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# KRC TIMES

## STAY-ENRICHED

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### PERSPECTIVE



## Nagaland University launches project to develop grammar for 18 Naga languages

**KOHIMA:**  
Nagaland University, in collaboration with the state's Directorate of School Education, has initiated an ambitious project to create written grammar frameworks for all 18 officially recognised Naga languages. These grammars will be incorporated into school textbooks from Class 5 to Class 12, aligning with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. For decades, Naga languages have been taught in schools, yet none had formal written grammar to support structured learning. This project aims to fill that gap by documenting essential linguistic features such as parts of speech, tense and aspect, sentence structures, tone patterns, and orthography. The effort will not only strengthen NEP's emphasis on multilingual education but also safeguard Naga languages from marginalisation, ensuring cultural pride and linguistic identity.

**WHO SAID WHAT**

**After the proceedings at the SCO Summit venue, President Putin and I travelled together to the venue of our bilateral meeting. Conversations with him are always insightful.**

~ Narendra Modi, PM India

## BJP Rule Brought Comfort to Bengali-Speaking Hindus, : Himanta

**SILCHAR**

Bengali-speaking Hindus in Assam have been "most comfortable" in Assam under the Bharatiya Janata Party's rule in the last 10 years, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said, further hailing his government for working to resolve all issues faced by them.

Speaking on the sidelines of a programme in Silchar, he said "We have been resolving all issues faced by Hindu-Bengalis one by one. We ensured that they got their Aadhaar cards back. We have stopped slapping new citizenship cases against them." He also claimed that his government has been foiling attempts by Bangladeshis to enter the country illegally.

"I don't think any previous government has done as much as I am doing. But everything has to be done in a process, else the court will stop it," he added.

The chief minister claimed that Bengali-speaking Hindus have been "most comfortable in the state under the BJP's rule in the last 10 years".

Asserting that all issues between Assamese and Bengali-speaking people have died down, he said, "Hindus identify themselves by their religion, and not by language anymore".

Asked about the number of illegal Bangladeshis who have been pushed back at the international border, Sarma said, "It is not proper to give figures...



When the time comes, we will give the figures." He said that Bangladeshis may enter through Tripura, Dawki in Meghalaya, Mankachar or Sribhumi in Assam, but "our security forces have been sending them back".

"We are taking steps to ensure that fresh infiltration cannot take place," he asserted. Noting that many middlemen have also been arrested, he said, "It is unfortunate that many of them are Hindus. In Tripura, dalaals (middlemen) are all Hindus. They help one person cross the border for Rs 20,000." Asked about TMC MP Sushmita Dev's allegations that Bengali-speaking Hindus are facing problems here, Sarma said, "She wants to break the Hindu society, but we are one." "How can someone who has left her own place challenge me? No political leader leaves his

or her origin. But she has left Assam and comes here as a guest now," Sarma added, referring to Dev, now a Rajya Sabha MP from West Bengal. Dev is a native of Silchar and represented the constituency in the Lok Sabha earlier.

Sarma also maintained that the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi accorded utmost importance to the Bengali language.

Asked for his reaction to BJP leader Amit Malviya's comment on the Bengali language, the CM said, "I don't know what Malviya has said. It is important what Narendra Modi says." "Bengali language cannot be Bangladeshi language. How can the BJP speak against the Bengali language when it has accorded so much importance to the language," Sarma added.

## Manipur officials say no confirmation yet on PM Modi's visit in September

**IMPHAL**

Senior officials of the Manipur government clarified that there is no official confirmation regarding Prime Minister Narendra Modi's reported visit to the state in the second week of September.

If confirmed, this would be the Prime Minister's first visit to Manipur since ethnic clashes broke out more than two years ago.

Speculation about Modi's visit arose after a section of the media suggested that he might combine his scheduled programme in Mizoram with a trip to Manipur. The Prime Minister is slated to reach Mizoram on September 12 and inaugurate the Bairabi-Sairang railway line the following day.

However, state officials in Imphal maintained that no communication has been received from the Centre about a possible Manipur stopover. "No, we do not have any official

confirmation from the Centre as of now that the Prime Minister will visit Manipur in the second week of September," one senior official said, while others also echoed the same stance.

Manipur's lone Rajya Sabha MP, Leishemba Sanajaoba of the BJP, also said he had no information about Modi's arrival. "I also noticed media reports that the PM will be visiting the state in the second week of September. However, we don't have any official confirmation regarding that as of now," he told reporters on the sidelines of a programme in Imphal.

The opposition has repeatedly criticised Modi for not visiting Manipur since violence between the Meitei and Kuki communities erupted in May 2023. The clashes have left at least 260 people dead and displaced thousands, creating a deep political and humanitarian crisis in the state.

## NRC Needed After TN Governor's Warning, Says Arambai Tenggol



**IMPHAL**

Arambai Tenggol, a Meitei group in Manipur, has expressed full support for the recent remarks made by Ravindra Narayana Ravi, Governor of Tamil Nadu, on the infiltration of illegal immigrants into the North Eastern states, particularly Manipur.

Highlighting the severity of the situation, Ravi stated that illegal immigration from Bangladesh and Myanmar is not merely driven by economic aspirations but represents a strategic attempt to destabilise India and potentially recreate conditions akin to a partition. Arambai Tenggol echoed this concern, noting the wide-ranging impact of illegal settlers on the state's socio-political and economic fabric.

According to the organisation, illeg

gal immigrants have been encroaching on reserved forest lands, occupying property illegally, and engaging in activities such as poppy cultivation to fund terror operations. The group also pointed to the emergence of Kuki narco-terrorist factions, advocating for a separate nation called "Zalengam," as a direct consequence of this infiltration, posing a threat to national security and the territorial integrity of India.

Arambai Tenggol has urged the immediate implementation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Manipur to identify and deport illegal immigrants, emphasising that such measures are critical for maintaining demographic balance and safeguarding national security. The organisation also called for stricter border fencing and other robust mechanisms to prevent further illegal entry into the state.

Laishram Robason, Control Room Operator of Arambai Tenggol, said, "The statement by Ravi is a wake-up call. The central and state governments must take urgent steps to strengthen border security and address this issue before it escalates any further. Arambai Tenggol stands committed to supporting efforts that protect the integrity and future of Manipur and India."

The remarks have sparked discussions on the urgent need for policy action in the North East, with organisations and political leaders emphasising coordinated efforts to secure the region against illegal immigration and related threats.

## Court-Directed Move: 98 COVID-Time Doctors Get Permanent Posts in Nagaland



**KOHIMA**

The Nagaland Government has clarified its position regarding the ongoing agitation by the Nagaland Medical Students' Association (NMSA) against the regularization of 98 Medical Officers who were appointed on a temporary basis during the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the state health department, the Gauhati High Court Kohima Bench, in its order dated August 1, 2025, dismissed the writ petitions WP(C)/239/2024 and WP(C)/187/2024 filed by the

**Following the court's directive, the Department of Health and Family Welfare has initiated the regularization process of the 98 COVID-19 appointee medical officers as a one-time dispensation under the Special Recruitment Drive, in line with Notification No. HFW(A)10/34/2024/145 dated August 18, 2025.**

NMSA. The association had chal-

lenged the government's policy decision to conduct a Special Recruitment Drive (SRD) for medical officers who rendered services during the pandemic.

The High Court ruled that the petitioners lacked locus standi to challenge the state's decision, as they were not considered "aggrieved persons." It further observed that the NMSA failed to establish a case warranting judicial interference under Article 226 of the Constitution of India. Consequently, the interim order dated November 21, 2024, which had temporarily suspended the recruitment process, now stands vacated.

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The department also noted that since the petitioners have already filed an appeal before the High Court, the matter remains sub judice. In such circumstances, officials emphasized that any form of agitation is "unwarranted" and urged for restraint until the judicial process concludes.

## Assam Police arrest two teachers for alleged ties to Bangladesh-based jihadi groups

**GUWAHATI**

Assam Police arrested two schoolteachers from the Dhubri district for their suspected ties to Bangladesh-based jihadi organizations, including Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI).

The arrests have heightened fears of extremist infiltration into community institutions across the sensitive border areas of lower Assam.

Police made the first arrest on August 27, taking into custody Shah Alam Sarkar, a teacher at Lakhimari Middle School, located near the international border.

Investigators allege that Sarkar actively engaged in recruitment, propaganda, and logistical support for cross-border radicals.

Authorities also revealed that Lakhimari Middle School, where Sarkar taught, was formerly a madrasa, Lakhimari PRE-Madrasa, before being converted into a SEBA-affiliated school in December 2023. Police suspect the school's former status may have left behind networks that now facilitate extremist activities.

Soon after Sarkar's arrest, another teacher from the same school, Hazrat Ali, went missing, triggering a state-wide manhunt. Police feared he held crucial information about a wider sleeper cell network operating within the community.

Acting on intelligence, a police team



led by Golaganj Police Station Officer-in-Charge Debajit Kalita arrested Ali, also known as Hazrat Master, late Saturday night from the Kazigaon area in Kokrajhar district.

"We received credible inputs on Hazrat Ali's movements and his suspected involvement in aiding jihadi elements. Our team acted swiftly and apprehended him from his hideout," a senior police official told Northeast Now on condition of anonymity.

Both suspects are currently being interrogated. Authorities are probing their links

to Bangladesh-based extremist groups and investigating whether they played roles in establishing sleeper cells in Assam.

The arrests have intensified concerns already brewing in Dhubri. Earlier this month, residents in Lakhimari and Bishkhowa villages reported receiving threatening phone calls from a Bangladeshi number.

The caller allegedly warned of "terrible consequences" for cooperating with Indian security agencies. On August 14, police also arrested a youth found carrying a Bangladeshi SIM card and national flag, further fueling suspicion of coordinated attempts to destabilize the region.

Security analysts believe these developments are part of a broader, organized campaign. Under "Operation Praghat," Assam's Special Task Force has already dismantled sleeper cells linked to the Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT) this year, particularly in Dhubri and Bilasipara.

The communal unrest during the June 2025 riots in Dhubri, combined with porous borders and demographic pressures, has created fertile ground for extremist groups to exploit identity-based tensions.

Investigators are focusing on Jamaat-e-Islami, a hardline Islamist organization in Bangladesh accused of spreading radical ideologies. Intelligence agencies

are closely examining the group's funding mechanisms, recruitment pipelines, and logistical operations in Assam.

"This is not an isolated threat. It's a systematic attempt to create an ecosystem of extremism along India's borders," warned a top intelligence source.

The Himanta Biswa Sarma government praised the swift arrests, describing them as a "significant step in safeguarding Assam's borders." Senior officials reiterated that dismantling radical networks is essential to prevent Assam's frontier districts from becoming safe havens for jihadi infiltration.

For many in Dhubri and Kokrajhar, the fact that two teachers, figures expected to educate and protect young minds, stand accused of extremist ties has been deeply disturbing.

"If our teachers turn into conduits for radical ideologies, it shakes the very foundation of our society," said a concerned villager in Lakhimari.

What began as the arrest of a single educator has now exposed a potentially dangerous network spanning classrooms, communities, and international borders, placing Assam's frontier districts on high alert in the fight against cross-border terrorism.

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## REFUR-BISHED ORDER ON STRAY DOGS

The Supreme Court has modified its dog-order of August 11 and “dog-lovers” are beyond relief, except that the order doesn’t meet everybody’s expectations. The best thing about the order is that dog-lovers have been told not to feed strays on the streets and roads, in the vicinity of schools and at the entrances to gated communities. Food is not always a distraction but dogs might take exception to a stray child or elderly man invading the public feeding areas randomly selected by the compassionate dog-lovers.

The problem is every dog-lover who feed stray dogs selects his or her feeding place. The dog-lover is as territorial as the dog! The Supreme Court’s modified order says the strays should be captured, sterilized and immunized and then released back into the human population. And because the stray dogs have been vaccinated against Rabies, children wouldn’t be in danger.

The most that will happen will be fear of dogs instilled in the child, a fear that will stay for the rest of his/her lifetime. Fear of stray dogs is an international phenomenon. In Netherlands, it led to strong measures taken and today Netherlands is beyond the ken of stray dogs. But India being ‘Sanatani’, Indians are default animal-lovers, not just dog-lovers.

The Supreme Court directed the Municipal Corporation of Delhi to release sterilized and vaccinated stray dogs back into their localities but not before the dogs are tested and declared rabies-free. Stray dogs betraying aggressive behaviour must be kept separate from the rest of the freely roaming stray dogs.

Is the MCD capable of carrying out this task? As it is, dog-lovers have been questioning the commitment of the inept MCD. The feeling drummed into the average Indian that our justices are a notch above common mortals. The stoppage of public feeding of stray dogs is a great relief to people who use roads for a smooth travel from ‘Point A’ to ‘Point B’. Stray dogs often take a liking for unprotected ankles and calves.

So while dedicated public feeding zones are a relief, the rider that sterilized and vaccinated stray dogs should be released back into their territorial biting grounds is still scary for the child and the majority of the elderly. Predicting dog behaviour is not in the domain of children and the elderly.

The top court’s order says designated feeding zones must be created and animal lovers can adopt stray dogs using the services of the MCD. A lot has been alleged about the MCD, will the municipal body up to the task? Only time will tell, but the three-judge bench of the Supreme Court has taken up the challenge with all sincerity with the hope that no dog breaches its trust.

Dog-lovers have been saying that parents should doggy-train their kids just like they’re potty-trained, adding that children provoking stray dogs is a common sight on India’s thoroughfares, keep the children on a leash! Dog-lovers are wholly with the “voiceless dogs”. So much so, they take exception to even “It’s a dog’s life”, stray dog’s are worthless.

The Supreme Court on Friday sought to make amends. Giving back to stray dogs their territorial rights is akin to ensuring human rights. But isn’t sterilization a breach of dog-rights? Dog spelled and pronounced back-to-front is GOD! And, here, you have dog-lovers affirming that the best way to ensure the end of the stray dog menace is to sterilize them and let time take its toll.

The standard lifetime of a dog is at the most 15 years and sterilized dogs will not get aggressive if their breeding rights are taken away without ado. Aggressive behaviour and rabies are signs. The MCD has been hogging money earmarked for stray dogs. There are about 20 dog-NGOs affiliated to the MCD, and they’re no better than the MCD.

Chances are the Supreme Court will “look into the matter” when it draws up the promised “national dog policy. As it is, Friday’s verdict applies not only to Delhi-NCR but to the entire country.

The final national “dog” must not lose sight of dedicated feeding zones for the stray dogs. Asking parents to doggy-train their children is as impractical as expecting the municipal bodies to set up dog-shelters for crores and crores of stray dogs. The verdict was delivered by a bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta, and N V Anjaria. The key modifications include release of sterilized and vaccinated stray dogs into the same area they were rounded up from; That the court has put a stop to feeding stray dogs in public spaces is the game-changer. Rest assured, the strays are not going to take it as an insult

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

Men are nearly always willing to believe what they wish. - Julius Caesar

# Modi Battles Two Fronts: Trump’s Tariffs, Rahul’s ‘Vote Chori’

K B JANDIAL

Never in his political career, PM Narendra Modi has wrestled with two serious challenges at the same time. He is grappling with geopolitical headwinds-punitive U.S. tariffs on safeguarding India’s global image and economic resilience; and fast catching up narrative of electoral irregularities which Rahul Gandhi calls “Vote Chori,” hitting the credibility of Election Commission of India (ECI).

**Trump’s Ceasefire Claim**  
The much-publicised ‘chemistry’ between Modi and Trump during the “Howdy Modi” era took a sharp nosedive after May 10, 2025, when Trump prematurely announced a ceasefire between India and Pakistan, projecting himself as the peacemaker who prevented a nuclear war. Trump even warned that India and Pakistan would face trade consequences if they defied his call. Despite Modi’s clarification in Lok Sabha and his personal denial in the June 18 phone call, Trump repeated the claim in public, undermining Modi’s stature and fuelling domestic criticism. Government denials seemed only to bruise Trump’s ego, as he expected all leaders to genuflect to his version of events.

**Straight Talk**  
Rahul Gandhi seized on Trump’s assertions, accusing Modi of “surrender,” and failure to retrieve POJK during “Operation Sindhoor.” Interestingly, a video has surfaced of Pakistan’s Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar confirming that the ceasefire was negotiated by the DGMOs, not Washington.

**Trump’s Ego vs Indian Diplomacy**  
Analysts say that diplomacy requires understanding the sensitivities of leaders like obsessed Trump, and finding out formulations to assuage their ego, when required. Modi and Jaishankar appeared to have avoided giving Trump even symbolic credit for ceasefire, aware of the domestic political risk. Jaishankar, a seasoned hand on Indo-U.S. relations, surely foresaw the complications but political compulsions – especially the “Narendra Surrender” campaign – left little space to indulge Trump’s vanity. Despite Rahul Gandhi’s repeated demand that Modi call Trump a liar, Modi avoided the trap, suspecting it as bait. India, after all, has never publicly named world leaders like this, not even the adversaries like Pakistan and China.

For Modi, the dilemma was stark: should he swallow Trump’s ego and let him take credit, or should he push back to avoid appearing weak before his people and simultaneously nip the Opposition’s taunt of “Narendra Surrender”? He chose the latter. Through his speeches, Modi sent an unmistakable message that he would never compromise the interests of Indian farmers, livestock rearers, and fishermen, even at a personal heavy price. This was a double-edged strategy: nailed the “Narendra surrender” propaganda while politically reconnecting with those sections of farmers estranged by the farm laws.

**Trump’s Tariff Strike**  
Trump, who has weaponised tariffs and undermined WTO principles, assumed India would eventually bend under pressure like others. He calculated that Modi, needing U.S. goodwill, would persuade Russia to accept a peace deal in Ukraine, bolstering Trump’s Nobel Peace Prize ambitions. When this did not appear coming, Trump lost his cool and blasted Indian economy as “doomed” – a remark Rahul Gandhi quickly echoed, bolstering his own critique of Modi’s economic management, some calling that of late, they are targeting Modi in tandem.

Modi, however, stood firm without provoking Trump by matching outbursts. Unlike other countries that signed unequal

agreements to appease Washington, Modi refused to capitulate, and instead joined a small group of Russia, China, and Brazil to defy Trump’s tantrums, hurting his ego further. He consciously rejected U.S. entry into India’s agriculture and related sectors.

**Uneasy Relations**  
Trump’s actions may ultimately hurt U.S. strategic interests. His tantrum has already pushed India to reset ties with China – the USA made anti-China four-nation QUAD with India notwithstanding; and strengthen relations with all-time friend Russia. Frustrated at India’s strategic manoeuvring, Washington is sending contradictory signals: Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent voiced optimism about reconciliation at the end of the day, while Trump aide Peter Navarro slammed India for buying Russian oil and even dubbed the Russia-Ukraine conflict as “Modi’s war.” The choice of Sergio Goro, a Trump loyalist with no diplomatic background, as U.S. Ambassador to India after an eight-month vacancy, raised further concerns. Elon Musk once called Goro “a snake,” and many experts describe his appointment as “bad” for India, perhaps thinking of USA’s larger plans in India including regime change exploiting domestic political unease, like in Bangladesh. However, none could succeed, given to India’s inherent strength and committed and apolitical defence forces.

Meanwhile, reports in German and Japanese media claimed that Modi declined four telephonic calls from Trump in recent weeks. It demonstrated not also Modi’s anger, but also his caution, implying that Modi feared Trump might misrepresent their conversation for his political gain, as he did with Vietnamese General Secretary To Lam.

Whatever diplomatic formulation the astute Indian Foreign Minister may make, it is going to be tough. To navigate this storm, India may be relying on what veteran diplomat Vivek Katju called three “brahmastri”: bipartisan support in the U.S. Congress, backing from American industry, and the Indian diaspora. How Modi deploys these remains to be seen.

Trump’s ‘surgical’ tariff strike on India, especially the 25% punitive tariff, is akin to sanctions but while India may suffer short-term macro-economic impact, assessed by economists around 0.51% of GDP, the USA too will face higher inflation. The long-term effect depends on this situation and global trade shifts and India’s own policy responses. While Modi manoeuvres on the global chessboard, another battle rages at home – one that strikes at the very heart of India’s democracy. Modi’s serious worry is the loss of jobs, rural distress and resultant politics due to tariff strike just months before key state elections in Bihar later this year and six other states in next year.

**Rahul’s ‘Vote Chori’ Campaign**  
Modi’s second fight at home is more serious, given its wider political consequences with a fast catching up Rahul Gandhi’s ‘Vote Chori’ campaign. Gandhi has packaged them into a narrative of systematic electoral fraud by the “compromised” ECI. At rallies and through initiatives like his “Voter Adhikar Yatra” on ongoing Special Intensive Revision of the Electoral Rolls in Bihar, and in media, he is transforming these electoral rolls’ lapses into evidence of deliberate theft. He has managed to catch the imagination of gullible people to accuse the electoral system as rigged.

Calling his revelations as “atom bomb,” Gandhi highlighted examples such as 80 voters listed at the same address, 70-year-old Shakun Rani allegedly registered twice. These cases, he argued, showed the system was rigged to allow impersonation and bogus voting.

ECI’s rebuttal but no probe  
The ECI made a strong rebuttal to the alle-

gations, calling these “baseless” and “deplorable,” and asking Rahul to submit a sworn declaration as prescribed under electoral rules or retract his claims. But the political campaign against ECI and “vote Chori” did not recede. For the first time, Rahul Gandhi and INDIA leaders have been able to generate public interest in these charges.

While the ECI unanimously decided to cling to procedural responses to the charges, it did not, even for its own satisfaction, ask the concerned Chief Electoral Officers to look into these allegations and fix accountability. This gave Rahul the punch he needed to aggressively pursue his charges and succeeded in projecting ECI as “compromised.” The opposition is slamming ECI for its inability to initiate legal action against the ruling party when their leaders grossly violated Moral Code of Conduct (MCC) in the past. With lack of transparency, such inactions lead to “trust deficit.”

The ECI lost the plot by sticking to the ‘letter of the rules’ and refrained from ordering probe into errors in the electoral rolls and fix the responsibility. This would have taken the punch out of the “Atom Boom.” But ECI, in its wisdom, did not do so, allowing Opposition leaders to project its involvement. More than anyone, ECI knows that these electoral rolls are made by election staff of the concerned State Govt under the supervision of Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) and not by ECI.

**Fact Check**  
Irregularities in rolls are not new – wrong addresses, outdated records, or dead voters’ names have always been present. These are administrative errors, presumably occurring due to gross inefficiency of the Govt staff deployed for the purpose. The CEOs, drawn from the IAS cadre of the concerned state, regularly update rolls, yet errors persist. Parties and candidates receive copies of rolls in advance and have both the data and duty to flag mistakes. On polling day, election agents of candidates are present inside booths to challenge impersonators, and official vote accounts (Form 17C) are given at close of polling. Counting is conducted in their presence. If irregularities remain, election petitions can be filed in High Courts.

Still, Gandhi’s campaign has struck a chord. By equating administrative errors with deliberate “Vote Chori,” he has tapped into a wider climate of distrust in ECI. In an era of political polarisation, and ‘trust deficit’ of ECI by its past conduct, the leap from clerical errors to conspiracy theory, in a climate of distrust, has become politically irresistible.

It is not to dismiss the importance of cleaning up rolls. Errors undermine voter confidence and provide ammunition for conspiracy theories. The ECI must invest more in transparent audits and better communication. But to claim that every wrong address or outdated entry equals Vote Chori is to confuse negligence with theft.

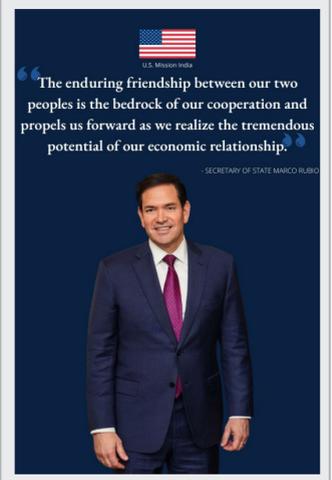
Democracy is safeguarded not just by the referee (ECI) but by all players (contesting political parties and contesting candidates). Political parties have both the data and the duty to ensure rolls are accurate, and their polling agents exist precisely to stop impersonation. If these mechanisms are not used effectively, crying “Vote Chori” afterwards, sounds less like evidence and more like an excuse for defeat. Promoting loss of faith in constitutional bodies, especially the ECI is a dangerous strategy as it has the potential to create anarchy in the country. The Bangladesh example is before us.

Handling twin battles  
Together, these challenges expose Modi to risks, rarely seen before: international

humiliation, and domestically, attempts to discredit electoral process. Modi’s ability to withstand Trump’s tariff assault without appearing weak, and neutralising “Vote Chori” narrative without dismissing citizens’ concerns, will shape the next chapter of his political journey. Modi fights these battles not in isolation but as reflections of India’s own larger test: can India remain both a resilient economy and a credible democracy despite this pressure? The answer will define its path forward.

### DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

**The partnership between the United States and India continues to reach new heights — a defining relationship of the 21st century. This month, we’re spotlighting the people, progress, and possibilities driving us forward. From innovation and entrepreneurship to defense and bilateral ties, it’s the enduring friendship between our two peoples that fuels this journey. Follow the hashtag and be a part of USIndiaFWDforOurPeople. ~ US Embassy India**



## COMEDY, FREE SPEECH, AND THE LAW

KALEESWARAM RAJ

It is the prerogative of the legislature to make laws or not. Law is not a solution for every unethical act in human conduct, which would need a social or cultural diagnosis and appropriate remedies. For example, one is not punished for ingratitude, for it is only a moral wrong and not a penal offence. If a person tells a lie to their spouse, unless it contains penal ingredients, they are not punished. Bad Samaritans cannot be prosecuted for being bad. Such instances of moral wrongs are numerous in human life.

When it comes to freedom of speech and expression, legislation is a more serious business. Free speech is a constitutional guarantee under Article 19(1)(a). This can only be subjected to reasonable restrictions as indicated in Article 19(2) of the Constitution. Whether a law restrictive of free speech is reasonable or not is for the constitutional court to decide. Given the scheme of things, the court asking other branches of the state to enact restrictive legislation is bound to be inherently problematic. It negates Montesquieu’s age-old idea of the separation of powers.

The Supreme Court called for a law on digital content when YouTuber Ranveer Allahbadia challenged the multiple cases against him in different parts of the country. The court’s demand for restrictive laws renders the constitutional scheme under Article 19 nugatory, as this writer has previously noted in an earlier piece (TNIE, March 12, 2025).

Recently, the Supreme Court took up the matter again. This time, five other comedians were present in court as per the court’s direction. Comedians who allegedly mocked the disabled were directed to post apologies on social media. The court reiterated the need to frame guidelines to regulate social media posts and to draw a line between “free speech and hurtful speech”. The Attorney General offered to develop a proposal. The court also said that suggestions are to be called from all stakeholders, including the Bar. Thus, almost a legislation by the executive, at the instance of the judiciary, is on the cards.

The peculiarity of the last day’s hearing is its focus on “commercial speech”. Commercial speech is seen as being afforded lesser free speech protection compared to non-commercial speech, at least in the American context. This is the picture emerging from the First Amendment to the US Constitution.

In India, Article 19(1)(a), on the face of it, does not distinguish between commercial speech and non-commercial speech. The distinction between the two is neither simple nor clear. It is contingent and dependent. In Hamdard Dawakhana v. Union of India (1959), the Supreme Court rejected the challenge to the law regarding objectionable advertisements of drugs and magic remedies. The drug producer, among other things, contended that the advertisement is entitled to get free speech protection.

Repelling the contention, the Supreme Court

upheld the statute which was intended to control or prohibit the advertisement of drugs in certain scenarios. It was laid down that the commercial advertisement cannot, as of right, claim protection under Article 19(1)(a). Yet, the five-judge bench had an easy job, as it was considering a straightforward case of commercial advertisement that required regulation for the public good.

However, in the Indian Express Newspapers Case (1984), the court intervened in the imposition of duty, which led to a reduction in pages and a consequent decrease in the space allocated for advertisements in the newspaper. The court thus implied that commercial speech too could claim Article 19(1)(a) protection. The same was the indication in Tata Press v. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam (1995). Again, in Suresh v. State of Tamil Nadu (1996), the court noted that the freedom under Article 19(1)(a), when mixed with commercial interest, will have “to be balanced against societal interest”. Thus, the Supreme Court always invoked a contextual approach to the topic. Formulating a rigid rule on the point is not easy, either through legislation or adjudication.

Let us come back to the present case in the Supreme Court. The quality of the content offered by influencers of our time might often be questionable. One would think that there is an artistic and cultural erosion, ostensible on the screen. Yet, it is one thing to acknowledge this issue, and quite another thing to call for a law to ‘set it right’.

Whether influencers are always commer-

cialising the speech is a complex and contestable issue. On extension, a newspaper article containing a political opinion or social view would be termed an instance of commercial speech. One might argue that the newspaper also engages in commercial activity, as it generates income, and the writer, too, receives remuneration. This approach is clearly untenable.

There are two more issues involved. First, the country already has comprehensive laws governing online and offline content, including the Information Technology Act 2000, the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021, and the Cable Television Network Regulation Act and Rules. The latter’s Advertisement Code, for example, bans content that derides groups, “presents criminality as desirable”, or projects derogatory images of women.

The Programme Code under the same Rules prohibits any telecast or publication that “offends against good taste or decency”. Almost everything, from obscenity to innuendos and half-truths, is prohibited under the code. These are provisions beyond the conventional statutes and codes, such as the Indian Penal Code, now revised as the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. There is already criticism that the 2021 Rules on digital platforms have the potential to meddle with digital freedom, with a chilling effect on free speech. There are instances of abuse and misuse of these laws by the state.

## 5 arrested in Thadou leader Nehkam Jomhao murder case, confirms Karbi Anglong SSP

GUWAHATI:

Assam's Karbi Anglong Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Sanjib Kumar Saikia on Monday confirmed the arrest of five individuals in connection with the alleged murder of Nehkam Jomhao, a respected leader of the Thadou community.

"We have arrested five suspects so far. The body has not yet been recovered. The situation in the district remains normal," SSP Saikia told Northeast Now during a phone interview on Monday morning.

He added that the investigation remains active as authorities work to uncover the full circumstances behind the killing.

Police made the arrests after unknown assailants abducted Jomhao from his residence in Chonghang Veng, located in the Manja area of Karbi Anglong, around 7:30 pm on Saturday, August 30.

According to SSP Saikia, police have identified the suspects as former cadres of the Kuki Revolutionary Army (KRA).



Investigators believe they killed Jomhao and disposed of his body in a nearby river. Despite sustained search operations, police have yet to recover the body.

Jomhao's murder comes less than a month after he participated in a historic peace dialogue in Imphal on August 6, where he represented Thadou Impi Manipur in formal talks with Meitei or-

ganizations. That dialogue marked the first such engagement between the two communities since the outbreak of ethnic violence in Manipur.

Following the incident, community organizations, including Thadou Community International (TCI) and the Thadou Students' Association (TSA), alleged that certain Kuki militant factions viewed Jomhao's peace-building efforts

as a challenge and targeted him for it.

The investigation is also examining the possibility of personal enmity between Jomhao and one of the accused, alongside the broader political implications of his role in peace negotiations.

Local leaders condemned the killing, calling it a "cold-blooded murder" and a serious blow to ongoing reconciliation efforts in the conflict-hit region.

They have called on authorities to ensure justice and strengthen security for Thadou leaders in both Assam and Manipur to prevent further targeted violence. The arrests and the unfolding investigation have brought renewed scrutiny to the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with Kuki insurgent groups. Critics argue that the agreement has allowed such militants to regroup and act with impunity.

As police continue efforts to recover Jomhao's body and determine the motive, the case highlights the deep-rooted ethnic fault lines in the region and the fragile state of the peace process.

## Assam releases three Bengal migrant labourers from detention, claims TMC

GUWAHATI

Following the intervention of the Mamata Banerjee government, Assam released three migrant labourers from West Bengal's Murshidabad district, who were allegedly detained by cops on suspicion of being Bangladeshi, Trinamool Congress MP Samirul Islam claimed on September 1.

The three were freed on August 31 night, said TMC MP Samirul Islam, who is also the chairman of the West Bengal Migrant Workers' Welfare Board.

"The three workers were taken into custody on suspicion of being Bangladeshi and sent to a detention camp in Assam. After our prompt intervention, they were released," the TMC MP told.

He also claimed, "Even Rs 1.5 lakh that was illegally extracted from them



was returned." According to Islam, two of them hail from Shaktipur and one from Beldanga in Murshidabad.

"They had travelled to Nagaon on August 22 and began hawking, but were picked up by the police at Haibargaon after policemen overheard them speaking in Bengali.

"Migrant workers of Bengal have been facing numerous cases. They have been detained, tortured and extorted in BJP-ruled states. Our government has taken a strong stand to act swiftly whenever such incidents are reported," the Rajya Sabha MP alleged.

In a post on X, Islam claimed that Golam Mondal, a migrant worker from North 24 Parganas' Habra, died in the BJP-ruled Maharashtra due to "inhumane torture by police during an illegal detention".

## Mizoram to launch 4 month crackdown on cross-border drug smuggling

AIZAWL

The Mizoram government is set to initiate a special four-month operation aimed at curbing drug smuggling from neighbouring Myanmar, a senior police official confirmed on Sunday, August 31. The operation, scheduled to commence on Monday, will continue until December 31.

Inspector General of Police H Ramthlengliana stated that the drive will be conducted in close coordination with the state excise and narcotics department as well as the Young Mizo Association (YMA), the state's largest civil society organisation.

Home Minister K Sapdanga emphasized the urgency of the initiative, noting that drug smugglers and addicts often engage in theft and other criminal activities, posing a serious threat to society.

Ramthlengliana highlighted the challenge, stating that law enforcement currently seizes only about 10% of drugs smuggled from Myanmar. To strengthen border control, 32 policemen will be deployed along the Indo-Myanmar border to assist the Assam Rifles and local volunteers in intercepting trafficking activities.

Last week, a joint team of police and the Central Young Mizo Association, led by Ramthlengliana, visited border villages in Champhai district to engage local leaders on the upcoming operation. Champhai, he said, is a major gateway for drug trafficking; last year, 170 of the state's 370 drug smuggling cases were recorded by Champhai police alone.

Mizoram, sharing a 510-km porous border with Myanmar, has been grappling with widespread drug abuse and trafficking. State excise and narcotics data reveal that from January 1 to August 8 this year, 51 individuals, including seven women, died due to drug abuse. Over the past five years, a total of 351 people have succumbed to substance abuse.

## Himanta unveils Mangal Pandey statue in Silchar, honours Barak Valley's role in 1857 revolt

SILCHAR

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, on August 31, unveiled a statue of freedom fighter Mangal Pandey at Ghungoor in Silchar, commemorating his sacrifice and highlighting the contribution of the Barak Valley during the First War of Independence in 1857. On the occasion, CM Sarma also released books on Mangal Pandey, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay, and the revered Assamese saints Srimanta Sankardeva and Sri Sri Madhavdev. Paying tribute to Pandey, the chief minister described the Sepoy Mutiny and earlier rebellions as the country's initial resistance against British colonial rule.

CM Sarma paid rich tributes to Mangal Pandey, stating that the Sepoy Mutiny and earlier rebellions

against British colonialism in history are referred to as the initial resistance against British imperialism.

The chief minister said that in the war of independence of 1857, a new type of rifle was given to the soldiers, which required biting the cartridge to activate it and use. "Several brave personalities were martyred in these struggles, which intensified the urge among the Indians to free the country. They realised that freedom was their birthright and they must have it at any cost. The realisation gradually captured the hearts and minds across the nation, leading to the start of the Congress movement, the arrival of Mahatma Gandhi, and eventually, after a nationwide freedom struggle, the country attained independence," CM Sarma said.

## Assam Congress announces final list of candidates for BTC polls

GUWAHATI

The Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) on Sunday, August 31 announced its final list of nine candidates for the upcoming Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) elections, completing its roster for all 40 constituencies. The elections are scheduled for September 22, with results to be declared on September 26.

The final list, approved by APCC president Gaurav Gogoi, includes:

Parbatjhora: Sahen Chandra Brahma  
Guma: Abu Bakkar Ali  
Srirampur: Rafikul Islam  
Sheikh  
Debagaoon: Mohini Mohan Basumatary  
Kajalgaon: Sanjib Warie

Sobaijhar: Binimoy Basumatary

Thuribari: Zamser Ali  
Goreswar: Bhebendra Nath Swargiary  
Pasnwi Serfang: Petrus Bagh

This announcement follows the release of the party's first list of 31 candidates, covering constituencies across Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa, Udalguri, and Tamulpur districts. Prominent names in the first list included Ranchana Basumatary (Jamduar), Rananjay Narzary (Soraibil), Kwrwm Mushahry (Kachugaon), Dwimu Roje (Dotma), Sunil Narzary (Baukhungri), Abhinash Brahma (Manas Serfang), Safiur Rahman (Mathanguri), Dharmeswar Baro (Mushalpur), Rumi Singh

Mushahari (Goibari), and Swarangsha Daimari (Rowta). In a last-minute development, Sahar Ali was replaced by Dr. Husna Ara Begum as the Congress candidate for Fakiragram, following a directive from APCC president Gaurav Gogoi. With this final announcement, the party has fielded candidates across all 40 constituencies, setting the stage for a high-voltage multi-cornered battle against the ruling UPPL, BJP, and BPF.

Election Timeline and Voter Details

Last date for filing nominations: September 2

Scrutiny of nominations: September 4

Deadline for withdrawal: September 6

Polling day: September 22

Counting of votes: September 26

Repoll (if required): September 24

The Election Commission has reported a total of 26,57,937 eligible voters, comprising 13,23,399 men, 13,34,521 women, and 17 others. Voting will take place across 3,359 polling stations in the four districts of the Bodoland Territorial Region.

The BTC elections are being closely watched as a crucial litmus test for the Congress, which has struggled to regain its foothold in Assam's tribal regions. With the UPPL and BJP already consolidating their base, the grand old party faces a challenging task of reconnecting with voters and reviving its influence in the Bodoland heartland.

## "Darkest chapter" in country: Tripura CM condemns attack on BJP workers in Khowai

AGARTALA

BJP workers attacked during PM Modi's Mann Ki Baat in Tripura's Khowai. Seven party workers injured, two suspects arrested in the incident. CM Manik Saha condemns attack as darkest chapter in country.

The attack on Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) workers in Tripura's Khowai while they were listening to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Mann Ki Baat' radio programme was the "darkest chapter" in the country, Chief Minister Manik Saha said.

Several BJP activists were assaulted by alleged Tripura Motha supporters on July 27 at Asharambari during the radio programme. At least seven saffron party workers were injured, and two per-



sons were arrested for their alleged involvement in the incident.

The chief minister was listening to the PM's 'Mann Ki Baat' programme on Sunday at the same venue where the BJP workers were attacked two months ago.

Speaking at the event after the PM's radio programme, Saha said, "The attack during the prime min-

ister's 'Mann Ki Baat' in July was a darkest chapter not only in Tripura but also in the entire country. 'Mann Ki Baat' is not a political event. People across the world discuss how a prime minister reaches out to the people over a radio programme." The chief minister also said the PM tries to remain connected with the people and their thoughts through the radio programme.

"No head of state organises such a programme," Saha claimed.

The CM said, "The way our party workers were attacked, their properties and vehicles were damaged, is totally unacceptable. Such incidents used to take place during the previous regimes of the Left Front and the Congress. Now, we are trying to come out of such politics." The chief minister said the BJP has been

in power in 20 states of the country under the leadership of the prime minister.

"The people want to listen to PM Modi. We are following his path to ensure development of the state. But some people are always trying to confuse the public," he said without naming any party.

Claiming that the northeast had earlier witnessed bloodshed due to secessionist movements, Saha lauded Modi for bringing lasting peace in the region.

"Tripura was no exception. Insurgents used to attack buses and trucks and kill innocent people. Eventually, members of banned outfits -ATTf and NLFt - surrendered recently, making Tripura an insurgency-free state," he said.

## IEI Tripura felicitates young entrepreneurs



BISWADEEP GUPTA

AGARTALA: The Institution of Engineers (India), Tripura State Centre, organised a Seminar programme on the topic "How to develop the existing Small Industrial scenario in Tripura" on 30th August, in the Seminar Hall of IEI, Tripura State Centre, Agartala, in connection with the Small Industry Day 2025.

Shyamal Kanti Deb, Former General Manager, Tripura Industrial Development Corporation Ltd., delivering the Keynote speech, discussed that developing the small industrial scenario in Tripura requires a comprehensive approach that involves collaboration among government, industry stakeholders, and ed-

ucational institutions. He further said that by addressing infrastructure, policy, skills, finance, and market access, Tripura can create a conducive environment for small industries to thrive and contribute to the state's economic growth.

The programme was presided over by Er. Paramananda Sarkar Banerjee, Chairman of the Institution of Engineers (India), Tripura State Centre. Prof. (Dr.) Priyanath Das, Honorary Secretary of the Centre, delivered the welcome address.

The seminar was attended by young entrepreneurs, senior engineers, and engineering students. Seven young entrepreneurs were felicitated during the occasion.

## Meghalaya HC cracks down on unlicensed street vendors in Laitumkhrach area

SHILLONG

The Meghalaya High Court has ordered immediate action against numerous unlicensed street vendors operating in Shillong's Laitumkhrach area, directing the Municipal Board to conduct a comprehensive survey and prevent new vendors from setting up shop.

The directive came during a hearing on August 29, when Chief Justice IP Mukerji and Justice W Diengdoh reviewed a damning report from the Shillong Municipal Board revealing widespread illegal vending activities.

The Municipal Board's report painted a troubling picture of regulatory oversight in the area. Of 122 identified vendors, none possessed valid vending certificates or licenses. The



Board classified only 22 as "eligible under the provisions of the scheme," though even these vendors lacked proper documentation.

The situation becomes more

complex as "additionally 48 vendors claimed themselves as street vendors," according to the Board's report. The document notes this creates a summary of "122 plus 48 street vendors" operating without licenses, though the exact relationship between these figures remains unclear.

The bench issued sweeping directives to address the regulatory chaos: The Municipal Board must complete "a thorough survey of the Laitumkhrach area and make an inventory of all the street vendors operating thereat with full details" within three weeks. This includes documenting vendor names, merchandise types, occupied areas, and duration of operations.

Authorities have been instructed to maintain "strict vigil" to ensure "not a single additional vendor is allowed to trade in that area" until further court orders. Local police will assist in enforcement efforts.

The court mandated that all pending license applications be processed within eight weeks. This includes the 22 vendors the Board considers eligi-

ble, provided they submit proper applications according to legal requirements.

The Board must also provide opportunities for eligible vendors without current applications to apply for licenses, with processing to follow established legal procedures.

Recognising the need for legitimate vending spaces, the court directed authorities to "identify a suitable place for relocation of licensed vendors." This suggests the court aims to balance commercial needs with urban planning requirements.

The order follows a successful crackdown on street hawkers in Shillong's Police Bazar area. The Laitumkhrach action emerged after Seng Samla Laitumkhrach "Ieng Skhem Ha Ka Hok," a registered society, requested extension of the Police Bazar enforcement to their area.

Both the state government and Municipal Board must file compliance reports before the next hearing, scheduled eight weeks from the August 29 order date.

Quest!

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## 'Idiots don't understand idioms', TMC MP Mahua Moitra taunts Raipur police



**RAIPUR:** In response to the FIR registered against her in Chhattisgarh's Raipur, for her alleged "derogatory" remarks against Home Minister Amit Shah, Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra took a sharp jibe at the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Sunday and said that "idiots don't understand idioms".

The TMC MP had sparked a controversy after allegedly saying that if Shah fails to stop infiltration from Bangladesh, "the first thing you should do is cut Amit Shah's head and put it on your table". She had allegedly made the remarks in Bengali.

A case was registered against Moitra in Raipur's Mana police station under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) Sections 196 (promoting enmity between different groups on the grounds of religion, race, etc) and 197 (imputations, assertions prejudicial to national integration).

"Idiots don't understand idioms, so which is where we are. Saying 'Heads will roll' you don't really cut someone's head. It's an idiom that metaphorically (phrase not literally applicable) said for seeking accountability, on one's responsibility (over shirking responsibility by union government). When you (Raipur police) use Google

translate to file a fake FIR, this is what happens", she said in her released video, declaring she will be going to the court against it.

Moitra drew attention of the Raipur SP on how his colleague, Kondagaon district police chief Akshay Kumar picked by 12 migrant workers who all hailed from her Krishna Nagar constituency on July 12, arrested them, lodged an FIR against them and kept them under illegally detention. I went to Chhattisgarh high court that issued a notice to the state government and later had to withdraw the case.

In a cutting remark, she took a dig at the Raipur police citing the Kondagaon SP with another idiom 'tails between your legs' (emphasising feeling defeated and ashamed) after the case was withdrawn by him. "Similarly you (Raipur police) have filed a fake FIR against me on—'Mahua Moitra ne kaha gala kaat diya' after using Google translation from Bengali to English and then to Hindi. This is what happens", she stated.

She read out the FIR registered against her and narrated what it signifies "I will go to the court (against the FIR) and it will be another slap in the face and then more heads will roll", she said.

The Raipur police however said that a local resident Gopal Samanto, filed a complaint against Moitra's remarks stating that her words were 'objectionable and unconstitutional', and can arouse outrage from other communities against Bangladeshi refugees settled in Mana Camp area of the capital since 1971.

## PM Modi holds bilateral talks with Putin, says India and Russia 'always walked shoulder-to-shoulder'

BEIJING

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday held a bilateral meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the SCO Summit, emphasizing that close cooperation between India and Russia is vital for global peace, prosperity, and stability.

The two leaders discussed bilateral cooperation, including in the economic, financial, and energy sectors, along with regional and global issues of common concern, said the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

Welcoming recent initiatives to resolve the conflict in Ukraine, PM Modi said that the parties involved must move forward "constructively."

"It is a great pleasure to meet you, and I always feel that every meeting with you becomes a memorable one. It provides us an opportunity to exchange a lot of information. We remain in constant contact and have held several bilateral meetings," PM Modi said in his opening remarks.

Putin is scheduled to visit India in December for the 23rd India-Russia Annual Summit. PM Modi said that the people of India were "eagerly waiting" for the Russian President's visit.

"This is the definition of our deep, 'special and privileged strategic partnership.' In the most difficult times too, India and Russia have always walked shoulder-to-shoulder with each other. Our close cooperation is not only important for the people of both countries but also for peace, prosperity, and stability in the world," PM Modi said.

On the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the Prime Minister reiterated India's position of supporting dialogue and peaceful resolution.

"We welcome the recent efforts toward resolving the conflict. We hope that all the involved parties will



proceed constructively. Humanity demands that we find ways to end this conflict as soon as possible to restore peace and stability in the region," said PM Modi.

The two leaders also reaffirmed their support for further strengthening of the special and privileged strategic partnership, said MEA.

Earlier, the two leaders shared a car ride to the venue of their bilateral talks.

At the SCO Summit, President Putin acknowledged India's role, stating that Moscow "highly values" the contributions of New Delhi, Beijing, and other strategic partners in facilitating peace efforts in Ukraine.

"We highly value the efforts and proposals of China, India, and our other strategic partners aimed at facilitating the settlement of the Ukrainian crisis," Putin said.

He also referred to the "understandings" reached with US President Donald Trump during their summit

in Alaska in August, expressing hope that they would pave the way for peace in Ukraine.

According to MEA, the Summit witnessed productive discussions on the SCO Development Strategy, reform of global governance, counter-terrorism, peace and security, economic and financial cooperation, and sustainable development.

Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi shared a photograph with Putin, where the two leaders were seen shaking hands and embracing on the sidelines of the summit. "Always a delight to meet President Putin!" said PM Modi on X.

India has consistently reiterated its position in favour of a peaceful resolution of the Ukraine conflict and has extended support to all efforts in this direction.

Just as PM Modi arrived in China from Japan on Saturday, he received a call from Ukrainian President

Volodymyr Zelensky, who briefed him on negotiations held in Washington with US President Donald Trump and European leaders.

According to Zelensky, the conversation with PM Modi was "productive and important." He added that India had expressed its readiness to make the necessary efforts and "convey the appropriate signal to Russia" and other leaders during discussions at the SCO Summit.

PM Modi later said he exchanged views with Zelensky on the ongoing conflict, its humanitarian dimension, and efforts to restore peace and stability. "India extends full support to all efforts in this direction," he said on X.

On August 18, Putin had also spoken to PM Modi over a phone call, sharing his assessment of the Alaska meeting with Trump. PM Modi welcomed the dialogue, describing it as a positive step toward resolving the crisis.

## INTERNATIONAL

## 'Brahmins' profiteering at expense of Indian people: White House trade adviser Navarro

NEW YORK

In a new rant against India for its purchases of Russian oil, White House trade adviser Peter Navarro has said that "Brahmins" are profiteering at the expense of the Indian people and it needs to "stop".

"Look (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi is a great leader," Navarro, the Trump administration's Senior Counsellor for Trade and Manufacturing, said in an interview with Fox News Sunday.

The trade adviser said that he doesn't understand how the Indian leader is cooperating with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping "when he's the biggest democracy in the world."

"So I would just simply say, the Indian people, please understand what's going on here. You got Brahmins profiteering at the expense of the Indian people. We need that to stop," Navarro said.

Navarro has been consistently targeting India over the last few days following a major downturn in ties between Washington and New Delhi over President Donald Trump's policies on trade and tariffs.

Trump has imposed 25 per cent reciprocal tariffs on India and an additional 25 per cent for Delhi's purchases of Russian oil.

India has termed the tariffs imposed on it as "unjustified and unreasonable".

The trade adviser said that he doesn't understand how the Indian leader is cooperating with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping "when he's the biggest democracy in the world."

Navarro was asked about China's purchases of Russian oil and whether the implementation of extra tariffs on India is enough to "choke" Putin.

"Well, let's be clear, we have 50 per cent tariffs now on India, but we



also have a little over 50 per cent tariffs on China. So there's a question, how much higher do you want to go without actually hurting ourselves?" he said.

Navarro said that before Putin invaded Ukraine in February 2022, India didn't buy Russian oil, and its purchases were of very, very small amounts.

"What happened? Well, the Russian refiners went in and got into bed with big oil in India. Putin gives Modi a discount on the crude. They refine it, and they ship it to Europe, Africa and Asia at a big premium, and they make a ton of money," he said.

"Now, what's wrong with that picture?" Navarro said, adding that this "fuels" the Russian war machine,

saying India is "nothing but a laundromat for the Kremlin".

Defending its purchase of Russian crude oil, India has been maintaining that its energy procurement is driven by national interest and market dynamics.

The trade adviser said that he doesn't understand how the Indian leader is cooperating with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping "when he's the biggest democracy in the world."

Russia has emerged as India's top energy supplier since the West slapped sanctions on its crude oil after the invasion of Ukraine.

"It kills Ukrainians. And what we have to do as taxpayers, we got to send them more money so Ukraine

can defend themselves. And on top of that, by the way, the 25 per cent of the 50 per cent is because India is the 'maharaja' of tariffs," Navarro alleged.

"They have the highest tariffs in the world. So they export us a bunch of stuff, (and) they won't let us sell to them. So who gets hurt? Workers in America, taxpayers in America, Ukrainians in cities getting killed by Russian drones," he claimed.

Navarro has previously described the Ukraine conflict as "Modi's war" and said the "road to peace" runs partly "right through New Delhi".

The US has refrained from criticising China, the largest importer of Russian crude oil.

## SCO condemns Pahalgam attack, backs India's call against double standards in fight on terrorism



TIANJIN

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on Monday strongly condemned the Pahalgam terror attack and concurred with India's position that "double standards" in the fight against terrorism are unacceptable.

The influential grouping listed its strong resolve to combat terrorism in a declaration that was unveiled at the end of its two-day annual summit at the Chinese port city that was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russia's Vladimir Putin and many other global leaders.

The SCO member states also condemned the military strikes by Israel in Gaza as it has led to numerous casualties among the civilian population and a catastrophic humanitarian situation in the Strip.

The declaration mentioned ways to enhance regional secu-

rity and identified combating terrorism as a major challenge.

"The member states strongly condemned the terrorist attack in Pahalgam on April 22," it said. The SCO member states also condemned the terror attacks in Khuzdar and on Jaffer Express, both in Pakistan's Balochistan province. "They (member states) expressed their deepest sympathy and condolences to the families of the dead and the wounded. They further stated that perpetrators, organisers and sponsors of such attacks must be brought to justice," according to the declaration.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping, and other world leaders attend the Shanghai Cooperation Council (SCO) Members Session in Tianjin, China.

It said the SCO, while reaffirming its firm commitment to the fight against terrorism,

separatism and extremism, stresses the inadmissibility of attempts to use terrorist, separatist and extremist groups for "mercenary purposes".

The SCO said it recognised the leading role of sovereign states and their competent authorities in countering terrorist and extremist threats.

"The member states strongly condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, stress that double standards in the fight against terrorism are unacceptable, and call on the international community to combat terrorism, including cross-border movement of terrorists," it said.

The SCO said the UN has the central role to fully implement the relevant UN Security Council resolution and the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in accordance with the UN Charter and the principles of international law, in order to jointly combat all terrorist groups.

## Responding to the Demographic Challenge: A Call for Policy, Unity, and Action

**O**n the 79th Independence Day of Bharat, 15 August 2025, the nation's attention was drawn to an issue of historic magnitude. From the ramparts of the Red Fort, Prime Minister Narendra Modi issued a solemn warning:

"Today, I wish to warn the nation of a grave concern and challenge. As part of a deliberate conspiracy, the demography of the country is being altered. Seeds of a new crisis are being sown. These infiltrators are snatching away the livelihoods of our youth, targeting our sisters and daughters, misleading tribals, and seizing their lands. When demographic change occurs, particularly in border areas, it creates a crisis for national security. No nation in the world hands itself over to infiltrators - how then can Bharat allow this? Therefore, today I announce the launch of a High-Power Demography Mission to address this severe crisis in a deliberate and time-bound manner."

These were not routine words. Independence Day addresses are often celebratory, forward-looking, sometimes political - rarely are they a clarion call to national survival. The gravity of the Prime Minister's statement demands that citizens not only listen but act. A demographic shift is no longer an academic concern; it is a living, accelerating reality that touches national unity, security, and social harmony.

**The Scale of Change: A Nation in Transition**  
Demography defines destiny. When a nation's population composition changes dramatically, political, cultural, and even territorial realities are reshaped. Data already points to troubling trends.

According to the 2024 study "Share of Religious Minorities - A Cross-Country Analysis (1950-2015)" led by Dr. Shamika Ravi of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, Bharat has seen the largest decline in majority population among major nations in the modern era.

"Hindus: Declined from 84.68% (1950) to 78.06% (2015) - a reduction of 7.82%."

"Muslims: Increased from 9.84% (1950) to 14.09% (2015) - a rise of 43.15%."

This is not merely a matter of religious identity but of geo-political balance. In states such as Mizoram, Nagaland, and Meghalaya, Christians already form over 70% of the population. In others - Kerala, Assam, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Jammu & Kashmir, and Lakshadweep - Muslims constitute a significant and growing share.

Demographic trends, if left unaddressed, can influence electoral politics, resource allocation, educational patterns, cultural continuity, and, in border regions, even territorial integrity. History shows us that borders rarely remain firm when population loyalties shift.

**The Conversion Industry: Networks, Money, and Manipulation**

The threat is not only natural demographic drift but deliberate manipulation - what the Prime Minister described as a conspiracy.

In July 2025, authorities uncovered the network of Jamaluddin, alias Chhangur Baba, in Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh. This alleged mastermind of mass illegal religious conversions admitted to receiving hundreds of crores of rupees from foreign sources, particularly Middle Eastern Islamic countries. Investigators revealed a structured network operating across 600 districts, employing 5,000 trained agents to lure, seduce, or coerce Hindu women into conversion via what has come to be known as "love jihad."

Reports allege that these agents were incentivized - not only emotionally but financially - with targets to entrap multiple women each year, convert them, and produce children within a new faith identity. While Jamaluddin's network was exposed, the chilling reality is that others may still be active. The absence of strict central laws, coupled with slow judicial processes, allows such operations to metastasize.

This is not an isolated phenomenon. Reports, including petitions to the Supreme Court, have claimed that tens of thousands of Hindus are being unlawfully converted every day. Funding for these operations is sometimes structured, even transactional - with payments offered for each child born outside the Hindu fold, large sums for converting daughters from influential Hindu communities, and further bonuses for targeting Brahmins, Jains, Sikhs, and OBC families. The scale of financial corruption is staggering, running into thousands of crores annually.

**Structural Weakness: Law, Loopholes, and Lost Time**

Why does this happen? The answer lies in systemic vulnerabilities:

1. **Weak or Non-Uniform Anti-Conversion Laws:** While ten Indian states have laws prohibiting forced or fraudulent conversion, there is no central legislation. Enforcement is patchy and easily bypassed through inter-state mobility.

2. **Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) Loopholes:** Originally introduced by Indira Gandhi in 1976, the FCRA was meant to control foreign influence. Yet, NGOs continue to receive massive funds, some of which, government reviews confirm, are diverted to activities like illegal religious conversions or anti-development protests.

3. **Judicial Delays:** Even when networks are exposed, cases often linger for years in courts. The absence of swift justice emboldens criminal networks.

4. **Community Vulnerability:** Marginalized communities lacking education, healthcare, or economic security are prime targets for conversion. In the absence of sustained outreach by their own cultural



and religious institutions, missionary networks exploit desperation.

Until these gaps are closed, the demographic trajectory will continue to shift in ways that undermine the nation's founding balance.

**The National Security Dimension**

Demographic change is not merely a cultural question - it is a national security imperative. Infiltration from neighboring countries, especially in border states like Assam, West Bengal, Tripura, and Bihar, has already altered local dynamics. Illegal immigration combined with political appeasement creates enclaves of vulnerability. When significant populations in strategic regions owe allegiance to transnational religious or ideological networks, the risk extends beyond politics into sovereignty itself.

Moreover, parallel phenomena such as land jihad (strategic purchase or encroachment of land to alter local demography), drug trafficking (funding anti-national operations), and political capture (via illegal voting rights) interlink with demographic manipulation. Together, they form a composite challenge - not merely criminal, but civilizational.

**Building a Comprehensive Roadmap**

To address this multi-layered challenge, a holistic national strategy is essential. It cannot rely solely on government action; it demands societal awakening, legal reform, administrative courage, and cultural renewal. Below is a structured roadmap that emerges from both expert analysis and ground-level sentiment.

1. **Legislative and Regulatory Reform**

"Amend and Strengthen FCRA: Introduce real-time tracking of foreign contributions, mandate purpose-specific utilization, and enforce immediate suspension for any NGO involved in religious manipulation or anti-national activities."

"Enact a Central Anti-Conversion Law: Establish uniform standards nationwide, defining forced, fraudulent, or inducement-based conversions as criminal offenses, with swift trial mechanisms and stringent penalties."

"Implement a Population Control Act: Apply equally across all communities to ensure balanced demographic growth in line with national resource capacities."

"Link Welfare Benefits to Responsible Parenthood: Limit government subsidies, educational scholarships, and housing benefits to families with two children or fewer, regardless of religion or caste."

2. **National Security and Electoral Integrity**

"Nationwide NRC (National Register of Citizens): Identify and remove illegal immigrants from electoral rolls and welfare schemes."

"Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Voter Rolls: Conduct rigorous verification before every election to eliminate fraudulent entries."

"Border Vigilance: Strengthen riverine and porous land borders with advanced surveillance, community alert networks, and local volunteer corps incentivized to report suspicious infiltration or land encroachment."

3. **Justice and Policing**

"Fast-Track Courts: Establish special benches for cases involving forced conversion, trafficking, and love jihad, ensuring verdicts within months, not decades."

"Use of NSA/UAPA Where Appropriate: Treat organized demographic manipulation as a form of soft-terrorism, applying national security statutes where ordinary criminal laws prove inadequate."

"Protection for Victims: Provide rehabilitation, psychological support, and legal aid to women trapped in coercive religious or sexual

exploitation schemes.

4. **Societal Awakening and Grassroots Empowerment**

"Unite Beyond Caste and Regional Divides: The preservation of civilizational continuity requires unity beyond sub-identities. Hindu society must close ranks around shared cultural and spiritual inheritance."

"Community Service as Civic Education: Integrate volunteerism - especially in education, healthcare, and skill training - into school curricula, encouraging future generations to serve marginalized brethren."

"Direct Outreach to Dalits, Tribals, and Vulnerable Groups: Empower through schools, clinics, and livelihood programs that build dignity and reduce susceptibility to external inducements."

"Support Widow, Orphan, and Women's Welfare: Many conversion networks target socially isolated individuals; robust community support systems neutralize this vulnerability."

5. **Cultural and Civilizational Renewal**

"Reaffirm Sanatana Dharma's Global Role: Hindutva, understood as the cultural essence of Bharat, is not exclusion but enlightenment - offering coexistence, compassion, and ecological balance to the world."

"Promote Positive Identity: When people feel pride, protection, and purpose within their tradition, inducement loses its appeal."

"Protect and Revive Traditional Knowledge Systems: Ayurveda, yoga, Sanskrit learning, and temple-centered community networks should regain their role as anchors of cultural confidence."

The Moral Imperative: Dharma-Yuddha With-

out Violence

This is not a call for confrontation but for civilizational defense. The challenge is profound but not insurmountable. No external conspiracy can succeed without internal weakness. When society awakens - when every citizen sees beyond immediate convenience to long-term survival - even the most deeply rooted threats can be reversed.

Bharat's Constitution, democracy, and plural freedoms depend fundamentally on the survival of its civilizational core. If that core fractures, institutions built upon it will crumble. Thus, demographic balance is not a sectarian goal; it is a precondition for national unity, sovereignty, and harmony.

**Conclusion: From Awareness to Action**  
The Prime Minister's warning should be taken not as an alarmist prophecy but as an urgent civic duty. Time remains, but not indefinitely. The trends are measurable, the risks tangible, and the tools available - provided willpower aligns with wisdom.

This is, in essence, a modern Dharma-Yuddha - a struggle not of weapons but of awareness, laws, culture, and community courage. Victory will not be measured in conquest but in preservation - of a civilization capable of guiding humanity toward coexistence, enlightenment, and enduring peace.

Sanatana Dharma has safeguarded human dignity for millennia. It is now the responsibility of this generation to safeguard Sanatana Dharma itself - and, through it, the soul of Bharat.

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## BARAK FESTIVAL

JANUARY 10-12, 2025

### ACTIVITY PROGRAM



**10 JAN**  
**NE Cultural Fest**

Any Form of Art and Cultural showcase can be showcased here. The Top performances will be invited to perform in the Main Event. Schools, Colleges, University Department, Individual & Group Competition.



**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.



**11 JAN**  
**Adventure Sports**

Tracking & Camps, Obstacle Navigations, Sport Climbing, Disaster Management, Techniques, Water Sports and more. Participants will face the challenges in life, increase confidence and sense of purpose in their life and also connected with nature.



## 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.



**12 JAN**  
**River-Climate Conclave**

State of the river will be discussed 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.



**10 JAN**  
**Media Conclave**

Media Conclave (Webinars, Seminars, Guesting, Panel, Talks and Conferences) are part of the 'Barak Festival 2025'. Theme: 'One for All, All for One'. Webinars panel talks, seminars, trainings, master & corporate talks, speeches, guest speakers, webinars.



**11 JAN**  
**5E For Success Conclave**

The 4th Annual 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, Extempore, Debate, Public Speaking (College). In an online event, various students of NE India Schools and Colleges can participate.



**10 JAN**  
**Media Conclave**

Media Conclave (Webinars, Seminars, Guesting, Panel, Talks and Conferences) are part of the 'Barak Festival 2025'. Theme: 'One for All, All for One'. Webinars panel talks, seminars, trainings, master & corporate talks, speeches, guest speakers, webinars.



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**10 JAN**

### Band Night

Musical Night | 10 JAN

**10-12 JAN**

### E-Sports

Full-Blown Competitive | CASH PRIZES | Trophy



**11 JAN**

### film festival

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**10-12 JAN**

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