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Guwahati Bullet Train: Chicken's Neck Poses Engineering Challenge:Himanta

GUWAHATU

Assam Chief Minister says underground or elevated railway infrastructure may be needed to cross the narrow Siliguri Corridor; final route and project details yet to be worked out.

Guwahati, November 3: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has said the proposed bullet train connectivity to Guwahati may require specialised engineering solutions to cross the strategically important Siliguri Corridor, popularly known as the Chicken's Neck.Welcoming the approval of Guwahati's inclusion in the high-speed rail network, Sarma said the development was significant for the Northeast, but several technical and logistical details remained unresolved."The first good news is that now Guwahati has been put on the map. But the details have to be worked out," the Chief Minister said.

Underground or elevated route under consideration

Sarma pointed out that the Siliguri Corridor, which connects the Northeast with the rest of the country, is around 22 km wide at its narrowest point, with some stretches measuring only 16 km.



With an existing national highway and railway line already passing through the corridor, constructing a separate track for bullet trains could pose a major engineering challenge.

"The bullet train cannot run on the present railway lines. It has to be a completely separate railway line," he said.The Chief Minister said the government would need to determine whether the proposed railway line would pass through the Chicken's Neck underground or above ground, given the limited availability of land in the strategically sensitive corridor.

He added that an underground or elevated alignment could significantly increase the project's cost compared with a conventional ground-level railway line.Sarma to seek clarity from Railway MinisterSarma said he would meet Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw during his next visit to Delhi to seek clarity on the technical aspects of the project.According to the Chief Minister, the proposal to extend the bullet train corridor beyond Siliguri to Guwahati had initially faced concerns over its feasibility.

However, following discussions with Vaishnaw and a request to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the proposal to include Guwahati received approval."Initially, they said it may not be possible. But after I met Ashwini Vaishnaw and requested the Prime Minister, they have now agreed that it will come to Guwahati," he said.

Sarma described the decision as a significant step for Assam and credited the Prime Minister and the Railway Minister for approving the extension.

He said the project would require detailed planning and substantial investment, particularly if specialised construction techniques were needed to cross the Siliguri Corridor.

The Chief Minister did not provide a construction timeline or details of the final alignment, saying these would become clearer after further discussions with the Railway Ministry.

Meghalaya Pressure Groups Give Government 30 Days to Enforce Anti-Influx Laws

SHILLONG

A coalition of 10 pressure groups and civil society organisations in Meghalaya has given the state government a 30-day deadline to implement existing laws aimed at regulating the entry of outsiders and safeguarding the socio-economic and political interests of indigenous communities.

In a letter to Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma dated November 3, the Joint Co-ordination Committee (JCC) expressed concern over what it described as prolonged delays and a lack of progress in enforcing key legal provisions. The committee warned that failure to address its demands within the stipulated period could trigger a public agitation.

The JCC represents 10 organisations, including the Federation of Khasi Jaiñtia and Garo People (FKJGP), Hynñiewtrep National Youth Front (HNYF), Ri-Bhoi Youth Federation (RBYF), Jaintia Students Union (JSU), Garo Students Union (GSU), A-Chik Youth Welfare Organisation (AYWO), Association for Democracy and Empowerment (ADE), Federation for A-Chik Freedom (FAF), All A-Chik Youth Welfare Society (AAYWS) and A-Chik Holistic Awakening Movement (AHAM).

According to the committee, demands for an effective mechanism to protect the interests of indigenous communities have been raised with the state government since 2013-14. However, several important issues remain unresolved.

MRSSA, migrant workers' registration among key demands

The organisations questioned the government's failure to effectively implement the Meghalaya Residents Safety and Security Act (MRSSA), 2016, particularly its provisions relating to entry and exit points.

They also sought enforcement of the Meghalaya Identification Registration (Safety and Security) of Migrant Workers Act, 2020, which provides a framework for registering migrant workers in the state.

The committee further flagged unresolved inter-state and international boundary disputes, along with the non-implementation of the Meghalaya Benami Transactions Prohibition and Detection Act.

PERSPECTIVE

Hardest question to answer: "Describe yourself?"

Paul Lyngdoh Sworn In as Meghalaya Minister After Joining NPP

SHILLONG

West Shillong MLA Paul Lyngdoh was sworn in as a minister in the Meghalaya government on Monday, days after joining the ruling National People's Party (NPP).

The oath-taking ceremony was held at Lok Bhavan in Shillong. Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma congratulated Lyngdoh in a social media post, wishing him "dedication and commitment" in serving the people of the state.

Lyngdoh's induction fills the vacancy created by the resignation of former United Democratic Party (UDP) president Metbah Lyngdoh from the Council of Ministers.

The move comes amid a political realignment in Meghalaya, with 11 legislators recently leaving the UDP. Eight joined the Bharatiya Janata Party, while Paul Lyngdoh and two other legislators moved towards the NPP.

The NPP formally inducted Paul Lyngdoh and Mawkyrwat MLA Renikton Lyngdoh on October 28. Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong handed them their membership certificates at the party headquarters. Mookaiaw MLA Nujorji Sungoh, who is also seeking to join the NPP, could not attend the event due to illness.

Paul Lyngdoh previously served as Meghalaya's tourism minister and was associated with initiatives to develop the state's tourism sector. One of the projects linked to his tenure, the proposed Shillong Peak ropeway, has recently drawn scrutiny following objections from the Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council.

WHO SAID WHAT



Insurance for All' is already a goal for the Government of India. Insurance should deepen and reach the last citizen who needs coverage. Access to credit, AI-enabled skilling of youth and strengthening our banking system to meet the requirements of Viksit Bharat are equally important priorities.
~ Nirmala Sitharaman, Union Finance Minister

Kangpokpi Shutdown Disrupts Imphal-Dimapur-Guwahati Traffic, Thousands Stranded



IMPHAL

Thousands of vehicles remained stranded in Manipur's Kangpokpi district on Tuesday as the Committee on Tribal Unity (CoTU), Sadar Hills, extended its ongoing total shutdown by another 48 hours, disrupting traffic along the Imphal-Dimapur-Guwahati highway corridor.

The shutdown was called to protest the alleged failure of the government to take concrete action and deliver justice for the killing of two Kuki-Zo civilians near National Highway 2, along the SP Road.

Normal life in Kangpokpi has been severely affected, with passenger vehicles, goods carriers and commuters facing prolonged delays. The disruption has also hit long-distance transportation from Imphal towards Nagaland and Assam, leaving several travellers struggling to reach their destinations.

Some vehicles were reportedly exploring alternative routes to reach Dimapur and Guwahati.

A driver, Roshan, said several vehicles were also waiting for security escorts in the Litan area of Ukhrul district before proceeding towards their destinations.

CoTU warns of further agitation

In a public notice issued on Monday, CoTU announced the extension of the shutdown from 36 to 48 hours, accusing the government of indecision and failing to initiate concrete action against those responsible for the killings.

The committee alleged that the government had shown indifference towards the lives and security of Kuki-Zo civilians and demanded decisive, timebound action.

"The patience of a grieving community must never be mistaken for weakness, nor its demand for justice be treated with contempt," CoTU stated.

The committee warned that if the government failed to ensure immediate action and timely justice during the extended shutdown, the Kuki-Zo community would convene a mass public meeting to deliberate on and announce its next course of action.

Bodies recovered after four-day search

The shutdown follows the disappearance of Paoginlal Hangshing and Tinginlun Chongloi, both aged 20, from Taphou Kuki village on October 28.

Their bodies were recovered on November 1 during joint search operations, triggering widespread protests and clashes between security forces and demonstrators in Kangpokpi.

CoTU has refused to claim the bodies until the government addresses its charter of demands.

The continuing shutdown has added to the disruption of movement along a key highway linking Manipur with Nagaland and Assam, with thousands of travellers and transport operators bearing the brunt of the blockade.

Tamenglong's Gaichakliu Kamei to Represent Manipur at Femina Miss India 2027



IMPHAL

Eighteen-year-old Gaichakliu Kamei from Manipur's Tamenglong district has been crowned Femina Miss India Manipur 2027, earning the opportunity to represent the state at the national pageant's grand finale.

Kamei was awarded the title at a ceremony held at Vivanta Guwahati on Sunday. She emerged as the winner during the regional Miss Northeast Diva auditions, which followed preliminary mega auditions in Guwahati on October 26.She competed against other state finalists, including Alish Maibam and Zeneva Laikhuram. The judging panel selected Kamei after assessing the contestants' poise, dedication and performance.

A member of the Zeliangrong Naga community, Kamei is a professional model with previous experience in beauty pageants. She also runs a social media platform focused on promoting youth empowerment and self-confidence among young women in her community.

Following her selection, Kamei has begun preparations for the Femina Miss India 2027 grand finale, where she will represent Manipur on the national stage.

Her achievement has drawn encouragement from well-wishers across the region, with expectations building ahead of the national competition.

Delhi High Court Stays JNU's Termination of Congress MP Bimol Akoijam



NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court stayed Jawaharlal Nehru University's (JNU) decision to terminate Congress MP and former professor Angomcha Bimol Akoijam over sexual harassment allegations, granting him interim relief.Justice Anup J Bhambhani issued notice to the university on Akoijam's petition challenging his dismissal and stayed the termination order and subsequent proceedings arising from it. The matter is scheduled for further hearing in January. Akoijam, who represents the Inner Manipur Lok Sabha constituency, was a professor at JNU's School of Social Sciences before the university terminated his services on October 9 following an inquiry into complaints filed by 11 female students.

In his petition, Akoijam challenged both his dismissal and JNU's decision to evict him from his official campus residence. He argued that the university had not given him a proper opportunity to present his case and had failed to follow procedures prescribed under University Grants Commission regulations and the JNU Act. He also contended that he had not received the required notice before his termination.

The complaints, filed in May, alleged that Akoijam invited students to his official residence under the pretext of meetings or social gatherings and attempted to sexually harass them. Some complainants also accused him of making obscene or inappropriate remarks during classroom interactions.

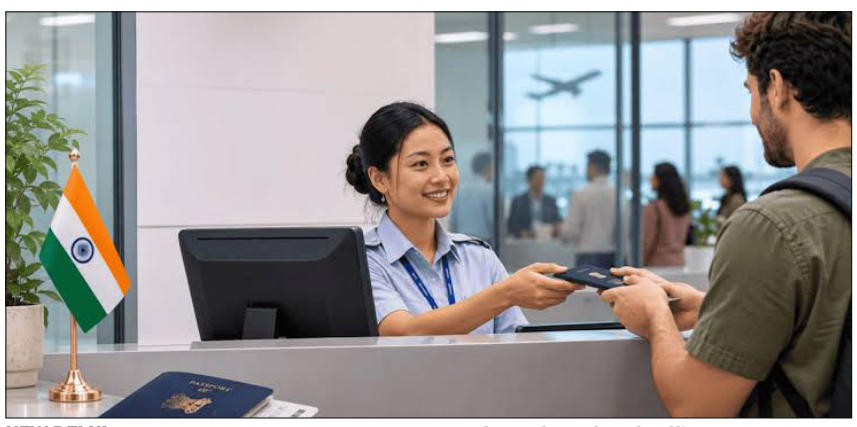
JNU's Internal Complaints Committee conducted an inquiry and recommended disciplinary action. The university's October 9 termination order, signed by Vice-Chancellor Santishree D Pandit, said the decision followed due process and consideration of the committee's findings.Akoijam has denied the allegations and questioned the fairness of the inquiry. He described the ICC proceedings as a "khap panchayat" and alleged that the university's action was politically motivated. He has also said he would resign from Parliament if the allegations against him were established.

The case has triggered a political confrontation in Manipur. The BJP has demanded Akoijam's resignation, while the Congress has accused the ruling party of using the allegations to target its MP. Protests have been held both against and in support of Akoijam.

After his dismissal, the BJP's women's wing held a march towards Congress Bhavan in Imphal, and Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh called for the MP to step down. A delegation of BJP women MPs later met President Droupadi Murmu, seeking action against Akoijam and protection for the complainants.

Centre Opens New Foreigner Registration Offices in Nagaland, Tripura

Kohima and Agartala offices to ease immigration services and strengthen enforcement; total number of FRROs rises to 20 nationwide.



NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has notified new Foreigners Regional Registration Offices (FRROs) in Kohima and Agartala, expanding the country's immigration registration network and bringing the total number of such offices to 20.

The move is part of the Centre's efforts to establish an FRRO in every state capital, in view of the growing number of foreign nationals visiting India for tourism, medical treatment and education.

According to an official statement issued on Monday, the new offices in Kohima, Agartala and Bhubaneswar will take over responsibilities previously handled by offices in other cities.

Cases from Nagaland and Tripura were earlier managed by the Kolkata FRRO, while those from Odisha came under the Hyderabad office.

More offices planned in Northeast

The Home Ministry is considering opening additional FRROs in states that do not yet have one, including Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Meghalaya.

Other states under consideration are Bihar, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

Since 2025, FRROs have also begun functioning in Jaipur, Chandigarh, Aizawl, Amravati and Guwahati.

Officials said the expansion is intended to facilitate the lawful entry and stay of foreign visitors while strengthening enforcement of immigration regulations and security requirements.

FRROs monitor compliance with immigration laws, deal with visa violations and overstays, and coordinate legal action or penalties where necessary.

Immigration law provides framework

The offices operate under the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025, which consolidated four earlier laws into a single framework governing the entry, stay, movement and departure of foreign nationals.

Under the legislation, the Bureau of Immigration receives support from FRROs authorised by the Centre to carry out immigration-related functions.

The ministry has listed the following cities as locations of FRROs: Ahmedabad, Amravati, Amritsar, Aizawl, Agartala, Bengaluru, Bhubaneswar, Calicut, Chennai, Cochin, Chandigarh, Delhi, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Kohima, Kozhikode, Lucknow, Mumbai and Trivandrum.

Tripura CM Seeks Swift Action After Alleged Assault on BSF Personnel in Sepahijala



AGARTALA

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha has condemned the alleged assault on Border Security Force (BSF) personnel at Ashabari in Sepahijala district and directed authorities to take swift and stringent action against those involved.

The incident reportedly occurred a day before the Chief Minister's statement, when a group of people allegedly attacked BSF personnel in the area.

Saha said violence against security personnel was unacceptable and must be dealt with firmly in accordance with the law. He directed the concerned authorities to act promptly and stressed that security personnel must be treated with respect and protected while carrying out their duties.

A BSF official told India Today that the personnel had gone to the spot following a tip-off about suspected smugglers when they were allegedly attacked by villagers.

The official said the BSF had lodged a complaint at Kalamchoura Police Station and an FIR had been registered. The charges include attempt to murder BSF personnel, snatching of their weapons and obstructing government officials from discharging their duties.

The official further said the accused had been identified but were absconding. He alleged that they were involved in smuggling activities and had been accompanied by associates.

"We will take strict action against them," the official said.

Further investigation into the incident is underway.

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STARLINK AND THE PERILS

Ukraine's experience exposes the risks of depending on privately controlled foreign satellite networks for critical military communications. For India, the lesson is clear: technological access must not come at the cost of sovereign control.

The controversy surrounding Elon Musk's Starlink services in Ukraine offers an important strategic lesson for India. It is not simply a dispute over commercial agreements or the terms of a satellite internet service. It raises a fundamental question about national security: what happens when a country's critical military communications depend on a privately controlled network headquartered outside its borders?

Ukraine's wartime experience has demonstrated how access to a commercial satellite network can acquire strategic significance. When a private company controls the infrastructure on which military operations increasingly depend, the authority to restrict, modify or withdraw that service can become a powerful lever. For a country facing complex security challenges along two contested borders, India cannot afford to overlook this vulnerability.

The issue is not whether Starlink is technologically advanced or commercially useful. Its ability to provide connectivity in remote and infrastructure-poor regions is undeniable. The concern is whether India should allow essential national security functions to become dependent on a service whose continued availability may ultimately be determined by decisions taken beyond its sovereign jurisdiction.

During the Russia-Ukraine war, Musk accused Ukrainian forces of exploiting Starlink's civilian commercial network for offensive drone operations. He said SpaceX had closed the loophole, while Ukrainian officials reported restrictions and disruptions affecting military terminals. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky subsequently announced that Starlink and Starshield operations had returned to the speeds required by Ukraine.

The episode also raised questions about the role of the US government in decisions affecting Ukrainian access. Accounts of the restrictions and the chain of decision-making differed. Musk has described Starshield, SpaceX's military-oriented system, as owned and controlled by the US government. Whatever the precise sequence of events, the larger lesson remains relevant: a country using a foreign-controlled communications network may not have the final say over its availability during a crisis.

Modern military operations depend heavily on uninterrupted communications. Satellite networks support command and control, intelligence sharing, logistics, surveillance and the deployment of unmanned systems. A sudden loss of connectivity can disrupt coordination, delay decisions and weaken operational effectiveness. The vulnerability becomes particularly serious when an alternative communication system cannot be activated immediately.

India must therefore consider a series of difficult questions. What if a foreign provider changes its terms of service? What if its home government imposes restrictions under domestic law or national security policy? What if access is curtailed during a military confrontation, precisely when uninterrupted communication becomes indispensable?

These questions are not accusations against Musk or assumptions about the intentions of SpaceX. They reflect the basic realities of international politics and commercial dependence. A company may have commercial commitments, but it also operates within the legal and regulatory framework of its home country. Diplomatic goodwill and contractual assurances cannot guarantee that commercial and strategic interests will always remain aligned.

For India, the stakes are particularly high. Its security environment includes a contested Line of Actual Control with China and a sensitive border with Pakistan. The difficult terrain along the Himalayan frontier, the vast distances involved and the possibility of disruption to conventional communication infrastructure make resilient satellite connectivity an important military requirement.

Yet resilience should not be confused with sovereignty. Replacing vulnerable terrestrial infrastructure with dependence on a foreign-controlled satellite network may resolve one operational problem while creating another. The same concern extends to maritime surveillance and operations in the Indian Ocean, as well as disaster response in remote and disaster-prone regions.

India's approach should not be driven by an instinctive rejection of foreign technology. Starlink and similar services could bring substantial benefits to remote communities, businesses, emergency services and disaster management agencies. Foreign technology can complement domestic capabilities and accelerate connectivity. But the distinction between a useful supplementary service and an indispensable strategic infrastructure must remain clear.

The principle of strategic autonomy, which has guided India's defence procurement, energy policy and diplomatic engagement, must also shape its approach to digital and satellite infrastructure. Strategic autonomy does not mean technological isolation. It means retaining the freedom and capability to make independent decisions, particularly when national interests are at stake.

This requires a clear framework for the use of foreign satellite networks in sensitive sectors. Critical military communications must remain under sovereign control. Commercial foreign networks may serve as additional channels, but they should not become the sole or indispensable means of communication for essential national functions.Contracts involving sensitive applications should incorporate safeguards relating to service continuity, suspension procedures, advance notification and emergency access. Such provisions cannot eliminate the possibility of foreign governmental intervention, but they can reduce commercial uncertainty and establish clearer obligations.

More importantly, India must invest in alternative communication pathways. Indigenous satellite capabilities, secure terrestrial networks and independent communication systems need to work together as part of a resilient national architecture. Merely having multiple service providers will not guarantee security if they depend on the same external infrastructure or remain subject to similar restrictions.Military planners must also conduct regular contingency exercises to determine whether essential operations can continue if a commercial satellite service suddenly becomes unavailable. Alternative arrangements cannot be improvised after a crisis begins. They must be built into the system before dependence becomes entrenched.Technological self-reliance, in this context, is about much more than manufacturing satellites or communication equipment domestically. It is about retaining the ability to operate, communicate and make strategic decisions even when external support is withdrawn. A country that possesses advanced technology but cannot independently sustain its critical functions remains vulnerable.Ukraine's experience does not establish that Starlink will be denied to India. Nor does it diminish the technological achievements of SpaceX. What it demonstrates is that access to a privately controlled network is not the same as control over that network. The distinction becomes decisive when commercial infrastructure turns into a component of national security.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"It was the mark of a barbarian to destroy something one could not understand."

~ Arthur C. Clarke

NOBEL ECONOMIC STABILITY: THEORY, POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT

PROF. (DR.) D. MUKHERJEE

The 2026 Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel was reportedly awarded jointly to Robert E. Hall of Stanford University and Michael Woodford of Columbia University for contributions to the microeconomic foundations of macroeconomic stabilisation. Announced on 12 October 2026, the award recognises research explaining how household and business decisions influence economic fluctuations. Their scholarship integrates Keynesian macroeconomics, rational expectations and New Keynesian theory, examining consumption, saving, employment, pricing and monetary policy. Its relevance is underscored by technological disruption and geopolitical uncertainty. The International Monetary Fund's October 2026 World Economic Outlook reportedly projects global growth of 3.1% and headline inflation of 4.7%. Robert Ernest Hall, born on 13 August 1943 in Palo Alto, California, graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1964 and earned his PhD from MIT in 1967 under Robert M. Solow. Joining Stanford in 1978, his research covers consumption, productivity, unemployment and business cycles. Michael Dean Woodford, born in Massachusetts in 1955, earned degrees from the University of Chicago, Yale Law School and MIT. He returned to Columbia University in 2004 as John Bates Clark Professor of Political Economy. His research focuses on monetary theory, inflation, policy rules and central-bank communication. Their work highlights how credible policies and stable expectations promote economic stability and sustainable development.

The Road to Nobel Recognition

Robert E. Hall and Michael Woodford's research demonstrates how household and firm decisions shape macroeconomic outcomes and how credible monetary and fiscal policies can moderate inflation, unemployment and economic fluctuations. Amid geopolitical rivalries, trade fragmentation, energy insecurity, technological competition and supply-chain restructuring, their insights acquire renewed significance. Economic resilience requires adaptive policies, credible institutions and an understanding of how individuals and businesses respond to uncertainty. Hall's seminal 1978 paper, Stochastic Implications of the Life Cycle-Permanent Income Hypothesis: Theory and Evidence, established that forward-looking consumption depends on changes in expected lifetime resources rather than current income alone. Woodford developed influential frameworks for monetary policy based on rational expectations, nominal rigidities and intertemporal optimisation, explaining how credible policy commitments and anticipated interest rates influence consumption, investment, output and inflation.

Their intellectual contribution lies in grounding macroeconomic analysis in the decisions, constraints and expectations of economic agents. These microeconomic foundations enable policymakers to assess monetary transmission mechanisms, compare alternative policy regimes and evaluate potential responses to economic shocks. Nevertheless, predictive accuracy depends on assumptions concerning information, financial constraints, price adjustments and expectation formation. Ultimately, their scholarship suggests that effective stabilisation extends beyond restoring equilibrium after crises. By integrating individual economic behaviour with strategic public policy, nations can strengthen productive capacity, navigate global disruptions, encourage innovation and promote inclusive, sustainable growth. Such frameworks improve evidence-based policymaking without eliminating uncertainty or guaranteeing immunity from future economic crises.

Robert E. Hall's research spans consumption theory, labour markets, unemployment, productivity and business cycles. His influential 1978 paper established a testable implication of the permanent-income hypothesis, while his subsequent work examined employment fluctuations and productivity measurement. The Hall-Rabushka flat-tax proposal reflects his interest in tax efficiency and institutional design. Michael Woodford's seminal work, Interest and Prices: Foundations of a Theory of Monetary Policy (2003), established a rigorous framework for understanding interest rates, rational expectations and nominal rigidities, profoundly influencing New Keynesian economics. His research highlights policy credibility, central-bank communication and the role of anticipated interest rates. Although their approaches differ, their contributions are complementary: Hall elucidated consumption decisions and economic fluctuations, while Woodford explained monetary transmission through expectations and price adjustments. Collectively, their scholarship strengthens evidence-based policymaking and advances coherent, credible and effective macroeconomic stabilisation.

How Economic Models Explain Stability

The laureates' contributions inform several complementary economic frameworks rather than a single jointly developed model. Hall's research on permanent income and consumption smoothing explains how households allocate resources over time, considering expected income, wealth, uncertainty and borrowing constraints. The Euler equation links present consumption with expected future consumption and real interest rates. Woodford's New Keynesian framework integrates intertemporal optimisation, rational expectations and nominal rigidities to explain relationships among inflation, output and monetary policy. Dynamic stochastic general-equilibrium (DSGE) models extend these insights by analysing interactions among households, firms and policymakers under uncertainty. Expectations-based frameworks further demonstrate how credible commitments, forward guidance and anticipated interest rates influence current decisions. Together, these approaches clarify economic behaviour, monetary transmission and policy effectiveness, supporting evidence-based stabilisation while recognising model assumptions and predictive limitations.

Economic Behaviour in a Changing World

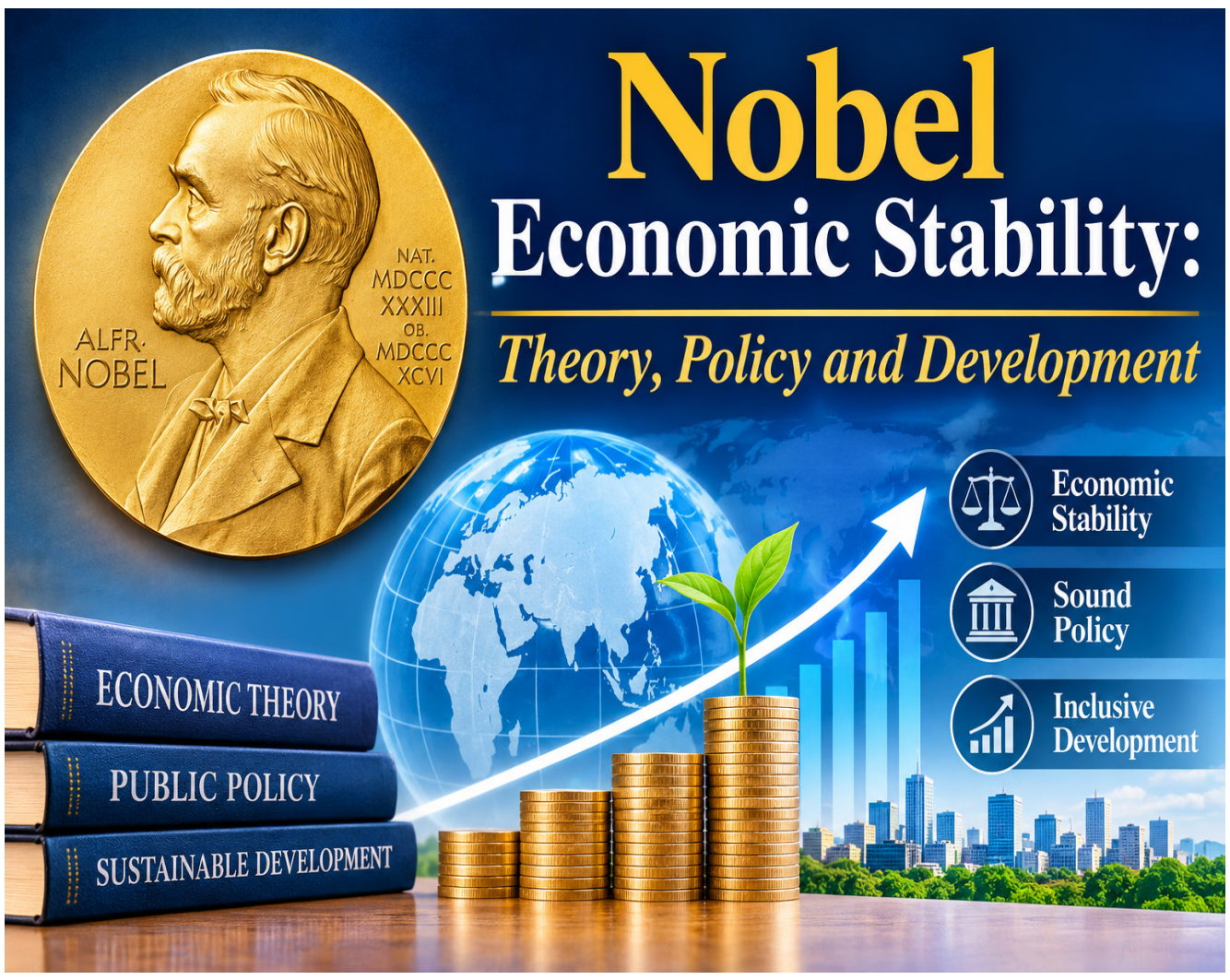
Hall and Woodford's frameworks help policymakers assess monetary and fiscal interventions under uncertainty, examining how interest rates influence consumption, investment and inflation. Although grounded primarily in optimisation and rational expectations, their models can be enriched by behavioural insights, including present bias, loss aversion and limited attention. Liquidity-constrained households may spend temporary transfers, while geopolitical uncertainty can discourage business investment. Energy-price shocks, trade restrictions, supply-chain fragmentation and technological uncertainty complicate economic stabilisation. The IMF's October 2026 projections of 3.1% global growth and 4.7% headline inflation highlight these challenges. Effective policymaking requires scenario analysis, distribution-sensitive evidence and recognition of supply-side disruptions. Monetary tightening can curb demand-driven inflation but cannot resolve physical shortages. Integrating micro-founded models with behavioural evidence, financial constraints and geopolitical risk analysis strengthens economic resilience.

Economics for Human Development The policy implications of the 2026 Nobel Prize in Economics extend beyond inflation control to encompass equitable access to healthcare, education, nutrition, employment and economic opportunity. Central banks should maintain credibility through transparent communication, while governments prioritise productive expenditure and targeted social protection over indiscriminate subsidies. Distributional analysis must complement aggregate indicators, assessing how interest-rate changes affect indebted households, small enterprises, informal workers and vulnerable communities. Employment, poverty and inequality measures should accompany inflation and growth statistics.

Technological disruption further necessitates investment in reskilling, digital infrastructure and adaptive social protection. Although artificial intelligence can enhance productivity, equitable benefits depend on accessible skills development and effective institutions. Governments must also strengthen international cooperation and integrate debt sustainability, financial stability and climate resilience into development strategies. Ultimately, macroeconomic stabilisation should be evaluated not merely through price stability and aggregate growth, but through its contribution to secure livelihoods, expanded opportunities and intergenerational welfare. Sound economic governance is therefore a means of achieving comprehensive human development, not an end in itself.

Economic Stability in an Age of Technological Change

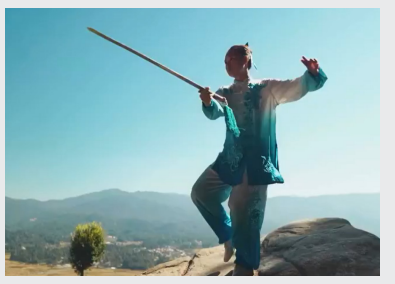
The 2026 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences underscores the relationship between individual economic behaviour and macroeconomic stabilisation. Hall's consumption analysis and Woodford's expectations-based monetary framework offer valuable insights for contemporary governance. Three lessons emerge: credible policymaking requires understanding economic expectations; effective stabilisation demands coordination among monetary, fiscal and regulatory institutions; and economic models must remain empirically grounded and responsive to changing conditions. Artificial intelligence offers productivity gains but also risks employment displacement, market concentration and investment volatility. Geopolitical fragmentation and energy shocks further complicate economic stability. No single framework can anticipate every transformation; therefore, economic models must incorporate behavioural insights, distributional analysis and rigorous stress testing. Ultimately, resilience requires adaptive institutions, protected livelihoods and sustained productive capacity. Sound economic governance must combine analytical rigour, institutional credibility and social responsibility, ensuring that stability advances dignified employment, shared prosperity and sustainable human development amid technological uncertainty.



DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

Arunachal Pradesh is set to become the centre of India's Wushu action this December as the country's top athletes converge in Itanagar for the 35th Senior National Wushu Championship.
Hosted by the All Arunachal Pradesh Wushu Association (AAPWA), the championship will bring together talented sportspersons from across the nation.
Venue: Dorjee Khandu Memorial Badminton Indoor Hall (DK Hall), Chimpu, Itanagar
9–15 December 2026

~ Pema Khandu, CM, Arunachal Pradesh



Assam to Get Northeast's First Private Medical Cyclotron Facility at Rs 62 Crore

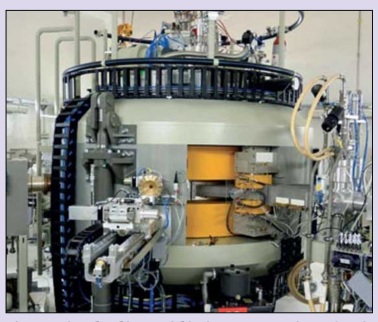
GUWAHATI

Assam is set to strengthen its nuclear medicine and advanced cancer diagnostic infrastructure with the development of the Northeast's first privately owned medical cyclotron facility in Guwahati, involving an investment of around Rs 62 crore.

The foundation stone for the specialised cyclotron vault was laid on November 1 at the Assam Industrial Development Corporation (AIDC) Industrial Estate in Bonda. The facility is being developed by Nucleomed Private Limited and will be the 14th medical cyclotron installation in the country.

The project is expected to be completed by September 2027, with commercial commissioning and production targeted for January 2028.

The ceremony was attended by medical experts and industry representatives, including Olivier Legrain, CEO and Vice-Chairman of Belgium-based Ion Beam Applications (IBA). Several senior medical professionals from Assam also participated in the event.



What will the facility produce?

The proposed installation will house an 18 MeV medical cyclotron capable of producing up to 30 curies of Fluorine-18 Fluorodeoxyglucose (F-18 FDG), a radioactive tracer widely used in Positron Emission Tomography-Computed Tomography (PET-CT) scans.

F-18 FDG helps doctors identify areas of increased metabolic activity in the body, allowing them to detect and assess cancer. PET-CT imaging is also used to investigate and evaluate several other medical conditions.

The facility is expected to supply F-18 FDG to PET-CT centres across the Northeast and other parts of the country. According to Nucleomed Director Dr Kandarpa Saikia, it will also manufacture short- and ultra-short-half-life isotopes required for cancer treatment and other medical applications.

A dedicated theranostics ward is also planned on the premises. Theranostics combines diagnostic imaging with targeted treatment, helping doctors identify specific disease-related targets and use them to guide therapy.

Project follows Advantage Assam 2.0

The project was initiated in November 2025 following Advantage Assam 2.0, the state's investment and infrastructure development initiative.

With piling and preliminary construction work completed, the next phase involves building the specialised vault designed to house the cyclotron equipment. The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) has approved the structural design of the nuclear installation in accordance with the specified safety standards.

Architect Ranjee Baruah and structural engineer Bhaskarjyoti Das are overseeing the project, while former IIT Guwahati Director S N Buragohain is serving as an adviser.

Plans to serve markets beyond the Northeast

The proposed facility is expected to reduce the region's dependence on radioactive tracers transported from other parts of India. It may also create opportunities to supply medical isotopes to markets beyond the Northeast.

Dr Saikia said improved air connectivity from Assam could facilitate the transportation of cyclotron-produced isotopes to other parts of the country and Southeast Asian markets.

Timely transportation is particularly important because several medical isotopes have short radioactive half-lives and must reach hospitals and diagnostic centres within a limited period after production.

Dr Saikia acknowledged the support of the Assam government, particularly Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, along with the AIDC and the Industries Department, in facilitating the project.

Expanding Assam's nuclear medicine infrastructure

Dr Saikia has been associated with the development of nuclear medicine in Assam since 2001, when he helped establish the nuclear medicine department at B Barooah Cancer Institute. He later established Nucleomed Imaging and Diagnostics and contributed to the introduction of the state's first privately operated PET-CT scanner.

The proposed cyclotron facility represents another expansion of specialised medical infrastructure in Assam. Once operational, it is expected to strengthen the regional supply of radioactive tracers, support PET-CT services and improve access to advanced nuclear medicine.

Its eventual impact will depend on the completion of construction, regulatory clearances, production capacity and the development of an efficient distribution network.

Nagaland to Hold Security Coordination Meet to Tackle Extortion, Says Dy CM Patton

KOHIMA

The Nagaland government will convene a security coordination meeting this week to address the growing concern over extortion, particularly in Dimapur, Deputy Chief Minister Yanthungo Patton has said.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the inauguration of the 10th Captain Late Kenguruse Memorial Football Tournament at Indira Gandhi Stadium in Kohima, Patton said the meeting would be held before November 10.

"We are going to have a security coordination meeting this week, before the 10th," he said.

The proposed meeting comes against the backdrop of continuing law-and-order concerns in the state, including extortion and activities linked to various Naga political factions.

According to the Nagaland Home Department's Annual Administrative Report for 2025-26, police registered 1,400 cognisable offences in 2025. Of these, 1,003 cases were registered under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), while 397 fell under Special and Local Laws.

The state recorded 14 murder cases and 54 cases under the Arms Act during the year. Police also registered 100 cases against different Naga political factions and arrested 160 cadres belonging to various groups.

Security forces seized 50 firearms, 1,432 rounds of ammunition and 85 magazines during the period, the report stated.

Drug-related offences also remained a major concern. Police registered 158 cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.

Seizures included around 576 kg of ganja, 20 kg of opium, 13 kg of heroin and shanflower, 10 kg of brown sugar and heroin, 1,04,470 units of synthetic drugs and 3,232.5 bottles of cough syrup. The estimated value of the seized substances exceeded Rs 52.21 crore.

Assam Orders Reduced Prices for 137 Anti-Cancer Medicines From November 9

GUWAHATI

Assam's Drugs Control Administration has directed pharmacies, distributors, stockists and hospitals across the state to sell 137 non-scheduled anti-cancer medicines at revised, lower maximum retail prices (MRPs) from November 9.The directive, issued on Monday, also announced a 90-day statewide inspection drive to ensure that the revised prices are implemented and that the medicines are not sold above the permitted rates.

The order follows an October 17 Gazette notification by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), which capped trade margins on the identified medicines at 30 per cent of their MRP. The NPPA invoked Paragraph 19 of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013, which allows it to intervene in the interest of public welfare.

The revised ceiling applies to non-scheduled formulations containing the listed medicines, whether sold as single-drug products or in combination. It also covers patented medicines.Under the Assam directive, pharmacies, hospital dispensaries, stockists and distributors must implement the revised prices from November 9 and prominently display updated price lists on their premises, as required under the pricing order.The administration said inspections would be carried out across the state to monitor compliance. Establishments found selling the medicines above the revised MRPs could face action under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order and the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

The NPPA's intervention follows findings that some non-scheduled anti-cancer medicines were being sold with average trade mark-ups of around 170 per cent, with margins reaching as high as 700 per cent in certain cases. The 30 per cent cap is expected to reduce prices by up to 70 per cent, depending on the existing price structure of each medicine.

No Decision on Siang Dam Construction, Public Consent Essential: Arunachal CM

ITANAGAR

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu has said no decision has been taken by the state or the Centre to construct the proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project, stressing that public consultation and consent would be essential before any move towards construction.Addressing concerns among residents of Siang and Upper Siang districts, including members of the Adi community, Khandu said the government was currently considering only the preparation of a Pre-Feasibility Report (PFR). The report would assess the project's viability, potential consequences and possible alternatives."Let me be clear. We are not talking about dam construction at this stage," the Chief Minister said, adding that no construction decision would be taken without detailed consultations and public consent. Khandu said the Union government had declared the proposed project a National Project on February 7, 2008, following a Cabinet decision. It is among 16 projects in the country classified as National Projects, he said.

Explaining the need for a feasibility assessment, Khandu referred to China's reported construction of a dam in Medog County, around 40 km from the Indian border, on the Yarlung Tsangpo river. Construction reportedly began on July 19, 2025.

He said around 65 per cent of the Aane Siang's water originates in China, leaving the region vulnerable to sudden surges as well as water scarcity during the dry winter months."Our valley faces real water risks, from sudden and exceptionally high flows arriving with little warning to water scarcity in the dry winter months," he said.Khandu argued that India could not influence developments upstream but could prepare for possible risks through scientific and technical assessments. He said the proposed Siang project was one option that could be examined to help maintain ecological flow in the Siang and Brahmaputra rivers.The PFR, he clarified, would be an initial assessment-not approval for construction. It would examine basic feasibility, likely consequences and alternatives for protecting the Aane Siang.The Chief Minister said any eventual decision would have to comply with legal requirements, including the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013, and the Environment Protection Act, 1986.He rejected claims that residents would be displaced or their land acquired without consent, describing them as misinformation. Khandu said the government would provide clarity through discussions and a roadmap, and would not abandon affected communities midway through the process.Acknowledging the right to disagree, he said the government remained open to discussions with residents, public representatives and officials. He also cautioned against protests turning violent, saying bandhs, blockades and attacks would cause hardship to local communities."Violence can never be the answer," he said, adding that those who threatened others or took the law into their own hands would be held accountable. Khandu appreciated the Arunachal Indigenous Tribes Forum and community organisations for promoting peace and dialogue in the Siang region. He urged residents of Siang and Upper Siang districts, and members of the Adi community, to take part in discussions on a project whose consequences could extend to future generations.

Assam BJP Steps Up Organisational Preparations Ahead of Autonomous Council, Civic Polls



GUWAHATI

The Assam unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has stepped up its organisational preparations ahead of a series of autonomous council and municipal elections scheduled for next month. State president Dilip Saikia on Monday held a meeting with the party's newly appointed in-charge and co-in-charges at its headquarters in Guwahati to review its poll preparedness.The meeting, held at Vajpayee Bhawan in Basistha, focused on strengthening the party organisation ahead of elections to the Mising Autonomous Council, Sonowal Kachari Autonomous Council, Tiwa Autonomous Council and Moran-Matak Autonomous Council, besides municipal boards across the state."We have made preparations for all these polls. We also discussed the council elections and issues concerning the Sixth Schedule areas of Karbi Anglong," Saikia said after the meeting.The organisational exercise comes against the backdrop of a reshuffle in the BJP's state-level organisational responsibilities. Former Bihar Cabinet Minister Mangal Pandey has been appointed as the party's Assam in-charge, while Nagaland MP Phangnon Konyak and Manoj Tigga of Alipurduar have been named co-in-charges. The appointments were made by BJP national president Nitin Nabin.Saikia described the appointments as significant for the state unit, saying the three senior leaders had been entrusted with overseeing the party's affairs in Assam.The meeting also discussed ways to strengthen the party's grassroots network, expand its political reach and prepare for the proposed "Gantantra Bachao, Arajakota Hatao" campaign.Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal welcomed the appointments and expressed confidence that the new leadership team would help expand the BJP's organisational presence in the state."Everyone in the BJP is happy that Pandey has been appointed as the in-charge, along with two co-in-charges. I believe that the BJP's strength will grow further in the coming days," Sonowal said.The organisational review follows Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's October 28 meeting with representatives of the Moran, Matak, Mising and Sonowal-Kachari communities. Discussions at that meeting centred on land rights and pending settlement cases, including land settlement in tribal areas, allotment of up to 50 bighas per family and a review of applications under Mission Basundhara 4.0.The All Assam Matak Students' Union also raised demands for elections to the Matak Autonomous Council and Scheduled Tribe status for the community.Monday's meeting was attended by state office-bearers, district presidents and party functionaries, along with representatives of the BJP's various morchas.

Bharatmala Roadwork Damages Nearly 100 Bighas of Farmland in Cachar, Farmers Seek Compensation

LAKHIPUR

Nearly 100 bighas of agricultural land have reportedly been damaged in Assam's Cachar district following the collapse of an earthen embankment created during construction of the Silchar-Jirighat road under the Bharatmala project, leaving several farming families facing substantial crop losses.

The damage has been reported in Labakpar Part III and Part IV under Poylapool Gaon Panchayat in the Lakhipur Assembly constituency. A strong flow of rainwater, soil and rocks swept through the fields, destroying paddy saplings across large stretches of farmland.

Affected farmers alleged that soil excavated from nearby hills had been used to raise the embankment as part of the road construction. They claimed that they had repeatedly asked the construction contractor to install culverts to ensure proper drainage, but their requests were ignored.

According to the farmers, the lack of adequate drainage led to the accumulation of rainwater behind the earthen structure. The embankment eventually collapsed, allowing water, mud and rocks to rush into agricultural fields and damage crops and adjoining vegetation.

The losses have come at a difficult time for farmers who had already invested money in cultivation. Several affected cultivators said they had taken loans to prepare their fields and raise paddy saplings. With much of their farmland damaged, they are now worried about repaying those loans and sustaining their families.

The farmers further alleged that although they had brought the matter to the attention of the Lakhipur co-district administration and the Agriculture Department, compensation had not reached them so far.

They have appealed to Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, Agriculture Minister Pijush Hazarika and Lakhipur MLA and minister Kaushik Rai to intervene.Their demands include an on-site inspection, a detailed assessment of the damaged farmland and timely, adequate compensation for the affected families.The farmers have also called for immediate corrective measures to improve drainage along the road construction stretch so that further accumulation of rainwater does not put neighbouring agricultural land at risk.The incident has raised concerns over the impact of infrastructure construction on farmland and the need for proper drainage arrangements, particularly in areas where roadwork involves large-scale earth filling. The farmers are seeking accountability and relief as they wait for the authorities to assess the damage.

Prof. Dr. Priyanath Das Elected Chairman of Institution of Engineers' Tripura State Centre

KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

Prof. Dr. Priyanath Das has been elected Chairman of the Institution of Engineers (India), Tripura State Centre, for the 2026–27 and 2027–28 terms. Engineer Sumit Kumar Majumdar has been elected Honorary Secretary.

The elections were held during the 18th Annual General Meeting of the Tripura State Centre on Saturday, October 31. A new executive committee was also constituted for the next two years.

The newly formed committee comprises 17 elected representatives from seven engineering divisions. The representatives were selected through an electoral process based on nominations from their respective divisions.

During the AGM, members approved the minutes of the previous meeting, the annual report and audited accounts for the first half of 2026. The meeting also approved the appointment of an auditor for the 2026–27 financial year and decided on professional remuneration.

The activities of the outgoing committee and the formation of the new executive body were also reviewed. Outgoing Chairman Engineer Parmananda Sarkar Banerjee shared his experiences during his two-year tenure and explained the process of constituting the new committee.



In his address, the newly elected Chairman, Prof. Dr. Priyanath Das, thanked the members for placing their confidence in him. He said he would work towards strengthening the organisation and promoting the engineering profession in Tripura.

He stressed the need for collective efforts by engineers, members and employees, with support from the state government, to ensure that the organisation fulfils its responsibilities. He also expressed hope that the new committee would expand the organisation's activities and contribute to the growth of the engineering community in the state.

Engineer Sumit Kumar Majumdar, the newly elected Honorary Secretary, had earlier served as Joint Secretary (Administration) in the outgoing committee.

The new leadership is expected to focus on strengthening professional engagement and expanding the activities of the Institution of Engineers (India) in Tripura.

During the 18th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Institution of Engineers (India), Tripura State Centre, the Honorary Secretary presented a comprehensive report highlighting the major activities, achievements, and initiatives undertaken by the Centre over the preceding two years, along with the financial report.

The AGM also witnessed a special welcome ceremony for 50 newly enrolled members, who were warmly welcomed and honoured with the traditional Risha of Tripura and the IEI membership pin, symbolising their association with the Institution.

Furthermore, the Centre formally acknowledged and expressed its sincere appreciation to the members, sponsors, and well-wishers whose valuable contributions, financial support, and cooperation made it possible to complete the previously unfinished construction and renovation work on the third floor of the IEI Tripura State Centre building.

The occasion reflected the Centre's commitment to professional development, institutional growth, active membership participation, and strengthening its infrastructure for future activities.

Quest!

The fastest growing mammal is the Blue Whale, whereas the slowest growing mammal is the human.



NATIONAL

Festive nuts, bitter bill: Dry fruit prices jump up to 35%



HYDERABAD

The festive-season tradition of stocking up on almonds, pistachios and walnuts is becoming an expensive affair in Telangana, with imported dry fruit prices rising by 25% to 35% in the wholesale market.

Traders attribute the increase to supply disruptions caused by the West Asia conflict, higher freight charges and the weakening rupee.

Shipping diversions following attacks on Saudi Arabia have increased transit times and transportation costs, with importers passing on the additional burden to wholesalers and consumers. The price rise comes as demand picks up ahead of the festive season and weddings.

Prices of American almonds, a household staple, have risen from Rs 880 to Rs 1,230 per kg, while pistachios have increased from Rs 1,500 to Rs 2,000. Walnuts now cost Rs 2,100, up from Rs 1,600 earlier, and pine nuts have climbed from Rs 4,200 to Rs 5,500 per kg. Premium varieties are priced between Rs 3,000 and Rs 9,000 per kg.

"Pistachio prices had increased by 60-70% over the previous year, while almonds had become 20-40% costlier, depending on the variety. Prices of almost all nuts and dry fruits, including almonds, pistachios, raisins and walnuts, are at all-time highs," said Prakash Jain, a trader at Begum Bazar's dry fruit market.India sources dry fruits from Iran, Afghanistan and the US. Traders say shipments from Iran and Afghanistan traditionally moved through Saudi Arabia, and diversions are adding to freight and insurance costs. The weakening rupee has further increased import bills.

Hiten Shah, another wholesale and retail trader, said prices were unlikely to ease before December if the disruptions continued. Business has also taken a hit, with traders reporting a 30-40% decline in sales. A retailer said he had seen customer numbers fall sharply despite the festive season, leaving little room for profits.

The price pressure has extended to sweets, which have become 20-25% costlier. Gulab jamun and kalakand now cost between Rs 950 and Rs 1,200 per kg, while rasgulla, soan papdi, rasmalai, balushahi and motichoor laddu are priced between Rs 800 and Rs 1,100.

Sugar prices have risen from around Rs 45 per kg in July and August to Rs 60- 70, adding to production costs. "Ingredient prices and the cost of production have gone up considerably over the past couple of months. We have no option but to pass on the increased costs to customers," said a manager at a sweets outlet in Rasoolpura.

Dry fruit-based sweets are even more expensive, with kaju katli, anjeer laddus and dry fruit halwa costing between Rs 1,800 and Rs 1,900 per kg. Consumers may have to settle for smaller quantities or cheaper alternatives this festive season.

India's economic growth high despite West Asia crisis, eyes to add 500 GW RE capacity in next decade: PM Modi

NEW DELHI



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday asserted that India's economic growth remains strong despite the ongoing crisis in West Asia, and said the country is set to add around 500 GW of renewable energy capacity over the next 10-11 years.

Addressing the Bharat Renewable Energy Summit and Expo in Delhi, he said India had already achieved nearly 300 GW of non-fossil installed power capacity and was firmly pursuing its earlier target of 500 GW by 2030.

He also said India's clean energy sector could offer investment opportunities exceeding Rs 20 lakh crore, or about USD 220 billion, by the end of the decade, as the country expands renewable energy generation, transmission infrastructure, manufacturing and energy storage.

The Prime Minister said more than 50 per cent of India's installed power capacity is now from non-fossil sources, five years ahead of the 2030 deadline under its Paris climate commitments.

"Now, in the coming 10-11 years, our effort will be to add 500 GW of new non-fossil capacity. This target is somewhat difficult, but I have faith in the capabilities of our country. And therefore, I say - we will do it!" he said.

Modi said the global energy crisis, including the ongoing West Asia conflict, had demonstrated that energy security was directly linked to economic security.

India's investments in clean energy over the past decade had helped it manage external disruptions better, he pointed out.

"If we remain heavily dependent on fossil fuels in the future, the global economy will continue to be disrupted repeatedly," he said, arguing that renewable energy offered a more widely distributed and potentially abundant source of energy compared to geographically concentrated fossil fuel reserves.

India has attracted more than Rs 15 lakh crore in renewable energy investments over the past decade, Modi said. Since the 2024 RE-INVEST Summit, the sector has received investments of around Rs 6 lakh crore over two years.

The government expects investment opportunities in the sector to exceed Rs 20 lakh crore by the end of the decade, he added.

Modi also asked investors to invest in India, saying the country offers huge investment opportunities in renewable energy as it provides political and policy stability.

He said India is among the top three countries in the solar and renewable energy sector.

"We need to connect every government building, school, college, hospital, and street-lighting system to solar energy...We need an indigenous storage solution and must develop new battery storage capacity," he stated.

India is progressing rapidly to take a big leap in green hydrogen and has a target of annual production capacity of 50 lakh tonnes, Modi said, highlighting progress in the National Green Hydrogen Mission.

He also highlighted the Green Energy Corridor (inter-state transmission lines), which will help evacuate power from the upcoming renewable energy capacity.

The government has provided an outlay of Rs 2 lakh crore for the second phase of the Green Energy Corridor. Modi said the future of energy security lies in clean power.

He noted that more than 44,000 govt buildings have been connected to solar energy, resulting in annual savings of about Rs 700 crore.

Modi inaugurated Bharat Renewable Energy Summit & Expo 2026 on Monday. The four-day Summit will be held from 2 to 5 November 2026.

Bharat RE 2026 will attract participants from over 130 countries, including more than 40 ministers, along with policymakers, investors, financial institutions and industry leaders.

Australia, Denmark, the European Union, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom will participate as Country Partners.

The summit will be held alongside the 9th Session of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Assembly and the 4th International Conference on Green Hydrogen (ICGH).

INTERNATIONAL

US strikes Iran's Qeshm Island ahead of crucial midterm elections

WASHINGTON



The United States has conducted defensive strikes on some Iranian targets in the Strait of Hormuz, a US official said Monday, on the eve of crucial midterm elections.

Iranian state television reported that explosions were heard on Qeshm Island. The official, who wasn't authorized to comment publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity, said that "Iranians using surface to air missiles against US assets" had been targeted.

The strikes appeared to be limited as opposed to a return to full hostilities but followed President Donald Trump previously saying the US would not launch new strikes on Iran before Tuesday's midterms. The unpopular war and the resulting impact on US gasoline prices and other parts of the economy have been a vulnerability for Republicans as they try to keep control of Congress.

The region is on edge about the prospects of the US resuming full-scale operations against Iran, and the new strikes, which were reported earlier by The Wall Street Journal, are certain to raise fresh concerns. Backchannel negotiations also are playing out as Israel and some Middle East allies lobby Trump on the way ahead in the more than 8-month-old war that's rattled global markets and wreaked havoc on Iran.

The Trump administration was last known to have carried out attacks in early September, but thousands of US troops remain in the waters off Iran to maintain a naval blockade aimed at preventing tankers hauling Iranian oil from getting to the global market. Plus, a third aircraft carrier and thousands of additional troops are on their way to the Middle East.

Before the strikes were confirmed, US Vice President JD Vance offered measured optimism that a deal could still be struck. Vance sent a letter to Iran's security chief, Mohsen Rezaei, last week, but the White House has offered scant details. Trump told reporters that letter was focused on assisting Iran with "medical supplies and various things."

"We've had a number of good conversations with the Iranians," Vance told reporters Monday when asked about the letter. "I actually just spoke with the president of the United States about an hour ago about this. Look, the president and I both feel pretty good about the prospects for potentially coming to a negotiated settlement. We're going to keep on working at it."

Posters of the Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, center, and his father, the late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei are seen alongside dried flowers on a barricade placed on the street leading to their residence compound where the late Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was killed during the U.S. and Israel strike on Feb. 28, in Tehran, Iran, Friday, Oct. 30.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has pushed for another wave of strikes on Iran after the U.S. elections, according to two regional officials and a third person familiar with the matter.

A return to full-scale war with Iran could help Netanyahu to form an emergency government after he and his far-right allies lost their parliamentary majority in last week's elections. Trump has alternated between threatening major strikes and pushing for a deal with Iran.

The two officials said diplomatic efforts have made progress, with Qatari mediators holding two rounds of talks last week with Iranian officials. The two officials said the mediators are trying to advance a framework for Iran to cease its attacks in the Strait of Hormuz in return for the U.S. lifting its blockade on Iran's ports.

They said more talks are planned for this week. The two officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were discussing classified briefings they had received from American, and in one case Israeli, officials.

One official said Netanyahu was working with senior officials in the U.S. administration to persuade Trump to launch a quick but extensive air campaign and that the president does not appear to have made a decision.

Netanyahu pressed for strikes during a call over the weekend with Trump, who would not commit to taking military action, according to a person who was briefed on it.

Other U.S. allies in the Middle East are warning against more strikes, saying that would destabilize the region and could lead Iran-allied Houthi rebels in Yemen to step up their attacks on Saudi Arabia and Red Sea shipping, a third regional official said. Iran-backed militias in Iraq could also get involved.

The Israeli government did not immediately comment. The White House did not directly respond to questions about Netanyahu and Trump's discussion of potential new strikes during the weekend call.

Saudi Defense Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman said he spoke by phone Monday with U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth about "the latest regional and international developments" and the Houthis' continued attacks on Saudi Arabia.

Posters of the Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, center, and his father, the late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei are seen alongside dried flowers on a barricade placed on the street leading to their residence compound where the late Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was killed during the U.S. and Israel strike on Feb. 28, in Tehran, Iran, Friday, Oct. 30.

Trump noted the drop in a speech in Washington on Monday, which was billed as his closing argument to Americans, and sought to minimize the scale of the conflict, which has cost U.S. taxpayers at least $47 billion.

"I don't know if you even call it a war, because we haven't been doing any fighting for months," Trump said.

Iran wants guarantees that the U.S. will implement its side of any agreement. The U.S. and Israel have twice attacked Iran while it was engaged in negotiations over its disputed nuclear program.

Iranian officials say publicly they are prepared for war or diplomacy.

The new supreme leader, Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, met with Iran's military chiefs and said the response to "any kind and level of threat" from the U.S. or Israel should be immediate and without "geographic limits," urging an expansion of the list of potential targets. A recent analysis by The Associated Press found that Iranian strikes on more than two dozen U.S. bases since the start of the war have caused billions of dollars in equipment damage. Rezaei, the Iranian security chief, told state television that "the tone has completely changed" from the U.S. and called it a "very good sign." He gave no details about the letter from Vance and said he had not responded.

Indian American voters warming up to Democrats: New survey



WASHINGTON

Indian-American voters are leaning towards Democratic candidates, with 62 per cent expected to vote for them in the midterm elections, reflecting growing disillusionment with US President Donald Trump, a new survey said on Monday.

According to the Indian American Attitudes Survey (IAAS), conducted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in partnership with YouGov, Democrats lead Republican candidates by 43 points ahead of the midterm elections.

"Sixty-two per cent of citizens plan to vote Democratic in House races, versus 19 per cent Republican. In Senate races, Democrats lead 63 to 21 per cent," the survey found.

The survey was conducted online among 1,000 Indian American adults between October 7 and 27, with an overall margin of error of 3.87 per cent.

"Results from a new survey conducted ahead of the midterm elections reveal a backlash against Trump and the Republican Party accompanied by a rebound in support for the Democratic Party," authors Sumitra Badrinathan, Devesh Kapur, Annabel Miller, Andy Robaina, and Milan Vaishnav wrote in an article published on Monday.Former Vice President Kamala Harris speaks during a campaign event ahead of the Nov. 3 midterms on Sunday, Nov. 1, 2026, in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

It found that the Republican gains from 2024 have not carried over into congressional support. As many as 30 per cent of Indian Americans backed Trump in 2024, compared with 19 per cent supporting Republican House candidates. Democratic support stands at 62 per cent in both surveys.

Among men aged forty and older, Democratic support rose from 53 per cent in January 2026 to 68 per cent in October, while Republican support fell from 32 to 16 per cent.

As many as 46 per cent of voters surveyed identified themselves as Democrats, significantly less than the 62 per cent who said they intend to vote for the party in the opposition.

In 2024, 62 per cent of Indian Americans supported Kamala Harris while 30 per cent favoured Trump.

By January 2026, Democratic support had slipped to 57 per cent, with 25 per cent expressing support for Trump.

The latest figures suggest that the Republican Party's electoral gains among Indian Americans have not translated into durable support for Republican congressional candidates.

Weaving a Greener Tomorrow: Transforming Northeast India's Bamboo Economy



For generations, bamboo has been woven into the very fabric of life in Northeast India. Locally revered as "green gold," it shields homes, cradles handicrafts, and sustains rural hearths. Yet, despite holding over half of India's bamboo reserves, the region has long played the role of a passive raw material supplier rather than an industrial powerhouse. Weak processing infrastructure, fragmented supply chains, and low value-addition have kept this abundant resource from fulfilling its true economic potential.

Today, that narrative is shifting decisively. With the Asian Development Bank (ADB) stepping in with a landmark $42.2 million Small Expenditure Financing Facility (SEFF) targeting six northeastern states—Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura—the bamboo sector is poised for an industrial renaissance.

from Handcraft to High-Value Industry

The core impediment holding back the region's bamboo sector has never been a lack of nature's bounty; it has been the missing middle of the value chain. Raw culms harvested manually across hills and valleys were often transported out of the region cheaply, only to return as finished engineered boards, flooring, and lifestyle goods manufactured elsewhere.

The ADB facility, working in tandem with the National Bamboo Mission and regional bodies like the North East Cane and Bamboo Development Council (NECBDC), aims to rectify this structural imbalance. By channeling funds directly into community-based sub-projects, the initiative is helping build modern primary and secondary processing plants closer to the source.

This transition toward engineered bamboo, structural panels, and bio-energy streams does more than just substitute costly imports; it establishes Northeast India as a competitive exporter in the global green economy.

Empowerment at the Grassroots: Women-Led Growth

What makes this transformation truly remarkable is its deliberate focus on inclusive development. Economic growth in rural landscapes cannot be compartmentalized; it must be equitable.

A standout pillar of the current institutional and financial rollout is the mandate ensuring at least one dedicated women-led bamboo manufacturing and processing facility in each participating state. By embedding women entrepreneurs at the vanguard of cultivation, processing, and marketing, the initiative transforms traditional artisans into organized industrial leaders. This grassroots financial independence creates a ripple effect, strengthening family resilience, elevating community standards, and fostering sustainable livelihoods.

The Road Ahead: Technology, Trust, and Scale

Unlocking the full promise of the green gold mine requires more than capital injections; it demands systemic modernization:

* Digital Traceability: Integrating digital value chain solutions will streamline market information, enhance supply chain transparency, and connect rural Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) directly with national buyers.

* Policy Harmonization: Building upon legal milestones—such as freeing non-forest bamboo from restrictive transit permits—private enterprise must be encouraged to invest securely in commercial plantations.

* Skill Integration: Rigorous technical training in anti-fungal treatments, precision machinery, and quality standardization will ensure that "Made in Northeast India" becomes synonymous with world-class durability and design.

Conclusion

Northeast India stands at a historic crossroads. As global markets pivot toward sustainable, carbon-negative materials, the region's vast bamboo reserves offer an unmatched ecological and economic advantage. By marrying international financial backing with local ingenuity, women-led enterprise, and forward-thinking institutional support, the bamboo sector is shedding its traditional limitations.

Through strategic investments and steadfast execution, we are not just building an industry—we are laying down a robust, green foundation for Peace, Progress, and Prosperity.



This financial and strategic thrust marks a pivotal chapter in realizing a sustainable economic roadmap for the region.

Moving

"Do we need more time? Or do we need to be more disciplined with the time we have?" - Kerry Johnson



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