

0730 hrs

3rd April 2025

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The Lok Sabha has passed the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025 negating the amendments moved by opposition. The Bill was cleared by the House with 288 Members voted in favour of it while 232 Members voted against the Bill. The Lower House held discussion over the Bill for over 12 hours till late night. The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025 aims to streamline the management of Waqf properties, with provisions to safeguard heritage sites and promote social welfare. The legislation also aims to improve governance by enhancing transparency in property management, streamlining coordination between Waqf Boards and local authorities and protecting stakeholders' rights. The Bill also seeks to improve the economic and social status of Muslim women, particularly widows and divorced women. The Bill aims at making the Waqf Board more inclusive, having representation from different Muslim sects for better Waqf governance and decision-making.

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Union Home Minister Amit Shah said, no non-Muslim will come into the Waqf. He said, there is no such provision to include any non-Muslim among those who manage the religious institutions. Participating in the debate yesterday in the Lok Sabha, Mr Shah said, this is a huge misconception that this Bill will interfere with the religious conduct of Muslims and interfere with the property donated by them. He said, this misconception is being spread to instil fear among minorities for their vote bank and to appease specific voter demographics.

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Dimapur Police have arrested Iuto Swu, a Personal Secretary to an advisor in the Nagaland government, along with his accomplice Atopu Kiba, in connection with the recovery of 25 soap cases of contraband Shanflower drugs. According to a press release from the Commissioner of Police, Kevithuto Sophie, the case originated from an NSCN (Niki) communication alleging that Dimapur Police officers had received the drug consignment in exchange for the release of arrested NSCN members. However, further investigation revealed that Mr Iuto had handed over the drugs to Mr Atopu for concealment at his rented house in Toluvi village. The 24 soap cases were later recovered from the property by the police, with the help of independent witnesses. Mr Iuto and Mr Atopu have been arrested in connection with the NDPS case. The investigation also revealed that two men, Jahirul Islam and Eamaradul Islam, who had transported the drugs from Manipur to Pherima, were abducted by NSCN (Niki) cadres on March 23, under allegations of drug trafficking. While 24 soap cases were recovered from Atopu Kiba's rented house in Toluvi village, the two kidnapped men, now accused, stated that they had brought 40 cases, and NSCN (Niki) cadres had kept 16 cases for their own purposes. The cadres did not hand over these 16 cases to the police or to Mr Iuto and Mr Atopu for concealment. The Commissioner of Police reminded the public to report any drug-related activities to the nearest police station, reiterating that no one should take the law into their hands. Further, media outlets are also urged to verify the accuracy of information before publication.

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Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya yesterday emphasized that democracy thrives not on arguments but on winning the hearts of citizens through constructive

conversations. Inaugurating the National Round of the two-day Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament Festival 2025 in New Delhi, Dr. Mandaviya praised India's diversity, stating that despite its differences, the Parliament stands as a symbol of unity.

The Minister encouraged young participants to adopt a Nation First mindset, regardless of their profession.

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Wokha town is currently experiencing a disruption in its water supply, caused by a significant depletion of the Etsuchukha spring, the town's main water source. This has led to an interruption in the regular water distribution to residents. Executive Engineer (EE) of the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED), Wokha, Imnazulu Ao expressed regret that the issue is expected to persist or worsen until the onset of the monsoon. In addition , pumping of water from Engorotchu source-has been halted, due to transformer failure, collapse of electric post and damage of electrical pumping system have further compounded the issue, with repairs taking time. The PHED Wokha division is working closely with the power department to resolve the problem and restore the water supply at the earliest.

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