations handling personal information. Data Fiduciaries must adopt appropriate technical and organisational measures to prevent unauthorised access, disclosure, alteration or loss of data.

They are also required to provide individuals with clear information about the purpose of data collection, obtain valid consent wherever necessary and ensure that personal information is not used beyond the stated purpose or legally permitted grounds.

In the event of a data breach, organisations must comply with the prescribed notification requirements and inform the Data Protection Board of India and affected individuals in accordance with the law.

The financial consequences of non-compliance can be substantial. Failure to implement reasonable security safeguards to prevent personal data breaches can attract penalties of up to Rs 250 crore under the Act. This provision reflects the seriousness with which the law treats data security.

Yet financial penalties alone cannot guarantee protection. Organisations must recognise that a data breach can damage public confidence, expose customers to financial fraud and create long-term reputational consequences. In sectors such as banking, insurance and healthcare, the consequences can extend far beyond regulatory liability.

The reported breaches involving major public sector banks underline the need for stronger internal security systems, continuous monitoring, timely vulnerability assessments and effective incident-response mechanisms. Data protection must become an integral part of institutional risk management rather than a responsibility addressed only after an incident occurs.

Understanding the three-phase implementation

The Government notified the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025, in November 2025, providing for an 18-month phased implementation of the regulatory framework. The staggered approach was intended to give organisations time to establish the systems and processes required for compliance.

The first phase, which began on November 13, 2025, brought certain preliminary provisions into effect, including the institutional framework and basic arrangements relating to the Data Protection Board.

The second phase, effective November 13, 2026, introduces provisions concerning the registration and obligations of Consent Managers. These entities are intended to provide individuals with a platform through which they can give, review, manage and withdraw consent for the processing of their personal information.

To qualify for registration, an applicant must be a company incorporated in India, demonstrate sufficient operational capacity and meet the prescribed financial requirements, including a net worth exceeding Rs 2 crore. Its proposed operations must also be consistent with the interests of Data Principals.

The introduction of Consent Managers could create a new segment within India's digital services industry. By enabling individuals to manage consent through structured systems, these entities may help make data protection rights more accessible and practical.

The third and final phase is scheduled to take effect on May 13, 2027. It will bring most of the substantive compliance obligations into operation, including requirements relating to notices, consent, security safeguards, individual rights, grievance redressal and additional responsibilities for specified categories of Data Fiduciaries.

However, organisations should not interpret May 2027 as the point at which preparations can begin. The scale of operational changes required makes early planning essential.

Why organisations must start preparing now

The first step towards compliance is understanding what personal information an organisation possesses, where it is stored, how it is used and with whom it is shared.

Many businesses collect personal information through multiple channels, including websites, mobile applications, customer databases, employee records, vendor agreements and cloud-based services. In several cases, organisations may not have a comprehensive picture of the volume of information they hold or the number of external entities with access to it.

A detailed data inventory and data-flow mapping exercise is therefore essential. Organisations must identify the categories of personal information collected, the purpose of collection, the systems in which it is stored, the individuals and departments accessing it, and the third-party service providers involved in processing it.

The next requirement is transparency. Individuals must receive clear and understandable notices explaining what personal information is being collected and why it is required. Consent should not be buried in lengthy, complicated or ambiguous terms and conditions. Nor should organisations collect more information than is reasonably necessary for the specified purpose.

The principle of data minimisation is particularly important. Every additional piece of personal information collected increases the potential exposure in the event of a security incident. Organisations must therefore reconsider routine practices that encourage excessive collection or indefinite retention of customer information.Data retention policies also require careful review. Personal information should not be retained indefinitely simply because storage capacity is available. Once the purpose for which data was collected has been fulfilled, organisations must ensure its erasure in accordance with the applicable legal requirements and prescribed exceptions. Where data is processed through an external Data Processor, the organisation must also ensure that deletion requirements are properly communicated and implemented.

Third-party vendors and employee accountability

One of the most overlooked areas of data protection is the involvement of third-party service providers. Businesses increasingly depend on external technology companies for cloud storage, customer support, payroll management, digital payments and data analytics.

Such arrangements can create vulnerabilities if contractual responsibilities and security standards are not clearly established.

Data Fiduciaries must ensure that their agreements with Data Processors contain appropriate safeguards and clearly define responsibilities relating to data security, access, retention, deletion and breach reporting. Compliance obligations must extend across the entire service chain.

Employee awareness is equally important. Even sophisticated technological safeguards can be undermined by weak passwords, phishing attacks, unauthorised data sharing or careless handling of sensitive information.

Regular training, access controls, internal audits and clearly defined incident-reporting procedures should therefore become standard organisational practices. Employees must understand that protecting personal information is not solely the responsibility of the information technology department. It is an institutional obligation.

Organisations must also establish effective mechanisms through which individuals can request access to their information, seek corrections or erasure, withdraw consent where applicable and raise complaints. Such requests should be recorded, tracked and addressed within the prescribed timelines.

From regulatory compliance to a culture of trust

India's data protection framework represents an important development in the country's digital governance journey. But legislation can achieve its intended purpose only when its principles are reflected in everyday institutional practices.The challenge is particularly significant for smaller businesses and start-ups that may lack the financial resources and specialised expertise available to large corporations. They will need accessible compliance guidance, affordable security solutions and professional support to adapt to the new requirements.

Government departments and public sector institutions must also maintain high standards. Citizens routinely share sensitive personal information with government agencies while accessing welfare benefits, identity services and other public facilities. The responsibility to protect such information must be matched by effective safeguards and accountability.

The reported banking breaches serve as a reminder that data security cannot be treated as a secondary administrative concern. A single incident can expose thousands of individuals to fraud, identity theft and financial loss. Restoring confidence after such incidents can be considerably more difficult than preventing them in the first place.Ultimately, the success of the DPDP Act will depend on whether it changes how organisations collect, process, store and protect personal information. Consent mechanisms, contractual safeguards and regulatory penalties are important, but they must be supported by strong technology, trained personnel and a genuine commitment to accountability.

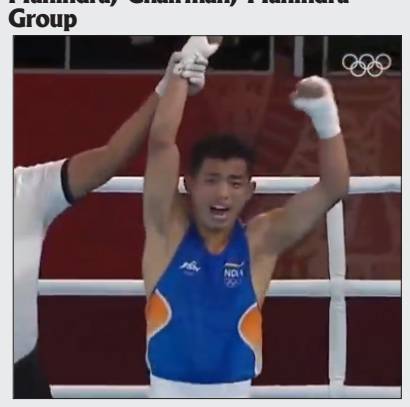
India's digital economy cannot grow sustainably without public trust. The real measure of data protection reform will not be the number of organisations that complete compliance documentation, but the extent to which ordinary citizens gain meaningful control over their personal information and confidence that it will not be misused.

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

India's first ever boxing gold at the Youth Olympics.
That's a big deal in itself. But what makes 17-year-old Lairenlakpam Ambekar Meetei's victory even more special is HOW he won.

Lost the first round, with ALL five judges scoring it against him.

Then fought back to win 3–2
And this from a young man from Manipur who began training with borrowed, worn-out gloves, whose parents worked hard to support his dream.
Yet another reminder of the extraordinary reservoir of sporting talent in our Northeast.
Congratulations, Ambekar
You've reminded us that what matters isn't how a fight begins… But how we respond when things aren't going our way. ~ Anand Mahindra, Chairman, Mahindra Group



Kaziranga Road Tragedy: Death Toll Rises to 26, Post-Mortems Underway in Golaghat and Jorhat

23 victims to undergo post-mortem in Golaghat and three in Jorhat; special medical teams deployed to treat the injured



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GUWAHATI: The death toll in the devastating road accident near Rongajan in Assam's Kaziranga has climbed to 26, including 14 women and 12 men, with a minor also among the victims, state minister Atul Bora said on Saturday.

According to the minister, post-mortem examinations of 23 victims are being conducted in Golaghat, while the remaining three will undergo the procedure in Jorhat. Ambulances have been kept ready to transport the bodies to their respective homes after the post-mortem examinations and hand them over to the bereaved families.

Confirming the latest casualties, Bora said three critically injured victims undergoing treatment at Jorhat Medical College and Hospital (JMCH) had succumbed to their injuries.

Medical assistance has been strengthened following the tragedy, with a team of doctors from Guwahati and other parts of Assam reaching the area to ensure the best possible treatment for those injured. Several victims continue to receive treatment at different hospitals.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma is also scheduled to visit the accident site on Saturday and meet those affected by the tragedy.

The accident occurred near Rongajan in Golaghat district when a passenger minibus travelling from Golaghat towards Nagaon collided head-on with a container truck on National Highway 715.

The impact of the collision left several passengers dead and others seriously injured. The injured were subsequently shifted to nearby hospitals for treatment.

Meanwhile, the district administration is coordinating medical assistance, post-mortem examinations and arrangements for transporting the bodies to the victims' respective homes.

Chakma Leaders Give 48-Hour Assurance to Address Future Harassment of Mizos in Rajiv Nagar

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AIZAWL: Chakma community leaders in Rajiv Nagar, Mizoram's Mamit district, have assured local organisations that they will make efforts to identify those responsible for any future incidents of alleged harassment of Mizos in the area within 48 hours.

The assurance was given through a written undertaking signed during a meeting convened over the alleged defacement of a memorial dedicated to missionary Rohmingthangi, who was killed in the locality. Central Young Mizo Association (CYMA) general secretary Malsawmliana said the commitment was signed by representatives of three village councils, the Rajiv Nagar zone of the Young Chakma Association (YCA) and the local zonal headquarters of the Mizoram Chakma Students' Union.

According to Malsawmliana, the signatories agreed to make efforts to identify those responsible within 48 hours if any further incident of harassment of Mizos by Chakmas occurred in the area. They also stated that they would not object to consequences if they failed to act on such incidents.

Speaking at the meeting, Central YMA president R Lalngheta condemned the reported defacement of the memorial marking the spot where Rohmingthangi was killed, as well as the alleged theft of materials used in its construction. He said such incidents could no longer be tolerated and called on YCA leaders to ensure discipline among their members.

Lalngheta stressed the need for peaceful coexistence between the Mizo community and Chakma residents, while urging local leaders to exercise restraint and prevent the situation from escalating into wider communal tension.

He also sought clarification from village councils in Rajiv Nagar and neighbouring areas over reports that deductions had been made from the MGNREGS wages of Christian workers.

Warning against any deliberate harassment of pastors or missionaries working in the area, the CYMA president said such actions would invite a strong response. He cautioned against exploiting the present situation to deepen divisions between the two communities.

Assam Approves 13 Sectoral Councils to Make Policy-Making More Inclusive



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GUWAHATI: The Assam government has approved the formation of 13 State-Level Sectoral Councils to bring public opinion more directly into policy formulation and improve the delivery of government services.Announcing the decision, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the councils would provide a platform for experienced individuals to identify shortcomings in existing service delivery systems and communicate their observations and suggestions to the government.

In a post on social media platform X, Sarma said the initiative would regularly seek citizens' feedback on government policies, with the objective of making people an integral part of the decision-making process.The councils will include community leaders, professionals with expertise in different sectors and social workers. They will operate under uniform administrative guidelines, organisational structures and core functions to ensure consistency in their functioning. Describing the initiative as "Your Govt, Your Voice", the Chief Minister said the idea was to ensure that citizens' concerns and suggestions receive greater consideration while policies are being framed and implemented.The government expects the councils to help identify gaps between policy objectives and their implementation on the ground. Their effectiveness, however, will depend on how regularly they engage with citizens and how far their recommendations translate into changes in governance and public service delivery.

Ukhrul Ambush: Manipur Deputy CM Condemns Killing of Four Travellers, Appeals for Peace

KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

IMPHAL: Manipur Deputy Chief Minister Losii Dikho has strongly condemned the killing of four travellers in an armed ambush near New Heaven along the Imphal-Ukhrul road in Ukhrul district on November 13, and called for immediate efforts to prevent further violence through dialogue and reconciliation.

In a statement titled 'Call for Dialogue and Reconciliation', Dikho expressed grief over the continuing loss of innocent lives and appealed to civil society organisations, village authorities, youth leaders and peace-loving citizens to come forward and help restore peace in the region.

Identifying the deceased as Kapangkhui RS, Haoleia RS, August Ngalung and Khanmila, the Deputy Chief Minister said the first two victims belonged to Shangshak village, while the other two were residents of Tashar



village.

Emphasising the value of human life, Dikho said the state had already suffered immensely from prolonged violence and further bloodshed would only deepen existing divisions.

"Human life is precious and enough blood has been shed. It is time to step back from the brink," he said.

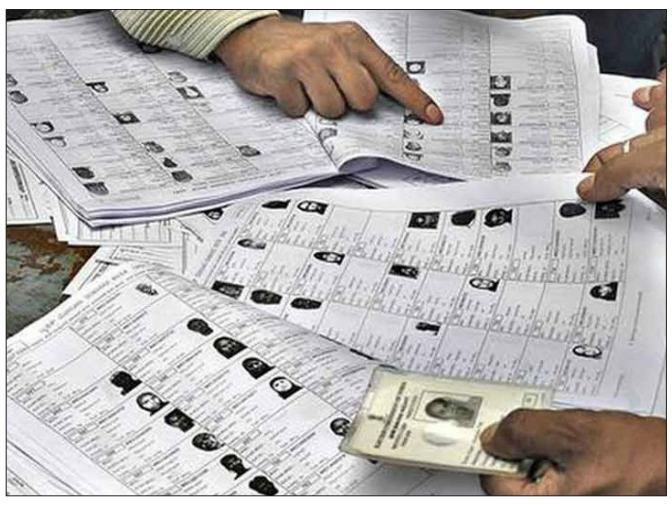
He stressed that lasting peace could not be achieved through revenge or armed confrontation, but required mutual understanding, dialogue and the willingness of different communities to listen to one another.

"True courage is not found in wielding a sword but in having the strength to sit across from one another and listen," Dikho said, urging all stakeholders to reject retaliatory attacks.

The Deputy Chief Minister's appeal comes amid renewed concerns over security in Ukhrul district following Friday's deadly attack.

According to Manipur Police, unidentified armed assailants opened fire on a Maruti Swift car and a Bolero pickup vehicle near New Heaven along National Highway 202 at around 1 pm on November 13. Four people were killed in the attack.Following the incident, security personnel from Manipur Police, the Border Security Force (BSF), the Army and Assam Rifles were deployed in the area. Search operations are underway to identify and apprehend those responsible for the killings.Dikho's appeal for reconciliation comes at a critical time, as concerns grow that retaliatory violence could trigger further tensions and threaten the fragile security situation in the hill district.

Changlang Loses Over 15,000 Voters in SIR; Arunachal BJP Backs Electoral Roll Revision



KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

ITANAGAR: More than 15,000 voters have been removed from the electoral rolls in Arunachal Pradesh's Changlang district following the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) 2026, with the district BJP unit welcoming the exercise and describing the revision as necessary to ensure the accuracy of electoral records.

At a press conference in Changlang, BJP district president Roshan Ngemu and party spokesperson Tobom Dai expressed support for the revision conducted by the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Arunachal Pradesh.

According to figures shared by the BJP leaders, the district's electorate has declined from 71,665 to 56,363 following the revision, representing a reduction of 15,302 voters, or approximately 21 per cent.

The party's endorsement comes against the backdrop of controversy surrounding the SIR exercise, particularly in Bordumsa, where protests and clashes erupted during the claims and objections hearings in September.

The unrest was reportedly triggered by allegations concerning the inclusion of members of the Chakma community in the electoral rolls. The protests involved the All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU) and reportedly resulted in damage to the office of the Electoral Registration Officer, forcing a temporary suspension of the hearings.

Addressing the developments, BJP spokesperson Tobom Dai also referred to the unrest in Bordumsa and the controversy surrounding the revision process.

Chief Minister Pema Khandu had earlier appealed to student organisations and other groups to follow established legal procedures while raising objections to electoral roll entries, rather than resorting to protests or disruption.

The formal period for submitting claims and objections through Form 6 during the SIR exercise was held between July 21 and September 18, 2026.

The sharp decline in Changlang's electorate has brought the revision exercise into focus, particularly amid concerns and political debate over voter inclusion, verification procedures and the rights of communities in the border district.

PM Modi Announces Rs.2 Lakh Compensation for Kaziranga Accident Victims' Families



KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed deep grief over the loss of lives in the devastating road accident near Kaziranga National Park in Assam's Golaghat district and announced financial assistance for the victims and their families.

Under the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF), an ex-gratia payment of ?2 lakh will be provided to the next of kin of each deceased victim, while those injured in the accident will receive ?50,000 each.

In a statement posted on X, the Prime Minister's Office said Modi was deeply saddened by the deaths and extended condolences to the bereaved families. He also prayed for the speedy recovery of those injured in the accident.The announcement came after a passenger minibus and a container truck collided head-on near Rongajan, close to Hathikuli Tea Estate in the Kohora range, along National Highway 715.According to initial reports, at least 24 people lost their lives in the accident, while several others sustained injuries. The injured were initially taken to Kohora Model Hospital, with critically injured patients subsequently referred to Jorhat Medical College and Hospital for specialised treatment.

Assam Panchayat and Rural Development Minister Atul Bora, who is also the local MLA, reached the accident site and supervised rescue and relief operations. Bora said he had encountered the aftermath of the collision while returning from Guwahati and joined local residents in rushing the injured to nearby hospitals.

Meanwhile, preliminary police findings have raised concerns over possible overspeeding and violation of traffic restrictions imposed in the Kaziranga area. Golaghat Senior Superintendent of Police Swapnaneel Deka said investigators suspected that the minibus driver may have lost control of the vehicle before the collision.Police have initiated an investigation to establish the exact circumstances leading to the accident. The number of passengers travelling in the minibus and other details are also being verified.The tragedy has triggered widespread grief across Assam, with political leaders and public representatives expressing condolences and renewing calls for stronger road safety measures.

Manipur Cabinet Approves 764 MSRLM Posts, Brings Uber, Ola and Rapido Under New Rules

KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

IMPHAL: The Manipur Cabinet has approved the recruitment of 764 personnel for the Manipur State Rural Livelihoods Mission (MSRLM) and cleared a new regulatory framework for app-based taxi and ride-hailing services, including Uber, Ola and Rapido.

The recruitment approval covers 637 contractual and 127 casual positions, aimed at addressing manpower shortages across the state and strengthening the implementation of rural livelihood programmes.

Of the total 764 posts, 708 had already received approval in 2021, while the remaining 56 are additional vacancies. The National Mission Management Unit under the Union Ministry of Rural Development will undertake the selection process for contractual positions. Recruitment to casual posts will be handled locally by the respective Deputy Commissioners.

The additional manpower is expected to improve the implementation of programmes supporting rural women through Self Help Groups (SHGs), with particular emphasis on livelihood generation and the Lakhpati Didi initiative. The mission operates across all 70 blocks of Manipur.



The Cabinet has also decided to conduct recruitment examinations at accessible locations to make the process more convenient for candidates.

The estimated annual salary expenditure for the appointments stands at ?25.74 crore, which will be shared between the Centre and the state government in a 90:10 ratio.

New regulatory framework for app-based transport

In another significant decision, the Cabinet adopted the Manipur Motor Vehicles Aggregator Rules, 2026, to regulate app-based taxi and ride-hailing operators.Under the new framework, aggregators will be required to obtain licences from the concerned authorities and comply with prescribed conditions relating to driver verification, vehicle fitness and passenger safety.

The move seeks to bring app-based transport services under a formal regulatory system, particularly amid concerns over vehicles operating without the necessary departmental approval.

The rules also aim to ensure greater transparency in fare determination and protect passengers from arbitrary pricing.As part of the proposed welfare provisions, drivers associated with aggregators will be entitled to health insurance coverage of ?1 lakh and term insurance of ?3 lakh.

The state government has also decided to keep licence fees and security deposits below the levels prescribed under the Central guidelines, with the objective of encouraging transport aggregators to enter and operate in Manipur.

The twin decisions are expected to strengthen rural employment and livelihood programmes while bringing the growing app-based transport sector under a defined regulatory framework. The government also expects the new transport rules to widen commuter choices and generate additional revenue for the state.

Quest!

Psychopaths can only think of the possible positive consequences of their actions, not the negative ones.



NATIONAL

Delhi Police proposes 50,000-person cap, 10 am to 5 pm window for gatherings at Ramlila Maidan

NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has drawn up a fresh set of proposed guidelines to regulate protests and public gatherings at Ramlila Ground in the national capital, including a ceiling of 50,000 participants and a fixed time window of 10 am to 5 pm, according to an report.

The draft Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) seeks to establish a uniform framework for safety, security and administrative arrangements at the venue. It is currently at an initial stage and has been forwarded to Delhi Police Headquarters for approval, a senior police officer told . Its provisions are yet to be finalised.

The proposed guidelines come after Delhi Police, through a standing order issued on October 11, de-notified Jantar Mantar as a protest venue and designated Ramlila Ground, Burari Ground and CBD Ground in east Delhi as alternative sites for demonstrations. The decision followed recommendations by a committee constituted by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs to identify alternative venues for exercising the right to organise protests. The police had said detailed and revised SOPs for the three venues would be issued separately.



Under the proposed arrangements for Ramlila Ground, organisers will first have to obtain clearance from the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) confirming the availability of the venue before approaching the police for permission. Applications will ordinarily have to be submitted at least 10 days before the proposed event.

The draft also makes organisers responsible for managing the gathering and coordinating with traffic authorities. They will have to make parking arrangements, designate drop-off points for participants and ensure that roads and emergency access routes remain unobstructed.

The proposed security guidelines prohibit firearms, swords, spears, sharp objects and other prohibited items at the venue. Drone operations in the vicinity of the ground will also require prior authorisation.

Organisers will additionally have to ensure the availability of drinking water, medical assistance and sanitation facilities, besides making arrangements for proper waste disposal.

Ramlila Ground has recently hosted major political gatherings, including the Congress-led INDIA bloc's November 1 rally against alleged irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls. Delhi Police had granted clearance for the rally subject to conditions, including that it conclude by 5 pm, with organisers responsible for crowd management, traffic arrangements and other security measures.

The senior officer told that further action on the proposed SOP would be taken after it is examined by the competent authorities. The guidelines will come into force only after receiving the necessary approval.

India seeks 'positive, forward-looking' ties with Bangladesh amid diplomatic strain, says MEA



NEW DELHI

India said it remains committed to a "positive, constructive and forward-looking" relationship with Bangladesh amid fresh diplomatic tensions between the two neighbours and the postponement of their consular dialogue.

The next round of the India-Bangladesh consular dialogue, scheduled for next week, has been postponed. It will now be held on a mutually convenient date, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

"India desires a positive, constructive and forward-looking relationship with Bangladesh," Jaiswal said at his weekly media briefing.

"Accordingly, initiatives have been taken and meetings held under our structured mechanisms in such areas as trade, railways, water resources and border management, among others," he said.



Jaiswal said the next round of the consular dialogue, which will also take up matters relating to the revised travel arrangement, will be held on a mutually convenient date.

"India remains ready to discuss all bilateral issues with Bangladesh through these existing mechanisms, including at the technical level," he said.

Relations between the two countries have come under renewed strain following former Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina's virtual media interaction in New Delhi on August 5. Dhaka subsequently reiterated its demand for her extradition.

India had distanced itself from the interaction, stating that it neither played a role in organising the event nor endorsed Hasina's remarks.

The Bangladesh foreign ministry had reacted sharply to Hasina's media interaction and said the country is "outraged" as it was permitted to be held despite Dhaka conveying concerns to New Delhi over the likely ramifications of the event on the bilateral relations.

Hasina, 78, was ousted from power in August 2024 following violent student-led protests. She has been living in India since fleeing Dhaka on August 5 that year.

Amid the continuing strain in ties, India invited Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman for a bilateral visit as well as to attend the outreach session of the BRICS summit in New Delhi in September.

However, Rahman skipped the BRICS summit and there is no clarity on whether he will visit India anytime soon.

Asked about Bangladesh's consistent demand to extradite Hasina, Jaiswal said it is a legal matter and will be dealt with accordingly.

INTERNATIONAL

Trump's shifting Iran war stance leaves US allies and mediators guessing as Asia trip looms

WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump has had a lot to say about his thinking on the way ahead in the Iran war since Republicans were trounced in last week's midterm elections.

In exchanges with reporters, broadcast interviews and social media posts since Election Day, he's somehow managed to back away from carrying out additional strikes while also backing away from the prospect of additional talks with the Islamic Republic's negotiators on ending the 8-month-old conflict.

The president acknowledged on the day after the midterms that the war and the global economic tumult it's caused were partly to blame for Republicans' electoral losses, while maintaining it was the right thing to do.

Then, at the start of this week, he huddled with Qatar's prime minister at the White House and afterward told reporters that he believed it was highly unlikely he'd need to order new major strikes on Iran, declaring that the war "militarily is effectively over."

But by Thursday, he was again raising questions about whether he needed to rush to find an endgame. He declared that the U.S. no longer needs a deal with Tehran and brusquely directed Vice President JD Vance — who served as his chief negotiator in earlier peace talks with Iran — to shift his attention to the administration's domestic anti-fraud campaign.

All the while, Trump warned Iran that the U.S. military is "locked and loaded" and keeping an eye on Pickaxe Mountain, a facility linked to Iran's nuclear program, for signs of activity.

"If something does not work out, I would not hesitate" to act, Trump told conservative broadcaster Hugh Hewitt on Thursday.

Iran war will shadow Trump during his trip to Asia

Trump's tonal shifts have only added to the uncertainty about what comes next in a war in which America's allies were not consulted before it was started but nonetheless struggle to deal with its economic ramifications.

"President Trump is now acting like an arsonist who has set ablaze our foreign policy," Democratic Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey said in an interview Friday on the sidelines of the Democrats' postelection gathering in Denver. "And now he just wants to walk away."

The president's ambiguous positioning on the war is expected to loom large during a visit next week to the Philippines and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meetings in the Chinese tech hub of Shenzhen.

While in Shenzhen, Trump will hold an unprecedented three-way summit with China's Xi Jinping and Russia's Vladimir Putin. Trump is expected to discuss Iran and the three powers' nuclear stockpiles with Xi and Putin.

The White House declined to comment directly to queries on Trump's postelection rhetoric on Iran. But Secretary of State Marco Rubio underscored that Trump's approach is leading to the Iranian economy collapsing.

"The economic pain that we are inflicting on that regime is so great that there's no need for military action because we've weakened them so much," Rubio said in a Friday evening speech to the Federalist Society.

Chief mediator Qatar continues to try to negotiate an interim agreement that would restore traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, a vital passageway for the flow of oil and natural gas from the Persian Gulf to global markets, while leaving open options for further discussions between the U.S. and Iran.

But those efforts are now clouded by uncertainty following Trump's shifting — and sometimes contradictory — comments, according to two Middle East diplomats familiar with the process.

The diplomats, who spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter, said the situation had appeared to be on the right track earlier this week after Qatar's prime minister met with Trump.

But Trump's social media post Thursday declaring that the U.S. doesn't need a deal with Iran and directing Vance "to focus his complete and total attention" on his anti-fraud campaign has created a sense of limbo.

One of the diplomats said the post raised questions about why Trump appeared to be sidelining Vance, who was skeptical about launching the war but ultimately supported Trump.

Trump's post came as Vance had been weighing a possible reengagement with senior Iranian negotiators, according to a person familiar with the matter who was not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The president posted his message calling on Vance to steer away from Iran negotiations the morning after The Wall Street Journal reported Vance was thinking about resuming talks. Trump — who had been aware of Vance's deliberations — believed the Iranians weren't acting in good faith, the person added.

Trump is also increasingly confident that he can credibly declare that he's achieved his military objectives in the war.

But traversing the Strait of Hormuz remains treacherous. The United Nations reports October had the highest number of incidents against commercial ships in the contested waters since February.

Still, Trump believes with oil shipments through the strait reaching near-prewar levels, he could potentially leave it to Gulf countries to negotiate a deal with the Iranians on governing the critical waterway, the person said.

The other regional diplomat described the push for peace as falling into a holding pattern as people await clarification from the White House on Trump's intentions.

That diplomat added it was not entirely clear to mediators or the Iranians if Trump's comments meant he was abandoning a negotiated agreement or was just posturing after the congressional midterm elections that cost his Republican Party control of Congress.

Iran remains unwilling to engage in negotiations over its nuclear program until the U.S. agrees to several core conditions that Iran has been demanding be part of any ceasefire agreement.

Differences with Iran over its nuclear activities remain the thorniest issue and one that Trump insists must be resolved as part of any deal meant to end the war.

Tehran's rhetoric has hardly cooled. Iran's deputy U.N. ambassador Gholamhossein Darzi told the United Nations Security Council on Friday that Iran "has never closed the door to diplomacy." But he warned that should the U.S. or Israel return to bombing, his country would offer "an immediate and decisive response."

Rubio earlier this week stressed that the U.S. is not opposed to mediators continuing their efforts.

"If there's a deal to be done, the

Microsoft restores all services after global outage, apologises and cites network upgrade issue



WASHINGTON

Microsoft's services were fully restored on Saturday after a massive global outage disrupted Outlook email and other workplace tools, with the company apologising to customers and attributing the incident to a network capacity upgrade issue.

The company's service health page displayed the message "All products are operational" on Saturday morning, covering Microsoft 365 business and enterprise services as well as consumer products.

"We are deeply sorry for the disruption this incident has caused our customers and partners. We know the trust they place in our services and take that responsibility extremely seriously," Microsoft said in a post on X.

The company said the outage was caused by a technical issue and was not related to cyber activity, artificial intelligence or AI agents. The problem originated during an earlier network capacity upgrade and surfaced after a recent network change, it said.

Microsoft said it had addressed the underlying issue but restored services gradually, checking stability at each stage because of the scale of demand. The phased restoration took longer but helped ensure services remained stable, it said.

Charles Lamanna, Microsoft's Executive Vice President of Copilot, Agents and Platform, said the investigation had identified technical challenges, including cascading failures and "thundering herds" at the network perimeter, which complicated the recovery process.

"I'm working closely with the engineering team to complete the full post-mortem. We will publish the post-mortem shortly covering the step-by-step timeline and our many repair items to avoid similar outages in the future," Lamanna said in a post on X.

Microsoft's service status account said on Saturday that it was continuing to monitor the restored services over an extended period because of the severity of the incident. It was also tracking the backlog of emails accumulated during the outage to ensure they were processed before declaring the issue fully resolved.

The outage, which began late on Thursday, affected businesses across the world, including Indian airlines and financial services firms.

Domestic carriers IndiGo, Air India and Akasa Air reported disruptions to their email-based customer support, affecting their ability to receive or respond to some passenger queries. Air India temporarily rerouted its email services to ensure customer communications continued to reach the airline. Flight operations were not reported to have been affected.

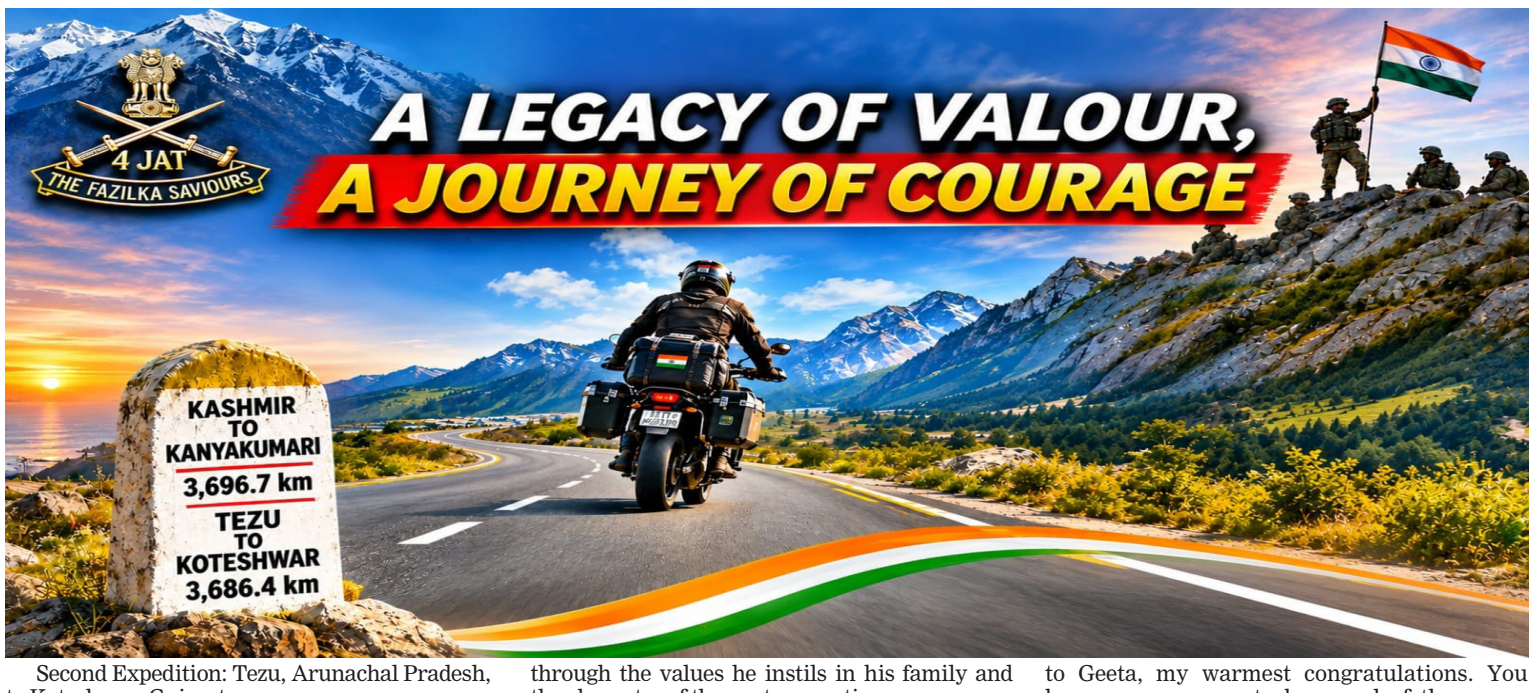
Financial services firms also faced difficulties accessing research reports and conducting client interactions.

The disruption primarily affected Microsoft 365 features linked to Exchange Online, the company's cloud-based email platform. Users faced difficulties accessing mailboxes through Outlook on the web and desktop applications, while email delivery was delayed.

At its peak, the outage generated more than 1.3 lakh reports of Outlook-related problems on outage-tracking platform Downdetector. Disruptions were reported across 72 to 74 countries.

"A LEGACY OF VALOUR, A JOURNEY OF COURAGE"





COL (DR.) ASHWANI KUMAR, MID, VSM (RETD.)
4 JAT Regiment - The Fazilka Saviours

From the Battlefields of 4 JAT to the Highways of India, An Army Brat Carries the Warrior Spirit Forward.

The extraordinary motorcycle expeditions of Shivgeet Singh Hooda are more than records of endurance. They are a celebration of military heritage, lifelong comradeship, family pride and the timeless spirit of the Indian Army.

Some journeys are measured in kilometres, some in hours, but a few are measured in memories, values and legacies passed from one generation to another. The remarkable cross-country motorcycle expeditions of Shivgeet Singh Hooda belong to the last category.

When Shivgeet covered thousands of kilometres across India, setting remarkable benchmarks in long-distance motorcycle riding, he did much more than demonstrate physical endurance and determination. In his own way, he carried forward the spirit of courage, discipline and perseverance that he inherited from a family deeply rooted in the traditions of the Indian Army.

For me, this achievement has a particularly personal significance. I have known his father, Col Shakti Hooda, since 1982. We grew up together in the fraternity of the illustrious 4 JAT Regiment, popularly known as the Fazilka Saviours. We were not merely colleagues; we were comrades who shared the demanding life of a soldier, operational responsibilities and countless memories that remain etched in our lives.

A Friendship Forged in the Battlefield.

Shakti and I served together during the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) operations in Sri Lanka. We were neighbouring Company Commanders, sharing the responsibilities, challenges and uncertainties of operational life. We also spent countless nights together, both along the Jammu and Kashmir borders and in the challenging operational environment of Sri Lanka.

Those were not ordinary nights. They were nights of operational alertness, difficult decisions, uncertainty and mutual dependence. The bonds forged in such circumstances go far beyond professional relationships. They become lifelong friendships built on trust, courage and the knowledge that a comrade will always stand beside you when it matters most.

Our association goes back to Jan 1983 when joined the unit in the Snow bound area of Bimber Gali popularity known as BG near Rajouri. I was present in the unit when Shakti and Geeta got married in 1984. I subsequently watched their family grow, and Shivgeet was one of those children whom we saw growing up within our extended regimental family.

I remember Shivgeet as a very small child in Dehradun and Mhow. I watched him grow through his schooling at Army Public School, Dhaula Kuan, Delhi Cantt., through his formative years and eventually his marriage.

Today, seeing that same little boy emerge as an accomplished motorcyclist undertaking extraordinary journeys across the country fills me with a sense of personal pride and emotion.

For me, this is not simply a story about a young man setting records. It is the story of a family I have known for more than four decades, a friendship forged in military service and a legacy that has found expression in the next generation.

Two Extraordinary Expeditions Across India.

Shivgeet has undertaken two remarkable cross-country motorcycle expeditions, demonstrating exceptional physical endurance, mental resilience and determination.

His first achievement was the Kashmir-to-Kanyakumari expedition, covering 3,696.7 kilometres in 54 hours and 44 minutes. Traversing the length of India, from its northern reaches to its southern tip, was an extraordinary test of stamina, concentration and perseverance.

His second achievement was equally remarkable. On 30 October 2026, he completed an East-to-West cross-country motorcycle expedition from Tezu in Arunachal Pradesh to Koteshwar in Gujarat, covering 3,686.4 kilometres in 51 hours and 31 minutes.

His achievements can be summarised as follows:

First Expedition: Kashmir to Kanyakumari
- Distance: 3,696.7 kilometres
- Time: 54 hours and 44 minutes

Second Expedition: Tezu, Arunachal Pradesh, to Koteshwar, Gujarat
- Distance: 3,686.4 kilometres
- Time: 51 hours and 31 minutes
- Completed: 30 October 2026

These are not ordinary road journeys. They require meticulous preparation, physical conditioning, mental alertness, navigational discipline and the ability to overcome fatigue and unpredictable challenges.

Long-distance motorcycling at this level demands extraordinary concentration and the determination to continue despite physical exhaustion and difficult conditions. It is a test not merely of the machine but, more importantly, of the human mind and body.

From Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from India's eastern frontier to its western shores, Shivgeet has demonstrated an exceptional passion for pushing the limits of human endurance.

Beyond Records: A Story Worth Telling.

The significance of Shivgeet's journeys also finds expression in the wider motorcycling community.

A feature preview shared from Rynox Gear's Instagram page carries an evocative opening line: "Some of the best riding stories never make it past..."

It is a thought-provoking observation. Behind every extraordinary ride lies a story that may not always be visible in the final record: the preparation, the sacrifices, the uncertainties, the physical demands and the determination required to complete the journey.

Shivgeet's story deserves to be told because it represents much more than speed and distance. It is the story of an Army child who grew up witnessing the discipline and courage of soldiers and has chosen his own way of expressing those values.

His journeys demonstrate that the warrior spirit is not confined to military operations. It can find expression in adventure, sport, professional excellence and the determination to overcome seemingly impossible challenges.

The Battlefield Legacy: Courage, Discipline and Never Giving Up.

What makes Shivgeet's accomplishments particularly meaningful is the military environment in which he grew up. The Indian Army has a unique way of shaping individuals. Its values are not taught merely through words; they are demonstrated through the lives of soldiers. Discipline, courage, comradeship, commitment and sacrifice become part of everyday existence.

The experiences of the Kargil War and the sacrifices of Indian soldiers during the Sri Lanka operations remain enduring chapters in our military history. For those of us who served, these are not merely historical references. They are memories of comrades, operations and the extraordinary challenges faced by soldiers in difficult circumstances.

Having served alongside Shakti in Sri Lanka and shared the demanding operational environment of Jammu and Kashmir, I understand the meaning of military endurance and determination. A soldier learns to remain steadfast when circumstances are uncertain, to maintain his composure under pressure and to keep moving towards the objective despite adversity.

The battlefield and a cross-country motorcycle expedition are obviously different worlds. Yet certain qualities remain universal: preparation, discipline, mental toughness, courage and an unwavering determination to complete the mission.

Perhaps this is where Shivgeet's military upbringing finds its most meaningful expression.

A Father's Pride and a Regimental Family's Joy.

For Col Shakti Hooda and Geeta, these achievements must represent an immensely proud moment.

As a father who has served in the Indian Army, Shakti knows the importance of discipline, determination and commitment. He has experienced these values in their most demanding form. Today, seeing his son demonstrate them in a completely different arena must be deeply satisfying.

For me, the emotion is equally personal.

I have seen Shakti as a young officer, stood beside him as a neighbouring Company Commander, shared operational experiences in Sri Lanka and spent countless nights with him along the Jammu and Kashmir borders. I was present when he married Geeta in 1984 and later watched their little son grow up in Dehradun, Mhow, Northeast and Delhi Cantt.

Now, after all these years, seeing Shivgeet undertake extraordinary expeditions across India brings the journey almost full circle.

It is a reminder that the legacy of a soldier does not end with his own service. It continues through the values he instils in his family and the character of the next generation.

The regimental family of 4 JAT extends far beyond the officers and soldiers serving in uniform. It includes their families, children and generations who carry forward the pride, memories and traditions of the regiment. For the entire 4 JAT fraternity, Shivgeet's accomplishments are a matter of collective pride.

A Message for the Younger Generation.

At a time when the younger generation is constantly searching for inspiration and meaningful challenges, Shivgeet's achievements carry an important message.

Greatness is not achieved simply by dreaming big. It requires preparation, discipline, perseverance and the courage to take on challenges that appear beyond one's capacity.

His journeys also symbolise the unity of India. From the mountains of Kashmir to Kanyakumari, and from Tezu in Arunachal Pradesh to Koteshwar in Gujarat, he has traversed the geographical expanse of a nation whose diversity is matched only by its unity.

His motorcycle has travelled thousands of kilometres, but the message it carries is far more significant. India is one nation, united by its spirit, and its younger generations have the potential to achieve extraordinary things.

To Shivgeet Singh Hooda, my heartfelt congratulations. You have made your parents, your extended family and the entire 4 JAT fraternity proud.

To Col Shakti Hooda, my comrade since 1982, my fellow Company Commander and my friend through decades of military service, and to Geeta, my warmest congratulations. You have every reason to be proud of the young man Shivgeet has become.

The Spirit That Never Dies.

The uniform may change, the battlefield may change and generations may come and go, but the spirit of a soldier never dies. I began my journey with Shakti in 4 JAT in 1982. We shared the challenges of military service, the demanding operational environment of Sri Lanka and the nights along the Jammu and Kashmir borders. I witnessed his marriage to Geeta in 1984 and saw Shivgeet grow from a little child in Dehradun and Mhow into the accomplished young man he is today.

Now, watching Shivgeet carry the spirit of determination across the highways of India is an immensely fulfilling experience. Some friendships are forged in ordinary circumstances; others are sealed in the toughest moments of life. Military comradeship belongs to the latter. And when the children of those comrades go on to achieve something extraordinary, the pride is shared by the entire regimental family.

Shivgeet may have travelled thousands of kilometres, but the inspiration for his journey comes from a legacy nurtured over generations.

His story is a reminder that the legacy of the Indian Army is not confined to its battlefields. It lives in the character, courage and achievements of generations raised in its shadow.

THE SPIRIT OF 4 JAT. THE PRIDE OF THE INDIAN ARMY. THE LEGACY OF A WARRIOR FAMILY.

JAI HIND!

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We are looking for volunteers across NE & West Bengal Interested candidates (College students, youths) can register at https://northeastintegrationrally.in/Volunteer_Registration.aspxor, send an email: neintegrationrally@gmail.com

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Business establishments, educational institutions, individual service providers etc. can enlist themselves or advertise their products or services at the most reasonable cost in InfoCom Diary. Send your details to InfoCom Solutions at: infocom.krc@gmail.com
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For Details Visit: https://bit.ly/krcstudentinternship
or
www.krcfoundation.org/products-services/training-development-5e-for-success/internship

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Participate in NE India Writing Star Contest and get your writings published. Eligibility: From Class VI onwards. Each participants receives a digital participation certificates. Send articles at: info@krcfoundation.org
For Details Visit: https://bit.ly/NEIndiaWritingStarContest
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