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Naga Organisations Stage Rally in Manipur's Ukhrul, Oppose Separate Kuki Homeland

Memorandum to PM Modi alleges over 32 Naga civilian deaths, seeks scrapping of SoO pact and withdrawal of Assam Rifles from Naga-inhabited areas

IMPHAL

Several Naga organisations staged a rally in Manipur's Ukhrul district on Thursday, urging the Centre to intervene in the ongoing crisis and work towards a lasting political solution. The protesters strongly opposed any separate homeland or territorial administrative arrangement for the Kuki community, claiming that such a move could affect Naga ancestral territories.The rally was organised by the Tangkhul Naga Long (TNL) and other Tangkhul frontal organisations under the aegis of the United Naga Council (UNC).Carrying banners and placards, a large number of protesters, mostly women, marched through Ukhrul town before submitting a memorandum addressed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi through the district Deputy Commissioner.

The memorandum, signed by leaders of five Tangkhul organisations on behalf of the Tangkhul Naga community, alleged that the ongoing



Manipur crisis was rooted in what it described as illegal Kuki immigration and historical disparities between the hill and valley regions.

The organisations accused the Centre of failing to address these underlying issues and expressed concern over what they termed the unprecedented militarisation of Naga-inhabited areas.A major demand in the memorandum was the rejection of any separate homeland, administrative arrangement or territorial council for the Kukis that could, according to the organisations, compromise Naga ancestral land and political rights.

The Naga groups also demanded the abrogation of the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with Kuki militant organisations and called for these outfits to be declared terrorist organisations.

The memorandum further alleged that more than 32 Naga civilians had been killed since the outbreak of violence in Manipur. It referred to incidents of killings, abductions, arson and shootings in Naga-inhabited areas to highlight the community's security concerns.

The organisations also raised allegations against the Assam Rifles, accusing the force of extending support to Kuki militant groups. They demanded its withdrawal from Naga-inhabited areas.Among other demands, the memorandum called for the relocation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Naga-inhabited areas and sought the removal of Manipur Deputy Chief Minister Nemcha Kipgen from office.On political representation, the organisations demanded restructuring of representation in the Manipur Legislative Assembly in accordance with constitutional provisions, stating that such an arrangement would be acceptable to the Naga community.

The memorandum also sought the cancellation of what it described as illegal Kuki chiefship and village settlement pattas and permits. It called for the removal of unauthorised settlements in accordance with the law and opposed the issuance of fresh land permits to people it alleged were illegal immigrants.

The rally took place a day after suspected armed militants opened fire on passenger vehicles along the Imphal-Ukhrul highway near TM Kasom, triggering fresh concerns over security in the hill districts.

The latest mobilisation underscores the continuing tensions among communities in Manipur and the growing demand from Naga organisations for security guarantees, protection of ancestral land and clarity on the Centre's approach to the crisis.

The allegations and demands contained in the memorandum represent the position of the organisations and have not been independently established.

PERSPECTIVE

My dear friend, clear your mind of can't

Delhi Court Orders Seven-Day Prior Notice Before Police Take Coercive Action Against Manipur MP Akoijam

NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Thursday directed the city police to serve a seven-day prior notice to Congress MP and former Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) professor Angomcha Bimol Akoijam before taking any coercive action, including arrest, against him in connection with a sexual harassment case.

Special Judge Dig Vinay Singh passed the order while disposing of Akoijam's anticipatory bail application. The court directed that the police must provide seven days' notice if they intend to arrest the Inner Manipur MP.

The court had sought a response from the Delhi Police on Tuesday before issuing the direction.

The case relates to sexual harassment allegations raised by several female students at JNU. At least 11 students reportedly filed complaints against Akoijam in May, alleging that he had invited them to his campus residence under the pretext of meetings or gatherings and attempted to sexually harass them.

Some complainants also accused him of making obscene and inappropriate remarks during classroom interactions.

Following an internal inquiry, JNU dismissed Akoijam from service in October. The MP, however, described the university's action as a "witch hunt" and questioned whether the prescribed procedures had been followed.

On October 12, Delhi Police registered an FIR against him at Vasant Kunj North police station based on a complaint and documents submitted by JNU Chief Security Officer.

WHO SAID WHAT



Parliament is the House for debates & discussion. But people who don't believe in democracy, debates and discussion are talking about debate! ~ Kiren Rijiju, Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister

Silchar Tense as Protesters Allege Newly Elected Councillors Used Fake Certificates



SILCHAR

Tension prevailed in Assam's Silchar on Thursday as protesters staged a demonstration outside the District Sports Association (DSA), accusing some newly elected councillors of the Silchar Municipal Corporation (SMC) of using forged certificates to contest and win the municipal elections.

The protest coincided with the scheduled oath-taking ceremony of the newly elected councillors. Demonstrators alleged that several candidates had secured electoral victories by submitting fake certificates and questioned the administration's failure to take action despite complaints over the alleged irregularities.

Demanding an investigation and action against the councillors concerned, the protesters assembled outside the DSA and planned to march towards the venue of the oath-taking ceremony.

However, police personnel stopped them from proceeding further, preventing the demonstrators from reaching the ceremony venue.

The police intervention led to a heated exchange between the protesters and security personnel, with the demonstrators expressing resentment over being denied access to the venue.

The situation remained tense outside the DSA for some time as protesters continued to press for action over the alleged use of forged documents in the municipal elections.

The allegations are yet to be independently established, and further details regarding the administration's response were not immediately available.

Jatinga Festival returns on November 21-22 with new venue, Bollywood star attractions

HAFLONG

The Jatinga Festival 2026 is set to return on November 21 and 22 in Assam's Dima Hasao district, featuring performances by Bollywood playback singers Kunal Ganjawala and Madhubanti Bagchi, along with several cultural attractions.

Organised by the Dima Hasao Tour and Travel Committee, the two-day event will feature musical performances, cultural programmes and entertainment activities aimed at attracting tourists to the hill district during the winter tourism season.

This year's festival will be held at a new venue opposite its traditional location at Hayam. Organisers said the change was intended to give the event a fresh look and provide space for its expanded range of attractions.

Music will remain one of the major highlights. Kunal Ganjawala is scheduled to perform on November 21, while Madhubanti Bagchi and other artistes will take the stage on November 22.

A major addition to this year's celebrations is the introduction of 'Wings of Jatinga', a beauty pageant designed to provide young women from the region with a platform to showcase their talents and abilities. The initiative also aims to promote confidence and women's empowerment.

The organisers have highlighted improved road connectivity as an important factor in attracting visitors. Travellers can reach Silchar from Guwahati by air in approximately 35 minutes, followed by a road journey of around one-and-a-half hours to the festival venue.The Dima Hasao Autonomous Council is also planning additional bus services to facilitate the movement of tourists and festival-goers.

The annual festival is expected to provide a boost to tourism in Dima Hasao by bringing visitors closer to the district's scenic landscapes, cultural traditions and local hospitality.

Manipur Plans Dedicated Department for Handloom, Handicrafts and Textiles

IMPHAL

The Manipur government is considering the establishment of a full-fledged department exclusively dedicated to handloom, handicrafts and textiles to strengthen the sector and create better opportunities for local artisans, Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh announced on Thursday.

The Chief Minister made the announcement while inaugurating the Manipur International Textile Expo (MANITEX) 2026 at Urban Haat, Nilakuthi, Imphal. The event was organised under the theme, "Weave for Togetherness, Many Threads, One Manipur".Addressing the gathering, Khemchand Singh highlighted the significant contribution of the handloom and handicrafts sector to Manipur's economy, cultural identity and international recognition. He said the sector represents an important part of the state's rich artistic and cultural heritage and has considerable potential to strengthen Manipur's presence in national and international markets.

Recounting his personal association with the handloom industry, the Chief Minister said his mother was a weaver and recalled that he had previously delivered yarn to the Kongba area of Imphal East. He said these experiences had given him a close understanding of the hard work and dedication involved in weaving.

Emphasising the need to strengthen the industry further, he called for sustained efforts to improve the working conditions of artisans and ensure that they receive greater economic benefits from their skills and products.

The Chief Minister also directed the concerned government authorities to ensure that artisans across the state effectively receive the benefits of various Central government-sponsored schemes.

At present, handloom, handicrafts and textiles function as a subsidiary of the Trade, Commerce and Industries Department.

During the programme, Khemchand Singh launched the official mobile application of MANITEX 2026 and unveiled a coffee table book titled Exploring Manipur Textile Design.

He also distributed awards for crafts and frame looms and accessories, besides extending support for the construction of individual worksheds for weavers under the Imphal East Mega Handloom Cluster. Assistance under the Small Development Programme of the National Handloom Development Programme was also distributed.

The programme was attended by the Chief Minister's wife, Yumnam Joybala Devi; Manipur Handloom and Handicrafts Cooperative Limited chairman and MLA Khongbantabam Ibomcha Singh; MLAs Sapam Nisikanta Singh and Sanasam Premchandra Singh; Chief Secretary Rajeev Singh Thakur; Additional Chief Secretary Anurag Bajpai; senior government officials and other dignitaries.The proposed dedicated department, if established, is expected to provide a more focused administrative framework for the handloom, handicrafts and textile industries, which support the livelihoods of a large number of traditional artisans and weaving communities in Manipur.

IIT Guwahati Develops New Models to Predict Traffic Patterns on Indian Roads

Drone-based study tracks over 36,000 vehicles and nearly nine million vehicle positions, offering insights for smarter traffic management and congestion control

GUWAHATI

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati have developed new mathematical and machine learning models to predict traffic movement under India's complex road conditions, a development that could help urban planners improve traffic management and tackle congestion.

The research, based on high-resolution drone footage collected from a busy multi-lane highway near Delhi, examined how vehicle speed and the distance between vehicles change with variations in traffic density.

Led by Professor Akhilesh K Maurya of the Department of Civil Engineering, the research team tracked more than 36,000 vehicles and nearly nine million individual vehicle positions to understand traffic behaviour under different road conditions.

The researchers used the extensive dataset to develop mathematical and machine learning models capable of predicting vehicle speeds and traffic patterns. The findings could contribute to more efficient traffic signal systems, intelligent transportation networks and improved congestion management.

The study sought to address the limitations of conventional traffic models, many of which were developed using road conditions and driving patterns that differ considerably from those found in India.

For the research, the team collected daytime drone footage from an eight-lane divided highway with wide paved shoulders on the outskirts of Delhi. The aerial monitoring enabled researchers to observe large numbers of vehicles and track their movements with high spatial and temporal precision.

Analysis revealed distinct changes in vehicle behaviour as traffic density increased. On relatively empty roads, vehicles maintained larger gaps from one another. As traffic became moderately heavy, these gaps narrowed and vehicles moved closer together.

However, under extremely heavy traffic conditions, the gaps increased again as vehicles approached congestion and movement became increasingly restricted.

Professor Maurya said traffic patterns in India were significantly different from those in countries where many conventional traffic models had originally been developed. He stressed the need for models based on actual Indian road conditions and driving behaviour.

He also highlighted the advantages of drone-based monitoring, which allows researchers to observe traffic across extended road sections and capture vehicle movements in considerable detail.

The study found that nearly 3,000 vehicles passed a fixed point in each lane under full traffic flow before congestion began. During traffic jams, when vehicles came to a standstill, traffic density reached nearly 900 vehicles per kilometre across the entire road width.

Based on these observations, the researchers evaluated six mathematical models and trained two machine learning models to estimate traffic speeds.

Given the unpredictable nature of Indian traffic, the team designed the models to predict a range of possible vehicle speeds rather than relying on a single estimate. This approach is intended to account for variations in vehicle behaviour and the mixed nature of traffic on Indian roads.

The researchers said further data collection across different cities, road categories and traffic conditions would help improve the accuracy and wider applicability of the models.

The findings could have several practical applications, including urban traffic digital twins, adaptive traffic signal management, road-capacity assessment and traffic simulation. The models may also support the evaluation of connected and automated mobility systems under Indian traffic conditions.

The research has been published in the International Journal of Intelligent Transportation Systems Research. The paper was co-authored by Professor Maurya and his research scholars Shekhar Singh and Surya H Ravikumar.

The study highlights the potential of combining drone-based surveillance, mathematical modelling and machine learning to develop traffic management solutions better suited to India's diverse and often unpredictable road environment.

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Is the Era of Right-Wing Political Dominance Coming to an End?

From Europe to South Asia, growing public discontent is challenging entrenched political power. The emerging shift may be less about ideology and more about accountability, economic opportunity and the demand for democratic renewal.

Elections are more than exercises in choosing governments. At critical moments, they become expressions of public impatience, exposing the widening gap between those who exercise power and those who must live with its consequences. Across the world, political establishments that once appeared invincible are facing growing resistance. The question is whether these developments signal the beginning of the end of right-wing political dominance or a broader revolt against entrenched power.

Recent political developments offer compelling reasons to examine this question. Hungary's defeat of Viktor Orbán after 16 years in power dealt a significant setback to the nationalist model admired by Donald Trump. Brazil's return to Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva denied the Bolsonaro camp a comeback. In Serbia, a student-backed movement has challenged the ruling establishment. Israel, meanwhile, continues to witness a fierce contest over Benjamin Netanyahu's leadership.

These developments are neither identical nor evidence of a uniform ideological shift. Yet they share an important characteristic: growing public resistance to the concentration of political power and the belief that electoral victory confers an indefinite right to govern.

The distinction is significant. Voters may reject a government without necessarily embracing its ideological opponents. Their discontent may stem from economic hardship, political arrogance, corruption or the perception that institutions have become instruments of those in power.

Netanyahu's political survival illustrates the limits of electoral dominance. Israel's longest-serving prime minister has demonstrated extraordinary political resilience. Yet his ability to remain in office cannot be understood simply as a reflection of popular approval. The country's fragmented electoral system and the difficulty of assembling a stable opposition coalition have played a crucial role in sustaining his leadership.

Political survival, therefore, should not automatically be interpreted as public consensus. Nor does an opposition's failure to unite necessarily amount to an endorsement of the government.

The same distinction applies to the growing political unrest across South Asia. Sri Lanka's Aragalaya uprising challenged a powerful political dynasty amid an economic collapse. Bangladesh witnessed a mass uprising against an increasingly authoritarian establishment, while Nepal's Gen Z mobilisation reflected deep frustration with corruption, privilege and a political system perceived to serve its own beneficiaries.

The causes and consequences of these movements differ. But their common message is unmistakable: younger citizens are increasingly unwilling to accept the notion that political elites possess an unquestionable right to govern indefinitely.

This growing impatience is not confined to developing countries. Across Europe, younger generations have confronted governments over unemployment, housing costs, economic insecurity and the absence of credible opportunities for social mobility. Their anger cannot always be classified as left-wing or right-wing. It often reflects a more fundamental rejection of institutions that appear disconnected from everyday realities.

The defining political conflict of our time may, therefore, be less about the traditional divide between the Right and the Left than about the widening distance between entrenched power and an electorate demanding accountability.

India is not insulated from these developments. The ruling establishment retains considerable organisational strength and electoral influence, but political dominance should never be mistaken for an unlimited mandate.

Allegations of electoral manipulation, where raised, demand transparent investigation and credible answers. Such allegations cannot be treated as established facts without evidence. Electoral integrity is too fundamental to democracy to be reduced to partisan accusations and counter-accusations.

At the same time, economic anxieties remain central to the lives of ordinary Indians. Unemployment, rising education costs, household financial pressures and uncertainty over future opportunities are shaping public expectations. For young people, the promise of national resurgence carries limited meaning if secure employment remains elusive, education becomes increasingly unaffordable and advancement appears dependent on privilege rather than merit.

National pride can inspire a population, but it cannot indefinitely substitute for economic opportunity. Nor can appeals to religious identity, nationalism or a leader's personal strength permanently insulate a government from questions about jobs, prices, public services and institutional accountability.

The challenge facing Trump in the United States is no different in principle. The November mid-term elections will test his administration's standing, although their outcome cannot be taken for granted. Even powerful political movements face difficulties when voters begin questioning the gap between electoral promises and their lived experience.

Right-wing movements have gained considerable support by addressing anxieties about national identity, immigration, security, cultural change and economic dislocation. Many of these concerns are genuine and cannot simply be dismissed as prejudice or ignorance.

The danger emerges when legitimate anxieties are converted into instruments of permanent political mobilisation. When opponents are portrayed as enemies, institutions are weakened and criticism is treated as disloyalty, political competition begins to lose its democratic character.

Such strategies may consolidate power in the short term. Over time, however, they deepen polarisation, narrow the space for compromise and weaken the institutional safeguards against the abuse of authority.

A political system that depends excessively on the personality of a leader rather than the credibility of its institutions also becomes vulnerable to that individual's fortunes. The concentration of power may create an appearance of stability, but it can conceal growing weaknesses beneath the surface.

Yet it would be premature to declare the imminent collapse of right-wing dominance. Orbán's defeat does not erase the political forces he represented. Lula's return does not settle Brazil's ideological contest. Student movements may succeed in challenging governments without necessarily possessing coherent programmes for governing.

Israel's experience demonstrates how opposition fragmentation can preserve a leader despite considerable controversy. Political change is rarely linear, and the defeat of one government does not automatically produce a more democratic, competent or accountable alternative.

The more consequential development is the growing assertiveness of citizens, particularly younger generations. They are challenging the assumption that those currently in power have an unquestionable right to determine the future of those who will inherit the consequences of their decisions.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all. ~ Aristotle

DEVIATION OF FOREIGN FUNDS A THREAT TO INDIA'S SECURITY



YATIN MAHAJAN

Deviation and misuse of Foreign funds in India pose a direct challenge to the nations Sovereignty, Integrity, and internal Security. Wherein unregulated or covertly diverted foreign money can be funneled into political mobilization, and influence domestic elections by diverting foreign money to campaigns and also influence policy making . Investigations by Indian agencies have highlighted foreign-sourced funds being utilized to orchestrate localized protests , legal roadblocks, and sustained opposition against critical industrial, mining, and energy projects and creating disruption of public and economic infrastructure. Foreign funds have historically have been tracked toward large scale religious conversion drives or inducement based outreach in sensitive and vulnerable tribal or border regions and also divides the country , shifting the demographic and social balance without democratic consent , which creates a threat to national integrity and also create cultural alteration and in a country like India which is a culturally rich and culturally diverse country , deviation and misuse of Foreign funds is threatening the diversity and the social practices and sense of unity amongst the citizens of india , which prevails from the time immemorial. Foreign funding also promotes Love Jihad , which is a new threat to civilized society in modern times. Foreign funded organisations are sometimes weaponized to deepen religious , regional or caste based polarization , threatening communal harmony and public order. Unaccounted foreign contributions can build parallel financial structures and ecosystems that nurture radicalization. Law enforcement operations (such as raid on cross border or foreign missionary/charity networks tied to illicit cash or foreign debit card channels) have exposed instances where external money directly or indirectly supported ultra left extremist or militant groups. External funds are occasionally channeled to provide heavy legal or logistical defense networks for individuals facing serious charges related to terrorism or anti state activities. To counter these risks, India enforces strict transparency rules, mandated bank tracking, utilization audits, and registration cancellations via Ministry of Home Affairs under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010, which is in the process of amendment under Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill , 2026 to curb the deviation of foreign funds within India in modern times which has threatened the sovereignty, integrity and national security of India.

To address the above stated risks the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 was enacted to create a modern regulatory framework that addresses evolving cross border financial flows, loopholes in existing law and stringently protects India's Sovereignty, Integrity and National Security. Original 1976 Act, was enacted during the emergency and it could not keep pace with the modern time requirements, as international engagement expanded and cross border financial transactions grew increasingly complex. Under the old 1976 Act , NGO registrations had perpetual validity, whereas Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 introduced a five-year validity period for registration certificates and mandated a structured renewal process to ensure continuous monitoring.

The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 (FCRA) regulates the acceptance and utilisation of foreign contribution (i.e. grants or donations) by individuals, associations or companies. It also aims to prevent any diversion of such contribution towards activities detrimental to national interest. All entities must obtain an FCRA certificate to receive foreign contribution for their activities. The 2010 Act introduced a five-year renewable registration certificate and a prior permission route for one-time recipients.

Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 aimed to curb the diversion of foreign contributions toward unauthorized or illegal purposes that deviated from the declared objectives of recipient organisations. This law introduced stringent provisions to stop foreign funds from being used in activities detrimental to the national interest, public order, or internal security. It introduced stricter provisions on how much foreign contribution could be spent on administrative overhead which was fixed to be 50% to ensure maximum funds are not deviated from the declared objective and go toward actual grassroots and charitable programs. This legislation enacted reporting mechanisms, audits and compliance obligations for associations , educational institutions , religious groups and NGOs receiving foreign money.Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill , 2026 was introduced in Lok Sabha on March 25,2026 to significantly tighten the regulatory framework governing how non-governmental organizations and individual receive and utilize foreign funding. It introduced a framework for supervision, management and disposal of foreign contribution and assets of an organization that ceases to have an FCRA certificate. An Organisation may cease to have an FCRA certificate if the holder of the certificate has made an incorrect or false statement , any terms and conditions of the certificate or the Act are violated , the government feels that the cancellation would be in public interest, or the holder of the certificate has not engaged in any reasonable activity for the benefit of society in its chosen field for two consecutive years, or has become defunct. Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill , 2026 further added that a registration certificate will cease if it is not renewed before expiry , no application for renewal was made , or the renewal application is denied. All organisations desiring to receive foreign contribution must register with the central government and obtain a certificate. This certificate must be renewed every five years. Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 also provides that the certificate may be cancelled by the central government, or surrendered by the organisation if it does not wish to further receive or use foreign contribution.

Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill , 2026 creates a Designated Authority to take over, manage and dispose of assets of an organisation whose FCRA registration has been cancelled, surrendered or ceased. A certificate is deemed to be ceased when the organisation fails to renew it before its five-year validity period expires. The Bill proposes to formulate such regulations relating to the handling of assets upon cancellation, surrender, or cessation of a certificate of registration, the management of defunct organisations, and other administrative and compliance processes.

As per the Act, if the certificate is surrendered or cancelled, the foreign contribution and assets created out of it will vest in such Authority as may be prescribed. The Bill replaces the vesting provisions from the Act with new provisions. Wherein it provides for a Designated Authority, in which foreign contribution and assets will vest, including those assets created partly from foreign contribution. Vesting will be provisional till a fresh certificate is granted, or the certificate is renewed or restored. Failing this, the vesting will be permanent. If the certificate is renewed, restored or granted fresh, the Designated Authority will return the unutilised portion of the foreign contribution or assets. Designated Authority must use the assets permanently vested in it for public purposes. It may transfer such assets to ministries, departments, authorities or agencies of the central or state government. It may also dispose assets through sale or other processes. Proceeds from disposal along with unutilised foreign contribution will be credited to the Consolidated Fund of India. For permanently vested assets that are fully or partly a place of worship, the Designated Authority must entrust its management to such person and in a manner as prescribed. It must also ensure that the religious character of the place of worship is maintained.Under the Act, entities that are not registered with the central government with an FCRA certificate must obtain prior permission from the central government before receiving foreign contribution. Prior permission is given for the specific purpose for which it is obtained, and from a specific source. The Act also states that such prior permission will be valid for the specific purpose or specific amount of foreign contribution received. The Bill adds that such foreign contribution shall be received and utilised within such time period as may be prescribed.



The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill,2026 was referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee to address intense opposition, wherein the bill proposes to create a Government appointed Designated Authority to take over, manage , or permanently vest foreign contributions and assets if an organisation's FCRA registration is cancelled , surrendered or not renewed. But opposition MPs strongly protested in parliament, claiming the bill threatens institutional independence, due process and legitimate non-governmental organisations, demanding either a complete withdrawal or major changes. But the Bill does not aims to threaten the legitimate NGOs as the bill solely focuses on appointing a Designated Authority to take over, manage , or permanently vest foreign contributions and assets if a NGO does not possess a valid FCRA Registration Certificate or prior permission from the Central Government before accepting foreign contributions , which is a mandatory provision under the existing Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act,2010, which will inturn create such foreign contributions and assets legalised. The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill,2026 is enhancing the scope of provision of possessing FCRA Registration Certificate a provision under the existing Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act,2010.

The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill,2026 strengthens oversight over foreign funding in India to curb misuse , money laundering and terror financing risks. The Government maintains that stricter FCRA enforcement aligns with Financial Action Task Force recommendations and aims to shut down illicit channels, terror financing or foreign -backed interference disguised as civil society or charitable work. There was a Lack of clear , uniform legal framework to handle infrastructure, land or financial assets built using foreign contributions when an organization's FCRA Registration Certificate is expired, was cancelled, or was surrendered and thousands of registrations had expired or gone unrenewed over the years, leaving a grey area around the fate of foreign funded assets. The Government cited the necessity to safeguard democratic institutions, public safety, and national sovereignty from unregulated or covert foreign financial influence, aligning India's framework with similar foreign-influence transparency laws in other democracies.Supporters of the bill argue that the amendments are necessary to stop terrorists and hostile entities from funneling money into India under the guise of charity or humanitarian aid. The Government also argues that this bill aims to prevent foreign-funded assets from disappearing into legal grey zones or supporting unverified network. Beyond the legal framework of the FCRA, federal agencies like the National Investigation Agency and the Enforcement Directorate consistently track unauthorized , cross -border financial networks designed to back subversive internal events. The Court affirmed that illicit funds funneled from the Pakistani establishment through hawala networks were directly used to finance organised stone-pelting and arson disguised as public street protests. Investigations into the now banned Popular Front of India (PFI) revealed a Rs 262 crore cross-border network operating through Gulf-based committee and shell entities. These international remittances were directly weaponized to fund radicalization camps , unlawful assemblies, and physical module within the country. Pulwama Millitant Attack and Pahalgam Millitant Attack both the terrorist attacks were funded by the Pakistani establishments and supported by the Pakistan.

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

Do you feel India should depend on other countries for processing the critical minerals that power our future?
I certainly don't!
Lithium, nickel, cobalt…these are essential for EVs, batteries, electronics and defence. Yet, we remain heavily dependent on imports of refined materials.
To address this, the Cabinet has approved a scheme to change this.
Key highlights:
New critical mineral processing plants.
Capital subsidy to boost investment.
Greater domestic value addition.
Stronger supply chains.
The principle is clear…India must have capabilities to build technologies of the future! ~ Narendra Modi, PM



Himanta challenges Rahul Gandhi to take on Modi in Parliament, not on streets

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday challenged Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to take his proposed debate with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Parliament, asking him to stop mobilising people on the streets and instead use the legislature to raise questions against the government.

Responding to Gandhi's demand for an open debate with the Prime Minister, Sarma said Parliament was the appropriate forum for such an exchange, provided the Opposition allowed the House to function without disruptions.

"If you are a leader in the Opposition and you know that you're one, so tell me where should a debate between you and the Prime Minister transpire, on the streets or in the Parliament?"



Sarma said.

The Assam chief minister argued that a parliamentary debate could cover a wider range of political and governance issues. He referred to the Bofors controversy and the Bhopal gas tragedy, questioning why Gandhi was focusing primarily on foreign relations and allegations of foreign support for Modi.

Sarma urged the Congress leader to ensure that the proceedings remained peaceful, with the Speaker presiding over the debate and the Prime Minister given an opportunity to respond.

"Kindly say that there will be no ruckus in the Parliament; you'll begin the debate; PM will reply and a range of issues will be discussed," he said.

Taking a swipe at Gandhi's approach to political mobilisation, Sarma said India should not be compared with countries such as Bangladesh and Nepal. He also accused the Congress leader of applying different standards to electoral outcomes.

Referring to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, Sarma alleged that Gandhi questioned the credibility of elections when the BJP won but accepted the results when Congress candidates emerged victorious.

"If Narendra Modi wins from Varanasi, EVM is malfunctioning; but when you win from Rai Bareli, it's 100% gold," he said.

Sarma advised Gandhi to move away from what he described as a confrontational political style and engage in parliamentary debate. "You can't be an angry young man forever," he remarked, urging the Opposition to allow people to follow parliamentary proceedings without disruption.

The exchange followed Gandhi's Diwali message to Modi on Tuesday, in which he renewed his challenge to an open debate. In a video posted on social media, Gandhi said the Prime Minister could choose the venue and accused him of depending on foreign support to remain in power.

"Twenty-four hours have passed, Modi ji. I challenged you. You say that the opposition is anti-national. Pick any stage, any venue, and debate me," Gandhi said.

Gandhi had first issued the challenge on Monday, alleging that foreign assistance had played a role in Modi's electoral success and continuation in office.

Earlier on Wednesday, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had also asked Gandhi to participate in a parliamentary discussion, saying the government was ready to debate all issues, including the SIR exercise. Shah said the government was even prepared to convene a special session for the discussion.

The competing challenges have brought Parliament's functioning, electoral roll revision and Gandhi's allegations of foreign influence into sharper focus, with the ruling BJP and the Opposition insisting that the other side must agree to their preferred terms of debate.

Gaurav Gogoi suspects land mafia link in Guwahati hotel killings, seeks wider probe

GUWAHATI

Assam Congress president and Lok Sabha MP Gaurav Gogoi has alleged that a wider land and property mafia network could be linked to the killing of five people at Hotel Bilas Inn in Guwahati, questioning whether the accused shooter was acting independently or on behalf of a larger criminal syndicate.

Gogoi made the remarks on Wednesday after visiting the Barpeta residence of the Bharali family, whose members were among those killed in the October 26 shooting at the hotel. He met the bereaved family and expressed his condolences.

Speaking to reporters, Gogoi said the death of the prime accused, Ghanakanta Gogoi, in police firing should not bring the investigation to an end.

He argued that the circumstances surrounding the killings, including the motive and possible involvement of other individuals, needed to be thoroughly examined.

"It cannot be said with certainty that the person who was encountered was acting alone," he said, suggesting that the accused shooter might not have been the mastermind behind the attack.

Gogoi said his interaction with the family had raised questions about several aspects of the case and called for a comprehensive investigation to establish whether others had planned or facilitated the killings.

"The entire case must not be closed just because an encounter has taken place," he said, alleging that other individuals could have been operating behind the accused.

The Congress leader also sought to link the incident to alleged land-grabbing activities in Guwahati. He claimed that property owners in prime locations, including areas along GS Road and near the airport, had faced intimidation and attempts to take over their land.

Suggesting that the accused could have been a hired shooter, Gogoi demanded that investigators examine the possible involvement of influential individuals and identify those allegedly directing the network.

GP Singh revives 2021 'Newton's third law' tweet after Ghanakanta Gogoi's death in police firing

GUWAHATI

Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Director General GP Singh on Wednesday invoked Newton's third law of motion following the death of Ghanakanta Gogoi, the prime accused in the October 26 Hotel Bilas Inn shooting, in police firing in Sivasagar district.

Singh, who previously served as Assam Director General of Police, wrote on X: "The relevance of Newton's third law remains undiminished in Assam. Keep it up."

He also reposted a message from December 1, 2021, which he had shared while serving as Assam DGP. The earlier post read: "For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction - Newton's Third Law."

The 2021 post was made following the death of Niraj Das, popularly known as Kola Lora, who was the prime accused in the mob lynching of All Assam Students' Union (AASU) leader Animesh Bhuyan in Jorhat.

On November 29, 2021, Bhuyan was allegedly attacked by a mob while attempting to help an elderly man who had fallen from his scooter. A journalist and another AASU member accompanying him were also assaulted. Bhuyan later succumbed to his injuries.

Das, who was arrested in connection with the lynching, died on December 1, 2021. Police claimed he had jumped out of a moving vehicle during an operation to recover a drug consignment and was subsequently run over by an escort vehicle while attempting to flee.

Singh's decision to revive the earlier post alongside his latest remarks has drawn attention to the similarities between the two incidents, both involving the deaths of accused persons during police operations.

Gogoi, 34, died after being shot during a police operation near Gaurisagar in Sivasagar district. He was being taken to Sivasagar

Amarendra Pal Elected Silchar Mayor, Bijendra Prasad Singh Named Deputy Mayor





OUR CORRESPONDENT

SILCHAR: Ending the long wait, the newly elected board of the Silchar Municipal Corporation (SMC) formally took charge on Thursday with the swearing-in of all 42 ward commissioners. The ceremony was attended by Minister Kaushik Rai and Krishnendu Paul, MP Parimal Suklabaidya, Sushmita Dev and Kanad Purkayastha.

Following the oath-taking ceremony, Ward No. 37 Commissioner Amarendra Pal was unanimously elected Mayor of the Silchar Municipal Corporation. Ward No. 9 Commissioner Bijendra Prasad Singh was elected Deputy Mayor. With the formation of the new board, the city is set to enter a new phase of development over the next five years. The new leadership is expected to work in coordination with all ward commissioners to improve urban infrastructure, modernise civic services and implement various development projects.

Making Silchar cleaner, more beautiful and equipped with modern civic amenities will be among the major challenges before the new municipal board. Residents will now look to the new leadership to bring visible improvements in the city's overall development during its five-year tenure.

Mizoram tribal film festival opens in Aizawl, showcases indigenous heritage and local talent

AIZAWL

A three-day tribal film festival celebrating Mizoram's indigenous heritage and local filmmaking talent began in Aizawl on Wednesday, with state Art and Culture Minister C Lalsawivunga inaugurating the event.

The festival, being held from November 4 to 6, is organised under an initiative of the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs in collaboration with the Mizoram government's Art and Culture department and the Information, Public Relations, Printing and Stationery department.

Film screenings and related activities are being organised at Vanapa Hall and Lianchhiari Run Mini Theatre during the three-day programme.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, Lalsawivunga said



the festival would provide an important platform to showcase Mizo culture, traditions and heritage. He highlighted the role of cinema and filmmakers in preserving the identity of indigenous communities.

The minister also acknowledged the contribution of local filmmakers to the development of Mizoram's film industry and encouraged younger generations to explore their cultural roots through cinema.

The opening programme also featured prize distribution for reel-making and short-film-making competitions, recognising creative talent from the state.

In the short-film category, Sadawt won the first prize of Rs 2 lakh, along with a memento and citation. Pasaltha Sangliana secured the second prize of Rs 1.5 lakh, while Ngotekherh received the third prize of Rs 1 lakh.

Seven other films were awarded consolation prizes of Rs 50,000 each.

In the reel-making category, Maurawkela won the first prize of Rs 30,000. Mizo Lalte Rorelna and Hmanlai Hian secured the second and third positions, receiving Rs 20,000 and Rs 10,000 respectively.

The festival seeks to bring indigenous stories and creative voices into wider public focus while providing local filmmakers with greater opportunities to showcase their work.

Kalyan Kumar Chakraborty's Selfless Service to Cancer Patients Will Be Remembered: BDF



OUR CORRESPONDENT

SILCHAR: The Barak Democratic Front (BDF) has mourned the demise of Kalyan Kumar Chakraborty, a founding member of Cachar Cancer Hospital and Research Centre and a noted social worker who dedicated much of his life to supporting cancer patients across the Barak Valley and the Northeast.In a condolence message issued on Thursday, BDF Chief Convenor Pradip Dutta Roy paid tribute to the departed and recalled his long association with Cachar Cancer Hospital from its formative years.

Dutta Roy said that although Chakraborty was no longer directly associated with the hospital's managing committee in later years, he remained deeply connected with the institution until his last breath.

He pointed out that Chakraborty himself had been battling cancer for a long time. However, the illness never weakened his compassion or commitment to helping fellow patients. Rather, his personal experience strengthened his determination to stand beside others facing the same struggle.

After retiring from service, Chakraborty devoted almost his entire life to providing emotional and other forms of support to cancer patients. Many newly diagnosed patients arriving at Cachar Cancer Hospital found hope and reassurance in him. He stood beside them, encouraged them and helped make their treatment journey easier, all without expecting anything in return, Dutta Roy said.

The BDF chief convenor observed that although modern cancer treatments have advanced considerably, many challenges remain in achieving a complete cure. A cancer diagnosis often places immense emotional and psychological pressure not only on patients but also on their families. He noted that in several developed countries, professional counselling and psychological support are recognised as important parts of cancer care, alongside treatment for physical symptoms. However, such support systems remain limited in developing countries like India, where healthcare facilities are already under considerable pressure.Dutta Roy said Chakraborty had quietly taken up this important responsibility without being a professional counsellor. His selfless efforts in providing emotional strength and support to cancer patients would remain an inspiration for people across the Barak Valley and the Northeast.

He also prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed his deepest condolences to the bereaved family.

The press statement was issued by BDF Convenor Debayan Deb.

Tripura Congress names candidates for 49 AMC wards, rules out alliance with CPI(M)

AGARTALA

The Tripura Pradesh Congress Committee has announced candidates for 49 of the 51 wards of the Agartala Municipal Corporation (AMC) ahead of the November 27 urban local body elections, ruling out any electoral understanding with the CPI(M).

The announcement came amid differences between the two parties over a possible joint contest under the INDIA alliance. CPI(M) state secretary and Leader of the Opposition Jitendra Chaudhury had indicated on November 1 that his party would contest the elections in alliance with the Congress.

However, Congress MLA Sudip Roy Barman said no formal discussions had taken place between the two parties, accusing the CPI(M) of announcing candidates and filing nominations without consulting the Congress.

He said both parties had participated in a joint INDIA alliance rally in Agartala on October 30, following which the Congress had expected discussions on a possible electoral understanding.



"Congress is a national-level political party. If anyone thinks that Congress is a small or insignificant political outfit that can be taken for granted, that is not acceptable. There was no discussion or meeting with us," Roy Barman said.

He added that Congress leaders had travelled to Delhi after the October 30 rally and returned on November 1, when the CPI(M) announced its candidates and filed nominations.

While acknowledging Chaudhury's interest in an alliance, Roy Barman said differences and the reluctance of certain individuals had prevented the proposal from materialising. He maintained that a joint electoral contest would have been a better arrangement.Tripura Congress president Asish Kumar Saha confirmed that candidates had been finalised for 49 AMC wards, with nominees for the remaining two seats expected to be announced shortly.He said party leaders were working to finalise candidates across urban local bodies and complete the nomination process.

"The party will begin filing nomination papers for its declared candidates from Thursday," Saha said.

Meanwhile, Saha raised concerns over the election environment, alleging that opposition candidates were facing intimidation and obstruction while attempting to file nominations in different municipal and nagar panchayat areas.

He specifically referred to alleged incidents in Mohanpur, Jirania, Ranirbazar, Kamalpur and Santirbazar, claiming that ruling party supporters were preventing opposition candidates from completing the nomination process.

The Congress has approached the state administration and the State Election Commission, seeking adequate security for candidates, proposers and party representatives at nomination centres.

Referring to the 2021 urban local body elections, Saha alleged that violence and irregularities had undermined the electoral process.

He said the party had raised its concerns at the all-party meeting convened by the State Election Commission and during its interaction with the State Election Commissioner.

The Congress has urged the administration and the election authorities to ensure free, fair and peaceful polling, and provide candidates with a secure environment to participate in the electoral process.

Quest!
An oyster can change its gender



NATIONAL

Rajnath Singh says maritime future of Indo-Pacific cannot be shaped by any single country



NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday said diversifying supply chains and strengthening regional cooperation are crucial to enhancing maritime interdependence among like-minded nations amid a strained security environment.

In an address at the Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue, Singh, without naming any country, said certain "actors" and "nations" are seeking to exploit the criticality of oceans for narrow unilateral gains as he called for building resilience to combat challenges in the maritime domain.

Describing oceans as bridges rather than barriers among nations, he highlighted their role in sustaining livelihoods and facilitating the exchange of goods, knowledge and culture.

The defence minister said that the maritime future of the Indo-Pacific cannot be shaped by any single country acting alone, in remarks that came amid growing global concerns over China's military muscle flexing in the Indo-Pacific region.

"The global maritime security environment is strained by deliberate trade disruptions. We see blatant challenges to the freedom of navigation and the weaponisation of narrow maritime passages," he said.

"This growing instability in the maritime domain casts a long shadow over the broader international order," he added.

Singh asserted that the answer to the vulnerabilities of an interconnected world lies in building resilience, emphasising that globalisation cannot be abandoned in response to every disruption, nor should maritime spaces that have enabled human progress be closed.

He stressed that the objective must be to make interdependence more secure.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh addresses the commemorative session of the Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue (IPRD) 2026 on maritime trade, global supply chains and technological partnerships, in New Delhi.

Highlighting the evolving nature of maritime security, the defence minister said challenges could arise not only from conventional military activities but also from non-traditional threats such as piracy, trafficking, illegal fishing, cyber-attacks and natural disasters.

He underscored the need for maritime security to evolve with the changing maritime domain.

"Artificial intelligence is changing the way data is processed, while autonomous systems are expanding the possibilities of surveillance & operations."

"New sensors are improving our ability to observe the oceans. Advances in materials, biotechnology and data analytics are opening new avenues for research and application," he said.

Singh said these developments have enormous implications for maritime security and economic activity.

"But technology, by itself, is not the answer. The more important question is how we use technology to address real challenges," he said.

Singh also underlined that technology must not become another source of inequality among nations as the Indo-Pacific includes countries with different levels of technological and economic capability.

"Some possess advanced research infrastructure. Others are still developing the institutional and human resources required to participate fully in this transformation. If technological progress benefits only a limited number of countries, we will not achieve the collective resilience that our region requires," he said.

The defence minister called for promoting cooperation in research, education, innovation and capacity building, stating that a stronger scientific capability in one country can contribute to the security and prosperity of the entire region.

Terming it particularly important for smaller maritime nations and developing countries, he said the most useful technology is not necessarily the most expensive or sophisticated; it is the one that solves a real problem.

Centre proposes immediate suspension of licences to manufacture drugs found 'Not of Standard Quality'

NEW DELHI



In a major step towards strengthening the regulatory framework for ensuring the quality and safety of medicines in the country, the centre has proposed immediate suspension of manufacturing licences for drugs Not of Standard Quality (NSQ) on specified critical quality parameters.

The proposed amendments to the Drugs Rules, 1945, seek to enable prompt regulatory intervention upon detection of substandard medicines, prevent their continued manufacture and distribution, and strengthen the mechanism for ensuring compliance with prescribed quality standards, in the interest of patient safety and public health.

Under the existing provisions of the Drugs Rules, 1945, suspension or cancellation of a manufacturing licence is preceded by the prescribed regulatory procedure, including issuance of a show-cause notice.This may result in a time gap between the declaration of a drug as NSQ and initiation of regulatory action. During this period, the concerned drug may continue to remain in circulation, posing potential risks to public health and making effective recall more challenging. To address this regulatory concern, the Union Health Ministry has proposed a provision for immediate suspension of the manufacturing licence of the concerned drug by the Central Licensing Approving Authority or the State Licensing Authority, as the case may be, upon receipt of a government analyst's report declaring the drug as NSQ with respect to Assay, Dissolution, Related Substances, Impurities or Sterility, officials said.

These parameters are critical to determining the quality of medicines.

The proposed provision aims to ensure that instances of non-compliance involving these specified parameters are met with prompt regulatory action, thereby minimising potential risks to patients.

The proposal also provides for mandatory corrective measures before revocation of the suspension.

The suspension shall continue until the manufacturer undertakes an effective Root Cause Analysis to identify the reasons for the quality failure and implements appropriate Corrective and Preventive Action (CAPA) to the satisfaction of the concerned Licensing Authority, officials added.

Revocation of the suspension shall be permitted only after implementation of the requisite corrective and preventive measures and their due verification by the Licensing Authority.

This mechanism is intended to ensure that identified quality deficiencies are adequately addressed and necessary safeguards are put in place to prevent their recurrence.

To further strengthen regulatory coordination and facilitate timely action, consequential amendments have also been proposed to Form 13, relating to the test report of the government analyst.

Under the proposed mechanism, the government analyst's report would be endorsed to the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI), the concerned State/Union Territory Licensing Authority under whose jurisdiction the manufacturing site is located, as well as the manufacturer and marketer of the concerned drug.

The proposed arrangement is aimed at ensuring timely communication of NSQ findings to the relevant authorities and stakeholders, thereby facilitating coordinated regulatory action and strengthening accountability across the drug manufacturing and marketing chain.

The proposal was made following deliberations at the 65th meeting of the Drugs Consultative Committee (DCC), held on December 20, 2024, and recommendations of the 92nd meeting of the Drugs Technical Advisory Board (DTAB), held on April 24, 2025.

"The amendments are expected to strengthen post-marketing regulatory surveillance, facilitate timely action against substandard medicines, promote greater accountability among manufacturers and marketers, and reinforce public confidence in the quality of medicines available in the country," officials added.

"The initiative reflects the government of India's continued commitment to strengthening the drug regulatory framework and ensuring the availability of safe, effective and quality medicines for the public," a statement from the ministry said.

The draft amendments have been notified for public consultation, inviting objections and suggestions from stakeholders and members of the public within 30 days from the date on which copies of the Gazette of India containing the draft rules are made available to the public.In a major step towards strengthening the regulatory framework for ensuring the quality and safety of medicines in the country, the centre has proposed immediate suspension of manufacturing licences for drugs Not of Standard Quality (NSQ) on specified critical quality parameters.

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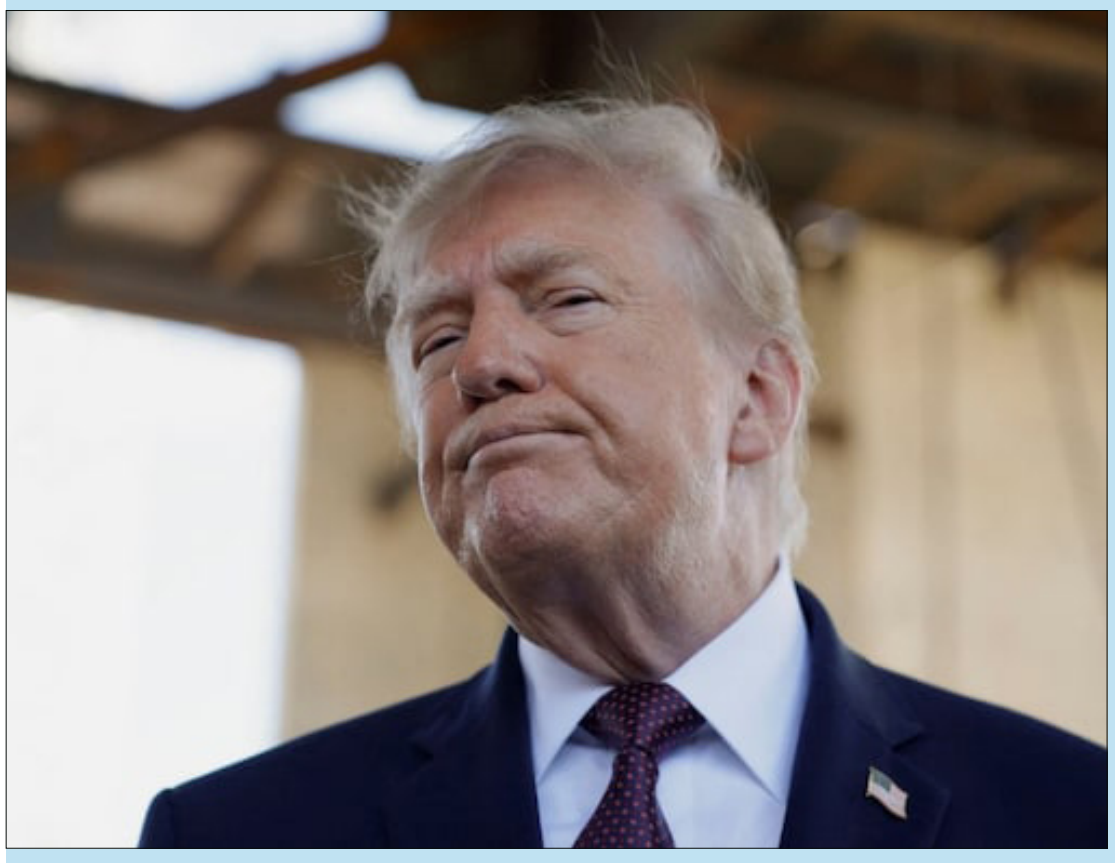
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INTERNATIONAL

'Largely true': Trump acknowledges Iran war impacted midterm polls



WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday acknowledged that the Iran war was the key factor in his party's sweeping midterm election losses, after Vice President JD Vance urged Republicans to be "honest" about the unpopular conflict's impact.

Asked if he agreed with Vance's remark that the Iran was "the reason we lost," Trump, speaking to reporters at his White House ballroom construction site, said: "I think it's largely true because it drove the gasoline up a little bit short term."

"But at the same time, if I had it to do again, I'd have to do it again. Because long term, it's the only answer. You can't let Iran have a nuclear weapon," he added.

Vice President JD Vance, often eyed as Trump's likely successor at the White House, blamed the president's war in Iran for Republicans' midterm wipeout.

The president had no public events on his schedule originally, but called reporters together at the last minute. He also briefly took questions, insisting, "If I were on the ballot I would have won."

He spoke at length about his new White House ballroom, delivering his first public remarks since the midterm election rout of his Republican Party from the construction site.

"It's going to be not only one of the biggest, but it'll be the most beautiful ballroom I think anywhere in the world," Trump told reporters -- without initially talking about the midterms in which Democrats swept Congress.

Meanwhile, Trump ruled out firing Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth despite suffering bruising midterm election losses that the US president has blamed on the war against Iran.

"No, I think he's doing a very good job," Trump said when asked if he was considering replacing Hegseth, a staunch proponent of military action against the Islamic republic.

President Donald Trump talks to reporters during a tour of White House Ballroom construction at the White House, Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2026, in Washington.

Iran says Democratic midterm sweep reflects Americans' 'no to war' message

Trump further said that if the Democrats were to launch an effort to impeach him when they take control of Congress next year, it would "destroy" their party.

Asked about prospective impeachment a day after his Republican Party suffered a sweeping midterm election loss, Trump said: "I think it would destroy the Democrat Party if they did that," insisting there was "no reason" for him to be impeached.

Trump has a long history of passing the buck, on issues large and small, but especially when there are ballot-box failures.

After Republicans lost the House in the 2018 midterms during Trump's first term, he blamed defeated members of his own party.

Utah Rep. Mia Love, who had tried to distance herself from him, "gave me no love, but then she lost. Too bad," the president said.

He mocked other losing lawmakers for not embracing him — Florida's Carlos Curbelo, Colorado's Mike Coffman, Virginia's Barbara Comstock, and Illinois' Peter Roskam — with the same words he would use eight years later: "My name wasn't on the ballot." Now he's trying to deflect blame once more, despite having urged voters to "pretend I'm on the ballot."

An Associated Press analysis of the 39 Trump speeches and rallies Trump staged since Sept. 1 showed the president used a version of the phrase in 30 of them. In some addresses he returned to the subject more than once, though, meaning there were at least 40 instances where he appealed to voters to engage in that bit of make-believe.

Israeli President accepts certified election results in a blow to Netanyahu's vote fraud claim



JERUSALEM

Israeli President Isaac Herzog on Wednesday accepted as legally binding the certified results from last week's parliamentary elections and said he would begin consultations with party representatives on the formation of a new government.Herzog's acceptance of the results as valid dealt a blow to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's effort to discredit the vote in which his religious-nationalist bloc lost its majority in the Israeli parliament, or Knesset, while Arab-led parties made historic gains. Netanyahu and his supporters have repeatedly made unsubstantiated claims that the Arab-led parties had "stolen" the election, possibly with foreign assistance.

The Israeli president is required now to sit down with various party leaders to determine who to name as prime minister-designate — a process that could potentially bring Netanyahu's opponents to power.

Israel's election commission said earlier on Wednesday that after a thorough investigation of all parties' claims of fraud it had found "no evidence of irregularities that compromised the integrity of the election or affected its results."

Netanyahu's Likud party did not respond to a request for comment.

A separate investigation by the Shin Bet intelligence service, which is headed by David Zini, a Netanyahu appointee and loyalist, into allegations of foreign interference in the election is still ongoing.

In a private meeting Wednesday of the election committee's members, its head, Supreme Court Justice Noam Sohlberg, read out an intelligence assessment from the Shin Bet saying the agency believed there had been a "widespread phenomenon involving the influx of substantial funds into Israel from foreign states," including from countries hostile toward Israel.

The Shin Bet provided no evidence to explain its assertion. The committee has previously said that while claims about foreign actors seeking to influence the election are serious and under investigation, it does not believe that any such interference affected the results — even if it had happened.

Sohlberg reiterated that stance on Wednesday.

"At this stage, these are merely suspicions, and even if they are substantiated, the scope of their potential impact is limited," he said during a ceremony to present the certified election results to Herzog.

Sohlberg added that it was dangerous to cast doubt on the results and said they are legally binding.Public trust in the electoral process is "easy to destroy, yet very difficult to repair," he warned.

In the Oct. 27 vote, neither Netanyahu's bloc nor the bloc of allies of his chief rival, opposition leader Gadi Eisenkot, secured a parliamentary majority needed to form a new government, raising the possibility of an alliance between the two rivals or an alliance between Eisenkot and some of the Arab-led parties.

Israel's president is now expected to begin a series of sit-downs with political parties. The meetings are expected to unfold over the next several days.

Herzog is then to choose the candidate — most likely Netanyahu or Eisenkot — who he believes is most likely to be able to form a coalition government, setting the stage for weeks of negotiations.

If neither man can put together a government, the country would hold a new election early next year.

Israeli intel service's request for separate interrogations is rejected

The Shin Bet had requested approval from Israel's attorney general on Tuesday to interrogate several elected officials as part of the agency's separate probe, including the Ra'am party leader Mansour Abbas and other senior Arab lawmakers, Israeli media reported.

The request was sharply rejected.

"It is not permissible to interrogate citizens or elected officials without evidence to justify such action," Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara said. The Joint List of Arab parties condemned the request, calling it a "campaign of incitement" by Netanyahu and his allies designed to delegitimize the Arab vote. A far-right ally of Netanyahu, Itamar Ben-Gvir, rejected the committee's findings that the elections were valid. He called on the Shin Bet, over which he has no jurisdiction, to "arrest all the leaders of the Arab political parties" and to interrogate them in "basement interrogation cells until these suspicions are fully clarified."

Herzog said Wednesday that the Shin Bet investigation into possible foreign interference should play out. But he cautioned that Arab Israeli voters "must not be smeared."

"I condemn the coarseness and racist expressions that we have heard recently," Herzog said.

El Niño's Triple Threat: Food Crisis, Water Scarcity and Unseasonal Heat Raise Global Concerns



The growing influence of El Niño over the Pacific Ocean has raised fresh concerns about the global climate outlook, with India and several other countries potentially facing a combination of weaker monsoon rainfall, unusually high winter temperatures and declining agricultural output.

The consequences could extend far beyond changing weather patterns, affecting food supplies, water availability, public health and rural livelihoods. The emerging situation points to three major challenges: agricultural losses, rising temperatures and growing pressure on food security.

According to a warning by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), the number of people facing acute food insecurity across 45 countries could rise to 274 million by the end of 2027. Climate change, geopolitical conflicts and shortages of fertilisers are among the factors that could aggravate the crisis.

Indian agriculture faces a double blow

El Niño can disrupt the normal pattern of the southwest monsoon, raising the risk of below-normal rainfall. Reduced precipitation and declining soil moisture could affect kharif crops. The situation may become more difficult during the rabi season if temperatures remain unusually high, threatening the production of wheat, mustard and gram.

Estimates cited in the report suggest that maize production could decline by 28-32 per cent, rice production by 12-18 per cent and pulses by 14-17 per cent. These figures, however, are projections rather than confirmed estimates of crop losses.

A decline in agricultural output could tighten food supplies and push up prices. Food inflation in India could rise by 3-5 per cent, according to the estimates cited in the report. Low-income households and communities dependent on agriculture are likely to bear the greatest burden.

Reservoir levels add to concerns

The impact of deficient rainfall is also becoming a concern for India's water resources. Data cited in the report for October 8, 2026, indicate that water storage in the country's 178 major reservoirs was below normal levels, with southern India particularly affected.

Lower reservoir levels could put additional pressure on irrigation, urban water supplies and industrial activities. Higher temperatures may accelerate evaporation from reservoirs and soil, further reducing available water.

Greater dependence on groundwater to meet agricultural and urban requirements could also accelerate the decline in groundwater levels, creating a longer-term challenge for water security.

Warmer winter raises fresh concerns

Another potential consequence of El Niño is an unusually warm winter. Forecasts cited in the report suggest that temperatures across several parts of India could remain above normal between November 2026 and February 2027, affecting both daytime and night-time conditions.

A weaker western disturbance over the northern Himalayan region could reduce snowfall. This may have implications for the seasonal water flow of rivers originating in the Himalayas.

Some climate assessments have also warned that summer-like conditions could begin as early as February 2027, although the actual temperature pattern will depend on several interacting weather systems.

Rising risk of heat-related deaths

The possible impact of extreme heat on public health is another major concern. According to estimates attributed to the University of Chicago's Climate Impact Lab, India could record around 15,800 additional deaths linked to rising temperatures between September 2026 and February 2027.

A separate estimate attributed to the Lancet Countdown projects as many as 55,000 additional heat-related deaths in India and 857,000 worldwide by March 2027.

These are projections, not confirmed mortality figures. The actual toll will depend on the intensity and duration of heatwaves, the effectiveness of public health systems, early warning mechanisms and protection for vulnerable populations.

Children, older people, pregnant women and outdoor workers are particularly exposed to extreme heat. High temperatures can increase the risk of heatstroke, dehydration, cardiovascular complications and kidney-related illnesses.

Changing rainfall patterns and flooding may also contaminate drinking water sources, increasing the risk of diarrhoea, cholera and typhoid. Warmer conditions and irregular rainfall can create favourable breeding conditions for mosquitoes, potentially increasing the spread of dengue, malaria and chikungunya.

Women and children face disproportionate risks

Climate-related disasters do not affect all sections of society equally. Women and children are often among the most vulnerable when food, water and household incomes come under pressure.

In food-insecure households, women may reduce their own food intake to ensure that other family members have enough to eat. Droughts and floods can also increase the burden of collecting water and managing household responsibilities.Financial distress may disrupt children's education and nutrition. Research cited in the report has also warned that economic hardship can increase the risks of early marriage and domestic violence in vulnerable communities.

Pregnant women face additional health risks during extreme heat, including the possibility of premature delivery and other pregnancy-related complications.

El Niño does not automatically mean drought

El Niño is a natural climate phenomenon associated with the unusual warming of surface waters in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean. It can alter rainfall and temperature patterns across different parts of the world.

The phenomenon generally recurs every two to seven years and can remain active for several months to around 18 months.

India has experienced drought-like conditions during several previous El Niño episodes, including those in 1982, 1987, 2002, 2009 and 2015. However, the occurrence of El Niño does not automatically result in drought in India.

Other climate factors, including the Indian Ocean Dipole, also influence the behaviour of the monsoon. The severity of its impact therefore depends on the interaction of several atmospheric and oceanic conditions.

While India and Indonesia could face heightened risks of drought, heatwaves and forest fires, some parts of Southeast Asia may experience excessive rainfall and flooding. The same climate phenomenon can therefore produce sharply different consequences across regions.

Preparedness will be crucial

Managing the potential impact of El Niño will require coordinated action across agriculture, water management and public health departments.Water conservation, the adoption of drought-resistant crop varieties, more efficient irrigation systems and adequate foodgrain reserves will be essential. Authorities will also need to monitor food prices and strengthen early warning systems to prepare communities for extreme heat and water shortages.Public health preparedness must focus particularly on outdoor workers, older people, children and pregnant women. Access to drinking water, cooling facilities and timely medical assistance could help reduce the risks associated with prolonged heatwaves. The precise intensity of El Niño and its eventual impact on India remain subject to forecasting uncertainties. Rather than creating alarm, the priority should be to monitor scientific assessments, strengthen preparedness and protect communities most exposed to climate-related risks.

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Presents

North East Integration Rally

Peace | Progress | Prosperity

Writing Star Contest

OPEN TO ALL FOR
| 5 CATEGORY | 8 NE STATES |
| 5 BROAD TOPICS |

MAY-NOV 2026

DIGITAL PARTICIPATION CERTIFICATE

THE SELECTED ARTICLE WILL BE PUBLISHED ON WWW.KRCTIMES.COM

"I can shake off everything as I write; my sorrows disappear, my courage is reborn."

– Anne Frank

TOPICS

- INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT OF NER (ROADS, RAILS, AVIATION, HYDROPOWER & SECURITY)
- PROMOTING TOURISM, MSME, AGRO & HORTICULTURE, ACT EAST DIPLOMACY
- DISASTER MANAGEMENT, ADVENTURE SPORTS & CLIMATE CHANGE
- ART & CULTURE, THEATRE, CINEMA, MEDIA & ENTERTAINMENT
- SE FOR SUCCESS- PROMOTING EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, ENPLOYABILITY, ENTREPRENEURSHIP & EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Open to Students from Class VI to Senior Citizens, divided into 5 categories+topics

Each entry will receive a digital participation certificate

There is NO fee for participation

The selected entry will be published on **www.krctimes.com**

email articles: **info@krcfoundation.org**

5 categories: A- Class- VI, VII, VIII |B- Class- IX, X, XI, XII |C-College & PG Students | D- Working Class & Homemaker |E- Retired & Senior Citizen (60+)

FOR RULES AND DETAILS, PLEASE VISIT
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Teacher Excellence Award

2026-27

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