

Infant's Death at GMCH Sparks Outrage; Opposition Seeks Human Rights Commission Probe



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Wahidur Rahman 27 August 2025 9953 views

Guwahati, August 27, 2025 – A tragic incident at the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) has sparked widespread outrage across Assam. A four-day-old infant admitted to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) on August 15 for infection and jaundice was found dead at the facility on August 18, allegedly due to negligence of medical staff.

The infant reportedly fell from a cot and became entangled in the wires of medical equipment while undergoing phototherapy—a catastrophe that occurred while the nurse on duty was preparing milk for other infants.

In response, the state government has formed a three-member investigation panel including senior administrative and medical education officials, along with a pediatric specialist from AIIMS Guwahati, to probe the incident. The Chief Minister, Himanta Biswa Sarma, has urged the public to cooperate and refrain from drawing conclusions based solely on media reports.

Opposition demands accountability and action

Debabrata Saikia, Leader of the Opposition in the Assam Assembly, has appealed to the Assam Human Rights Commission (AHRC) to take suo motu cognizance under Section 21(5) of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. He described the incident as a "blatant violation of fundamental human rights" and called for accountability at the highest levels of government, including the Chief Minister and the Health Department.

Saikia also demanded:

- Interim compensation of ₹10 lakh to the bereaved family under the Assam Victim Compensation Scheme, 2012;
- Formation of an independent expert committee to investigate systemic failures, including staffing and infrastructure deficiencies;
- Protective measures for the family, including security and legal aid.

He described the tragedy as reflective of a broader “daily disaster” within the state’s public healthcare system and warned that continued inaction would erode public trust.

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BY WAHIDUR RAHMAN

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