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PERSPECTIVE

Best wishes to all hardworking doctors on #DoctorsDay. Our doctors have made a mark for their dexterity and diligence. Equally notable is their spirit of compassion. They are truly protectors of health and pillars of humanity. Their contribution in strengthening India's healthcare infrastructure is indeed exceptional.

- Narendra Modi, PM

Union Minister approves Rajdhani Express halt at Diphu, but implementation still pending

NEW DELHI
Despite official approval from the Union Railway Minister, the long-pending demand for a halt of the prestigious 12423/12424 New Delhi-Dibrugarh Town Rajdhani Express at Diphu Railway Station remains unfulfilled, sparking growing frustration among residents of Karbi Anglong. Member of Parliament from Diphu, Amarsing Tisso, had formally submitted a request on July 20, 2024, to Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, emphasising the need for a daily Rajdhani halt at Diphu — a vital administrative and commercial centre in the hill district. Responding positively, the Union Minister conveyed his support through a letter dated May 28, 2025 (No.2025/CHG/13/NFR/07/Part-1), addressed to MP Tisso. Following ministerial endorsement, the Railway Board's Joint Director (Coaching) directed the General Manager of North Frontier Railway (NFR) and other relevant authorities to make the required arrangements. However, despite the official nod from the top, no action has been taken at the operational level by NFR or its divisions. This bureaucratic inaction has drawn sharp criticism from public representatives and civil society organisations, who have labelled it a serious lapse in administrative accountability.

WHO SAID WHAT



"It's only me making these posts, I would advice leaders of the World to post their own stuff, once in a while you'll make a mistake, don't worry about it."

- Elon Musk, American Entrepreneur

75 per cent Assam voters want MLA replaced or party to change candidate: Survey

GUWAHATI

A recent public opinion survey conducted by VoteVibeLLP reveals significant electoral churn in Assam, with 40% of voters indicating a desire for their party to change the current MLA, and 35.4% expressing the intention to replace their sitting MLA with a candidate from a different party.

The survey, conducted among over 10,000 respondents across the state through Random Digit Dialing (RDD), suggests a wave of dissatisfaction that could impact ticket allocation and seat retention for incumbent legislators.

As per the survey data, 41.3% of respondents said they are considering replacing their current MLA with a candidate from the same party, while 34.5% prefer a candidate from a different party. Meanwhile, 18.1% said they are satisfied with their current MLA and do not want any



change, indicating that only 1 in 5 voters are content with their local representative. Additionally, 5.1% responded "May Be," and 1% said they "Can't Say." The gender-wise breakdown shows consistent trends across both male and female voters. Among males, 41% prefer a new candidate from the same party, 34% want a different party's candidate, and 20% are satisfied with the current MLA. Female respondents displayed similar sentiments, with 42% opting for change within the party, 36% preferring a switch to another party, and 16% expressing satisfaction. Age-wise data underscores a generational shift in voter expectations.

Voters aged 18-24 and 25-34 showed the highest percentage desiring a change in candidate (over 40%), reflecting a youthful demand for fresh leadership. Interestingly, older voters aged 55 and above also showed high

discontent with sitting MLAs, echoing the broader sentiment for renewal. Across all age groups, the percentage of voters satisfied with their current MLA hovered around the 20% mark.

The findings suggest an increasingly volatile electoral landscape in Assam, with nearly 75% of voters open to change — either within the same party or by shifting allegiance. Analysts believe these numbers could lead to widespread ticket denials for incumbents and a high number of swing seats in the upcoming elections.

With just a small fraction of respondents firmly backing their current MLAs, political parties may face intense pressure to revamp their candidate lists to align with public sentiment.

The data also reflects a growing demand for accountability and performance from elected representatives in Assam.

NEW DELHI

In a crucial development aimed at resolving the prolonged crisis in Manipur, a 19-member delegation representing major Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) from the state held a high-level meeting with senior officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in New Delhi today.

The delegation included key representatives from the Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI), All Manipur United Clubs Organisation (AMUCO), and Forum for Civil Society (FOCS), among others.

The extensive meeting, which began at 11:30 AM and lasted over three and a half hours, was attended by A.K. Mishra, Advisor (Northeast), Rajesh Kamble, Joint Director of the Intelligence Bureau, and other MHA officials.

The CSO delegation presented a comprehensive charter of



urgent demands and issues requiring immediate intervention from the central government. These include:

Absolute commitment to Manipur's territorial integrity: The delegation reaffirmed that any initiative or negotiation that threatens the state's territorial unity is non-negotiable and unacceptable to the people of Manipur.

Unrestricted free movement: Stressing that the right to move

freely is a constitutional guarantee, the delegation urged the government to immediately restore mobility for all communities as a first step toward normalcy.

Resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs): The CSOs demanded a phased and time-bound plan for the safe return of all displaced persons to their original homes within this year.

Implementation of National Register of Citizens (NRC): Call-

ing illegal immigration a core issue behind long-standing tensions, the delegation pressed for NRC implementation or a similar mechanism to identify and address unauthorised settlers.

Opposition to SoO extension without consensus: The delegation voiced strong resistance to any further extension of Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreements with insurgent groups unless all stakeholders within the state are taken into confidence.

Future dialogues in Imphal: The CSOs called upon the MHA to conduct subsequent rounds of discussions in Imphal to facilitate wider participation and engagement from grassroots actors. Willingness for inclusive peace talks: The delegation expressed readiness to take part in broader stakeholder discussions, provided such efforts genuinely serve the goal of lasting peace and not political maneuvering.

Additional concerns raised included the long-pending enquiry report into the Gwalabti incident, a memorandum on farmer safety, and the construction of an illegal 343-km road along the Churachandpur-Kangpokpi axis — flagged as a potential security threat requiring urgent investigation.

The delegation also discussed recent MHA directives on detecting illegal immigrants within a 30-day timeframe and stressed the need for proper mechanisms and safeguards during implementation. MHA officials assured the delegation that all points raised are under serious consideration and will be forwarded to appropriate authorities for action. Outcomes and follow-up steps are expected to unfold in the coming days.

The delegation will return to Imphal on July 2 and plans to brief the media and public on the meeting's outcomes.

4 SHOT DEAD BY UNIDENTIFIED GUNMEN

Manhunt Launched for Gunmen Behind Churachandpur Killings: Manipur Police



IMPHAL

The Manipur Police on Tuesday said security forces have launched search operations to arrest the gunmen who killed four people in an ambush in Churachandpur district a day ago.

An FIR has been registered in connection with the killing of the four people, and security has been tightened to prevent any escalation of violence, a police statement said.

"Operations have been launched by security forces to arrest the culprits involved in the incident.

An FIR has been registered in connection with the case at Churachandpur PS for further

investigation," the police said.

At least four people, including a 72-year-old woman, were shot dead in the ambush by gunmen in Churachandpur district on Monday.

The United Kuki National Army (UKNA), a banned militant outfit, claimed responsibility for the attack, which killed three members of another armed Kuki organisation that signed a peace agreement with the government in 2008. "Security measures have been taken up to prevent any escalation of violence," the police statement said.

The ambush took place near Mongiang village, about five km from Churachandpur town, around 2 pm on Monday, when three of the victims were travelling in a car.

The three men died on the spot inside the car, while the elderly woman, who was passing the area, was hit by a stray bullet.

She succumbed to her injuries on the way to the Churachandpur district hospital.

The car has been brought to the Churachandpur Police Station, an officer added.

'NO GUIDE, NO TREK': Meghalaya's new rule after tourist murder

SHILLONG

Amid growing concerns over tourist safety, especially following the high-profile murder of a visitor in Sohra, Meghalaya authorities have mandated the use of registered guides for all outdoor activities in the East Khasi Hills district. The directive aims to ensure the well-being of travellers and prevent incidents in remote and less-monitored areas.

The orders came a month after Indore businessman Raja Raghuvanshi's murder, allegedly planned by his wife during their honeymoon in the Sohra region of the state.

"In view of safety reasons, it is now mandatory for all tourists to take the services of a registered tourist guide while undertaking treks and outdoor activities in the area," East Khasi Hills Deputy Commissioner Rosetta M. Kurbah said in an order.

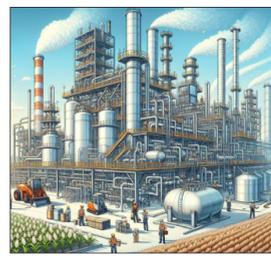
Mandatory guide services will not only ensure better safety for visitors but also help prevent incidents such as getting lost, sustaining injuries, or being vulnerable to criminal activities in isolated areas, she added.

Kurbah, who is also the Chairperson of the District Tourism Promotion Society (DTPS), cited safety and security concerns following the Raja Raghuvanshi murder case that shook the state and led to the arrest of eight people from Indore.

Tourism officials said the order would be strictly enforced, and violators may face penalties or be denied access to trekking routes.

The administration also plans to deploy more trained guides and work with local communities to implement the directive effectively.

PM Modi to dedicate India's first bamboo-based bio-ethanol plant in Assam: Himanta



GUWAHATI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will soon visit Numaligarh in Assam's Golaghat district to dedicate to the nation India's first bio-ethanol plant, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced on Monday.

"Ushering in a dawn of industrial development in Assam. Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi ji will visit Numaligarh to dedicate the nation's first Bio-Ethanol plant," Sarma posted on social media platform X.

While the CM did not confirm the exact date of the PM's visit, he had earlier indicated that Modi is expected to arrive in Assam on September 8 to attend the inauguration of the year-long birth centenary celebrations of Bharat Ratna Bhupen Hazarika.

Sarma visited the Numaligarh Refinery Ltd (NRL) site on Monday to review preparations ahead of the PM's arrival and issued necessary instructions to officials to ensure the smooth conduct of the event. He also inaugurated the newly constructed Dhansiri township, developed by NRL for its employees.

The Assam Bio Refinery, developed under Assam Bio Ethanol Private Ltd (ABEPL), marks a milestone in India's green energy sector. ABEPL is a joint venture between Numaligarh Refinery Ltd and two Finnish technology firms — Fortum and Chempol Oy.

This cutting-edge bio-refinery, built at a cost of ₹4,000 crore, is the first in India to produce fuel-grade ethanol from bamboo biomass. The plant is designed to process 300 KTPA (kilo tonnes per annum) of bamboo to produce 49 KTPA of ethanol, significantly boosting the region's renewable energy capacity and opening up economic opportunities in bamboo cultivation and supply chains.

Officials hailed the project as a symbol of India's commitment to clean energy, rural empowerment, and innovation-driven industrialisation in the Northeast.

No ILP, no ride: Naga Students' Federation calls for stringent transport checks

KOHHIMA

In a bid to safeguard Nagaland's indigenous identity and security framework, the Inner Line Regulation Commission of the Naga Students' Federation (NSF) has issued a strong advisory to all interstate and inter-district taxi owners, drivers, and operators. The advisory calls for strict adherence to the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation (BEFR) of 1873, which mandates the Inner Line Permit (ILP) system for non-indigenous individuals entering Nagaland.

The NSF emphasized that ensuring ILP compliance is not merely a procedural requirement but a constitutional and cultural obligation aimed at protecting Nagaland's demography, ecosystem, and tribal heritage.

All transport operators have been instructed to verify the ILP status of every passenger before allowing them to board. If any passenger fails to produce a valid ILP issued by the Government of Nagaland, services must be politely denied. The advisory also mandates that non-indi-

genous drivers must carry their own valid ILP alongside the vehicle's All India Taxi Permit, with records — either digital or physical — kept ready for on-the-spot verification by enforcement personnel.

The NSF warned that transporting individuals without valid ILP documentation constitutes illegal transportation, attracting punitive actions under Section 6 of the BEFR (1873). Penalties may include heavy fines, vehicle seizure, and cancellation of taxi permits, in addition to potential legal proceedings for undermining state-level security protocols.

Reiterating the critical role of the ILP system, the NSF described it as a legal shield preserving the state's indigenous identity, ecological balance, and law-and-order mechanisms. The organization expressed confidence in the cooperation of the transport community and promised continued monitoring and awareness efforts to strengthen compliance.

"Compliance is not an option it is a shared responsibility towards the preservation of our land and people," the NSF stated.



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INDIA NEEDS 115 MILLION JOBS

World celebrated Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) day on June 27, 2025. The celebrations have acquired a special significance this year since the world has a great task to create 600 million jobs needed by 2030 to absorb the growing global workforce. MSMEs employ for nearly 2.3 billion people globally, though it has been suffering from persistent barriers.

As for India, to address the job gap, the country will need to create between 90 million and 115 million jobs. IMF has even estimated it to be 143 million. Indian MSMEs employ a little over 110 million workers, accounting approximately 62 per cent of the total employment, in the formal sector.

At global level MSMEs account for 90% of businesses, 60 to 70% of employment and 50% of GDP worldwide. As the backbone of societies everywhere they contribute to local and national economies and to sustaining livelihoods, in particular among the working poor, women, youth, and groups in vulnerable situations. MSMEs hold the potential to transform economies, foster job creation, and promote equitable economic growth if given adequate support.

In emerging markets, most formal jobs are generated by SMEs, which create 7 out of 10 jobs. Nevertheless, access to finance is disproportionately difficult for smaller firms in the least developed countries (LDCs), with 41 percent of SMEs in LDCs reporting access to finance as a major constraint to their growth and development, by comparison to 30 percent in middle-income countries (MICs) and only 15 percent in high-income countries (HICs).

In his message UN Secretary general has called for unlocking full potential of MSMEs. He said, "We must invest in their success by increasing availability of affordable financing, opening market opportunities, and strengthening digital infrastructure and skills. ... Together, let us commit to unleash the transformative promise of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises as drivers for sustainable development and innovation."

ILO Director General Gilbert F. Houngbo highlighted the crucial role of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in creating jobs and advancing social justice. He calls for bold, coordinated action to empower MSMEs through inclusive policies, better access to finance, skills, innovation, and decent work.

MSMEs are not merely engines of growth, they are also catalysts for social justice. By generating employment for nearly 2.3 billion people, particularly for women, for youth, and marginalized communities often excluded from formal economic structures, MSMEs are crucial in advancing inclusive growth, productive employment and decent work, Houngbo said.

Despite their vital role and prospects, MSMEs face persistent barriers. Globally, over half of MSMEs' financing requests remain unmet, in stark contrast to just 7% for larger enterprises. In emerging economies, 70% of MSMEs lack affordable financing, thus hindering their growth potential, he said. The digital divide, shortage of skilled human capital, and poor working conditions further exacerbate their challenges, contributing to a productivity gap of nearly 70% compared to large firms, making them more vulnerable in times of crisis.

ILO believes that MSME are crucial for social justice. Their competitiveness and sustainability must go hand in hand with decent work and respect for fundamental principles and rights at work.

ILO has called for Stronger social dialogue to develop inclusive MSME policies; Tailored support to formalize enterprises and extend sustainable protections; Investments in skills, innovation, and digital access; And financing strategies that make capital more accessible to small enterprises, especially those led by women youth and underprivileged groups.

Here in India, MSME Day 2025 was observed as Udyami Diwas. 'Udyami Bharat - MSME Day' theme for 2025 focused on "Enhancing the role of MSMEs as drivers of Sustainable Growth and Innovation." While government has showcased its achievement in the MSME sector, it is well known how this sector has been suffering since last decade.

One can just recall the budget speech of the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who labelled MSMEs of India as the second engine in the growth story of India, and boasted of significantly helping the sector under PM Narendra Modi led government, and announced several new schemes for them. However, in reality the Centre has been cutting allocations for the Union Ministry of Micro, Medium and Small Enterprises since 2022-23, and the level of allocation for the financial year 2025-26 is still lower than actual expenditure in 2022-23. Definitions for all categories for MSMEs has also been changed to help bigger enterprises, while smaller ones have been struggling for help.

It should be recalled that the Centre has announced Employment Linked Incentives for employers in the Union Budget 2024-25, but it has miserably failed. Now the EPFO has extended the deadline for Universal Account Number (UAN) activation and Aadhaar seeding with bank accounts to June 30, 2025. MSMEs in India, are clearly not getting the government support that is required by them, and the ELI is an example.

Even the NITI Aayog report on "Enhancing MSMEs Competitiveness in India" delves into the array of challenges confronting MSMEs - ranging from financial constraints and technological gaps to skill shortages and regulatory hurdles. India must do more than merely celebrating MSME day.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Too much effort to increase our happiness transforms it into misery. - Jean-Jacques Rousseau

DOCTOR AND DOCTOR'S DAY



DR. TASADUK HUSSAIN ITOO

Around the world, Doctors' Day is celebrated, as we all recognize the contributions that doctors make in the community and to individual lives. Different countries do celebrate Doctors' Day on different date. The core purpose remains a unique thought that all nations make sure that those in the healthcare sector are appreciated and acknowledged. It is a day to acknowledge and celebrate doctors, surgeons, physicians for their role in ensuring highest sort of healthcare in a person - physical, psychological, moral, social, intellectual and spiritual.

The first time that Doctors' Day was observed in the United States took place on the 30th of March back in 1933. Eudora Brown Almond, the wife of a doctor in Georgia, believed her husband and other physicians deserved more recognition for their hard work and set out to make this idea a reality. Almond mailed greeting cards to all local physicians and their wives, and she put flowers on the graves of deceased doctors. The flowers were red carnations, which would later become the representative flower for the Doctor's Day. Moreover, the first ether anaesthetic was used for surgery on the 30th of March as well - that took place in 1842 and it was administered by Crawford W. Long, M.D. before an operation was carried out on a man's neck to remove a tumor.

NATIONAL DOCTOR'S DAY
India celebrates its National Doctor's Day, since 1991 on July 1st every year in honor of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy (01 July 1882 to 01 July 1962) - who was a prominent doctor, educator, freedom fighter, social worker, and politician; besides being a recipient of the highest Indian civilian award (Bharat Ratna). He gave his life to the people, treated many individuals, and inspired millions.

I would like to express my kind gratitude, pay a grand salute and acknowledge the dedication and commitment of

doctors towards our society. The role of doctors in our lives is revolutionary and I believe being a doctor, it is more important to bring revolution in the life of patients. Doctors are the warriors, who are always making relentless efforts towards providing the highest level of healthcare to patients to best of their knowledge, irrespective of facing many odds and challenges in daily life. During the challenging times of COVID-19 pandemic including other epidemics, our doctors stand brave in managing the crisis. We lost many of them in battle against COVID-19 virus. Let us pay a tribute to all of those noble souls.

Being a doctor by profession, I would say that patients are the most important visitors to us. We are literally dependent on them and I believe it is a mutual benefit between a doctor and a patient - a doctor gets an opportunity to serve humanity and earn his livelihood by amusing his patients. Likewise a patient gets an opportunity to get himself treated and stay healthy and happy on visiting a doctor. Besides diagnosing and treating a patient clinically, positive counselling of a patient by his doctor with immense care, concern and love during the course of treatment forms an important part in the line of management. Having said that, counselling a patient pragmatically forms an important part of managing his/her concerns and ensuring welfare. Getting into the shoes of a patient, developing empathy, sympathy, love, care and giving him/her hope in a state when he/she might be feeling hopeless/ emotionally down/ helpless while understanding his struggles - is the best way to bring revolution and positively impact the life of a patient.

A doctor while receiving a patient - who is bed-ridden, couldn't do things that he could have done while being in health normally, his life gets shattered for a moment of life being ill. The doctor comes to amuse the patient and with the cure of God the patient gets off-bed and starts again a healthy life. The doctor

by amusing the patient brings change/ revolution in his (patient's) life.

A patient is the best noble teacher for a doctor other than the teacher who taught him in a medical school. A patient gives a doctor an opportunity to serve humanity, to please Almighty Lord and to teach him morally, practically and ethically. More often, I used to invest time in counselling patients and give them enough motivation to live life with a disease. When patient gives a hopeful smile at the end, that becomes the moment of my great satisfaction.

I could remember Professor (Dr.) Muhammad Sultan Khuroo, one of the renowned medicos cum noted scientist - in an interview saying that we should focus on three important things 'being a doctor'. First we should give priority to effective patient care/ management by keeping in focus the 'clinical medicine' while dealing with the patients, besides adopting labs and modern imaging modalities in establishing diagnosis. Secondly, we should always teach and pass on our gained knowledge to others. Thirdly, we should take interest in research to explore and gain more. Additionally, he said that we should revive the concept of 'being a doctor' while it was perceived decades back - to strengthen trust in a doctor-patient relationship.

Even during our recent meeting, Dr. Khuroo appraised about various aspects to focus on in a doctor-patient relationship - trust, mutual respect and understanding, confidentiality, communication skills, sympathy and empathy, ethics, encouraging clinical medicine besides adopting necessary labs and modern imaging modalities in establishing diagnosis, including other aspects. Moreover, enlightening a patient through all dimensions of health is revolutionary to the life of a patient. Besides encouraging clinical, physical, social, mental, emotional, intellectual dimensions - spiritual dimension is cornerstone. Most of the times I could realise a patient gets relief beyond

words by enlightening him spiritually. Lastly, I would say that to hold bond of strength - mutual understanding and trust for each other is very important in a doctor-patient relationship. Whenever there happens any misunderstanding or distrust, disputes and conflict arises. Rising disputes, conflicts and violent acts are the result of distortion of this relationship. Therefore, we need to avoid any disputes by reposing trust on our doctors in order to strengthen this relationship. And more importantly, I believe effective communication between a doctor and his patient - acts as a strong pillar in developing trust in a doctor-patient relationship, besides improving the quality of life of the patient.

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

ASSAM RIFLES RECOVERS HEROIN NO. 4 IN MIZORAM #AssamRifles recovered Heroin no. 4 (wt 117.60 grams) worth Rs. 88.20 Lakhs and apprehended three individuals in Lunglei district, #Mizoram. The recovered items and apprehended individuals were handed over to the Excise and Narcotics Department, Lunglei for further investigation and legal proceedings.

- Assam Rifles



BURNT CASH CASE: MORE QUESTIONS ARE RAISED THAN ANSWERED

KAPIL SIBAL

On the night of March 14, 2025, remnants of burnt currency were found - for which a video is available - in the outhouse of the premises allotted to Justice Yashwant Varna, then a judge of the Delhi High Court. This revelation raises serious questions which need to be answered. What was the quantum of currency that was found? Why was the currency not seized? Why was a panchnama not prepared by the Delhi Police present at the spot? Why was the outhouse not cordoned off to ensure that the scene of the incident was protected or secured? Why was the currency not preserved for inquiry and investigation? Why was an FIR not registered against unknown persons? To all these questions, the In-House Committee ("Committee") set up by the then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court provides no answers; they are otherwise unavailable.

For all these questions, the Committee says that these were not within its remit. In the absence of any explanation for why the police acted as they did, the Committee concluded that since the currency was found in the outhouse of the judge's residence, it must have been placed there with the judge's tacit or active consent. The Committee consisted of two sitting Chief Justices and one judge of the High Court. It found no more than what was already available in the public domain in the form of videos recorded by the fire services department. Justice Varna had categorically stated that the currency did not belong to him and that he was not aware of who had placed it in the outhouse. The mainstream media has quoted various amounts of currency, ranging from 15 crore and beyond, in large bundles, which were found

in the outhouse. The currency in the alleged quantum could not have entered the premises without the knowledge of the CRPF personnel stationed at his residence. Managing to cart large quantities of currency and placing it in the outhouse would necessarily have entailed the active involvement of several persons. No evidence to that effect was before the Committee, nor has it been alleged by anyone to date.

In fact, the issue became far more serious when it was revealed that a CCTV camera was placed in a security room at the entrance, constantly monitoring ingress into the premises. This CCTV apparatus was controlled by the security personnel and not by the family. When the CCTV camera was seized, the FSL report revealed that the hard disk was blank. This constitutes a major security lapse, as it is the State's responsibility to protect the judge.

This again raises several vital questions. When did the CCTV camera stop working? Did the security personnel make any complaint in that regard? No answers are available. The Committee never investigated why such footage could not be retrieved. The person who placed the currency must have been aware that the CCTV equipment was not functioning. Surprisingly, the Committee blames the judge for not seizing and preserving the CCTV footage, assuming he knew and had control of the functioning of the CCTV. What authority did he have to seize the footage when it was never in his custody and control?

The Committee proceeds on the assumption and concludes that the keys of the outhouse were under the tacit or active control of the family, even though there was ample evidence that the keys were in the possession

of the staff and not the family, as reflected in a paragraph of the Committee's report. Part of the paragraph reads as follows: "50. What has further come on record in the shape of statements of witnesses No. 31, 32, 34, 35, 40, 46 and 47 is that the storeroom was occasionally locked, and the key to the lock was accessible to all of the residents of 30 Tughlak Crescent, New Delhi including the security staff and the personal staff of Justice Yashwant Varna..."

This evidence was rejected, and contrary evidence was accepted without investigation, with a finding that the outhouse was under the tacit or active control of the family. What "tacit or active control" means is not clear. The Committee placed the burden on the judge to provide evidence as to whom the currency belonged to. The burden of proof would only shift when a person is found in illegal possession of a substance prohibited by law. Admittedly, the judge was not in possession of the alleged currency.

The inquiry was conducted behind the judge's back; no right to cross-examination was afforded, nor was he given a personal hearing when he demanded it from the Committee. The Committee had already started writing the report on April 27, 2025.

The judge's submissions made on April 30, 2025, were not addressed in the report.

The Committee further finds that the judge's conduct in not going to the outhouse upon his return from Madhya Pradesh on the evening of March 15 and not protesting his transfer to the Allahabad High Court was unnatural and indicative of his guilt. What is intriguing is why the family was not informed that currency was discovered in the outhouse, either by the fire services

personnel or the Delhi police. In fact, the judge came to know about it only on March 17, when the video was shown to him.

There is also no direct or circumstantial evidence of the removal of the remnants of burnt currency from the premises after the fire services personnel and the police left the premises on the morning of March 15 at 2 am. However, the CRPF personnel remained on-site thereafter, yet none reported seeing staff remove currency. The Committee's conclusions raised more questions than they answered. Such a flawed report must not be the basis of an impeachment motion without a thorough investigation.

Hope that the political parties stand up to an obvious endeavour by this government to decimate what is left of the independence of the Judiciary.

Kapil Sibal | Senior lawyer and member of Rajya Sabha | This highlights how the two Asian states are vibrantly cooperating in multifaceted areas both bilaterally and multilaterally. Both can further collaborate in building supply chain resilience, digital economy, green growth and cyberspace initiatives.

The economic association can be augmented in the fields of medical tourism and oil & gas paving the way for an alternative energy supply chain. India and Vietnam's interests intertwine as they share many similarities in their strategic outlook. Both are working on independent foreign policy and self-reliance based on national interests without being part of any military alliance. India and Vietnam can additionally reinforce their cooperation in the Indo-Pacific strategy frameworks.

Mass resignation rocks AIUDF's Sribhumi unit over leadership crisis and policy failures

SRIBHUMI

A significant part of AIUDF Karimganj district committee resigned collectively. Resignations were due to organisational and ideological shortcomings. Leaders cited poor electoral performance and unscientific alliances.

A large section of the Karimganj District Committee (KDC) of the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) has tendered their collective resignation from party positions, citing a series of organisational and ideological failures that have led to an erosion of public trust and support in the region.

In a formally submitted statement addressed to the party leadership, the resigning members expressed "respect and regret" while acknowledging their inability to restore the party's base in Karimganj since the last Parliamentary elections.

Among those who have stepped down are:
Azizur Rahman Talukdar – President, KDC/AIUDF



M. Nazumuddin and Abdul Qayyum Choudhury – General Secretaries

Kamrul Islam, Abdul Fattah, Abdul Karim (Ex-ZPM) – Vice Presidents

Abdus Sattar – Assistant General Secretary

Sayed Ahmed Talukdar – President, South Karimganj LAC

Other Youth and Ward-level Presidents and Secretaries

The letter outlines a series of core grievances, which the office bearers believe have undermined the credibility and effectiveness of the AIUDF in Karimganj:

Unscientific alliance with "Mohajut" during the last Assembly polls and alleged misuse of authority in candidate selection.

Perceived collusion between elected AIUDF MLAs and the ruling party, which damaged the party's anti-establishment stance.

Failure to oppose anti-minority legislation in the Assembly, leading to growing disillusionment among AIUDF's traditional support base.

Poor electoral performance, notably in the seat of the AIUDF Party President during the last general election.

"We made repeated attempts to regain the party's lost prestige and connect with the masses, but all efforts proved futile," the members wrote. The collective resignations reflect not only dissatisfaction with leadership decisions but also internal disillusionment about the AIUDF's current political trajectory.

Despite stepping down, the signatories extended gratitude to the party leadership for their past guidance and expressed hope that their decision might pave the way for introspection and reform within the AIUDF.

The mass resignation is expected to have significant implications for the party's grassroots structure in Karimganj, a traditional AIUDF stronghold.

Man gets 25-year jail term for sexual offence against minor



SHILLONG

A 25-year prison sentence has been handed down to Teiboklang Wahlang from Mawngap village in Shillong after his conviction under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act by the Court of Special Judge

(POCSO), East Khasi Hills.

Special Judge MK Lyngdoh delivered the verdict, imposing rigorous imprisonment along with a Rs 50,000 fine for the Section 6 POCSO Act violation. The court specified that failure to pay the fine would result in an additional six months behind bars.

Wahlang received a separate two-year sentence for criminal intimidation under Section 506 of the Indian Penal Code, carrying a Rs 10,000 fine. Non-payment of this amount would add three more months to his imprisonment.

The investigation was conducted by WP/SI L. Kharjana of the District Executive Force, currently stationed at the Women Police Station in East Khasi Hills, Shillong.

The conviction represents another case processed through India's specialised POCSO courts, which were established to fast-track trials involving crimes against children and ensure swift justice for young victims.

Mizoram to get Rajdhani Express connecting Aizawl with Delhi: CM Lalduhoma

AIZAWL

Mizoram is set to be connected to the national capital by Rajdhani Express, Chief Minister Lalduhoma announced on Monday, marking a significant leap in the state's railway connectivity.

Speaking at the Remna Ni celebration in Aizawl — commemorating the signing of the Mizoram Peace Accord — Lalduhoma said that the Central Government has approved Mizoram's long-standing demand for a premier express train linking Aizawl to Delhi.

The Chief Minister revealed that he recently met Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, urging the Centre to introduce Rajdhani service and establish direct rail links between Aizawl, Delhi, Kolkata, and Agartala (Tripura).

"The Railway Minister has complied with our request. We will get the Rajdhani express service. There will be train service between Aizawl and Delhi and two other cities — Tripura and Kolkata," Lalduhoma said.

The introduction of the Rajdhani Express will be a milestone in Mizoram's connectivity, significantly improving accessibility and economic integration with major metropolitan cities.

Currently, the state's rail network is limited, and the new services are expected to reduce travel time, boost tourism, and enhance business opportunities in the region.

Manipur journalist conferred RK Sanatomba award for excellence in cultural reporting

IMPHAL

Journalist Thongam Bonney was honoured with the prestigious RK Sanatomba Journalist Award on June 30, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to reporting on art and culture in Manipur. Bonney currently serves as the state's leading vernacular daily, Poknapham.

The award ceremony was held at the office of the RK Sanatomba Memorial Trust at Konung Mamang, marking the 32nd death anniversary of RK Sanatomba. The event began with a floral tribute to the late editor's portrait and also witnessed the release of Kangla Lanjung Volume 16.

The ceremony was attended by Mangi Shija, mother of late RK Sanatomba, political analyst Leihaothabam Saratchandra,

and A. Brajakumar. Speaking at the event, RK Nimai, Chairman of the Trust, highlighted the immense challenges faced by journalists in conflict-affected Manipur and emphasised the need to recognise their courage and contributions despite limited resources. He also recalled Sanatomba's unwavering commitment to alternative journalism and the power of truthful reporting.

Instituted in 2004, the RK Sanatomba Journalist Award is presented annually to distinguished media persons from Manipur, commemorating the legacy of RK Sanatomba, who served as the Editor of the local daily Kangla Lanjung. Born in 1963, he was the youngest son of MK Khedasana and Mangi Shija, and passed away on June 30, 1993, in an unfortunate incident.

HAFLONG

Hundreds of BJP workers staged a sit-in protest in front of the District Commissioner's office in Assam's Haflong on Monday, demanding the removal of Debolal Gorlosa from his post as CEM (Chief Executive Member) of the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council.

Protesters also called for the immediate clearance of pending work bills owed to contractors.

The agitating workers leveled serious allegations against Gorlosa, accusing him of anti-BJP activities, corruption, autocratic governance, and involvement in illegal activities across the Dima Hasao district.

The protesters held placards and chanted slogans such as: "Debolal Gorlosa hatao, Dima Hasao bachao", which translates to "Remove Debolal Gorlosa, Save Dima Hasao."

The allegations include unauthorised land encroachments, misuse of government funds, illegal mining, and abuse of executive powers, allegedly in violation of the Sixth



Schedule of the Constitution of India.

"Debolal Gorlosa is showing bias within the BJP. During the last MAC election, he secretly financed independent candidates who are BJP workers, even while campaigning for BJP candidates elsewhere. Since we supported official BJP candidates, the CEM is now deliberately blocking our bills in retaliation," alleged Rohit Hagjer, a party worker from Hatikhali constituency.

He further claimed that the independent candidates now hold the positions of Chairman and Vice-Chairman in the Constituency Development Committee (CDC).

Hagjer also warned of mass resignations on July 16 if their demands are not met by July 15.

Earlier, the protesting group submitted a memorandum to Assam Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, urging him to take action against CEM Gorlosa and replace him with a capable and elected MAC in the interest of unity, strength, and public welfare in Dima Hasao.

They also alleged that CEM Gorlosa has curtailed the portfolios of Executive Members by assigning them low-budget departments.

Sources said that under Gorlosa's leadership, he sidelined several council members, including Amendu Hojai, Niranjan Hojai, Nojit Kemprai, Devojit Bathari, Biswajit Daulagupu, Ratan Jarambusa, and Ngamrothang Hmar.

Assam Youth Congress files twin FIRs against Minister Jayanta Mallabaruah over Garukhuti corruption

GUWAHATI

The Youth Wing of the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) has filed two separate FIRs against Cabinet Minister Jayanta Mallabaruah, accusing him of corruption tied to the Garukhuti agricultural project.

Youth Congress leaders submitted the complaints in Guwahati and Biswanath and demanded an investigation into the alleged misuse of public funds.

In Guwahati, members of the Youth Congress filed the FIR at Bhangagarh Police Station. They accused Mallabaruah of diverting welfare scheme funds, originally meant for deserving citizens, to the families of politically influential figures.

At a press conference following the filing, a Youth Congress

representative questioned the double standards in welfare disbursement. "Ordinary people must present proper documents to access schemes like Orunodoi. But are the same rules applied to ministers' families?" he asked.

Another Youth Congress member criticized the state government's focus. "Assam faces a debt burden exceeding Rs 1 lakh crore, while youth unemployment and inflation continue to rise. Yet, instead of improving the Gross State Domestic Product, our leaders seem more interested in boosting their own 'Gross Escalated Family Product,'" he remarked.

The youth wing also targeted several BJP leaders who previously served in the Congress under Tarun Gogoi's leadership.

According to Congress

spokesperson Deep Bayan, these leaders admitted to engaging in syndicate-style operations during Gogoi's later years in office.

"Now, they hold ministerial roles in the current government despite having damaged the image of the Congress party back then," Bayan stated.

Meanwhile, in Biswanath, the local Youth Congress unit filed another FIR accusing Mallabaruah of misusing public funds during the procurement of Gir cows for the Garukhuti project. The complaint alleges criminal misappropriation, cheating, and corruption.

Manash Jyoti Saikia, President of the Biswanath District Congress, called for an investigation into the minister's actions during his tenure with the Congress.

Separately, the Biswanath

Chari Press Club condemned Mallabaruah for making a derogatory remark aimed at journalists. They demanded a formal apology for his reference to reporters as "tolor srenir manuh", a term interpreted as "people from the lower rung." Amir Khan, the club's General Secretary, called the comment divisive and offensive. "Does the minister not rely on votes from the same 'lower classes' he seems to look down on?" he asked.

Facing public pressure, Minister Mallabaruah issued a statement of "deep regret" on social media on June 29, addressing the backlash over his remarks. His comment, made during a press briefing, had sparked widespread protests by journalists and media groups across Assam.

Meghalaya honeymoon murder: Sonam got Rs 16 lakh jewellery as gift, alleges Raja's brother



GUWAHATI

Meghalaya honeymoon murder: Vipin Raghuvanshi, the elder brother of murder victim Raja Raghuvanshi, on Monday, alleged that his family gifted jewellery worth approximately Rs 16 lakh to Sonam Raghuvanshi, Raja's wife and the prime accused in his murder, during their wedding ceremony.

Vipin made this statement a day after Meghalaya Police recovered significant evidence from Ratlam, Madhya Pradesh, including jewellery, a laptop, and other items.

Officers reportedly retrieved these from the maternal home of Silome James's wife, James, a real estate businessman, faces arrest for allegedly concealing and destroying evidence in connection with the murder case.

Authorities spotted Vipin at the Crime Prevention Branch office in Indore, where the Meghalaya Police team has been conducting operations.

Speaking to the media, he said he provided investigators with photos of the jewellery his family had given Sonam at the time of her marriage to Raja.

"I was called in for questioning and asked to share pictures of the jewellery exchanged during the wedding. I have no information yet on which specific items the police have recovered," Vipin said.

He further stated that Raja had worn a gold chain and ring when he

departed for Meghalaya with Sonam. According to Vipin, Raja told their mother that Sonam had insisted he wear the jewellery during their honeymoon trip. "Raja sent us photos taken at the airport before their departure. When our mother saw them, she scolded him over the phone for wearing such costly ornaments. Raja told her Sonam had asked him to wear them," Vipin recounted.

On Sunday, Meghalaya Police announced the seizure of gold jewellery, laptops, and other potentially crucial items belonging to Raja and Sonam. East Khasi Hills Superintendent of Police Vivek Syiem stated that these electronic devices and documents could play a key role in advancing the investigation into Raja's murder, which took place on May 23.

So far, police have arrested Sonam Raghuvanshi, her alleged lover Raj Kushwaha, and his associates, Vishal Chauthan, Akash Rajput, and Anand Kurmi, on charges of conspiring to kill Raja.

Authorities also detained Silome James, Balbir Ahirwar, and Lokendra Singh Tomar for allegedly tampering with and hiding important evidence.

Raja Raghuvanshi disappeared on May 23 while on honeymoon in Meghalaya, just three days after leaving Madhya Pradesh with Sonam. On June 2, police discovered his mutilated body in a deep gorge near Weisawdong Falls in Meghalaya's Sohra.

"Peace Accord represents will of the people, not just MNF": Former Mizoram CM Zoramthanga

AIZAWL

Zoramthanga stresses accord as collective Mizo mandate without misconceptions. MNF commemorates peace accord despite no state government observance. Accord's economic strength ensured balanced terms with Indian government.

Marking the 39th anniversary of the historic Mizo Peace Accord, Mizo National Front (MNF) president and former Chief Minister Zoramthanga strongly asserted that the 1986 accord was not merely a pact between the Centre and the then-underground MNF, but a collective mandate of the Mizo people.

Addressing a commemorative function at Saitual on Monday, Zoramthanga said, "Some vested interests attempt to reduce the significance of the Mizo Peace Accord as



an agreement solely between the Centre and the MNF. However, it was signed on behalf of the MNF by Laldenga and on behalf of the non-insurgent Mizos by then Chief Secretary Lalkhama."

The MNF celebrated the 39th Peace Accord Day statewide, though the state government did not organize any official observance of the occasion.

Zoramthanga, once a leading rebel commander during the insurgency, emphasized that the accord was signed from a position of strength for both the

Indian government and the MNF. "We were economically and organizationally strong when we negotiated peace. Had we been weak, the accord would have lacked balance," he noted.

He also highlighted the constitutional milestone that followed the accord — Mizoram's elevation to statehood in 1987 and the special protections granted under Article 371G of the Indian Constitution. This provision ensures that no Act of Parliament applies to Mizoram in matters of Mizo religious

Quest!
People with smartphones unlock their phone around 110 times each day.

Congress slams PM Modi ahead of five-nation foreign tour, accuses him of dodging key national issues



NEW DELHI

Ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's upcoming overseas visit, the Congress party launched a sharp attack, accusing him of avoiding pressing national concerns.

Congress General Secretary in-charge of Communications, Jairam Ramesh, slammed the prime minister's five-nation, eight-day tour, labeling it a "jaunt" and dubbing Modi the "Super Premium Frequent Flier PM."

Ramesh, in a post on X, said, "When the going gets tough, the self-styled toughs get going," suggesting that Modi is fleeing from critical domestic issues that require his immediate attention.

Ramesh accused Modi of neglecting the prolonged unrest in Manipur, a state he has allegedly not visited since the outbreak of violence.

"The double engine government has derailed in the state, and nor-

mal life has collapsed," Ramesh said.

The Congress leader referenced statements reportedly made by India's defence attache to Indonesia, suggesting that the country suffered military setbacks during the initial stages of Operation Sindoor due to the prime minister's decisions.

However, the Indian embassy in Indonesia clarified that these remarks were misrepresented and taken out of context.

Ramesh cited repeated claims by US President Donald Trump, who alleged that he brokered a ceasefire between India and Pakistan by leveraging trade negotiations. According to Ramesh, the government has failed to adequately address or refute these assertions.

The Congress also took aim at the government's inability to bring the perpetrators of the Pahalgam terror attack to justice, even after 70 days. Ramesh pointed out that the same group

may have been linked to previous attacks in Poonch (December 2023), Gagangir, and Gulmarg (October 2024).

Besides Brazil, Modi will visit Ghana, Trinidad and Tobago, Argentina, Brazil, and Namibia during the eight-day trip, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

In the first leg of the visit, Modi will undertake a visit to Ghana from July 2 to 3.

From Ghana, Modi will travel to Trinidad and Tobago on a two-day visit from July 3 to 4.

In the third leg of his visit, Modi will visit Argentina from July 4 to 5.

In the fourth leg of his visit, Modi will travel to Brazil at the invitation of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

The prime minister will visit Brazil from July 5 to 8 to attend the 17th BRICS Summit followed by a state visit.

In the final leg of his visit, Modi will travel to Namibia.

NEW YORK

The Pahalgam terror attack was an act of economic warfare meant to destroy tourism in Kashmir, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said, asserting that India has made it clear that it will not allow nuclear blackmail to prevent it from responding to terror emanating from Pakistan.

India has had a string of terrorist attacks over the years emanating from Pakistan and in the wake of the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, there was a sentiment in the country that 'enough is enough', Jaishankar said on Monday.

His remarks came during a conversation with Newsweek CEO Dev Pragad hosted at the publication's headquarters at One World Trade Centre near the 9/11 Memorial in Manhattan.

Jaishankar said that the Pahalgam attack "was an act of economic warfare."

"It was meant to destroy tourism in Kashmir, which was the mainstay of the economy. It was also meant to provoke religious violence because people were asked to identify their faith before they were killed."

So we decided that we cannot let terrorists function with impunity.

The idea that they are on that side of the border, and that, therefore, sort of prevents retribution, I think, that's a proposition that needs to be challenged and that is what we did," he said.

Jaishankar is on an official visit to the US and will travel to Washington DC to participate in the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting on Tuesday.

He commenced his visit by inaugurating an exhibition in the UN Headquarters titled "The Human Cost of Terrorism", organised by the Permanent Mission of India to the UN.

He said that the terrorists based in Pakistan carrying out

attacks against India do not operate in secret and these are terrorist organisations who have the "equivalent of their corporate headquarters in the populated towns of Pakistan."

"Everybody knows what is the headquarters of organisation A and organisation B and those are the buildings, the headquarters that India destroyed in Operation Sindoor," he said.

Operation Sindoor was launched to target terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in retaliation for the Pahalgam attack that killed 26 civilians and for which The Resistance Front (TRF), a front for Pakistan-based terrorist group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) had claimed responsibility.

"We are very clear there will be no impunity for terrorists, that we will not deal with them any longer as proxies and spare the government which supports and finances and in many ways, motivates them."

We will not allow nuclear blackmail to prevent us from responding," he said.

Jaishankar added that "we've also heard this for too long" that both India and Pakistan are nuclear countries and therefore the other guy will come and do horrible things, but you mustn't do anything because it gets the world worried.

Now we are not going to fall

for that. If he is going to come and do things, we are going to go there and also hit the people who did this.

So no yielding to nuclear blackmail, no impunity to terrorists, no more free pass that they are proxies.

And we will do what we have to do to defend our people," Jaishankar said amid applause from the audience.

Referring to the exhibition at the UN highlighting the devastating toll of terrorist attacks across the globe, including those perpetrated by Pakistan-based terror entities, Jaishankar said India believes that "terrorism is actually a threat to everyone, that no country should use it as an instrument to further its policies because, at the end of the day, it comes back to bite everyone."

He stressed that the message to the world has to be that there should be zero tolerance for terrorism, that there should be no circumstances, no excuse, no justification under which a country would allow, support, finance or sponsor terrorist acts.

He said India has been dealing with terrorism emanating from Pakistan for several decades but it actually started from the time of the country's independence in 1947 when within a few months, terrorists were sent into Kashmir and were described as proxies and tribal invaders.

"And then soon enough, the Pakistani Army followed. So we have battled terrorism, really intensive, for the last four decades and we've had some horrific cases," he said, as he referred to the 2001 Parliament and 2008 Mumbai terror attacks.

During a Q&A session that followed the conversation, Jaishankar was asked about President Donald Trump's claim that he used trade to stop the recent conflict between India and Pakistan and whether that has affected trade negotiations between Delhi and Washington.

"No, I don't think so. I think the trade people are doing what the trade people should be doing, which is negotiate with numbers and lines and products and do their trade-offs."

I think they are very professional and very, very focused about it," Jaishankar said.

He said that there is a national consensus in India that our dealings with Pakistan are bilateral.

"And in this particular case, I can tell you that I was in the room when Vice President (JD) Vance spoke to Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi on the night of May 9, saying that the Pakistanis would launch a very massive assault on India if we did not accept certain things."

And the Prime Minister was impervious to what the Pakistanis were threatening to do.

On the contrary, he indicated that there would be a response from us.

This was the night before and the Pakistanis did attack us massively that night, we responded very quickly thereafter," Jaishankar said.

"And the next morning, Mr (Secretary of State Marco) Rubio called me up and said the Pakistanis were ready to talk."

So I can only tell you from my personal experience what happened. The rest I leave to you," he said.

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On the contrary, he indicated that there would be a response from us.

This was the night before and the Pakistanis did attack us massively that night, we responded very quickly thereafter," Jaishankar said.

"And the next morning, Mr (Secretary of State Marco) Rubio called me up and said the Pakistanis were ready to talk."

So I can only tell you from my personal experience what happened. The rest I leave to you," he said.

And then soon enough, the Pakistani Army followed. So we have battled terrorism, really intensive, for the last four decades and we've had some horrific cases," he said, as he referred to the 2001 Parliament and 2008 Mumbai terror attacks.

During a Q&A session that followed the conversation, Jaishankar was asked about President Donald Trump's claim that he used trade to stop the recent conflict between India and Pakistan and whether that has affected trade negotiations between Delhi and Washington.

"No, I don't think so. I think the trade people are doing what the trade people should be doing, which is negotiate with numbers and lines and products and do their trade-offs."

I think they are very professional and very, very focused about it," Jaishankar said.

He said that there is a national consensus in India that our dealings with Pakistan are bilateral.

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POWER CAN RECONCILE—BUT CAN THE PEOPLE?



In a state scarred by ethnic conflict and political inertia, Manipur has witnessed a flicker of hope. On June 30, 2025, senior leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the state, including former Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, came together with rebel factions for a crucial joint meeting at Thambal Sanglen in Keishampat. The gathering of 22 BJP MLAs—minus the seven Kuki-Zo-Hmar legislators who stayed away—and the declared support of eight others marked a significant step toward party unity. Spearheaded by BJP Manipur Pradesh president A. Sharda, the meeting symbolized a political reawakening aimed at restoring a popular government under a fractured President's Rule.

This renewed intra-party engagement, however, must transcend symbolism. Manipur's wounds run deep. More than 300 lives have been lost since ethnic violence erupted on May 3, 2023. Over 70,000 people remain displaced, languishing in camps and shelters. The state remains divided along ethnic lines, separated by an invisible yet militarized "buffer zone" that starkly illustrates the human and psychological cost of prolonged conflict. Despite repeated assurances from the state police that no such zone officially exists, the reality on the ground says otherwise.

A case in point is the recent incident involving Inner Manipur MP Angomcha Bimol Akoijam, who was prevented from entering Phougakchao Ikhai in Bishnupur—part of his own constituency—on June 29. His strong condemnation of the "imaginary and unconstitutional" buffer zone underscored the painful irony: even an elected representative cannot move freely within the state he represents. This restriction, he said, nurtures communal division and reinforces a trust deficit that shows no sign of abating.

The June 30 BJP meeting, though brief, was a strategic recalibration. A. Sharda later revealed she had

submitted a comprehensive report to the party's central leadership, conveying the unified sentiment of the MLAs to reestablish a popular government. Former CM N. Biren Singh's presence and his ongoing outreach to rebel party colleagues further signal the BJP's attempt to project a united face, not just to the Centre but to a public weary of administrative paralysis and endless conflict.

Biren's resignation in February, under pressure from both Kuki groups and dissenting MLAs, was a turning point. Since then, he has worked to rebuild party cohesion. His recent statement highlighting the absence of communal violence for the past several months hints at tentative progress. However, he was careful to reiterate that any substantial political move must receive approval from the BJP's national leadership in New Delhi. Despite the limitations of central oversight, his tone was one of reconciliation, not retribution. He refused to engage in political mudslinging, and lauded Union Home Minister Amit Shah's role in attempting to normalize the situation.

Yet, not everyone is convinced. Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee president K. Meghachandra was quick to dismiss Biren's optimism as "childish." Speaking at Congress Bhawan on June 26, he challenged the BJP to dissolve the Assembly and seek a fresh mandate. While his call for accountability is not misplaced—especially in a state devastated by over two years of unrest—his remarks risk reducing a humanitarian crisis to an electoral chess game.

This is a moment that demands collaboration, not confrontation. Both the BJP and the Congress must move beyond party lines to focus on reconciliation, rehabilitation, and rebuilding. The Congress, despite its valid criticisms, must shift gears toward constructive engagement. The memory of the all-party meeting convened by Biren in May 2023—however limited its impact—serves as a reminder that bipartisan dialogue is not only possible but essential.

There are encouraging signs. A 19-member delegation of civil society groups, including COCOMI, AMUCO, and FOCS, prepared to

meet Union Home Ministry officials in Delhi, signaling that grassroots initiatives are aligning with political overtures. The BJP's June 30 meeting similarly illustrated a will to repair internal divisions. If political actors and civil society can find common ground, what is stopping the broader Meitei and Kuki communities from doing the same? "Still, barriers persist. The events of March 8, 2025, in Kangpokpi—where violence erupted during efforts to reopen transport routes—highlight the volatility that still defines many inter-community interactions. Amit Shah's March 8 directive to ensure free movement on Manipur's highways remains only partially implemented. The reality is grim: the physical and psychological effects of the buffer zone continue to prevent civilians, and even elected leaders, from moving freely.

The solution must begin at the grassroots. BJP and Congress workers—many of whom are deeply embedded in their communities—can serve as the first bridge between the Meiteis and Kukis.

Confidence-building measures led by mandal and block-level leaders can sow the seeds of understanding. Political workers, if empowered to cross ethnic and geographic lines, can create p

The BJP has taken a commendable step in confronting its internal dissent and setting the stage for renewed governance. N. Biren Singh's outreach and the party's consensus-building efforts deserve recognition. But this process cannot be unidirectional. The Congress must contribute meaningfully—less with rhetoric, more with resolve.

More importantly, both parties must listen to the people. Those still stuck in relief camps. Those who have lost homes, livelihoods, and family. Those who cannot visit a market or attend a funeral without fearing for their safety. Political gestures must now translate into tangible change for these citizens. "The path forward must include:

Dismantling the de facto buffer zone.

Enabling free and safe movement for all communities.

Initiating joint community-level dialogues.

Ensuring political accountability from both the state and central leadership.

Manipur stands at a historic juncture. The unity displayed by BJP legislators and civil society leaders must now extend across ethnic lines and into every corner of the state. Reconciliation among political elites is only the beginning. Real healing can only happen when ordinary Meiteis, Kukis, Pangals, Nagas, and others feel safe walking the same streets, visiting the same temples, churches, mosques, and markets—without fear or suspicion.

This is the time to rise above party politics and ethnic loyalties. The people of Manipur deserve not just peace, but dignity, security, and a future. The burden is now on the political class to prove that unity is not just possible in backroom meetings or Delhi delegations—but on the ground, among the people who need it most.

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ACTIVITY PROGRAM



10 JAN
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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, experts, academicians, and presenters & speakers. Participation through invitation only. 5 different awards are provided.



11 JAN
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10 Jan
Barak Festival: Peace Progress & Prosperity



Barak Festival

Adventure Sports, Art & Culture Promotion

ONLINE GLOBAL FEST

JAN'25

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 Talks and Conferences) are part of the 'Barak Festival 2025'. Theme: 'One for All, All for One'. Webinars, panel discussions, seminars, masterclasses, corporate HR, speakers, panel speakers, moderators.



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Barak Festival

Band Night | 10 JAN

Musical Night | 11 JAN

SCIENCE STUDIO

10-12 JAN

Use a glimpse of Science to witness magical. Class VI-XI | Teachers | Seniors, Administrators | Parents. Raw science out of textbooks into real-life experiences of students.



10-12 JAN
E-Sports

Full Blown! Don't miss! CASH PRIZES | Trophy



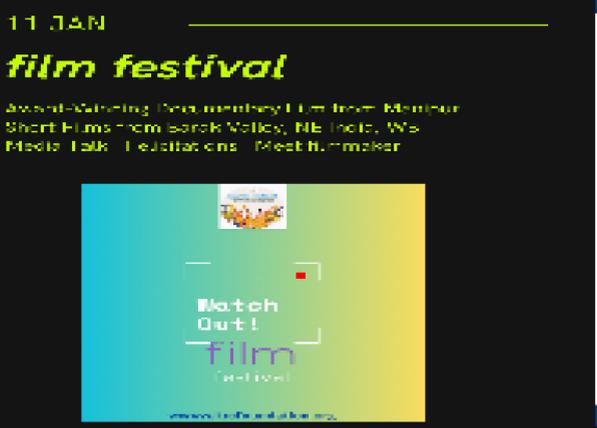
DEC-24-JAN'25
Photography

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



11 JAN
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.



11 JAN
film festival

Award-Giving Ceremony | Film from Manipur. Short Films from Barak Valley, NE India, W. Media Talk | Exhibitions | Meet & Greet.



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