

Unease among Assam tribal leaders over ban on public consumption of beef

SUKRITA BARUAH GUWAHATI, DECEMBER 15

THE REACTION of a BJP MLA from Meghalaya to the party-led Assam government's announcement of a ban on the public consumption of beef in the state has gone viral, inspiring ditties, among other things. As CM Himanta Biswa Sarma's beef order became public, Sanbor Shullai had quipped: "[In Meghalaya] We can eat snake, beef, scorpion, whatever we like... It is your choice."



CM Himanta Biswa Sarma

The ban is going to be hard to implement, especially in Assam's tribal belts where beef is commonly consumed, particularly during festivities. Sarma's announcement of adding a provision for a complete ban on serving and consumption of beef in public places, including eateries and at community gatherings, to the Assam Cattle Preservation Act, 2021, was as much an administrative move as meant to put the Congress in a spot.

It followed allegations by a section of the Congress leaders that Sarma and the BJP had "served beef" to voters to pull off a historic win in the Muslim-majority Samaguri seat in last month's Assembly bypolls. The CM said that since the Congress too seemed to suggest that this was wrong, he was happy to ban beef.

jects their customs, have as many as 15 recognised tribes, including Karbi, Dimasa, 'Any Kuki' tribes, 'Any Naga' tribes, 'Any Mizo' tribes, Hmar, Khasi and Garo.

Pramith Senguyon, general secretary of the Dimasa Students' Union based in Haflong, also questioned the practicality of a beef ban and worried it could stoke tensions by hurting the diversity of the region. "Our community does not consume beef, but there are 13 tribal communities in our district, most of whom practise Christianity. Any such move should not be done without the consent of the tribal communities... it can hurt sentiments..." Senguyon said.

In Meghalaya, ruled by a BJP ally and found itself at odds with the Assam government over other issues also, the beef ban has caused a flutter. Shullai, who remarked it should be a matter of choice, said he "condemned and opposed" the ban and that he would ensure that this was never introduced in Meghalaya.

Meghalaya minister Rakkam Sangma, from the NPP, a BJP ally, made light of the situation, saying Meghalaya should take advantage of the situation. "Meghalaya should set up good hotels in Byrnihat, Khanapara and serve good beef curry, so that Assam people come to Meghalaya, eat well and go back," he recently said.

Govt defers introduction of 'One Nation, One Election' Bills

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 15

AFTER LISTING two Bills that would enable simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and Assemblies of States and Union Territories for Monday, the government Sunday postponed the introduction of the Bills in the Lok Sabha for later this week, sources said.

The Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-Ninth Amendment) Bill, 2024, and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment Bill), 2024 were removed from the revised list of business for Monday in the Lok Sabha. Sources aware of the development said the government had decided to introduce the Bills later this week, perhaps Tuesday. The Winter session of Parliament is scheduled to conclude on December 20.

Discussion and voting on the supplementary demands for grants for 2024-2025 and the introduction and passing of the appropriations Bills by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman are included in the revised list of business in the Lok Sabha.

The Union Cabinet had approved the simultaneous elections Bills last week. Based on the recommendations of the High-Level Committee on One Nation One Election, chaired by former President Ram Nath Kovind, the Bills set out the process for moving towards simultaneous polls at Centre and in States and UTs.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah being felicitated by Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai, Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma and others during the closing ceremony of Bastar Olympics at Jagdalpur in Bastar district on Sunday.

Give up arms or face strong action, Shah warns Maoists

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA JAGDALPUR, DEC 15

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shah Sunday appealed to Maoists to give up arms and join the mainstream, or else they will have to face the strong action of security forces. He said the rehabilitation of the surrendered Maoists is government's responsibility.

Addressing a sporting event - 'Bastar Olympics' - in Chhattisgarh's Jagdalpur, Shah also said the country would be free of Maoists by March 2026.

"I appeal to Naxals, please come forward. Give up arms, surrender and join the mainstream. Your rehabilitation is our responsibility," he said.

He said if the Maoists do not listen to the appeal of surrender, they will be crushed by the security forces.

"Chhattisgarh Police is committed to fulfilling Prime Minister Narendra Modi's resolve to make India Naxal-free by March 31, 2026," he said.

The Union home minister said the Chhattisgarh government's rehabilitation policy is the best in the country.

"If you surrender and join the mainstream, you will contribute for the development of Chhattisgarh and India," he said. Shah said when the Congress was in power in Chhattisgarh before the BJP assumed charge a year ago, the action against the Maoists became slow.

"But after our government came to power in Chhattisgarh, action against the extremists accelerated resulting in killings of 287 Naxals in last one year, arrest of 992 Naxals and surrender of 836 others," he said.

Shah said since the Modi government assumed charge, there has been a 73 per cent reduction in the casualties in security forces and 70 per cent decline in civilians' deaths.

"If Naxalism ends in Bastar (Chhattisgarh), it will attract more tourists than Kashmir due to its natural beauty," he said.

He further said those who know the process of change taking place within the society also know that it is not limited to only 1.5 lakh people participating in the Bastar Olympics.

"Everyone is saying that Bastar is changing. I assure you that when I will come to the 2026 Bastar Olympics, I will say that Bastar has changed," he said, adding that this change has been initiated by the Bastar Olympics.

The Union home minister said this event will write a new saga of development of Bastar in the coming days and will become a strong basis for the complete eradication of Naxalism. He also said many development works are being done, through which Naxalism is being defeated.

Do not criticise EVMs when results not in favour, Omar tells Congress

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 15

OPENING ANOTHER point of friction with an important ally, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has dismissed the Congress party's vehement objection to Electronic Voting Machines, and echoed the BJP's defence - you can't accept election results when you win, and blame EVMs when you lose.

"When you get a hundred plus members of Parliament using the same EVMs, and you celebrate that as sort of a victory for your party, you can't then a few months later turn around and say... we don't like these EVMs because now the election results aren't going the way we would like them to," Abdullah said.

Being told that he sounded suspiciously like a BJP spokesman, Abdullah reacted with "God forbid!" He then added: "No, it's just that... what's right is right."

He said he speaks based on principles rather than with partisan loyalty and cited his support for infrastructure projects like the Central Vista as an example of his independent thinking.

"Contrary to what everybody else believes, I think that what's happening with this Central Vista project in Delhi is a damn good thing. I believe constructing a new Parliament building was an excellent idea... The old one had outlived its utility," he said. He said parties should not contest elections if they do not trust the voting mechanism.

"If you have problems with the EVMs, then you should be consistent in those problems," he said while replying to a question about whether he thinks the opposition in general and the Congress, in particular, is barking up the wrong tree by focusing on EVMs. After its loss in the Haryana and Maharashtra Assembly polls, the Congress has expressed doubts about the EVM's infallibility and the election outcome. It has demanded a return to the paper ballot.

Abdullah's comments add to his National Conference party's unhappiness with the Congress, which was allied with it during the September Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

The CM said EVMs remain the same regardless of the outcome and parties should not use them as an excuse for defeat.

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DELHI ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS Kejriwal to contest from New Delhi, Atishi from Kalkaji

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 15

THE AAM Aadmi Party (AAP) Sunday released its fourth and final list of 38 candidates, including 36 sitting MLAs, for the upcoming Assembly polls in Delhi that is scheduled for February 2025.

Party chief Arvind Kejriwal will be contesting for the fourth time from the New Delhi seat, while Chief Minister Atishi has been fielded from Kalkaji for the second time. Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj will contest from Greater Kailash again and Gopal Rai from Babarpur.

The list also includes Imran Hussain from Ballimaran, Sumanth Bharti from Malviya Nagar, and Durgesh Pathak from Rajinder. AAP's Purvanchali face, Sanjeev Jha, who won the last polls with the highest majority of votes, has been fielded from Burari.

Satyender Jain, who was in jail in a money laundering case, will be running again from the Shakur Basti seat. The party has also repeated MLA Amanatullah Khan from Okhla. Khan is currently in jail.

The AAP has also given a ticket to Naresh Balyan's wife Pooja Balyan from the Uttam Nagar seat. Balyan was arrested earlier this month for allegedly having links with gangster Kapil Sangwan. From Mehrauli, the party has fielded Naresh Yadav yet again. Yadav was recently sentenced in a desecration case by a Punjab court.

However, the party dropped its sitting MLA from Kasturba Nagar, Madan Lal, in the final list. It has chosen to field Ramesh Pehalwan, who joined the party

along with his wife - a two-time councillor Kusum Lata Sunday, from the seat.

The AAP had announced 11 candidates in its first list, 20 candidates in the second list and one candidate in the third list. So far, the party has dropped 22 sitting legislators in the lists it has declared.

Notably, this also includes two of the seats where the legislators were swapped due to anti-incumbency. The seats include Patparganj from where former deputy chief minister and senior leader Manish Sisodia is the sitting MLA. While Sisodia has been moved to Jangpura, Mangolpuri sitting MLA Rakhi Birla has been fielded from Madipur.

The party has replaced Sisodia and Birla with new faces. Apart from this, three sitting MLAs have fielded their wife or son in as many seats. SK Bagga's son Vikas Bagga has been fielded from Krishna Nagar and Pahlal Sahn's son Puran Deep Sahn is contesting from Chandini Chowk, in addition to Pooja Balyan from Uttam Nagar.

In the last Assembly polls, AAP had registered a landslide victory by winning 62 of the 70 seats, with the BJP getting the remaining eight seats.

After the release of the final list, Kejriwal shared on X: "Today, Aam Aadmi Party announced its candidates on all 70 seats. The party is contesting the elections with full confidence and full preparation. BJP is missing. They have no CM face, no team, no planning and no vision for Delhi. They have only one slogan, only one policy and only one mission 'Remove Kejriwal'. Ask them what they did in 5 years, and they reply - 'Kejriwal ko bahut gaali di.'"

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APPENDIX-IV-A (See proviso to rule 8 (6)) SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002