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:: THE HEADLINES ::

- Ninth session of 14th Nagaland Assembly commences
- State government introduces revised FNTA Bill in Assembly
- MLAs raise concerns over proposed FCRA amendments
- Governor Nand Kishore Yadav reviews coffee cultivation in Nagaland

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The ninth session of the 14th Nagaland Legislative Assembly commenced today with the introduction of the revised Frontier Nagaland Territorial Authority Bill, 2026, along with five government bills. During Zero Hour, MLA Dr. Tseilhoutuo Rhutso, raised the issue on potential fraudulent pension cases. The House also discussed the issue pertaining to the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010. The discussion was initiated by MLA Achumbemo Kikon, while MLAs Temjenmenba Pongen, Y. Mankhao Konyak, Keducho Khamo, and P Longon also participated. Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio gave the concluding remarks. Several Assembly Committee Reports, reports and rules, and matters relating to the assent of Bills were also presented. Earlier, Speaker Sharingain Longkumer made an obituary reference to former Assembly member G. Kughavi. The House observed a minute's silence in his memory. The Speaker later adjourned the house to meet on September 3.

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The Nagaland Legislative Assembly today introduced a revised Frontier Nagaland Territorial Authority (FNTA) Bill, 2026. The revised Bill is scheduled to be taken up for consideration and passing on September 3. The original FNTA Bill, introduced in the Assembly on March 26, was withdrawn today through a voice vote after Deputy Chief Minister Y. Patton moved the motion. The legislation seeks to establish a special institutional arrangement for the six districts of Eastern Nagaland—Mon, Tuensang, Longleng, Kiphire, Noklak and Shamator—following the Memorandum of Agreement signed between the Centre, the Nagaland government and the Eastern Nagaland Peoples' Organisation in February. The earlier Bill was deferred in March amid concerns over the proposed authority's powers and its constitutional and legal implications.

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MLA Achumbemo Kikon has urged the Centre to withdraw the proposed Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026, expressing concern that its provisions could adversely affect churches, charitable institutions and other minority organisations. Initiating a discussion under Rule 50 in the Assembly today, Mr Kikon said the proposed amendments could make FCRA registration and renewal more complicated and create scope for institutions and assets built partly through foreign contributions to be taken over. He particularly questioned the proposed Central government-designated authority, and called for the proposed amendments to be examined in the context of Article 371A. Participating in the discussion, MLA Kudecho Khamo acknowledged the government's objectives of regulating foreign contributions and improving financial transparency, but cautioned that the proposed provisions could disproportionately affect smaller churches and grassroots organisations.

*(S/B KHAMO - 29 Secs)*

MLAs Temjenmenba Pongen, Y. Mankhao Konyak, and P Longon also supported the discussion.

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Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio has welcomed the Centre's decision to refer the proposed Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment (FCRA) Bill, 2026, to a Joint Parliamentary Committee, saying it would provide an opportunity to address genuine concerns and remove apprehensions surrounding the legislation. In his concluding remarks on the discussion on FCRA in the Assembly today, Mr Rio said churches and Christian institutions have historically played a significant role in the development of Nagaland, particularly in providing education, healthcare, social welfare, and assistance to vulnerable communities in remote areas. He said, the proposed amendments had generated widespread concern over the potential impact on such activities. Mr Rio said he had consulted Christian leaders and written to Union Home Minister Amit Shah, urging greater parliamentary scrutiny and wider consultations on the proposed amendments.

*(S/B RIO - 34 Secs)*

The Chief Minister further reaffirmed the state government's commitment to continue engaging with all stakeholders and the Government of India to ensure that legitimate concerns are addressed.

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Governor Nand Kishore Yadav today reviewed the progress and prospects of coffee cultivation in the state during a meeting with officials of the Coffee Board of India and the state Department of Land Resources at Lok Bhavan, Kohima. The meeting discussed

efforts to expand coffee cultivation, improve productivity and quality, as well as strengthen processing, training and market linkages. Officials said coffee cultivation in Nagaland has grown steadily with both Arabica and Robusta varieties cultivated across several districts. The meeting also reviewed challenges facing the sector, including poor road connectivity, transportation difficulties, limited processing facilities, climate-related concerns, small landholdings, shortage of skilled labour and limited access to international markets. At the same time, it noted the growing coffee culture in Nagaland, and highlighted strong potential for specialty and premium coffee through organic certification, value addition, coffee tourism, cafés and e-commerce. Governor Yadav stressed the need for a coordinated approach to strengthen the entire coffee value chain, adding that quality production and value addition would be key to increasing income for farmers and creating opportunities for local entrepreneurs and youth. The Governor expressed confidence that sustained institutional support, improved infrastructure, scientific farming practices and stronger market linkages could help Nagaland emerge as an important producer of premium coffee in the country.

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MLA Dr Tseilhoutuo Rhutso has called for comprehensive verification of pensioners in Nagaland, citing concerns over possible unauthorised pension drawals and irregularities in the system. Raising the issue during Zero Hour of the Assembly today, Dr Rhutso said pension is a right and reward for years of service and must be protected for genuine pensioners.

According to data presented by the MLA, 63,370 retired government employees and nominees currently receive pensions through State Treasuries and the SBI's Computerised Pension Processing Centre. He said, the state government spent more than 2,679 crore rupees on life and family pensions in 2025-26, while over 1,049 crore rupees had been disbursed up to July this financial year. The MLA raised concerns over possible irregularities, including delayed reporting of deaths, unverified remarriage of family pensioners, duplicate pensions, and potentially fraudulent life, marriage, death and disability certificates. He also called for closer scrutiny of pensioners aged 70 and above and those residing outside Nagaland. Dr Rhutso proposed several measures to streamline the pension system, including time-bound physical or Aadhaar-linked biometric verification using Jeevan Pramaan; a centralised online pension portal for Nagaland; and a detailed audit by a high-level committee led by the Finance Department. The MLA stressed that the measures would protect the rights and dignity of genuine pensioners while preventing the misuse of public funds and reducing the burden on the state exchequer.

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