

Child's death at Guwahati flyover site leads to arrests of contractor firm officials



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In a swift development following public outrage, Assam Police have arrested three officials of Bhartia Infra Projects Ltd (BIPL) after the tragic death of a three-year-old boy who fell into an uncovered drain at the Arya Nagar flyover construction site in Guwahati. The incident, which occurred earlier this week, triggered shock across the city and led to demands for accountability from both the company and government authorities.

According to reports, the toddler, identified as Sunit Kumar, slipped into an unguarded drain within the construction zone. CCTV footage and eyewitness accounts later revealed several exposed manholes and drains left unattended at the site. The flyover work had been contracted to BIPL under the supervision of the Public Works Department (PWD), raising serious questions about lapses in safety monitoring. The mishap has also drawn attention to previous incidents linked to the company, including the recent electrocution death of a worker at another BIPL site.

Those arrested include **Avinash Bhatia**, Director of Bhartia Infra Projects Ltd, along with **Kaushik Gogoi**, Safety Engineer, and **Prasannajit Pathak**, Deputy Project Manager. Officials confirmed that the arrests were carried out within 40 hours of the incident, and further action may follow as investigations proceed. DCP (West) Padmanabh Barua stated that police are probing the extent of negligence and accountability at multiple levels.

Bhartia Infra Projects Ltd, which promotes itself as a leading infrastructure firm with projects across the Northeast, is responsible for several major works under the PWD. Company literature on IndiaMart highlights its leadership team and emphasis on project safety, yet the present case starkly underlines a gap between claims and practices on the ground. The arrests of top officials, including a director, have intensified scrutiny of the company's safety record and operational standards.

Questions of accountability have also been directed toward the government. Critics argue that the PWD, as the supervising authority, shares responsibility for the lapses that led to the child's death. Civil society groups and opposition leaders have demanded that the government act decisively to bar BIPL from undertaking mission-critical public works until it demonstrates strict compliance with safety norms.

The tragedy, while deeply personal for the family of the young victim, has become a larger reminder of the risks posed by negligence in public infrastructure projects. The incident is being seen not merely as an accident, but as a systemic failure that demands urgent reform in how construction safety is enforced in Assam.

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