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STAY-ENRICHED



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PERSPECTIVE

Stories of grief and agony. Stories that make your blood boil. For years, our Satras and Mandirs have been attacked and encroached upon with impunity. NOT ANYMORE. Our Satra Commission has unearthed startling facts and we're working to SECURE our Satras like NEVER BEFORE.

- Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, CM, Assam

Manipur groups urge Centre to delete 'Any Kuki Tribes' from ST list



IMPHAL

Two Manipur-based organisations have urged the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to delete the "Any Kuki Tribes" (AKT) category from the Scheduled Tribes (ST) list in the state as it allegedly allows "foreigners to claim rights" of the indigenous people and "poses a threat to their land and resources".

In a memorandum to the minis-

try, the two organisations - Thadou Inpi Manipur and Meitei Alliance - stated that "the appeal aligns with the official position of the Government of Manipur, which, following cabinet decisions on October 19, 2018 and January 2, 2023, formally recommended the deletion of "Any Kuki Tribes" category.

"The vague nature of AKT allows foreigners to claim tribal rights in Manipur. This poses a serious

threat to land, resources, and constitutional privileges of pre-existing scheduled tribes," the two organisations claimed in the memorandum.

They also alleged, "AKT has no unique language, separate cultural heritage, and geographical isolation, all of which are the basic criteria for Scheduled Tribe recognition under Article 342 of the Constitution of India. It fails every benchmark and only serves to sow ethnic discord and legal confusion." The two organisations also claimed that the category AKT was inserted into the Scheduled Tribes list of Manipur in 2003 through "politically motivated and non-transparent means".

"Unlike any of the Scheduled Tribes of Manipur that are linguistically and culturally distinct, AKT is an ambiguous and arbitrary insertion without a legitimate basis. AKT is not accepted or recognised by any of the Scheduled Tribes of Manipur...instead, its existence has only exacerbated ethnic tension and undermined social harmony," the memorandum said.

"Beef today at temples, pork tomorrow at mosques": Himanta Biswa Sarma

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday, June 24 warned people from engaging in controversies by throwing beef in front of temples or else a similar reaction will be faced by the other section of the people.

Speaking to the media while visiting Hasilabeel in Goalpara district, the Chief Minister called for a complete halt to the sale and consumption of beef. "The business of beef must be stopped. If beef is allowed near temples today, tomorrow one might find pork (pig meat) near mosques. That is unacceptable. Everyone should consider turning vegetarian," he remarked.

Touching on the sensitive issue of land encroachment, CM Sarma said the government is willing to engage in dialogue with individuals who have encroached on government land—provided they approach the administration through proper channels. "If encroachers submit formal applications, we are ready to speak with them," he stated.

Targeting senior Congress lead-



ers Rakibul Hussain and A.K. Rasid Alom, the Chief Minister accused them of hypocrisy. "How can they challenge the government when they themselves are living in glass houses? They've encroached on government land and even run brick kilns there. They should reflect on their own actions first," he said.

He further emphasized that while every citizen has the right to travel across Assam, public figures should refrain from making remarks perceived as sympathetic to Pakistan or Bangladesh.

End of War??



CONGRATULATIONS TO EVERYONE! It has been fully agreed by and between Israel and Iran that there will be a Complete and Total CEASEFIRE (in approximately 6 hours from now, when Israel and Iran have wound down and completed their in progress, final missions!), for 12 hours, at which point the War will be considered, ENDED! Officially, Iran will start the CEASEFIRE and, upon the 12th Hour, Israel will start the CEASEFIRE and, upon the 24th Hour, an Official END to THE 12 DAY WAR will be saluted by the World. During each CEASEFIRE, the other side will remain PEACEFUL and RESPECTFUL. On the assumption that everything works as it should, which it will, I would like to congratulate both Countries, Israel and Iran, on having the Stamina, Courage, and Intelligence to end, what should be called, "THE 12 DAY WAR." This is a War that could have gone on for years, and destroyed the entire Middle East, but it didn't, and never will! God bless Israel, God bless Iran, God bless the Middle East, God bless the United States of America, and GOD BLESS THE WORLD!

DONALD J. TRUMP, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

WHO SAID WHAT



Those who know the Iranian people and their history know that the Iranian nation isn't a nation that surrenders.

- Sayyid Ali Khamenei, Iran's Supreme Leader

'We're among the safest places on Earth': Meghalaya Dy CM hits back at US advisory



SHILLONG

Following a recent travel advisory by the United States cautioning its citizens against visiting Meghalaya due to alleged risks of terrorism and violence, Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong has firmly countered the claims, calling them misleading and unfounded.

"It's unfortunate that the US

has issued such an advisory. We don't know where they collect their information from to place Meghalaya in that category," Tynsong said.

Tynsong, who also handles the Home department, emphasised that Meghalaya remains one of the safest and most welcoming destinations globally. "Meghalaya is one of the safest places in the world, and people of the state are

known for their hospitality," he stated.

He encouraged sceptics to engage directly with those who've experienced the state firsthand. "Talk to those who have visited Meghalaya and met the hardworking people living in the beautiful villages of the state. These are the real ambassadors," he said.

Tourism Minister Paul Lyngdoh also weighed in, highlighting the vibrant tourism landscape of the state. Meghalaya expects to host 2 million visitors this year, with a year-round calendar of events including the popular Cherry Blossom festivals.

To further enhance the tourist experience, the government has launched a "Tourist Buddies" programme to assist visitors at major attractions. "The state is recruiting 50 Tourist Buddies in the state capital itself, where they will be stationed at key tourist locations such as Ward's Lake, Golf Links, and Khyndai Lad," Lyngdoh said.

A senior tourism official revealed that the government plans to invest over Rs 1,000 crore in tourism infrastructure. The sector already provides employment to over 50,000 people, making it the second-largest employer in Meghalaya after the state government.

ULFA (I) leader Rupam Asom taken into NIA custody for interrogation in high-profile cases



GUWAHATI

Rupam Asom is under intensive interrogation at NIA's Sonapur office. His arrest follows a police operation in Tinsukia district. NIA reopened stalled case files linked to Rupam Asom.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has formally taken custody of United Liberation Front of Asom (Independent) brigadier Rupam Asom, also known as Kant Borah, days after he was apprehended by the Tinsukia po-

lice.

Sources confirmed that the senior ULFA (I) operative has been undergoing intensive interrogation sessions over the last three days at the NIA's Sonapur office near Guwahati.

Rupam Asom is a key figure in several ongoing investigations related to serious offences, including murder, abduction, and armed insurgent activities.

The NIA had previously registered multiple cases against him as part of its broader crackdown on insurgent networks operating in the Northeast.

Officials have stated that with his formal custody secured, the NIA has reopened case files linked to past incidents involving the ULFA leader. These cases, some of which had remained in limbo due to his prolonged absconding status, are now being actively pursued.

Security sources believe Rupam Asom's interrogation may provide critical insights into ULFA (I)'s operational structure, recruitment networks, and trans-border linkages.

The NIA has not yet disclosed the specific charges under which he will be produced before the court, though more developments are expected in the coming days.

Assam SLRC extends interview relief to landslide-hit candidates from Dima Hasao and Barak Valley

SILCHAR

Landslides severely damaged roads and railways in Assam disrupting transport. Interview schedules for Grade-IV posts in Guwahati affected by transport issues. Train cancellations impacted candidates from Dima Hasao and Barak Valley.

Recent landslides in Assam have significantly disrupted the transportation infrastructure, leading the State Level Recruitment Commission (SLRC) to announce special provisions for affected job candidates. The natural disaster, which severely impacted road and rail networks, particularly the Jaginga-Lampu stretch of National Highway 27, left many aspirants unable to attend their scheduled interviews for Grade-IV posts in Guwahati. The landslides have not only affected the physical infrastructure but also posed significant challenges for the local communities, disrupting daily life and economic activities.

With the disruption extending to train services, multiple cancellations and reschedulings were noted. The



Northeast Frontier Headquarters (NFHQ) confirmed these interruptions in Railway Bulletin-1 issued on

23rd June 2025. Affected candidates, particularly from Dima Hasao and the Barak Valley, found themselves un-

able to reach their interview locations due to these logistical challenges. The impact on the transportation network has been profound, highlighting the need for robust contingency plans in such scenarios.

In response, the SLRC decided to extend "special consideration" to candidates from the severely impacted regions. This decision underscores the need to address the unforeseen challenges posed by the natural disaster, ensuring that candidates are not disadvantaged due to circumstances beyond their control. The Commission's proactive approach aims to uphold the principles of fairness and accessibility, even in the face of adversity. The official notification stated: "To ensure fairness and equal opportunity, the Commission has resolved to offer a revised interview schedule specifically for candidates from the affected districts of Dima Hasao and Barak Valley." This move highlights the Commission's commitment to equitable treatment for all aspirants. By adapting to the situation, the SLRC

demonstrates its dedication to supporting candidates in their pursuit of employment opportunities.

Affected candidates are advised to monitor official announcements closely for updated interview schedules. The Commission has assured that detailed information regarding the new dates will be communicated soon through the ASSEB (formerly SEBA) portal at www.sebaonline.org, allowing candidates to prepare accordingly. This communication strategy ensures transparency and keeps candidates informed, reducing anxiety and uncertainty during these challenging times.

The SLRC's decision to reschedule interviews is a critical response to the disruptions caused by the landslides, reflecting a broader effort to maintain fairness and accessibility in its recruitment processes amidst natural adversities. This initiative not only addresses immediate logistical issues but also reinforces the importance of resilience and adaptability in public service operations.



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RE-SHAPING OF ENERGY AND GEOPOLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Financial markets and policymakers are complacent about developments in the Middle East and their effects on energy markets. The market price for oil for future delivery is trading around the mid-sixties per barrel, well below the spot price and below the average inflation-adjusted price for two decades.

Despite the growth of renewables, especially solar and wind power, oil and gas, alongside coal, remain the staple source of energy underpinning modern economies and societies. Currently, the world consumes around 100 million barrels of oil daily (around 50 percent for transport and 20 percent for petrochemicals). No significant decline is forecast due to limited alternatives for heavy transportation and as a chemical feedstock. Natural gas is around 23 percent of the world's total energy consumption and provides a quarter of global electricity.

The Gulf region is the world's most important energy producer, accounting for around 50 percent of proven reserves. It produces around 33 percent of the world's oil and approximately 17 percent of natural gas. Any severe disruption would affect availability and price flowing through to economies.

The absence of concern comes from a perception of ample supplies. In the leadup to the current crisis, OPEC, driven by Saudi pressure, increased output, causing sharp declines in price exacerbated by slowing demand from decelerating economic activity, particularly in China. In a repeat of 2015, Saudi Arabia sought to punish producers who exceeded quotas agreed upon between member states. It may have been to placate President Donald Trump, who has consistently sought lower oil prices. Saudi Arabia's objective is to maintain its market share as low prices make US shale oil and gas uncompetitive and accelerate the use of a potentially stranded resource.

The spreading conflict alters the equation. There is increased stockpiling and consumption—military aircraft are not designed for fuel efficiency. The most serious threat comes from collateral damage to energy facilities or the weaponisation of oil and gas supplies.

Israel, whose declared objective is destroying Iran's nuclear capabilities and unseating its leaders, may target oil and gas facilities to increase pressure on the regime. Iran exports up to 2 million barrels of oil and refined petroleum products daily (around 2 percent of total oil supply). This loss may not be covered by other producers whose capacities are already strained due to lack of infrastructure, in part because of under-investment in the shift away from fossil fuels. Only Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Russia, whose capacity is hobbled by sanctions, may have actual additional available capacity.

The US entry into the war has changed its dynamics. Iran may seek a total or selective blockade of the Strait of Hormuz—the chokepoint of global energy supplies—through which a fifth of the world's oil supply passes. A long-standing rule in the Persian Gulf states is that if Iran is under threat, it will seek to prevent regional competitors from selling their oil. Even though free passage is still theoretically possible, many shipping companies are already reluctant to transit the narrow waterway due to insurance concerns. The charter costs of large crude carriers (capable of carrying 2 million barrels of oil) from the Gulf to China have more than doubled (from around \$20,000 to just under \$48,000 per day).

Another option is to attack other Gulf nations' oil facilities, which has happened previously. American and Israeli military bases in these countries increase this risk. Iranian-backed domestic militias, already in place, could undertake these attacks. Iraq, which supplies over 4 million barrels of oil per day, is vulnerable due to the location of its infrastructure in Basra, close to Iran, and the history between the two nations.

Iran will be reluctant to attack Gulf neighbours with whom they have carefully re-established relations and a modus vivendi over recent years. This suggests another option—a coordinated oil embargo on the US, Europe and supporters of Israel.

While Arab unity is elusive and never guaranteed, there is a historical precedent—the 1973 oil embargo by Arab members of OPEC in response to the Yom Kippur War and the US support for Israel. The crucial players are West-leaning Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar. Despite competition with Iran for regional influence and the Sunni and Shia schism, there are reasons that these nations may act.

First, they fear regional instability if the present Iranian regime is toppled. Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria highlight the West's lack of staying power and appetite for casualties and cost to engineer the outcome they state.

Secondly, Western denial of Iran's right to even peaceful nuclear capabilities affects the ambitions of at least Saudi Arabia and the UAE. It leaves the region subservient to Israel as its only nuclear-capable actor consistent with Washington's policy to preserve Israeli military superiority.

Thirdly, Israel and its supporters' desire for regime change in Iran and potential replacement by the sons of the Shah will alarm Gulf monarchies because they will exist at the behest of foreign powers and can be displaced at the whim of the West. Given the volatile foreign policies of the US and its allies, including their backing of the ill-fated Arab Spring, this possibility is non-trivial. As Hosni Mubarak discovered, US support exists until it doesn't.

Fourthly, America's confiscation of Russian assets, tariffs, and economic policies have created unease about Western investments in the Middle East. The Gulf states have already begun to favour domestic projects over foreign investments.

Finally, the Gulf population, excepting the rulers and their acolytes, is predominantly pro-Palestinian and anti-American. Siding with Israel and the West is existentially dangerous for the internally fractious ruling families, irrespective of their repressive domestic policies.

Higher oil prices would financially benefit producers struggling to balance budgets at current levels. An embargo which did not affect their energy supplies would be supported by non-aligned nations, who oppose the wars in Gaza and Iran and Western interference.

Israel and its allies should remember Thucydides' Melian Dialogue, which records Athens' conquest of Melos. The Melians unsuccessfully resisted, suffering horrific losses. Athens believed that "the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must", and they could act with impunity because their power was complete. Less than three years later, Athens suffered a military disaster in Sicily from which they never recovered.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

You can destroy your now by worrying about tomorrow.

- Janis Joplin

TRUMP IS LYING HIS WAY INTO WAR IN MIDDLE EAST



BRANKO MARCETIC

For the past two decades, disastrous Middle East wars have been synonymous with the name of Bush. The current US president seems determined to now make them synonymous with the name Trump.

It is widely understood that the US war with Iran that the Donald Trump White House is barreling toward, and the regime collapse that seems to have become the unofficial goal of the Israeli government, would be terrible for everyone involved, and for the same reasons as the Iraq War was twenty years ago: massive civilian death in yet another Muslim-majority country that will inflame a new round of anti-American terrorism.

US troops and even civilians needlessly sacrificed as they become targets of reprisal in the region and possibly beyond; a violent internal power struggle involving ethno-sectarian violence and a tug of war for influence by foreign powers; and a flood of weapons and desperate, angry people leaving Iran's borders that destabilizes neighbouring countries, nearby regions, and even the very same Western countries backing this war.

Trump himself knows all this very well because he watched it all play out with George W. Bush's Iraq invasion and, taking the political temperature a decade's worth of chaos later, used it to viciously pounce on Bush's brother in the 2016 Republican primary. "Obviously the war in Iraq was a big fat mistake, alright? ... [W]e can make mistakes. But that one was a beauty," he said on the debate stage, shocking the Washington establishment. "We should have never been in Iraq, we have destabilized the Middle East."

"They lied. They said there were weapons of mass destruction—there were none. And they knew there were none," he added for good measure.

This was the kind of talk in 2016 that earned Trump the furious hatred of Republican neoconservatives. "It was a disgrace," lamented Fox News host Mark Levin at the time, who spent the rest of the race bashing Trump and vowing not to vote for him. "This guy sounds like Code Pink. ... He sounds like a radical kook. ... And there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq." Nine years later, Levin is now one of the people who has reportedly personally convinced Trump to go to war with Iran,

in between cheering for war in a TV studio and assuring everyone that defeating the country would be as easy as the famously simple and painless Iraq War. Best places to visit in Jammu and Kashmir

Trump is now a fingernail's length away from doing exactly what he bashed Bush for doing in order to kickstart his political ascent. Just like Iraq, the Iran war he's poised to directly enter will be a war based on faulty intelligence and sold to the public with lies.

And they are lies, the claims that Trump and his political allies are making to justify going in. The charge that Iran is days away from producing a nuclear weapon, that this is even the goal of its leadership, and that preemptive war is therefore legally and morally justified is a lie — Bush's same weapons-of-mass-destruction lie warmed over and lazily served up as if no one would notice. Aping Bush official Condoleezza Rice's infamous line that "we don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud," pro-war Sen. Ted Cruz went on Fox News this Monday to warn that "if Iran gets a nuclear weapon, I think the odds are unacceptably high that we would find out with a mushroom cloud." A high schooler tries harder to cover up plagiarism than this. Best places to visit in Jammu and Kashmir

What's more, everyone saying this knows it's a lie. How can we be sure? Because the US intelligence agencies that your taxes fund to the tune of tens of billions of dollars have repeatedly said the opposite. Just three months ago, Trump's own director of national intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard, told a Senate committee that US intelligence "continues to assess that Iran is not building a nuclear weapon and Supreme Leader Khamenei has not authorized the nuclear weapons program that he suspended in 2003." This conclusion, by the way, has consistently been the same one US intelligence agencies have made since at least as far back as 2007.

Pro-war officials, both Democrat and Republican, have simply decided to pretend this never happened. Nearly every senator who was physically there and heard Gabbard has since gone on to misleadingly tell the public the exact opposite of what she told them. Trump himself was recently asked point-blank about what Gabbard relayed and replied, "I don't care what she said. I think they were very close to having one."

Nothing has changed in the three months since. Just yesterday, four sources told CNN that US intelligence assessments were still that Iran wasn't trying to produce a nuke, and that even if it was, it would take up to three years for it to be able to do so. The same day, the Wall Street Journal reported that just before Trump greenlit Israel's attack last week, US officials were shown the supposedly slam-dunk Israeli intelligence proving Iran was a nuclear threat, and found it utterly unconvincing.

So why is this happening, in spite of its overwhelming unpopularity, monumental risks, and the lives it will cost, including American ones? The answer, in short, is because of Israel and Trump himself. Israeli leadership, and current prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu above all, has been pushing for war with Iran for decades, a war that everyone understands it can't fight without the United States. Israeli officials right now are not even pretending their goal isn't to get Trump to involve the United States directly and finish the job for them. Just like with Netanyahu's enthusiasm for Trump's terrible idea to occupy Gaza, the Israeli MO is to barge in and break everything, then make the United States pick up the pieces and pay for it.

But the buck ultimately stops with Trump, who in his brief time in office has proven himself, somehow, an even weaker leader than his feeble predecessor. Recent behind-the-scenes reports explaining Trump's shift paint a picture of an indecisive president incapable of restraining Israel, and easily manipulated by war-seekers in and around his administration — so the same exact thing we had for the last year of Joe Biden's presidency. The difference was, though he came very close to causing it, Biden had the modicum of nerve to at least veto Israel's push for an Iran war.

Trump, by contrast, has actively enabled and facilitated it. Israel shared its war plans with Trump officials months in advance of its attack, which they were reportedly deeply "impressed" by, and Trump didn't just greenlight the war but secretly transferred three-hundred precision missiles to Israel just days before it started it, which allowed Israel to immediately assassinate a spate of Iranian military leaders and scientists, on top of moving US military resources into the region to ensure Israel pays minimal cost for its reckless actions. This is not a matter of a US president simply going along with something he was powerless to stop.

But Trump's responsibility for this situation goes well beyond these recent actions. The root of all this is Trump's completely pointless decision in his first term to rip up the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or JCPOA, commonly called the Iran deal, which had been working and had neutralized Iran's enrichment program as an issue. That was followed by pitiless sanctions and his provocative assassination of a top Iranian general that came a hair's breadth from starting war in early 2020, which together empowered Iranian hard-liners and made future compromise more difficult. His final, fatal mistake was, in the middle of negotiations to clean up the mess he had created and re-enter the JCPOA, to suddenly turn around last month and insist on the maximalist demand that Iran end all uranium enrichment: a poison pill pushed by Netanyahu that rolled back progress in talks.

It is no exaggeration that just about every brick of the road toward this war was laid by Trump over his two terms. And having laid it in place, he's now strolling toward the dark pit at its end, dragging the country along as he prepares to plunge in.

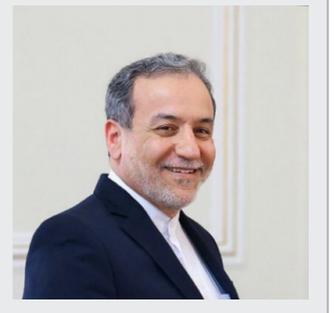
There may still be a chance to de-escalate, even now. The US public and

Trump's own MAGA allies don't want this war. Iranian officials were eager to make a deal before the war, and made clear to Trump they still were after Israel started this US-backed war, even signalling they would be willing to be more flexible in talks. His Gulf partners have reached out asking him to pressure Israel into the cease-fire that Iran is quietly calling for. All of it comes down to Trump, and if he has the backbone to slap down Netanyahu. And that's exactly the problem, complete. Less than three years later, Athens suffered a military disaster in Sicily from which they never recovered.

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

As Iran has repeatedly made clear: Israel launched war on Iran, not the other way around. As of now, there is NO "agreement" on any ceasefire or cessation of military operations. However, provided that the Israeli regime stops its illegal aggression against the Iranian people no later than 4 am Tehran time, we have no intention to continue our response afterwards. The final decision on the cessation of our military operations will be made later.

- Seyed Abbas Araghchi, Foreign Minister, Islamic Republic of Iran



THREE LESSONS FOR TODAY FROM EMERGENCY 1975

SOURAV ROY

Come June 25, India will be observing the 50th anniversary of a murderous attack on its democracy. Announcing the cabinet decision last July, Home Minister Amit Shah had said that, as a reminder of how Indira Gandhi had thrown lakhs of people behind bars for no fault of their own and the way media's voice was muzzled, the government had decided to observe every June 25 as 'Samvidhaan Hatya Diwas'. He further stated, "This day will commemorate the massive contributions of all those who endured the inhuman pains of the 1975 Emergency."

On March 21, 1977, Indira Gandhi decided to withdraw the Emergency after the results of that year's Lok Sabha elections were announced. While the electoral verdict was the last nail on the coffin, many other factors hugely contributed to compel Mrs Gandhi to backtrack. One of them was the satyagraha movement started mainly by the RSS and Sangh-inspired organisations.

The RSS's role in mobilising the satyagraha movement was appreciated by many, including by some who were diehard opponents of RSS ideology. Achyutrao Patwardhan, a noted socialist leader, is on record saying, "I am pleased to learn that the volunteers of the RSS, as well as any other group of political resistance, were willing to openly collaborate and support those who opposed Emergency and are able to work with enthusiasm and integrity, against the diabolical regime that resorts to blatant repression and lies." Deeply impressed by the satyagrahis' valour in leading the movement in the face of police atrocities and brutality, CPI(M) leader A

K Gopalan observed, "There must be some high ideal giving them indomitable courage for such a heroic act and sacrifice." (June 9, 1979, Indian Express).

The history of the Emergency, conducted in a draconian manner that independent India has never witnessed, has three key lessons that all Indians must learn. Firstly, the dynasty-driven political parties pose a serious threat to democracy. Remember, most dynastic parties emerged on the political horizon of India around the 1970s. It was in that decade that many dynasties tightened their stranglehold on otherwise ideology-driven parties and converted them into family businesses.

There is reason to believe that Indira Gandhi's brand of politics inspired them. By the late 1960s, Indira Gandhi realised that she was almost totally isolated in her party. Deeply disturbed by this, instead of re-building bridges, she chose to create her own party, only to realise that she could completely rely only on her close family members — especially her younger son Sanjay Gandhi. In the mid-1970s, with the opposition parties coming together and sharpening their attack, media roundly criticising her and anti-corruption youth movements in Gujarat and Bihar gaining momentum, a sense of insecurity overwhelmed Indira Gandhi's mind. Alone at the top and suspicious of her colleagues in Congress — although it was completely under her control — she found dependable support only in Sanjay. Her dependence was so complete that although she rescinded Sanjay's directives on June 25, 1975 to cut power supply to media houses and keep high court chambers under lock, she couldn't directly

confront her son.

Over the years, the Indira-Sanjay duo became a model to orchestrate son-rises in different political parties. Remember, it is the post-Emergency era that has witnessed the emergence of younger generations among the Thackerays, Stalins, Abdullahs and the Yadavs of UP and Bihar coming forward to take control of the parties earlier helmed by their fathers. It would not be an exaggeration to suggest that the Emergency emboldened many to convert their parties into family fiefdoms.

Dynastic parties do not just lack in ideology-based policy perspectives, but also promote birth-based discrimination, something that our Constitution rejects lock, stock and barrel. Hence, the first lesson of Emergency is that dynastic parties are detrimental to democracy.

Why could none in the Congress come forward to oppose Indira Gandhi? By the mid-1970s, the party had become bereft of even the veneer of ideology. The leadership was almost completely encircled by sycophants. Internal democracy within the Congress had become a thing of the past. As a consequence, none in the party had a semblance of courage to question Indira Gandhi, much less oppose her decision to impose Emergency.

In the larger context of democratic reforms, political party reform merits greater attention. In many states like Maharashtra, charities and public trusts are disallowed from having two or more blood relations occupying offices simultaneously. A similar provision in the rules and regulations governing the establishment of

political parties would go a long way in ending dynastic politics. Obviously then, with party organisational leadership itself throwing internal democracy to the dustbin, the need to deliberate upon a slew of party reforms becomes the second important lesson of the Emergency.

The third learning is about the most sordid 'safe play' approach of thinkers, creative writers and litterateurs. Except for a few writers and scholars such as Dharmaveer Bharati, Kamalashwar, Durgabai Bhagwat and Vishnu Pandya, most writers, poets and playwrights chose to remain silent and failed to rise to the expectations of the people. Sadly, journalist Khushwant Singh openly endorsed Emergency rule; some other journalists were also found wanting on this front. Former Deputy Prime Minister Lal Krishna Advani had wryly commented that while the government wanted media persons to simply bend a little, the latter chose to crawl. Many of those who are wearing 'Freedom of expression' badges on their sleeves today were silent during the Emergency and didn't join the satyagraha of those days.

The history of the 21 months of Emergency is a stark reminder of how some people manning democratic institutions — like the judiciary and the press — are ready to compromise when pressured. The third lesson, therefore, is that people of integrity who are committed to the basics of democracy and are ready to fight for it — although in short supply — are the true saviours of democracy than those who give lip service to the ideal.

Healthcare access tops agenda as Meghalaya CM meets villagers at grassroots level



SHILLONG

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma addressed urgent healthcare needs during a citizen interaction programme at Mawkdok Playground on June 23, where villagers from remote areas highlighted the critical shortage of medical facilities in hard-to-reach locations.

The CM Connect initiative brought together residents who voiced concerns about the lack of Sub-Centres and Mini Primary Health Centres in villages with poor road connectivity. Sangma responded by directing the Health Department to immediately begin identifying suitable locations for new health facilities in these underserved areas.

"These platforms are essential for understanding real challenges faced by our people," Sangma said during the session, emphasising the programme's role in connecting policy decisions with ground-level needs.

Local legislators Gavin Mylliem

from Sohra and Matthew B. Kurbah from Mawphlang praised the direct engagement approach. Kurbah requested similar programmes be organized in Mawphlang Block to address regional concerns.

Beyond healthcare, citizens raised multiple infrastructure issues. Teacher shortages plague several schools across the constituency, while electricity connectivity remains problematic in KhatarShong regions due to challenging terrain. Agricultural areas continue facing road infrastructure deficits that hamper local farming activities.

Villagers acknowledged improvements in the tourism sector and welcomed Sangma's proposal for a dedicated tourism police force. Water supply systems received mixed feedback, with residents appreciating government efforts while requesting enhanced distribution networks for rural homes, schools and hospitals.

An innovative proposal emerged for establishing ropeways in villages

like Phong to facilitate the efficient transportation of agricultural produce from remote farming areas.

Government department officials attended the session to provide immediate clarifications and address citizen queries on the spot.

The programme concluded with cheque distribution to Self Help Groups and community organisations supporting rural development projects.

Sangma later visited Swer village to inspect the ongoing Swer-Mawrah Water Supply Scheme and its planned approach road construction. His visit included a stop at Ramakrishna Mission School, where he discussed institutional challenges with administrators and committed support for resolving key issues.

The Chief Minister assured residents that all concerns raised would receive serious attention through coordination with relevant government departments.

CBFC urges Manipur government to enforce Cinematograph Act 1952

IMPHAL

The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) Regional Office in Guwahati has called on the Government of Manipur to ensure strict enforcement of the Cinematograph Act, 1952, to regulate the public exhibition of films, videos, and related content in the state. In a letter dated June 23, 2025, Additional Regional Officer Dipankar Gogoi, IRTS, emphasized the need for compliance with certification requirements.

The CBFC, the sole authority for certifying films and visual content for public exhibition across India, has tasked its Guwahati office with overseeing the Northeast region, including Manipur. Gogoi's letter expresses that all films, videos, advertisements, trailers, promo videos, songs, and other visual presentations must be certified by the CBFC before public screening.

The official has requested the Manipur Chief Secretary to issue instructions to district administrations, ensuring that no uncertified content is exhibited anywhere in the state. The letter also notes that violations of the Cinematograph Act, 1952, are cognizable and non-bailable offenses under Sections 7 and 7A, with appropriate actions permissible under the Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973).

Gogoi urged for prompt action, stating that such measures would be highly beneficial. Copies of the letter have been sent to the Director of Art and Culture, Government of Manipur, and the Deputy Commissioners of Imphal West and Imphal East for their information and necessary action.

Nagaland minister Temjen Imna Along stranded as protest erupts over tea worker's death in Assam

KOHIMA

Nagaland Minister and BJP state president Temjen Imna Along found himself stranded for hours on Monday evening after enraged locals blocked the Dhodar Ali road in Assam's Mariani area, protesting the death of a tea garden worker in a road accident.

The dramatic scenes unfolded near Kathalguri Tea Estate, where a vehicle carrying raw tea leaves overturned in Section No. 2 of the garden, leading to the death of 25-year-old Deepak Praja, a tea worker.

Locals, blaming the accident on poor road conditions and the alleged negligence of the tea estate management, staged a fierce protest and road blockade.

As the news of the worker's death spread, hundreds of tea estate workers and local residents descended on the historic Dhodar Ali, bringing all movement to a stand-

still. Temjen Imna Along, who was travelling through the area at the time, was caught in the blockade, with his convoy immobilised amid heavy agitation.

Security forces were deployed urgently, and the Titabor Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO) reached the site to pacify the protesters and clear the road. However, tensions remained high late into the evening, with the blockade continuing and traffic severely disrupted. This unexpected entanglement of a prominent minister in the middle of a grassroots protest has cast a spotlight on the long-standing grievances of tea garden workers and the poor infrastructure in Assam's plantation belts.

Authorities are working to resolve the impasse, but the incident has raised serious questions about worker safety, emergency preparedness, and the condition of interstate transit routes.

Indian Army and Assam Rifles apprehend rifles and IEDs in intelligence based joint operations

IMPHAL

Indian Army and Assam Rifles, in coordination with the Manipur Police, Central Reserve Police Force and Border Security Forces, launched intelligence-based joint operations in the hills and valley districts of Manipur.

The operations conducted between June 16 to June 22 in Thoubal, Bishnupur, Kakching, Kamjong, Tengenoupal, Senapati, Imphal East and Imphal West resulted in the apprehension of 17 cadres, recovery of three IEDs, 24 weapons comprising of automatics, rifles, pistols, improvised mortars, grenades, ammunition and war-like stores.

"Intelligence based joint operations launched by #IndianArmy and #AssamRifles formations under #SpearCorps, in coordination with @manipur_police, #CRPF and #BSF in the hill and valley districts of #Manipur, namely Thoubal, Bishnupur, Kakching, Kamjong, Tengenoupal, Senapati, Imphal East and Imphal West, between

16 - 22 Jun 25 have resulted in apprehension of 17 cadres, recovery of three IEDs, 24 weapons comprising of automatics, rifles, pistols, improvised mortars, grenades, ammunition and war like stores," the post by Spear Corps on social media X read.

The apprehended cadres and recovered items have been handed over to the Manipur Police.

"The apprehended cadres and the recovered items have been handed over to #ManipurPolice," the post further read. Earlier in Manipur on June 20, the Police informed that the law-and-order situation in Manipur had been normal in the past 24 hours except for a lone report of unprovoked firing in Bishnupur district, according to a press release.

On Thursday at approximately 3:00 PM, a cultivator from Phubala Awang Maning Leikai, namely Ningthoujam Biren Singh, was shot in his left arm by an unknown armed miscreant while he was working in his paddy field at

Phubala Maning.

Biren Singh was initially taken to the District Hospital, Bishnupur, for medical treatment and later referred to the RIMS Hospital, Imphal. His condition is reported to be stable at present.

In response, security forces launched a search operation in and around Langchingmanbi, Heichanglok, and the western areas of Phubala village. During the operation, security forces came under fire from unknown armed miscreants, and the forces retaliated accordingly. During the crossfire, one woman from Langchingmanbi village was found dead with a bullet injury. She was later identified as Mrs. Hoikholing, wife of the village chief of Langchingmanbi.

Local police attended to the incident, and they transported the deceased to the District Hospital, Churachandpur, for necessary legal formalities. Cases have been registered in connection with the incidents, and an investigation is underway.

Meghalaya to build Rs 51.7 crore skywalk in Mawkdok to boost tourism, local economy



SHILLONG

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K

Sangma has confirmed that the state will begin construction of a Rs 51.7 crore skywalk in Mawkdok, East

Khasi Hills, following the completion of the tendering process. The project is scheduled to start after the monsoon season.

The announcement came during Sangma's visit to Mawkdok on Monday under the "CM Connect" programme, aimed at strengthening government engagement with local communities. The skywalk is being pitched as a major tourism infrastructure initiative that is expected to significantly transform the region's appeal. The skywalk will feature a 40-metre-long walkway, including a 7-metre-wide cantilever section that will extend over the valley, offering expansive views of the surrounding landscape. Officials say this will make it one of the longest cantilever skywalks in India.

"This is a project that will change the face of tourism in the area and create new opportuni-

ties for the local economy," Chief Minister Sangma said during his address to the villagers.

Mawkdok, a popular viewpoint located along the Sohra tourism circuit, is already a frequent stop for visitors en route to Cherrapunji. The upcoming skywalk is expected to enhance the destination's appeal further, encouraging longer stays and increased tourist spending.

The project was initially announced in November 2023 at the Shillong Cherry Blossom Festival, where Sangma and Union DONER Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia laid its foundation. At the time, Sangma highlighted the state's vision: "Tourism is a very important part of our overall strategy for the region. We are hopeful that the DoNER Ministry would continue to support the region to promote tourism."

Karbi Anglong marks 74th KAAC Foundation Day with vibrant celebration at Diphu



SUSHANTA ROY

DIPHU: The 74th Foundation Day of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) was celebrated with immense pride and festivity on Monday at Sarsing Teron Langkung Habe (Town Hall) in Diphu, showcasing the region's rich cultural heritage and progress.

The event was led by Chief Guest Tuliram Ronghang, Chief Executive Member of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council, and Guest of Honor Amarsing Tisso, Member of Parliament.

Distinguished attendees included MLAs Darsing Ronghang (Howraghat) and Bidya Sing Englung (Diphu), KAAC Chairman Raju Tisso, Padmasree Dhoneswar Ingti, Executive Members, District Commissioner Nirola Phangchopi, Senior Superintendent of Police Sanjib Kr Saikia, and other notable figures such as Kache Teronpi (wife of KAAC CEM) Humsing Bey, and Roland Killing, Karbi Anglong district BJP President. The day was filled with vibrant cultural performances, traditional music, and displays of ethnic diversity, symbolising the unity of Karbi Anglong. In their speeches, dignitaries traced KAAC's evolution from its origins as the Mikir Hills Autonomous Council, established on June 23, 1952, highlighting advancements in infrastructure, education, and government scheme implementation. Ronghang paid tribute to the visionaries who founded the Council, emphasising their sacrifices for self-governance and political recognition.

He announced the completion of several road projects under KAAC in 2025, with the remaining ones targeted for completion by March 2026. He also launched new websites for the Information & Technology and Art & Culture Departments, enhancing dig-

ital access and cultural preservation.

A highlight was the award ceremony, honoring individuals for their contributions to Karbi society: Semson Sing Ingti Award 2025; Pakhila Lekthepi, celebrated modern singer and Asom Gaurav Award 2024 recipient, Khorsing Terang Award 2025; Kangther Bey, noted singer and cultural activist, Sarsing Teron (Langkung Habe) Award 2025; Dr. Alice Enghipi, the first Karbi MBBS graduate from Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh, Bonglong Terang Literary Award 2025; Hangmiji Hanse, distinguished poet and cultural contributor.

The CEM Special Award 2025 was bestowed upon Smti Nirola Phangchopi, the first Karbi woman to serve as District Commissioner. CEM Lifetime Achievement Awards 2025 recognised Biren Sing Engti, the first Karbi MP and union minister, Smti Kache Teronpi, for achievements in sports and culture, Dhansing Rongpi, for youth and cultural development, Satyendra Terang, for contributions to Fine Arts and Mangal Sing Kathar, for preserving Karbi folk culture.

Certificates of appreciation were awarded to individuals like Miss Binita Chetry, 2nd Runner-up in 'Britain's Got Talent 2025', and others, including Smt. Sashikala Hansepi, Jeevan Ingti (also honoured for 'Trinity College's Excellent Teacher Award'), and Sarbamon Engti for their work in music, dance, and art.

Ronghang noted that over 1,00,000 land pattas were distributed to indigenous people from December 2023 to April 2024, underscoring KAAC's commitment to transparent and responsive governance.

The 74th KAAC Foundation Day celebrated Karbi Anglong's legacy of self-governance, cultural pride, and ongoing development, uniting the community in a shared vision for the future.

'Rs 50 Lakh public money for minister's private dairy': Gaurav Gogoi accuses Assam CM of favouritism



Quest!

Ants don't have lungs.

GUWAHATI

A controversy has erupted in Assam after a state minister allegedly received Rs 50 lakh in taxpayer funds for his private dairy farm through a

government scheme, prompting sharp criticism from the opposition Congress.

Assam Congress president Gaurav Gogoi attacked Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday, alleging systematic favouritism in the distribution of government benefits. The dispute centres on what Gogoi described as the Chief Minister's dismissive response to questions about the funding.

"Rs 50 lakh of taxpayer money was handed to a minister for his private dairy farm in Assam. The Chief Minister's brazen response? 'What will they do after losing power?'" Gogoi posted on social media platform X. The Congress leader accused the state government of a pattern of preferential treatment, claiming that those with political connections receive disproportionate benefits while genuinely needy beneficiaries are sidelined. According to Gogoi, this represents a fundamental failure of the schemes designed to support vulnerable populations.

"This isn't the first time those close to this government have reaped outsized benefits.

Meanwhile, those who truly need support - first-generation entrepreneurs, small farmers, the poor and marginalised are left fighting for their rightful share, excluded from schemes meant to uplift them," he stated.

Gogoi characterized the incident as a violation of public trust, arguing that it demonstrates misuse of government resources for personal gain. He accused the Sarma administration of treating political power as personal privilege rather than public responsibility.

"This is not governance, but rather a betrayal of the oath of office. Public money is misused to secure private futures, and power is treated as entitlement, not responsibility," he added.

The timing of the controversy coincides with the state's preparation for Ambubachi Mahayog, an annual religious celebration. On Sunday, Chief Minister Sarma announced the beginning of the festival honoring Maa Kamakhya, expecting spiritual leaders and devotees from across India to gather at Nilachal Hills.

Black box of crashed AI plane is in India, being examined by AAIB: Minister



PUNE

Civil Aviation Minister K Ram Mohan Naidu on Tuesday said the black box of the Air India plane, which crashed in Ahmedabad earlier this month, was being examined by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau, and dismissed speculation that it would be sent abroad for an inquiry.

The London-bound Air India flight crashed into a hostel complex in Ahmedabad moments after taking off from the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport there on June 12, killing 270 persons, including 241 on board. One passenger survived.

The black box of Air India's Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner plane was recovered from the site on June 13.

A black box is a small device that records information about an aircraft during its flight. It helps in the investigation of aviation accidents.

Asked about some media reports suggesting the black box would be sent abroad for a probe into the incident, Naidu said, "it is all speculation. The black box is very much in India and it is currently being investigated by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB)."

To a query on when is the black box data expected to be retrieved, the

minister said it is a very technical matter. "Let the AAIB conduct the probe and go through the entire process," he added.

Naidu was speaking here on the sidelines of the Helicopters & Small Aircraft Summit 2025, organised by FICCI jointly with the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

A high-level panel has been set up to investigate the causes of the Ahmedabad plane crash and the investigation is progressing smoothly, the government said after the incident.

"Decoding the black box is going to give an in-depth insight into what happened moments before the plane crash," Naidu had earlier said.

Operation Sindhu: IAF evacuates 268 Indians from Egypt amid Israel-Iran conflict



NEW DELHI

A total of 268 Indian nationals were evacuated by the Indian Air Force under Operation Sindhu from Egypt in an effort to get citizens back home safe amid the Israel-Iran conflict. The IAF's C-17 aircraft landed in Delhi this morning, and the passengers were welcomed by Minister of State L. Murugan.

The spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, Randhir Jaiswal,

informed about the flight in a post on X, adding, "268 Indian nationals who returned in the third flight from Israel were received by MoS Dr L Murugan. The IAF C-17 flight from Sharm-El-Sheikh, Egypt, landed in Delhi at 1100 hrs on 24th June."

He informed that a total of 594 Indians have returned so far from Israel as part of Operation Sindhu.

Earlier, a total of 165 Indian nationals were evacuated by the Indian Air Force under Operation

Sindhu from Jordan in an effort to get citizens back home safely amid the Israel-Iran conflict. The IAF's C-17 aircraft landed in Delhi this morning, and the passengers were welcomed by Minister of State L. Murugan.

The spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, Randhir Jaiswal, informed about the flight in a post on X, adding, "An IAF C-17 flight evacuated 165 Indian nationals from Israel under Operation Sindhu. They were received by MoS L. Murugan upon

arrival in Delhi. The aircraft landed at 0845 hrs on 24th June from Amman (Jordan)."

"In response to heightened tensions in conflict-affected areas in West Asia, IAF C-17 aircraft commenced missions from Jordan and Egypt to extricate Indian nationals and citizens of friendly countries. The IAF remains committed as first responders to provide assistance within the country and across the globe in times of need," the Air Force said in a post on X.

Ministry of External Affairs official spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal stated that the Israel leg of Operation Sindhu started on June 23. Jaiswal emphasised that the safety and security of Indian nationals abroad remain the government's highest priority.

The conflict between Israel and Iran began on June 13 when the former launched a massive airstrike on Iranian military and nuclear sites, code-named "Operation Rising Lion". In retaliation, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) initiated a large-scale drone and missile campaign called 'Operation True Promise 3', targeting Israeli fighter jet fuel production facilities and energy supply centres.

Tensions escalated further after the US conducted precision airstrikes early Sunday morning on three key Iranian nuclear facilities under "Operation Midnight Hammer". Iran retaliated by launching multiple missiles at US military installations in Qatar and Iraq, including the Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar, the largest US military base in the region, CNN reported.

INTERNATIONAL

ISRAEL AND IRAN ACCEPT CEASEFIRE

BEERSHEBA

Israel and Iran on Tuesday accepted a ceasefire plan proposed by US President Donald Trump to end their 12-day war that roiled the Middle East, after Tehran launched a retaliatory limited missile attack on a US military base in Qatar.

The acceptance of the deal by both sides came after Tehran launched a final onslaught of missiles targeting Israel that killed at least four people early Tuesday morning, while Israel launched a blitz of airstrikes targeting sites across Iran before dawn.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel had agreed to a bilateral ceasefire with Iran in coordination with Trump.

Netanyahu said that he had reported to Israel's security cabinet Monday night that Israel had achieved all of its war goals in the 12-day operation against Iran, including removing the threat of Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes. Israel also damaged Iran's military leadership and several government sites and achieved control over Tehran's skies, Netanyahu said.

"Israel will respond forcefully to any violation of the ceasefire," Netanyahu said.

Heavy Israeli strikes continued in Iranian cities until shortly before 4 am, followed by Iranian barrages that sent Israelis hurrying into bomb shelters as the sun rose, killing at least four people and injuring eight others, Israel's Magen David Adom rescue services said.

Writing over an hour after a deadline passed for Iran to halt its attacks, Trump wrote on Truth Social: "THE CEASEFIRE IS NOW IN EFFECT. PLEASE DO NOT VIOLATE IT! DONALD J. TRUMP, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES"

Iranian state television reported that the ceasefire went into effect at 7:30 am, but Iranian officials have not commented since Trump's announcement. Hours earlier Iran's top diplomat said the country was prepared to halt airstrikes.

"As of now, there is NO agreement on any ceasefire or cessation of military operations," Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas



Araghchi wrote in a post on X.

"However, provided that the Israeli regime stops its illegal aggression against the Iranian people no later than 4 am Tehran time, we have no intention to continue our response afterwards."

Araghchi added: "The final decision on the cessation of our military operations will be made later."

Iran's barrage damaged at least three densely packed residential buildings in the city of Beersheba, police said.

First responders said they retrieved four bodies from one building and were searching for more. Outside, the shells of burned-out cars littered the streets. Broken glass and rubble covered the area. Hundreds of emergency workers gathered to search for anyone else trapped in the buildings.

Police said some people were injured even while inside their apartments' reinforced safe rooms, which are meant to withstand rockets and shrapnel but not direct hits from ballistic missiles.

The direct hit in the largest city in southern Israel came before Trump said the ceasefire had gone into effect.

Trump says ceasefire is in effect

Trump's announcement that Israel and Iran had agreed to a "complete and total ceasefire" came soon after Iran launched a limited missile attack Monday on a US military base in Qatar, retaliating for the American bombing of its nuclear sites. The

US was warned by Iran in advance, and there were no casualties.

Trump's announcement on Truth Social said the ceasefire beginning about midnight Washington time would bring an "Official END" to the war.

Trump describes conflict as '12 Day War'

Trump gave the conflict between Israel and Iran a name: the "12 Day War." That recalls the 1967 Mideast war, known by some as the "Six Day War," in which Israel fought a group of Arab countries including Egypt, Jordan and Syria.

Trump's reference carries emotional weight for the Arab world, particularly Palestinians. In the 1967 war, Israel captured the West Bank and east Jerusalem from Jordan, the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, and the Golan Heights from Syria. Though Israel later gave the Sinai back to Egypt, it still holds the other territories.

Trump communicated directly with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to secure the ceasefire, according to a senior White House official who insisted on anonymity to discuss the Monday talks.

Vance, Secretary of State Marco Rubio and special envoy Steve Witkoff communicated with the Iranians through direct and indirect channels.

The White House has maintained

that the Saturday bombing helped get the Israelis to agree to the ceasefire and that the Qatari government helped to broker the deal.

It's unclear what role Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's leader, played in the talks. He said earlier on social media that he would not surrender.

Attacks from Iran forces temporary closure of Israel's skies

Israel's Airports Authority said Iran's barrage forced them to close the country's airspace to emergency flights for several hours.

Some flights were forced to circle over the Mediterranean Sea, according to Israeli media.

Israel's airports have been closed since the war with Iran began, but a handful of emergency flights started arriving and departing over the past few days.

By early Tuesday, Qatar Airways resumed its flights after Qatar shut down its airspace over the Iranian attack on Al Udeid Air Base. Flight-tracking data showed commercial aircraft again flying in Qatari airspace, signaling Doha believed the threat on the energy-rich nation had passed.

In Israel, at least 24 people have been killed and more than 1,000 wounded in the war. Israeli strikes on Iran have killed at least 974 people and wounded 3,458 others, according to the Washington-based group Human Rights Activists.

The group, which has provided detailed casualty figures from Iranian unrest such as the protests surrounding the death of Mahsa Amini in 2022, said of those killed, it identified 387 civilians and 268 security force personnel.

The US has evacuated some 250 American citizens and their immediate family members from Israel by government, military and charter flights that began over the weekend, a State Department official said.

There are roughly 700,000 American citizens, most of them dual U.

'Spreading propaganda': Myanmar junta arrests woman over birthday post for Suu Kyi



YANGON

A Myanmar woman arrested by the junta for "spreading propaganda" is being detained over a Facebook post celebrating the 80th birthday of jailed democratic leader Aung San Suu Kyi, local media said.

Suu Kyi was the figurehead of Myanmar's decade-long democratic thaw, becoming de facto leader as it opened up from military rule, but she has been incarcerated since February 2021 when the generals snatched back power in a coup.

She is serving a 27-year sentence on charges rights groups dismiss as fabricated and on Thursday marked her birthday behind bars

while her son urged followers to publish messages declaring their support.

Myanmar's junta said in a statement over the weekend it had arrested two Facebook users for "inciting and spreading propaganda on social media with the intention to destroy state stability."

One of those detained -- Hinn Yin Phyu -- was arrested at accommodation for employees of state media station MRTV in the capital Naypyidaw on Saturday, the statement said, without providing details of her posts.

The Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) reported on Monday that Hinn Yin Phyu was an MRTV employ-

ee who had been arrested after posting a "happy birthday" message for Suu Kyi, citing sources close to the detained woman.

"May you live long and be free from illness, may you be free from the suffering caused by separation from your loved ones throughout your life, and may you only meet good people," said the now-deleted post, according to DVB.

Despite being blocked in a digital crackdown accompanying the coup, Facebook remains Myanmar's most popular social media platform.

State notices announcing arrests over social media use are commonplace but usually provide scant detail of alleged transgressions.

A spokesman for Myanmar's junta could not be reached for comment on the arrest.

Suu Kyi won the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize as she refused to enter exile to escape her first period of incarceration by Myanmar's military.

As she guided the country through its democratic interlude her reputation was tarnished on the international stage after she defended the military for their crackdown on the Rohingya Muslim minority.

When the generals toppled her government it sparked a protest movement that security forces swiftly crushed in the streets.

Since then the country has descended into civil war as pro-democracy activists formed guerrilla units to fight back, alongside ethnic armed organisations that have been battling the military in Myanmar's fringes for decades.

NEW GEOPOLITICAL TRIANGLE RAISES ALARM FOR INDIA'S NORTHEAST

The trilateral meeting held on June 19 in Kunming between China, Pakistan, and Bangladesh may have appeared routine on the surface, but its implications are far from ordinary. For the first time since independence, India faces a coordinated and institutionalized alignment among three of its most consequential neighbors—an emerging triangle that carries profound strategic consequences, particularly for the nation's northeastern frontier.

This is not just a matter of shifting diplomatic rhetoric. The formal establishment of a joint working group among Beijing, Islamabad, and Dhaka—covering cooperation in trade, defense, investment, and maritime strategy—marks the transformation of an abstract concern into a concrete geopolitical challenge. This strategic triangulation coincides with political uncertainty in Bangladesh, where mounting pressure surrounds interim leader Muhammad Yunus ahead of anticipated elections.

At the heart of this emerging threat lies the precarious Siliguri Corridor, India's narrow and vulnerable link to its northeastern states. Often dubbed the "chicken's neck," this corridor has long been seen as India's Achilles' heel. But what was once a theoretical vulnerability has now morphed into an operational concern. Yunus's provocative statement during his March 2025 visit to China—that India's seven northeastern states can access the ocean only via Bangladesh, positioning his country as the "sole guardian" of the Indian Ocean in the region—was not merely rhetorical flourish. It marked a deliberate shift in Bangladesh's strategic posture.

The reported Chinese proposal to construct an airbase in Lalmonirhat, a Bangladeshi district just 20 kilometers from the Indian border, with Pakistan set to participate as a subcontractor, brings this threat uncomfortably close to home. Such a development would place potential adversaries within direct striking distance of India's most fragile military and economic access point to its northeast.

This tightening strategic triangle is the result of long-term maneuvering. China's influence in Bangladesh has moved from commercial dominance to strategic entrenchment. With bilateral trade reaching \$24 billion in 2024—\$22.88 billion of which was Chinese exports—China has firmly established itself as Bangladesh's top trading partner. More tellingly, Beijing's decision to roll over a \$2 billion loan to Pakistan in March 2025, even as Islamabad grapples with the aftermath of a \$7 billion IMF bailout, underscores China's commitment to maintaining and deepening its regional alignments.

Meanwhile, the inclusion of Afghanistan into the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)—as agreed in a May 2025 trilateral in Beijing—represents



a broader push toward a regional infrastructure and influence matrix that could sideline India. Symbolic gestures have reinforced these trends: China's announcement that a Pakistani astronaut will be the first foreigner to visit the Tiangong Space Station, and the inclusion of a Pakistani rover on the upcoming Chang'e-8 lunar mission, reflect a strengthening technological and strategic alliance.

Equally notable is the transformation in Pakistan-Bangladesh relations. Decades of estrangement following the 1971 war have given way to fast-growing collaboration since August 2024. Bilateral trade between the two nations rose by 27% in just four months, and they now aim to hit a \$3 billion trade target within a year.

The security dimension of this rapprochement is especially concerning. Bangladesh's participation in the "Aman 2025" naval exercise hosted by Pakistan—the first such collaboration in a decade—marks a major shift. Between September and December 2024, Bangladesh procured large volumes of artillery and tank ammunition, along with 40 tonnes of RDX, from Pakistan. Interest in acquiring Pakistani JF-17 fighter jets and potentially even Abdaali missiles signals a deepening military engagement.

Much of this realignment has occurred since the political transition in Bangladesh following Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's departure in August 2024. Under interim leader Muhammad Yunus, Dhaka has visibly distanced itself from New Delhi and moved closer to Beijing and Islamabad. Yunus choosing China as the destination for his first official foreign visit—a break from South Asia's traditional diplomatic etiquette—was a strong message. The invitation extended to Chinese state-owned companies to manage the long-contested Teesta River project, despite India's prior willingness to cooperate, further underscores this pivot.

The new axis was put to the test during the India-Pakistan standoff following the Pahalgam terrorist attack in May 2025, which killed 26 civilians. In retaliation, India launched Operation Sindoor, targeting nine suspected terror sites in Paki-

Bangladeshi exports through Indian territory, signal a tightening of strategic controls. Yet, the recent crisis also exposed the challenge of simultaneously managing multiple, interconnected flashpoints.

The India-Pakistan confrontation in 2025 marked the first instance of Pakistani forces deploying advanced Chinese weaponry, including the HQ-9 air defense system, PL-15 air-to-air missiles, and J-10 fighter jets. This marks a new era in South Asian military dynamics, with China's defense industry increasingly embedded in regional conflicts.

The China-Pakistan-Bangladesh axis is no longer a speculative alignment. It has matured into an operational partnership with strategic coherence and ambition. What India once confronted as bilateral irritants has now coalesced into a trilateral framework that challenges its regional autonomy and security doctrine.

For India, this necessitates a rethink of its traditional bilateral engagement strategy. The geopolitical reality demands a multi-pronged, region-wide approach that combines diplomacy, economic investment, military readiness, and strategic narrative-building.

The northeastern states—once hailed as India's gateway to Southeast Asia—now risk becoming its frontline in a new era of geostrategic competition. While the triangle may not yet be militarized to its full extent, the trajectory is clear.

The fundamental question is no longer whether this axis will test Indian resolve, but whether New Delhi can respond with the urgency and sophistication required to safeguard regional stability and its own strategic autonomy.

The time for reactive diplomacy has passed. India must now craft a comprehensive, forward-looking regional strategy that anticipates challenges, preempts risks, and recalibrates alliances. Anything less would be a strategic miscalculation with long-term consequences.

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11 JAN
Barak Valley Conclave
Potential Issues and Challenges of Barak Valley to be discussed by stakeholders. Includes NGOs, and Government officials, industry representatives, local community and government employees. Participation through invitation only. Different rewards are provided.

10 Jan
Barak Festival: Peace Progress & Prosperity



Barak Festival

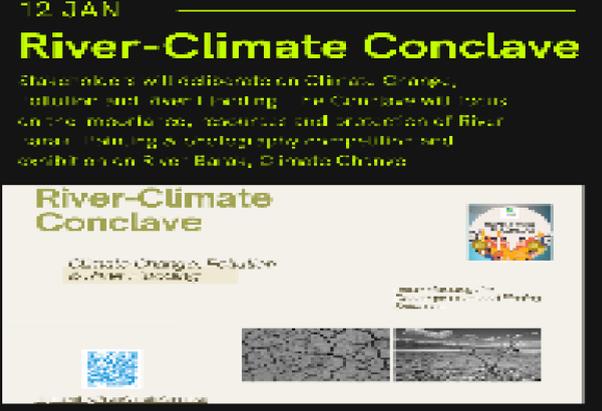
Adventure Sports, Art & Culture Promotion



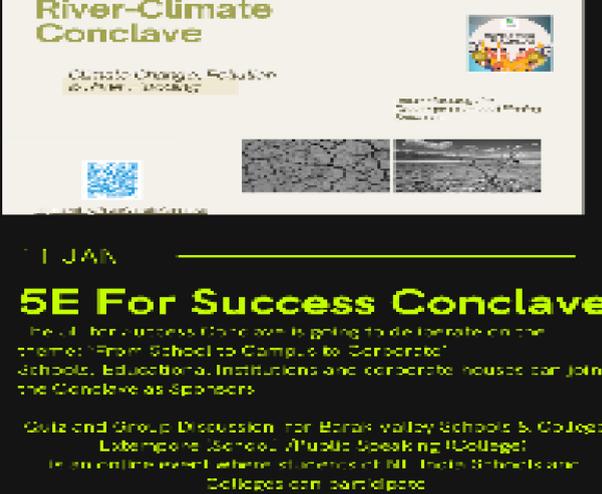
JAN'25
Online Global Fest
All can participate online and send a video clip on Poems, Songs and Dance Performances, Bengali, English, Hindi & Manipuri. Last Date: 31st December 2024.



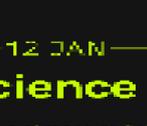
10 JAN
Media Conclave
Media Conclave (Webinars, Seminars, Guest Panel, Talks and Conferences) are part of the 'Barak Festival 2025'. Theme: 'One for All, All for One'. Webinars panel talks, seminars, symposiums, master & corporate talks, speeches, panel discussions, webinars.



12 JAN
River-Climate Conclave
State leaders will deliberate on Climate Change, pollution and river flooding. The Conclave will focus on the importance, treatment and protection of River Barak. Training & Geography competition and exhibition on River Barak, Climate Change.



11 JAN
5E For Success Conclave
The 4th 5E For Success Conclave is going to be held on the theme: 'From School to Campus to Corporate'. Schools, Educational Institutions and corporate houses can join the Conclave as sponsors. Quiz and Group Discussion for Barak valley Schools & Colleges. Extension: School Musical Speaking Competition. In the online event, various students of NE India Schools and Colleges can participate.



Barak Festival

Band Night | 10 JAN
Musical Night | 11 JAN



10-12 JAN
Science Studio
Use a glimpse of Science to see how things work. Class VI-XI | Teachers | Seniors, Administrators | Parents. Raw science out of textbooks into real-life experiences of students.



10-12 JAN
E-Sports
FIFA Football | Counter-Strike | DASH-PRIZES | Trophy.



DEC-24-JAN'25
Photography
Online Photography Contest: River Barak | NE India | Art & Culture of NE | NE Culture. Real-Time Photography Contest of 'Barak Festival 2025'.



11 JAN
film festival
Award-Giving (Best movie) Film from Manipur. Short Films from Barak Valley, NE India, W & Media Talk | Exhibitions | Meet & Greet.



10-12 JAN
Book Bank
Anti-Book Campaign: Book Bank | Buy one Give one | Donate.

Book Club
Meet Authors, Publishers, Read & Discuss, Buy one Give one.

Painting Carnival
Water Colour painting and Draw-Paint Campaign.

5E SUCCESS

STUDENT INTERNSHIP

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- Event Management
- Programme Coordinator

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