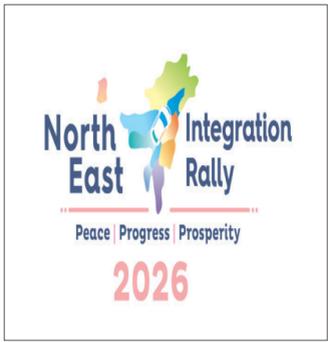




KRC TIMES

STAY-ENRICHED



VOLUME:1, ISSUE 570 | SILCHAR MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 08, 2025. EAST AND NE INDIA EDITION | e-mail: krctimes@gmail.com ,www.krctimes.com

Get all the latest and updated news of today in the evening. For subscribing to this e-paper contact at -8721838313

SUBSCRIBE
₹300 / year

WhatsApp payment details : 8721838313
info@krctimes.com

PERSPECTIVE

A calm mind is a weapon against chaos.

Sikkim to open 'Chola and Doklam' for domestic tourists from Sep 27

GUWAHATI
The Sikkim government has announced that it will open two high-altitude tourist destinations, Chola and Doklam, to Indian visitors from September 27, marking a significant expansion of the state's tourism landscape.

C.S. Rao, Additional Chief Secretary of the Tourism and Civil Aviation Department, said the state will allow only 25 vehicles per day to visit the two destinations initially. He added that the department will issue permits soon, following a meeting with tourism stakeholders to finalize the operational framework. The government will restrict entry to Indian tourists only, with foreign nationals not allowed beyond Changlu. To support visitor safety and comfort, the state is developing acclimatization facilities at the 17th Mile and preparing accommodation packages in Kupup and Gnathang. While Doklam already has essential infrastructure in place, a five-kilometre stretch in Chola, partly within the Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary, is still undergoing improvement. Authorities will also allow motorbike travel under specific safety advisories. In addition to opening new natural destinations, Sikkim is gearing up to promote battlefield tourism. The government has scheduled the official launch for January 15, with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh expected to inaugurate the initiative. Officials aim to position Sikkim as a unique destination that blends natural beauty, cultural heritage, and military history.

After remaining closed for over three months due to landslides, North Sikkim has finally reopened to tourists, bringing relief to the tourism sector.

WHO SAID WHAT

Congratulations to our Men's Hockey Team for their splendid win in the Asia Cup 2025 held in Rajgir, Bihar. This win is even more special because they have defeated the defending champions, South Korea! This is a proud moment for Indian hockey and Indian sports. May our players continue to scale even greater heights and bring more glory to the nation!

- Narendra Modi, PM

Assam pays tributes as Bhupen Hazarika's birth centenary celebrations begin

GUWAHATI

Songs of Bhupen Hazarika reverberated in Assam on Monday on the first day of the year-long birth centenary celebrations of the legendary singer-composer.

Governor Laxman Prasad Acharya and Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma took the lead in paying tributes to the music maestro at the inaugural ceremony held at Dr Bhupen Hazarika Samannay Tirtha in Guwahati. He was cremated here in November 2011.

Hazarika's only son, Tez Hazarika, was present along with his wife and their son. The family came from the US to attend the ceremony.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah paid rich tributes to Hazarika. Modi wrote an arti-



cle, throwing light on the bard's life and music and how it inspired millions of people.

Taking to X, Shah wrote, "Remembering Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhupen Hazarika Ji on his Jayan-

ti. Known as the Bard of Brahmaputra, Hazarika Ji's soulful voice carried the spirit of Assam to the world and his creations spoke of love, unity and humanity. His melodies will forever echo in our hearts,

reminding us of the power of music to heal and unite." Sarma wrote, "Today, we celebrate the life of a legend, who carried Assam to the world through his soulful melodies and made humanity his tune

GUWAHATI

The Northeast has the power and potential to reach the economic, socio-cultural and philosophical zenith, according to Minister of Development of North East Region (DoNER) Jyotiraditya Scindia.

He said that the role of the DoNER ministry is to strengthen the bridge between the Northeast and the rest of India.

In an interview the Union minister revealed that eight high-level task forces have been formed to chalk out plans for key sectors of the region. One Chief Minister is the head of each task force and other Chief Ministers of the region are members.

The task forces will chalk out plans for development of key sectors like agriculture, handloom and handicraft, tourism, poultry products, etc. Development of these key sectors is crucial for economic development of the region, said Scindia.

Scindia pointed out that the Northeast is India's bridge towards the east and southeast and that is why Prime Minister Narendra Modi has laid stress on the overall development of the region.

Modi himself has visited the re-



gion around 70 times so far, which is more than all previous Prime Ministers taken together, while Central ministers of the NDA government have visited the Northeast more than 700 times.

The DoNER minister said that there has been a five-fold increase in Central allocations to the region during the time of the NDA government. He revealed that the total

length of the national highways in the region increased manifold, while the number of active airports has increased from nine to 17.

Five State capitals are connected by railways and two more would be connected soon. He said that Rs 80,000 crore is being spent on development of railways in the region.

Scindia said that the Sela tunnel and Dr Bhupen Hazarika Setu

The DoNER ministry has also decided to fully utilise the tourism potential of the Northeast in public-private partnership mode. "We want to provide end-to-end solution for tourists, including hotels, travel, tour guides, etc., and the State governments, Centre and private parties would join hands to complete the ambitious project."

are engineering marvels, while an AIIMS has already started functioning and an IIM is coming up.

Scindia pointed out that the Centre organised the North East Investment Summit, in which investments worth Rs 4.5 lakh crore was promised by both private and public sector organisations.

"The summit was inaugurated by the Prime Minister, while be-

fore the summit I held roadshows all over the country along with the Chief Ministers of the Northeastern states," he added.

He said that the promised investments would go a long way in overall economic development of the region, and that the semiconductor project would also improve the economy of Assam substantially.

The Centre has also asked the Chief Ministers of the Northeast to identify the USPs of their respective States so that those can be marketed worldwide.

The DoNER ministry has also decided to fully utilise the tourism potential of the Northeast in public-private partnership mode. "We want to provide end-to-end solution for tourists, including hotels, travel, tour guides, etc., and the State governments, Centre and private parties would join hands to complete the ambitious project."

Scindia revealed that he has personal links with the Northeast. "One of my aunts was married to the Maharaja of Tripura. That is why I thank the Prime Minister for giving me the opportunity to serve the region," he added.

Manipur moving towards peace after agreement with Kuki community: RSS



NEW DELHI

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) said efforts to restore calm in Manipur are showing results, pointing to a recent agreement between the Union home ministry and the Kuki community as a significant step.

At a press briefing in Jodhpur following a three-day coordination meeting of office-bearers and Sangh-linked groups, RSS national publicity in-charge Sunil Ambekar noted that separatist activity and violence in the North East have declined in recent years.

"We are seeing that separatism and violence have reduced in the North East, and there is peace. These are the results of efforts made in recent years," he said.

Ambekar added that the Sangh monitored the Manipur unrest closely and sought to bridge divides between the Kuki and Meitei communities. "It is good that we are moving towards peace, especially after the Union Home Minis-

try signed a special agreement with the Kuki community. Now that the national highway has reopened for the Meitei community, we hope peace will prevail," he said.

The meeting in Jodhpur also discussed issues ranging from religious conversions and drug abuse in Punjab to concerns over illegal immigration and infiltration in West Bengal. Ambekar said the National Education Policy (NEP) featured prominently, with participants supporting greater use of Indian languages in education. "Primary education should be in the mother tongue, and respect for all Indian languages is essential. There is no opposition to English, but Indian languages must get their due place in education and administration," he stressed. On women's participation, Ambekar highlighted initiatives such as "Operation Sindoor," under which women volunteers organised nearly 900 events aimed at fostering a nationalist spirit. He also said Naxal and Maoist violence had declined, but attempts to mislead tribal communities continued, making welfare programmes and cultural outreach important.

The coordination meeting also reviewed preparations for the RSS centenary year, to be observed from Vijaydashami 2025 to Vijaydashami 2026. The inaugural event will be held on October 2, 2025, in Nagpur.

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat, general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale and about 320 representatives from 32 affiliated organisations attended the September 5-7 meeting.

Pradyot Manikya Calls NE Diaspora to Sept 9 Protest at Jantar Mantar

AGARTALA

Founder of Tipra Motha Party, Pradyot Kishore Manikya Debarma, on Sunday, September 7 appealed to all North East people living in New Delhi to join a non-political protest on 9th September, which will be held by the indigenous people of Tripura at Jantar Mantar against illegal migration and for the speedy implementation of the Tiprasa Accord.

In a video message, Pradyot, who is also the royal scion of Tripura, said that on the 9th there will be a non-political protest at Jantar Mantar in Delhi.

"There will be no political flag, neither any political speech. There will be the Indian flag. Our demand will be that the Government of India must think about the future of the indigenous people of Tripura. I want to tell the Government of India that we are also people of this nation and you must think about the people of Tripura and illegal migration in Tripura. The Tiprasa Accord which was signed has taken a long period. We are attending meeting after meeting but no conclusion has come out. We want to know why this agreement is getting delayed," said Pradyot.



He mentioned that one Tripura youth, David Muring, came to Delhi from Tripura on foot with these demands.

"This time we should not think about party, but have to give solidarity as Tiprasa. Tipra Motha Party is not important, but our community is important first. We will raise our voice there symbolically. Earlier, when Tiprasa people did not have anything, they united and fought for the District Council. But now we have everything but no courage. I

ask all of you that if you want to think about your children's future, you must think now. If the government gives anything to my next generation, I will not take any steps further. But if the government doesn't, then I am ready to fight, even ready to go to jail and die. I appeal to everyone from the North East living in Delhi to come and support us. We are not fighting against any community but fighting for the existence and survival of our own people," he added.

Former Manipur DGP backs NH-2 reopening, calls for restoration of key roads

IMPHAL

Former Manipur Director General of Police Yumnam Joykumar Singh has backed the government's decision to reopen National Highway 2, calling it a much-needed step to restore movement in the violence-hit state. He urged authorities to extend the same focus to other key routes, including NH-37 and the road to Moreh on the Indo-Myanmar border, to ease mobility for ordinary citizens. "Manipur is a landlocked state, and most people cannot afford air travel," Singh said, highlighting the necessity of secure and accessible road networks.

He asserted that the authorities must provide foolproof security across all major highways to restore normalcy. Singh said the security situation had improved under President's Rule compared to the previous N. Biren Singh-led government, as reported by a news agency.

However, he admitted that tensions between communities still linger beneath the surface.

Beyond infrastructure, Singh called for the early resettlement of thousands displaced by ethnic violence, which has claimed more than

250 lives and uprooted around 60,000 people. He emphasized the need for a neutral government to oversee the resettlement process and foster reconciliation between the Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities.

He cited recent dialogues between Meitei and Thadou civil society groups as encouraging signs, but warned that peace would remain elusive without trust-building efforts.

"There must be sustained dialogue between civil society groups on both sides," he said. Singh also pointed to illegal migration from Myanmar as a core issue fueling unrest. He criticized Manipur's failure to regulate refugee settlements, unlike Mizoram, which restricts long-term integration. He alleged that many of these migrants have become active participants in the conflict against the Meiteis.

Calling for safeguards against demographic manipulation, Singh pushed for a special intensive revision of the electoral rolls.

He said the authorities must preserve the integrity of the voter list through stricter scrutiny, given Manipur's border location and strategic importance.



VOLUME:1, ISSUE 570

PROMOTING LITERACY IN THE DIGITAL ERA

Literacy has always been the bedrock of human progress. It is one of the most fundamental requirements for any society aspiring to move forward. Without literacy, there can be no sustained development, no meaningful participation in civic life, and no true empowerment of individuals. It is not just an educational goal; it is a fundamental human right. Literacy opens the door to other rights and freedoms, shaping global citizenship and enabling people to participate fully in political, social, cultural, and economic life.

At its core, literacy is more than the ability to read or write. It is a foundation for acquiring knowledge, values, and skills that allow societies to cultivate peace, uphold the rule of law, and nurture equality, justice, solidarity, diversity, and tolerance. A literate population is better prepared to build harmonious relationships—with themselves, with others, and with the planet.

Yet the global challenge remains daunting. Despite progress, as of 2024, an estimated 739 million youth and adults worldwide still lack basic literacy skills. Four in ten children fail to achieve minimum proficiency in reading, and as recently as 2023, approximately 272 million children and adolescents were out of school. These numbers are disproportionately concentrated in developing and least-developed countries, where infrastructure, economic inequality, and social barriers continue to deny millions the most basic access to education.

The definition of literacy has evolved dramatically over time. Decades ago, the ability to sign one's name or write simple sentences was considered sufficient. Today, the demands of our rapidly changing world require a much broader understanding. Literacy now includes the ability to identify, interpret, create, and communicate information in a world dominated by digital technologies and an abundance of text and media. It is a continuum—a lifelong learning process that integrates reading, writing, numeracy, and increasingly, digital and media skills.

In this expanded view, literacy is not an endpoint but a constantly developing set of competencies. It encompasses education for sustainable development, global citizenship, and job-specific skills. It reflects the reality that in today's interconnected world, survival and success depend not only on knowing how to read but on knowing how to read critically, across multiple platforms, and in multiple contexts. The power of literacy to transform lives is undeniable. Beyond fulfilling the right to education, it increases individual capabilities, reduces poverty, enhances livelihoods, and improves health outcomes. It strengthens social participation and fuels sustainable development. Women's literacy, in particular, generates a powerful ripple effect—improving family health, boosting children's education, and driving community development. Each year, on September 8, the world observes International Literacy Day (ILD), a reminder of literacy's indispensable role in building a just, peaceful, and sustainable society. Since 1967, ILD has been a call to action for policymakers, educators, and citizens alike. The theme for this year—"Promoting Literacy in the Digital Era"—speaks directly to the urgent need to align educational efforts with the realities of a world transformed by technology. The digital revolution offers both promise and peril. Artificial Intelligence, automation, and mobile connectivity have expanded the reach of information and education. Digital tools can break down barriers for marginalized groups, bringing learning resources to remote villages, refugee camps, and underserved urban neighborhoods. For the 739 million people who still lack basic literacy, digital platforms hold the potential to accelerate inclusion, offering self-paced learning, language diversity, and interactivity that traditional classrooms often cannot provide. But this digital shift also risks creating a new form of inequality: double marginalisation. Those excluded from traditional literacy programs may now find themselves further excluded from the benefits of the digital age. Without access to devices, connectivity, or the skills to navigate online environments, millions risk being left behind altogether. Moreover, digitalisation carries its own set of challenges. Privacy and security concerns are mounting, as personal data flows across platforms often without adequate safeguards. The rise of digital surveillance and algorithmic biases threatens civil liberties and social fairness. Ethical dilemmas around artificial intelligence and automated content moderation raise questions about control, accountability, and inclusivity. Meanwhile, the ease of consuming information online risks encouraging passive, superficial engagement rather than deep, critical thinking. And the environmental impact of ever-expanding digital infrastructure—from e-waste to energy consumption—cannot be ignored.

UNESCO defines digital literacy as the ability to access, manage, understand, integrate, communicate, evaluate, and create information safely and appropriately through digital technologies. It encompasses a spectrum of competencies, including computer literacy, ICT literacy, information literacy, and media literacy. It aims to empower individuals—especially young people—to approach digital information critically, build resilience against misinformation, hate speech, and extremism, and use technology for employment, entrepreneurship, and civic participation. Crucially, digital literacy is not simply about teaching technical skills. It is about fostering judgement, ethics, and responsibility in a digital society. It is about ensuring that technology serves human progress rather than undermining it. In practical terms, literacy in the digital era enables people to engage safely and effectively with digital content, evaluate credibility, discern context, and contribute meaningfully to online and offline discussions. It cultivates critical thinking and equips individuals to navigate complex information environments—skills that are essential for vibrant democracies and resilient economies.

To realize this vision, societies must take concrete steps. Bridging the digital divide is paramount. Affordable internet access, widespread availability of devices, and localized content are essential if digital opportunities are to be truly universal. Educational systems must integrate digital skills from the earliest levels while preserving and strengthening foundational reading and writing abilities. Public policy must safeguard privacy, promote ethical technology development, and encourage transparency and accountability in digital governance.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Be brave. Take risks. Nothing can substitute experience."

- Paulo Coelho

Escalating Tensions in Manipur: Naga Fury Over Kuki Militant Camp Relocation Amid SoO Extension



WAARI SINGBUL NETWORK

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi's highly anticipated visit to Manipur approaches—his first since the ethnic violence erupted in May 2023—the state stands on the brink of renewed conflict. The recent extension of the tripartite Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with Kuki-Zo militant groups has sparked fresh outrage, particularly among the Naga community, who allege that the relocation of designated militant camps encroaches on their ancestral lands. Intended to address Meitei concerns by moving camps away from valley areas, this decision has instead deepened ethnic tensions in the hill districts, jeopardizing fragile peace efforts.

The SoO agreement, signed in 2008 between the Government of India, the Manipur government, and umbrella organizations representing 25 Kuki-Zo insurgent groups—including the Kuki National Organisation (KNO) and United People's Front (UPF)—has long been a divisive tool for managing militancy in the Northeast. It requires militants to cease hostilities, deposit arms in monitored camps, and participate in peace talks, in return for immunity from security operations. The annually extended pact covers approximately 2,266 cadres across 14 designated camps in Manipur's hill regions.

However, critics, including Meitei civil society group Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI), label it a "deceptive pact" that shields "narco-terrorist" activities, citing alleged involvement of SoO groups in drug trafficking, extortion, and the 2023 Meitei-Kuki clashes, which claimed over 250 lives and displaced 60,000 people.

On September 4, 2025, the Centre, Manipur government, and Kuki-Zo representatives signed a renewed one-year extension in New Delhi, introducing "re-negotiated ground rules" to restore peace and reopen National Highway 2 (NH-2), a critical lifeline blocked since the violence began. Key changes include reducing camps from 14 to seven, relocating them farther from Meitei-inhabited plains to reduce tensions, and establishing buffer zones. Manipur Chief Secretary Vineet Kumar Goyal stressed that the pact preserves the state's territorial integrity and aims to normalize supplies along NH-2, which the Kuki-Zo Council (KZC) pledged to unblock for goods

and commuters. Security sources hailed the KZC's cooperation as a "confidence-building measure" ahead of Modi's visit.

However, the Kuki-Zo Council issued a press statement countering that NH-2 was never closed to commuters or goods but will remain prohibited to the Meitei community until a final resolution is reached, undermining the government's narrative.

The relocation plan has also provoked a fierce backlash from the Naga community, dominant in foothill areas like Kangpokpi and Ukhrul. The Foothills Naga Coordination Committee (FNCC) released a scathing press statement on September 7, denouncing reports that the "Thingsat" camp—housing Kuki militants under Kangpokpi police station—would shift to Kharam Vaiphei village (Naga ancestral



land) and be renamed "Lhangkicho." The FNCC called it a "total undermining" of Naga rights, accusing the government of offering a "safe haven" to militants despite assurances to respect indigenous land ownership.

"This development is not only an insult to FNCC but a total undermining of the rights of the Naga people," the statement declared, referencing the SoO pledges and the Manipur government's August 2025 assurances during Naga protests against unauthorized road construction and poppy cultivation. The FNCC warned of "inevitable bloodshed" if the shift proceeds, holding the government accountable for any Kuki-Naga violence. They threatened to close the vital road through Naga lands—a Kuki

lifeline—and evict "illegal Kuki villages" built without consent, alleging misuse of Naga land for "drug trafficking and illegal smuggling" that has amassed "unimaginable wealth" against indigenous Nagas.

This reflects broader Naga discontent. In July 2025, the FNCC imposed an indefinite bandh in foothill areas, protesting "German-Tiger roads" linking Kuki-dominated Churachandpur to Kangpokpi, SoO camp encroachments, and poppy farms, though it was lifted after government talks. The timing, ahead of Modi's visit, fuels perceptions of Delhi's "appeasement policy" toward Kukis. The United Naga Council (UNC) has long opposed Kuki expansions, citing deadly 1990s clashes over overlapping "homeland" claims.

Meitei groups, already furious over

the SoO renewal, see it as a betrayal of the Manipur Assembly's February 2024 resolution to abrogate the pact, alleging Kuki militant violations during the 2023 violence. COCOMI reiterated on September 5 that it "legitimizes Chin-Kuki narco-terrorists" and demanded abrogation to tackle drug syndicates. Even some Kuki factions, like Thadou Inpi Manipur, expressed disappointment over ignored calls for abrogation.

Modi's visit, set for September 13 after inaugurating Mizoram's Bairabi-Sairang railway, is contentious. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh called a rumored three-hour itinerary a "non-visit" and "insult" to Manipur's suffering populace, who have endured 29 months, over 260 deaths, and ongoing displacement. Preparations at

Imphal's Kangla Fort and Churachandpur's Peace Ground include heightened security, but analysts warn the SoO fallout could overshadow the event. "This is Kuki appeasement at Naga and Meitei expense," a senior Naga leader said, highlighting risks of a three-way ethnic flare-up.

Under President's Rule since February 2025, extended to January 2026, Manipur's administration struggles with fragmented communities divided by buffer zones. While the SoO extension seeks to stabilize NH-2 and support 58,000 displaced persons, Naga threats of road closures and evictions underscore how one group's gain fuels another's grievance. As Modi prepares to address Meitei and Kuki gatherings, Delhi must mediate land disputes and enforce rules, or his visit may offer fleeting hope rather than lasting peace in this volatile region.

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

Spotted a red flag 🚩, cut them off 🚫
Recently, we cleared 20 hectares of illegal plantation from the Rongjuli range in Goalpara.
Our action against forest encroachments will continue COME WHAT MAY.
The message is clear- STOP ILLEGAL CROACHMENT.

~ Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, Assam CM



OIL TO AI, THE GREAT GAME CONTINUES

PRATIK KANJILAL

Two events this fortnight remind us of Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr's wry epigram—the more things change, the more they remain the same. On Tuesday, in the biggest antitrust case of the century so far, US federal judge Amit P Mehta ruled that Google must hand over some of its data to "qualified competitors" in order to dilute its dominance in internet search.

And in Tianjin, Xi Jinping, Narendra Modi and Vladimir Putin made common cause to form what is being thought of as a new front, a counterpoise to Western powers. What binds the three leaders is Russia's need to sell crude and the others' need to import Russian crude for energy security in the world's most highly populated nations.

Most competitions and conflicts have been fought over energy, and the history of human civilisation is a constantly evolving map of pathways for the flow of energy and value. So, naturally, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has developed into a global polarisation over Russian oil, which could lead to a reorganisation of the world order.

Meanwhile, the rivalry between the US and China finds its finest expression in the AI race, since silicon is the new oil and the new snake oil, too. The US is throwing money and state resources at intelligent machines

in the hope of dominating the commanding heights of a future digital economy, while the Chinese are focusing on developing currently viable applications that can immediately corner the market. It remains to be seen which model will win the tournament, but this much is certain: the data pipelines and gateways through which people access AI are going to be contested, and the Google case is a harbinger of tournaments to come.

The most widespread use of AI is now in search. People quickly discovered that voice prompts return better results than plain text or Boolean searches.

In acknowledgement, Google now places its AI search results at the top of its result pages. Microsoft has integrated its AI into its Edge browser. It can see pages and tabs open in the browser and crafts its responses accordingly. In effect, the browser is a viewport looking directly into Microsoft's search service.

It reminds one of the landmark 1998 antitrust case, US vs Microsoft, in which the company was accused of integrating the Internet Explorer browser too tightly with the Windows operating system. Since Windows enjoyed overwhelming market dominance at the time, the stratagem allowed the company to steer information flows over the internet.

As AIs become default gateways to the internet, taking over the role of search

engines, one can expect similar contests over the distribution of data. The Silk Route, the Suez Canal, undersea cables, satellite networks, browsers, AIs—they're all in the same asset class, really. Trade routes have been supplanted by supply chains and digital networks, and they are worth fighting over.

So is energy, which has been fought over even before industrial times, by means of slavery, for instance.

The slave was a unit of energy with manual dexterity built in, which could perform complex tasks beyond the powers of a modern assembly line robot. One of the earliest uses of programming was in textile weaving—designs were encoded in punched cards which told the Jacquard loom (1801) how to weave designs. But machines were no good at picking cotton or tobacco, which were classified as mental jobs and given over to slaves in the Americas.

The horrors of slavery illustrate how valuable energy can be in some applications. The system was hugely inefficient. European slavers who ventured into West Africa were mowed down by malaria. Millions of slaves died on the voyage across the Atlantic. And when they were put to work in the New World, they were not as productive as free workers. Depressed workers in poor health are not likely to be productive.

London imposed duties on sugar produced by free peasants in the United Provinces

in order to keep Caribbean and American sugar competitive. This was to protect the institution of slavery, in which some leading entrepreneurs and financiers of Europe and Britain had made long-term investments. That was one reason why slavery lingered for so long, though it was a poor investment and inspired moral anxieties—like oil does today.

For decades, the world had been turning to green technologies and learning the frugal use of energy. But last year, while China sought to lead in the development of solar energy, the US became the world's biggest producer of oil and natural gas. Behind its shabby treatment of India in the tariff wars is not so much concern for Ukraine as irritation, because if India buys crude from Russia, it will not buy American oil, which is far more expensive.

Take off the mask of political morality, and what remains is competition for energy markets. There's also rivalry over supply routes like the Panama Canal, which the US has expressed an interest in acquiring. Meanwhile, China is building an overland 'Suez Canal' to connect it to Europe, and in the ether, AI is creating new networks of value which nations and corporations will vie for. The world may have changed dramatically in the 21st century, but the global contest is still over energy, value and their flows, and who must make common cause with whom to gain the lion's share.

BTC chief pitches peace and development ahead of September 22 polls

BODOLAND

As Bodoland heads to the polls on September 22, BTC chief and United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) president Pramod Boro says the region is entering a new phase—one built on peace, development, and inclusion after decades of unrest.

Boro said that the region must not be left behind in the Prime Minister's vision of 'Viksit Bharat'.

"We have sustained the peace. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is saying Viksit Bharat. When the Prime Minister is talking about Viksit Bharat, we can't be left out. We got independent at the same time, but we left behind. The Prime Minister is talking about Atmanirbhar Bharat, Viksit Bharat, we have to go along with."

The BTC chief said sustained peace had laid the foundation for development in Bodoland over the past five years.

"So we are preparing the ground in the last five years, we laid the foundation of development in the Bodoland region, remov-



ing all kinds of violence, hatred, and inconvenience. Now the Bodoland region is very peaceful. Bodoland region is ready to move, ready to go, accept all kinds of development happening in the world," Pramod Boro told ANI in an exclusive interview.

Taking a swipe at the previous Bodoland People's Front (BPF) regime, Boro said that the Bodoland region had moved a history of

violence but now the region is strengthening its democratic roots.

He said, "During the BPF regime, there were only killings, violence everywhere. There was no election if there was no violence. But during our time after 2020, every election was held free and fair, peacefully. So, people believe that democratic exercise can be done very perfectly in our place,

democratic strengthening in our place. Now people are believing in democracy. Earlier there was no democracy."

Criticising former BTC chief Hagrama Mohilary's tenure, Boro said it resembled "dictatorship" with little regard for democratic norms.

"During the Hagrama Mohilary time, it was like a dictatorship; he controlled everything. We believe in the Constitution; people believe in the Constitution. Now the provisions of the constitution, rules of law, properly implemented in the Bodoland region in our time," Pramod Boro said.

Stressing his administration's focus on people's concerns, BTC chief Pramod Boro said his government had worked to resolve long-pending problems in Bodoland over the past five years.

Boro said, "Because in the last 5 years, after coming to power, we started working for the people of Bodoland. We could realise what the issues are, burning issues. Which issues have people taken seriously? We had identified those issues and we started

working to resolve one issue after another. Major issue was the land issue and we have resolved maximum land-related issues of the people, even the previous government wasn't able to touch these issues."

Asserting that long-pending problems in Bodoland were being addressed under his party's leadership, BTC chief Pramod Boro said "political will" was key to resolving issues neglected since Independence.

"We have proved that there is political will, any political party, any political leader can solve the problem. Since independence some issues were there and nobody could resolve these. We build confidence, and now people believe us. The people of Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) can see their hopes and a realistic future in the UPPL model of politics. UPPL model of politics is for the people of the Bodoland region," Pramod Boro said.

Highlighting his administration's inclusive approach, BTC chief Pramod Boro said his government had worked to protect the identity and culture of all communities

in the region.

Boro said, "We have a 3.5 million population and 26 different communities. We have taken all 26 communities on account and we are working together to protect their identity, culture, and tradition and also given recognition to their identity and culture. Now people are very happy. But these kinds of issues and problems were not solved by the previous government, even the national party."

UPPL on Sunday organised a mega election campaign rally at Mushalpur area in Baksa district, where thousands of people gathered.

"In today's rally, thousands of people have come and gathered at the small town of Mushalpur. They gathered here without fear," Pramod Boro said.

UPPL and BJP had formed the BTC government in 2020, and this time both parties are fighting alone. The Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) election for 40 council constituencies will be held on September 22.

HITO demands Meghalaya Govt to act against Assam transport body's blockade threat

SHILLONG

Meghalaya's Hymniewtrep Integrated Territorial Organisation (HITO) has expressed concern over a recent statement by the President of the Tourist Transporter Association of Assam, warning of a possible blockade against essential services in Meghalaya.

In a letter to Meghalaya Governor C. H. Vijayashankar, HITO described the remarks as "deeply troubling and wholly unacceptable," adding that the tone of the statement implied Meghalaya falls under Assam's jurisdiction—a claim the group strongly rejected. HITO argued that the decisions taken by the All Khasi Meghalaya Taxi Tourist Association (AKMTTA) were aimed at regulating tourist transport within the state, in line with practices already followed by local councils (hima) and traditional village bodies (dorbar shmong). The organisation also pointed out that similar restrictions exist in Assam itself, where visitors to tourist destinations such as Kaziranga National Park and Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary are required to use local or authorised vehicles. These rules, HITO noted, are in place to ensure safety, support local livelihoods, and protect fragile ecosystems. Clarifying the intent of the AKMTTA, HITO said outside taxis are not being barred from entering Meghalaya. "On the contrary, these vehicles are welcomed to drop off passengers at hotels, with the understanding that tourists will then use local transport to visit attractions—thus supporting the community's economy," the letter stated.

Stressing that communities have the right to safeguard their livelihoods, HITO urged the Governor to take action against "selfish elements" that risk disrupting Meghalaya's tourism model.

Akhil Gogoi mocks 'Mama-Chacha' nexus, accuses BJP of blocking ST Status for six indigenous communities

SIVSAGAR

Sivasagar MLA and Rajiv Dal chief Akhil Gogoi launched a scathing attack on Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) president Badruddin Ajmal, likening their relationship to "two sides of the same coin."

Speaking at a public rally and joining programme of Rajiv Dal in Abhayapuri, Bongaigaon district on September 7, Gogoi remarked that while "Badruddin holds the lower end, the key remains with Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma," further adding that "if Mama's back itches, Chacha scratches it, and if Chacha's back itches, Mama scratches it."

Turning his attention to the controversy surrounding Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for six

indigenous communities, Gogoi criticized AIUDF MLA Ashraf Hussain's opposition to the demand. He alleged that Hussain's remarks were made under BJP's directives, pointing out that "the BJP government has never supported ST status for the six communities" and that such statements are aligned with BJP and RSS interests.

In a sharp retort to the Chief Minister's earlier claim that he would expose Gaurav Gogoi's alleged links with Pakistan on September 10, Akhil Gogoi mocked the CM for remaining silent since the announcement. "The Chief Minister does not even have a firecracker, let alone an atom bomb. And if he does, it is nothing more than a dud firecracker," Gogoi said, drawing applause from the gathering.

GUWAHATI

Assam government, on September 8, launched the year-long birth centenary celebrations of Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, with Governor Laxman Prasad Acharya and Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma paying rich tributes to the legendary singer, composer, and cultural icon.

The inaugural ceremony was held at the Dr. Bhupen Hazarika Samannay Kshetra in Guwahati, the site where the maestro was cremated in November 2011. Both the governor and the chief minister offered floral tributes at his memorial. As part of the ceremony, 100 prominent personalities hoisted a flag in his honour, followed by a musical programme dedicated to his timeless legacy.

Hazarika's only son, Tez Hazarika, along with his wife

and son, arrived from the United States to participate in the centenary events. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to attend the celebrations on September 13 during his two-day visit to Assam, further underlining the national importance of the commemoration.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma described Hazarika as a global voice of humanity and an eternal source of inspiration. "His life and times are an example in itself. His love for Assam and Bharat is one to take inspiration from by all," Sarma said in a post on X. "We celebrate the life of a legend who carried Assam to the world through his soulful melodies and made humanity his tune and love his anthem," he added.

The chief minister also highlighted the unprecedented honour accorded to Hazarika by the

BJP-led government at the Centre, which posthumously conferred the Bharat Ratna on him, renamed Dibrugarh Airport in his memory, and issued a commemorative coin featuring his likeness.

Samar Hazarika, the younger brother of the maestro, appreciated the state government's initiative to celebrate his brother's centenary on such a grand scale. "This is the first time an Assamese artiste has been honoured in this manner across the nation," he said, while also thanking non-governmental organisations and cultural institutions for planning parallel events. The Bhupen Hazarika Cultural Trust, founded by the maestro himself, also organised programmes at Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra in Guwahati, which included musical performances and the ceremo-

nial lighting of lamps before his museum.

Elsewhere in Assam, district administrations have lined up cultural tributes. In Nagaon, a musical programme on September 10 will feature 15,000 students from universities, colleges, and schools singing Hazarika's immortal song "Manuhe Manuhor Babe" (If humans do not care for humans) at Nurul Amin Stadium. Officials from the India Book of Records will be present to document the event.

Bhupen Hazarika, fondly known as "Sudhakantha" (the Bard of the Brahmaputra), was born on September 8, 1926, at Sadiya in Tinsukia district. His music, deeply rooted in Assam's cultural ethos, transcended borders and languages, uniting people through universal themes of humanity, justice, and empathy.

Assam begins year-long centenary celebrations of Bhupen Hazarika

CPI(M)-Congress thrives on lies, dirty politics and conspiracies: Tripura Minister

AGARTALA

Tripura Transport and Tourism Minister Sushanta Chowdhury accused the CPI(M) of spreading lies and creating confusion among people through political conspiracies.

He claimed that the party, with the support of Congress, has historically used tactics to divert public attention and destabilize governance.

Addressing a massive gathering in his own Majlis Assembly Constituency under West Tripura today, Chowdhury said, "CPI(M) has always relied on propaganda and conspiracies, often with Congress aiding them. We have seen this in previous elections, where Congress workers were attacked or displaced during the CPI(M) regime. Now, just ahead of the elections, they are again spreading rumors that the present



government will not last."

Chowdhury announced that the BJP has decided to hold a mass gathering to protest against what he termed "dirty politics and propaganda" by the CPI(M) and Congress.

He added, "We are fully prepared to fight this propaganda. People are with us. I don't believe in personal attacks; I believe in performance, delivery, and work. This is how we

will fight the elections."

Addressing the people of Majlis Assembly Constituency, Chowdhury emphasized, "Since BJP formed the government in 2018, not a single incident of political violence or political murder has occurred in Tripura. We believe in democracy, development-oriented politics, and staying with the people. BJP is a party with a difference, a disciplined

party."

Chowdhury also recalled the 2003 Mandwai massacre in West Tripura during the CPI(M) regime, saying, "They created divisions between tribal and non-tribal communities merely to win elections."

He further stated that during that time, Congress leaders, along with Delhi leaders such as Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Sitaram Yechury, and Prakash Karat, used to hold meetings against CPI(M) in Tripura.

He highlighted the significance of the 2018 state elections, saying, "Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP formed the government, ending the misrule of CPI(M). Just as CPI(M) could not make a comeback in West Bengal, the people of Tripura have rejected them."

Mizoram CM hails Catholic Church's role in shaping education and social welfare



AIZAWL

Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma lauded the Roman Catholic Church for its longstanding contributions to education, healthcare and social service, describing it as a vital force in shaping society both in Mizoram and across the Northeast. Speaking at a programme of the North East Catholic community in New Delhi, the chief minister said the church has consistently worked for the welfare of the underprivileged and has been instrumental in uplifting countless lives. He highlighted the role of Zoram Entu Pawl, a Catholic body in Mizoram, as a pillar of support for marginalized communities.

Recalling the history of Catholic-led education in the state, Lalduhoma noted that St. Paul's High School, established in 1953 as the first high school in Mizoram, remains one of the finest

educational institutions in the state. He added that church-run schools have produced several distinguished leaders, including Mizoram's first Chief Minister Ch. Chhunga, the first Mizo minister in the Assam government A. Thanglura, and Assam Public Service Commission chairman R. Thanhlira, among others.

The chief minister also acknowledged the role of Catholic institutions beyond Mizoram, pointing to St. Anthony's College in Shillong as one of the oldest and most prestigious centres of higher learning in the region.

Encouraging the younger generation to follow the path laid down by their elders, Lalduhoma urged Mizo youth to continue contributing to society with dedication and integrity. He was accompanied at the programme by Mizoram Education Minister Vanlalhlana and Lok Sabha MP Richard Vanlalhmangaiha.

Meghalaya: Immediate removal of MLA as Mendipathar College chairman demanded

SHILLONG

A joint petition has been submitted to Meghalaya Governor Chandrashekar H. Vijayashankar by the Confederation of Meghalaya Social Organisations (CMSO), the Post Graduate Students' Union (PGSU) of NEHU Tura campus, and social activist Cherian Momin, seeking the removal of Mendipathar MLA Marthon J. Sangma from the chairmanship of Mendipathar College's Governing Body.

The petition, filed on Sunday, accuses Sangma of misusing his position, indulging in nepotism, violating statutory recruitment rules, and subverting educational governance. It alleges that the legislator appointed his daughter, Smt. Dingri D. Shira, as a part-time lecturer in the college without following due process, bypassing Governing Body approval, public advertisement, or clearance from the Directorate of Higher and Technical Education.

According to documents attached to the petition, the appointment was made through a plain-paper letter



dated August 22, 2023, which carried no memo number or official authorisation. An RTI reply from the principal of Mendipathar College dated July 24, 2025, confirmed that no Governing Body resolution had authorised the ap-

pointment. The petition further states that the MLA reconstituted the Governing Body in January 2024, retaining himself as president and nominating politically aligned individuals in-

stead of neutral academic representatives. This, the organisations argue, amounted to politicisation of a publicly funded educational institution.

Another serious charge highlighted in the petition relates to financial mismanagement. A communication from the State Bank of India reportedly suspended certain account operations of Mendipathar College due to conflicting instructions over authorised signatories, which the petitioners claimed demonstrated a collapse of governance. The petitioners urged the Governor to order an impartial inquiry, suspend Sangma from the chairmanship of the Governing Body pending investigation, and reconstitute the body in line with statutory rules and University Grants Commission (UGC) regulations. They also sought restoration of financial accountability in the institution.

"This is not about politics; it is about safeguarding the sanctity of higher education governance," the petition stated, invoking constitutional provisions under Articles 14 and 16, as well as guidelines under the National Education Policy 2020.

Marthon J. Sangma, who represents Mendipathar constituency in North Garo Hills, has not issued any public statement yet in response to the allegations.

Quest!

'Made in China' stickers are made in Korea.

STUDENT INTERNSHIP

Join as an Intern@
North East Integration Rally 2026

WHO CAN JOIN

- HS to PG Students

WHAT YOU GET

- Certificates + Paid Internship*
- KRC Placement Mentorship

APPLY NOW <https://bit.ly/neirinternshipform>
E: seforssuccess@gmail.com

9330830083 www.northeastintegrationrally.in

Sonia Gandhi slams centre's 'planned misadventure' in Great Nicobar, warns of ecological and tribal crisis



NEW DELHI

Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi has strongly criticised the Modi government over the Rs 72,000-crore 'Holistic Development of Great Nicobar' project, calling it a "planned misadventure" that threatens both the island's fragile ecosystem and the survival of its indigenous tribes.

In an article published in *The Hindu* titled "The making of an ecological disaster in the Nicobar", Gandhi accused the government of insensitively pushing the project through while bypassing constitutional, legal, and environmental safeguards.

"The collective conscience cannot, and must not, stay silent when the very survival of the Shompen and Nicobarese tribes is at stake," she wrote, urging citizens to oppose what she described as a "travesty of justice" and a "betrayal of national values."

Gandhi highlighted

that the project would permanently displace the Nicobarese, whose ancestral villages fall within the proposed development zone. These communities were earlier forced to relocate after the 2004 tsunami and had hoped to return.

The Shompen, a particularly vulnerable tribal group, face an even greater existential threat, she said. "The project denotifies a significant part of the Shompen tribal reserve, destroys forest ecosystems where they live, and invites a massive influx of outsiders, isolating the tribe from its ancestral land."

Despite policies that require prioritising tribal welfare in such cases, the government has proceeded without consulting the Shompen or the local Tribal Council, she alleged.

Ecologically, Gandhi warned that the project would lead to large-scale deforestation, estimating the loss of between 8.5 lakh to as many as 58 lakh trees. She criticised the government's plan for compen-

satory afforestation as an inadequate replacement for old-growth rainforests.

She also flagged potential threats to local wildlife, including the endangered Nicobar long-tailed macaque and sea turtles. "Biodiversity assessments have been flawed, with studies conducted in off-seasons and using unreliable methods," she said.

Gandhi alleged that the government manipulated facts through a high-powered committee to bypass coastal regulation zone (CRZ) protections. "The report of this committee has not been made public," she noted, calling for transparency and accountability.

She also expressed concern about the seismic risks of building massive infrastructure in an earthquake-prone zone, saying it could jeopardise not just the ecology but also lives and investments.

"The laws of the land are being mocked wholesale," Gandhi concluded. "Unconscionably, one of the country's most vulnerable groups may have to pay the ultimate price for it."

The Great Nicobar project, which includes a transshipment port, international airport, power plant, and township across 160 sq km, continues to face growing scrutiny from environmentalists, tribal rights activists, and now, senior political leaders.

'No dip in cargo shipments despite 50% US tariff on Indian goods': Sonowal



TUTICORIN

Amid concerns over the impact of a 50 per cent US tariff on Indian products, Union Ports Shipping and Waterways Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Friday claimed that there has been no reduction in overall cargo shipments from India. Almost 90 per cent of India's foreign trade in terms of volume and 70 per cent of India's foreign trade by value is transported through sea routes.

"We have not seen a reduction in overall cargo shipments from India," Sonowal told when asked to comment on the impact of a

50 per cent steep tariff imposed by Washington on Indian goods entering the US.

India and the US have been negotiating a bilateral trade agreement (BTA) since March. So far, five rounds of talks have been completed.

After a 50 per cent duty was imposed on August 27, the US team has deferred its visit to India for the next round of talks, which was scheduled from August 25. No new dates have been finalised for the next round of talks.

Amid tensions between India and the US, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said that at the end

of the day, the two great countries will get this solved. Delhi's values are much closer to ours and to China's than to Russia's.

During April-July, the country's exports to the US increased 21.64 per cent to USD 33.53 billion, while imports rose 12.33 per cent to USD 17.41 billion, according to commerce ministry data.

The US was the largest trading partner of India in the April-July 2025-26 period (USD 12.56 billion bilateral trade). India's exports to America have been recording a positive growth since April this year.

India has described the US move to levy a 25 per cent addi-

tional tariff on Indian goods as "unfair, unjustified and unreasonable".

At VOC Port, Sonowal paid tributes to the statue of the legendary freedom fighter VO Chidambaram, commemorating his 154th birth anniversary. At the event, the minister inaugurated the green hydrogen pilot project with a capacity of 10 Nm³/hr at VOC Port, making it the first port in the country to produce green hydrogen.

Established at a cost of Rs 3.87 crore, the project will generate green hydrogen to power street lights and an electric vehicle charging facility in the Port colony.

Addressing the gathering, Sonowal said India's maritime sector is witnessing unprecedented progress.

Projects being launched will generate thousands of direct and indirect jobs in Tamil Nadu, boost trade, and attract global investments, positioning the State as a key contributor to India's target of a USD 5 trillion economy by 2027 and a USD 1 trillion economy from Tamil Nadu alone by 2030.

Sonowal further highlighted that the VOC Port is set to become India's Green Hydrogen and Ammonia hub with renewable energy and green bunkering.

He also expressed satisfaction over the capacity augmentation projects being carried out at the port.

He also laid the foundation stone for the Pilot Green Methanol Bunkering and Refuelling Facility, at a total cost of Rs 35.34 crore, with a capacity of 750 m³.

This project supports the use of alternative fuels and aligns with the planned Coastal Green Shipping Corridor between Kandla and Tuticorin.

INTERNATIONAL

Putting tariffs on countries that make deals with Russia is right idea: Zelenskyy



KYIV

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has backed the imposition of tariffs on countries maintaining economic ties with Russia, saying it is the "right idea" in the face of continued aggression by Moscow.

During an interview with ABC News Chief Global Affairs Correspondent Martha Raddatz on Friday (local time), Zelenskyy suggested that such punitive economic measures remain an effective strategy when asked if the plans to put sanctions on such countries backfired, as Russia continues with its strikes.

"No. I think the idea to put tariffs

on the countries who continue [to] make deals with Russia, I think this is [a] right idea," Zelenskyy said.

The Ukrainian President's remarks come after Raddatz referred to the meeting of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping during the 25th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Heads of State Council summit in Tianjin, China, noting the bonhomie between the three economic giants despite the US's tariffs due to the purchase of oil from Moscow.

Zelenskyy, during the interview, also declined Putin's invitation for talks in Moscow for a dialogue amid the Russia-Ukraine war, stating that

he cannot visit the capital of a country that continues to launch daily missile attacks on Ukraine.

The Ukrainian President also suggested that his Russian counterpart should come to Kyiv if he genuinely wishes to hold discussions. "He can come to Kyiv. If a person doesn't want to meet during the war, of course, he can propose something which is acceptable to me or the other. It's understandable; I can't go to Moscow when my country's under missiles, under attack, each day. I can't go to the capital of this terrorist," Zelenskyy said.

Further, the Ukrainian leader accused Putin of using the invitation as a political manoeuvre to delay dialogue, stating that the

latter was "playing games" with the US.

"And he understands it... He is doing it to postpone the meeting. He is playing games, and he is playing games with the United States," he said.

Earlier, the Russian President expressed his openness to meeting Zelenskyy, suggesting that such a meeting could take place in Moscow, provided it is well-prepared and aimed at producing a constructive outcome.

During a press briefing following his four-day visit to China, Putin emphasised the possibility of dialogue amid the Russia-Ukraine conflict, reiterating that he has "never ruled out" such a meeting, but stressed it must be in line with Ukraine's constitutional framework.

"I've already said that I've never ruled out such a meeting, but whether this can be meaningful in accordance with the Ukrainian constitution... It is possible; I never rule this out. If the meeting is well-prepared and leads to a positive potential outcome, it is possible. And by the way, Donald (Trump) asked me if it's possible to have such a meeting, and I said that it is. After all, if Zelenskyy is ready, he can come to Moscow. This is quite possible," he stated.

Meanwhile, Zelenskyy on Monday called for sanctions against Russia after it launched its largest aerial assault of the Ukraine war Saturday night. In a series of posts on X, Zelenskyy said that the statements by state leaders and institutions must be backed by strong actions such as "sanctions against Russia and individuals connected with Russia", which he suggested through tariffs and trade restrictions with Russia.

Trump issues 'last warning' to Hamas over hostages



WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump said Sunday he was issuing a "last warning" to Hamas, saying the Palestinian militant group must accept a deal to release hostages in Gaza.

"The Israelis have accepted my terms. It is time for Hamas to accept as well. I have warned Hamas about the consequences of not accepting. This is my last warning," Trump said on social media, without elaborating further.

In a statement released shortly after, Hamas said it was ready to "immediately sit at the negotiating table" following what it described as "some ideas from the American side aimed at reaching a ceasefire agreement."

US news outlet Axios reported that White House envoy Steve Witkoff sent a new proposal for a Gaza hostage and ceasefire deal to Hamas last week.

The White House has not released any details about the proposal but late Sunday Trump said "you'll be hearing about it pretty soon," as he portrayed the negotiations in a positive light.

"We had some very good discussions. Good things could happen," he told reporters. "I think we're going to have a deal on Gaza very soon."

In early March, Trump issued a similar ultimatum to Hamas, demanding it free all

remaining hostages immediately and turn over bodies of dead hostages, saying if not, "it is OVER for you."

Israeli campaign group the Hostages and Missing Families Forum welcomed the US president's latest intervention as a "true breakthrough."

Hamas militants seized 251 hostages during the massive October 7, 2023 attack on Israel, with 47 still believed to be in Gaza.

The Israeli military says 25 of them are dead. Israel is seeking the return of their remains.

The statements from Trump and Hamas came as Israel's army bombed a Gaza City residential tower Sunday - the third in as many days - after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced the military was "deepening" its assault on the key urban center.

Witness Mohammed Al-Nazli told AFP that the strike on the Al-Roya tower "felt like an earthquake."

At least 48 people were killed in Sunday's Israeli attacks, according to Gaza civil defense agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal.

The air force has leveled two other residential high-rises under the same claim that Hamas had used them as observation points.

The White House has withheld details of the proposal, but

Trump said Sunday, "you'll be hearing about it pretty soon," hinting at positive progress.

Israel warns recognising Palestinian state could trigger 'unilateral' action

Netanyahu said on Sunday that around 100,000 residents had already left Gaza City, accusing Hamas of trying to prevent evacuations and of using civilians as "human shields."

The escalation has fueled fears of a further deterioration in already dire humanitarian conditions for Palestinians living in the area.

On Saturday, Israeli protesters took to the streets to call on their government to reverse the decision to seize Gaza City, fearing for the fate of hostages believed to be held there.

The October 7, 2023 attack resulted in the deaths of 1,219 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally based on Israeli figures.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed at least 64,368 Palestinians, most of them civilians, according to figures from the health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza that the United Nations considers reliable.

Media restrictions in Gaza and difficulties in accessing many areas mean AFP is unable to independently verify the tolls and details provided by the civil defense agency or the Israeli military.

REWRITING THE COUNT: How India's 2027 Census Will Go Fully Digital

India's decennial population census has always been described as the world's largest peacetime data operation - a mammoth exercise mobilising millions of enumerators to count every person in a country whose population now exceeds 1.4 billion. Traditionally, this operation involved a paper trail that stretched from the smallest hamlet to the capital's statistical centres, with manual schedules, scanning, coding, and cross-checking consuming years before meaningful data could guide public policy. The 2027 census, postponed from its original 2021 schedule due to the COVID-19 pandemic, marks not just a delayed operation but a paradigmatic shift. For the first time in its history, India plans a fully digital enumeration, employing mobile applications, a self-enumeration portal, and near-real-time integration of data streams into analytical systems. If successful, the transition will rewrite not just the mechanics of counting but also the economics of governance, fiscal planning, and social development. The census will cease to be a static snapshot and begin functioning as a dynamic infrastructure - a foundation for real-time policy recalibration. But while the technological promise is vast, the risks - of exclusion, privacy breaches, or operational failure - could undermine both trust and effectiveness.

The Mechanics: Smartphones, Portals, and Offline Workarounds
The Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner (ORGI), under the Ministry of Home Affairs, has laid out a dual-mode architecture for 2027:

1. Door-to-Door Digital Capture: Enumerators will be equipped with smartphones running a secure census application. They will visit households, inputting information directly into digital forms rather than onto paper schedules.

2. Self-Enumeration: Households will have the option to submit their details via a secure web portal or mobile app, generating a unique ID or receipt, which enumerators will later verify. This hybrid model blends citizen self-service with field validation - preserving both efficiency and coverage integrity.

For areas with poor internet connectivity, the system is designed with offline-first capabilities. Data entered into devices will be stored locally and synchronised automatically with central servers once the device reconnects to a network. This feature is essential for rural India, where patchy connectivity remains a reality.

Administrative Preparation: The "Freeze" on Boundaries

Before any census, administrative boundaries must be "frozen." No jurisdictional changes - whether the creation of new districts, renaming of wards, or redrawing of municipal zones - can occur during the enumeration period. Such changes historically led to duplication, omission, or misalignment of data with legal geographies.

States are already engaged in this pre-census housekeeping. Tamil Nadu, for instance, has set December 31, 2025, as the deadline for completing all border and jurisdictional adjustments. For fast-changing urban agglomerations, the digital census relies on base maps that link each dwelling to a geocoded polygon, ensuring that every household is counted exactly once, and in the correct location.

In rural areas lacking formal digital maps, local facilitators and village-level authorities will delineate enumeration blocks, often sketching community-agreed maps to guarantee complete coverage.

From Months to Moments: Accelerating Data Availability

Under the paper regime, questionnaires completed in the field would spend months in transit, scanning, and manual data entry. Analytical tables could take years to emerge.

The digital pipeline promises something unprecedented: the flow of microdata from devices to secure servers enables programmatic consistency checks, early tabulations, and controlled API access for government dashboards. Ministries responsible for health, education, infrastructure, and fiscal planning could use provisional population figures, caste distributions, literacy rates, or migration patterns within weeks - not years.

Such speed changes the very nature of governance. Allocation of school teachers, planning of urban transit, targeting of rural employment schemes, or recalibration of poverty alleviation programmes could all be done with more agility and precision.

Training and Trust: Preparing 3 Million Field Functionaries

The census workforce - estimated at 3 to 3.5 million - represents the human backbone of this technological shift. For many enumerators, the census app will be their first experience with structured digital data entry on a large scale.

Training modules must therefore address more than mechanics. They will cover:

"Privacy and Consent: Standardised scripts for informing respondents about data use and confidentiality.

"Bias and Sensitivity: Handling sensitive topics, particularly caste, religion, disability, or migration status, with professionalism and cultural awareness.

"Troubleshooting: Resolving app glitches, network failures, or geocoding errors in the field.

"Escalation Protocols: Ensuring that unresolved issues quickly reach supervisory levels without disrupting field-work.

Support systems, including regional help-

migration modelling all rely on reliable population counts at granular geographic levels.

The digital census, especially when integrated with geospatial layers, enables:

"Slum Growth Modelling: Tracking informal settlements' expansion, essential for sanitation, health, and affordable housing policies.

"Spatial Inequality Analysis: Understanding income and service gaps across cities, guiding equitable infrastructure investments.

"Migration Economics: Quantifying flows between rural and urban areas, shaping labour market forecasts, skill development

Care: While integrated data systems promise policy power, they must avoid mission creep into surveillance or commercial misuse.

Beyond Counting: Building the Data Infrastructure for Growth

At its core, the census is more than a demographic ledger. It is the economic foundation of government - shaping fiscal policy, welfare design, infrastructure investments, electoral representation, and even private-sector market strategies.

By going digital, India is cutting transaction costs, reducing information asymmetries, and creating positive externalities that benefit both state capacity and market efficiency.

Accurate, timely, and granular population data fuels smarter policymaking, enhances investor confidence, and supports more equitable development trajectories.

But the promise will materialise only if inclusivity, privacy, and transparency are treated not as afterthoughts but as design principles. A digital census without social legitimacy is just a faster way to miscount, misallocate, and misgovern.

Counting for the Future

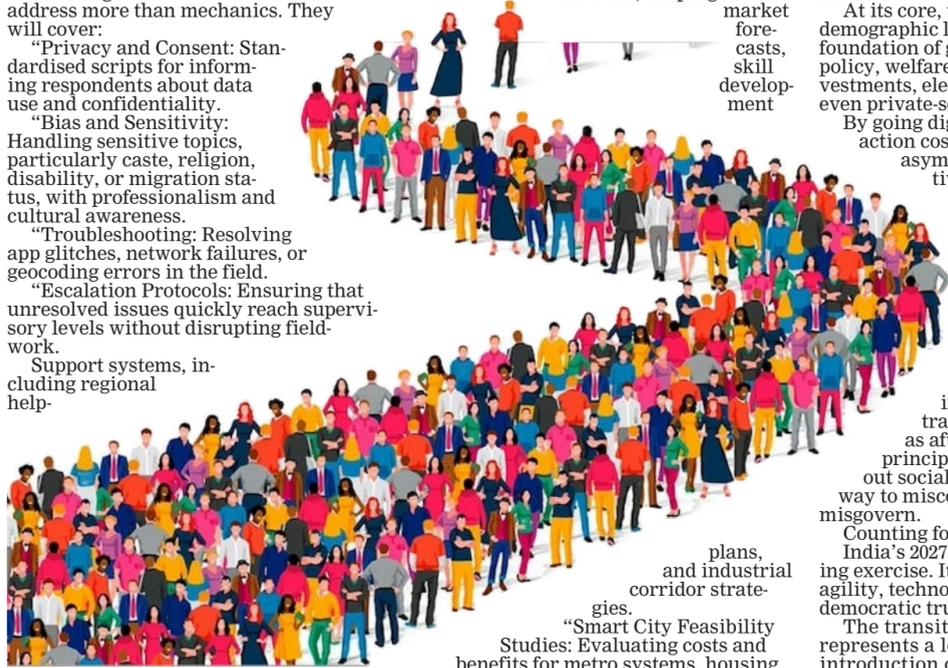
India's 2027 census is not just a counting exercise. It is a test of institutional agility, technological robustness, and democratic trust.

The transition from paper to digital represents a leap comparable to the introduction of Aadhaar or the Goods and Services Tax - a structural change in how the Indian state knows, serves, and allocates for its people.

If done right, the census will become more than a record of population. It will serve as a living data infrastructure, capable of informing and recalibrating policies across sectors with unprecedented speed and precision.

In the language of economics, India is investing in the information capital of the state. And just as physical infrastructure drives trade and productivity, information infrastructure drives governance quality and developmental equity.

In 2027, India will count not only its people but also the value of reliable, real-time knowledge - an asset as vital to a modern economy as roads, ports, and power grids. Whether this census becomes a national milestone or a missed opportunity will depend not only on technology, but on the political and ethical choices made along the way.



desks and real-time guidance for novice smartphone users, will be critical in preventing errors, reducing anxiety, and maintaining enumeration quality.

The Return of Caste Data: Economic and Political Reverberations

For the first time since Independence, India plans to collect caste data beyond Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) categories. This decision - still contingent on final instructions - carries profound implications.

Caste data is politically sensitive, economically consequential, and socially divisive. Welfare targeting, affirmative action, and debates about representation in education, employment, and politics all hinge on accurate caste demographics.

Economically, such data could recalibrate subsidy schemes, job reservations, and regional equity plans. Politically, it could reshape the electoral landscape by quantifying groups that have long asserted underrepresentation. The inclusion of caste beyond SC/ST therefore transforms the census from a demographic exercise into a potentially redistributive instrument of statecraft.

Fiscal Federalism and Dynamic Efficiency

India's fiscal federalism - the architecture that determines how Union funds are shared with states - is population-sensitive. Census numbers directly affect Finance Commission transfers, GST compensation, and central scheme allocations.

Delays or inaccuracies have historically distorted fiscal fairness, with fast-growing states sometimes undercompensated for the demographic realities shaping their infrastructure and welfare burdens. A digital census promises timely, accurate inputs, enabling fiscal flows that match real needs.

Economist Douglass North's insight that institutions reduce transaction costs applies here. Printing, transporting, scanning, and digitising millions of paper schedules consumed vast resources in past censuses. Digital enumeration eliminates physical logistics costs, accelerates tabulation, and introduces dynamic efficiency - the ability of institutions to adapt and reallocate resources in near-real-time.

Over time, the upfront investment in devices, training, and infrastructure is outweighed by gains in accuracy, timeliness, and operational savings.

Urban Planning, Housing Economics, and Migration Models

Modern economies depend on accurate spatial data. Housing demand, transportation economics, urban planning, and

SPACE FOR YOU ONLY

Rs. 150/- per day

NAME CHANGE

I. M. GunadonSingha, S/o. Purnachand B Singha, R/o. House No. 33, New Link Road, ADC Colony, Rongpur Part-IV, Silchar Pin Code - 788009, Cachar, Assam have changed my name to GunadonSingha for all future purposes.

PLACEMENT SERVICES

Fresher, job seekers can register with KRC Placements. Send resume to - 5eforsuccess@gmail.com To source candidates, organisation can contact KRC Placements at info@krccfoundation.org For Details Visit: https://bit.ly/krccplacements Apply here: https://bit.ly/KRCPlacementForm

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Business establishments, educational institutions, individual service providers etc. can enlist themselves or advertise their products or services at the most reasonable cost in InfoCom Diary. Send your details to InfoCom Solutions at: info.com.krc@gmail.com Submit Here: https://bit.ly/InfoComDiaryForm

STUDENTS' INTERNSHIP

Students can apply for a three-months internship with KRC Foundation. During the internship the student can get an opportunity to work on a live project. On successful completion the student is awarded a certificate. Apply to 5E for Success: 5eforsuccess@gmail.com For Details Visit: https://bit.ly/krccstudentinternship or www.krccfoundation.org/products-services/training-development-5e-for-success/internship

NE INDIA WRITING STAR CONTEST

Participate in NE India Writing Star Contest and get your writings published. Eligibility: From Class VI onwards. Each participant receives a digital participation certificate. Send articles at: info@krccfoundation.org For Details Visit: https://bit.ly/NEIndiaWritingStarContest www.krccfoundation.org/campaigns-csr/ne-india-writing-star-contest

CONNECT@ KRC TIMES



KRC TIMES

To engage with KRC TIMES, please use the following e-mails and WhatsApp Nos: For News: krctimes@gmail.com / WP: 8721838313 For Advertisement: info@krccfoundation.org / WP: 9330830083 For Subscription: krctimes@gmail.com / WP: 8721838313 Editor: biswadeep.gupta@gmail.com / WP: 8721838313



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
Adventure Sports
 Trekking & Canoe, Obstacle Navigation, Sport Climbing, Disaster Management Technique, Water Sports.
www.krcfoundation.org



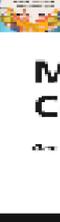
10 JAN
Barak Festival: Peace Progress & Prosperity



Barak Festival 2025 BARAK VALLEY CONCLAVE
 10th January, 2025 | Theme: Silchar | POTENTIAL, ISSUES & CHALLENGES
 REGISTER NOW
www.krcfoundation.org | 071 8562 5



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



10 JAN
Media Conclave
 Media Conclave: Media Conclave, Workshops, and the Fund, Talks and Conferences are part of the 'Barak Festival 2025'. Theme: 'One for All, All for One'.
 Register your team/individuals, journalists, media & corporate houses, sponsors, guests, speakers, members.



10 JAN
Media Conclave
 Media Conclave: Media Conclave, Workshops, and the Fund, Talks and Conferences are part of the 'Barak Festival 2025'. Theme: 'One for All, All for One'.
 Register your team/individuals, journalists, media & corporate houses, sponsors, guests, speakers, members.

Barak Festival
 Adventure Sports, Art & Culture Promotion

REGISTER HERE

CONTACT: info@krcfoundation.org



12 JAN
River-Climate Conclave
 Climate Change will influence on Climate Change, pollution and river flooding. The Conclave will focus on the importance, technical and protection of River Barak. Training & Geography competitive and certification. River Barak, Climate Change.



11 JAN
5E For Success Conclave
 The 4th 5E For Success Conclave is going to be held on the theme: 'From School to Campus to Corporate'. Schools, Educational Institutions and corporate houses can join the Conclave as sponsors.
 Quiz and Group Discussion for Barak valley Schools & Colleges, Extension, Seminars, Public Speaking, College/Institution level Extension of NE India Schools and Colleges can participate.



10 JAN
Media Conclave
 Media Conclave: Media Conclave, Workshops, and the Fund, Talks and Conferences are part of the 'Barak Festival 2025'. Theme: 'One for All, All for One'.
 Register your team/individuals, journalists, media & corporate houses, sponsors, guests, speakers, members.



10-12 JAN
Science Studio
 Get a glimpse of Science to its new heights. Class VI-XI | Teachers | Seniors, Administrators | Parents. Raw science out of textbooks into real-life experiences of students.



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'.



10 JAN
Band Night
 Musical Night | 10 JAN

Barak Festival
 Band Night | 10 JAN
 Musical Night | 10 JAN

CONTACT: info@krcfoundation.org



10-12 JAN
E-Sports
 Full Blasted Demos | CASH PRIZES | Trophy



11 JAN
film festival
 Award-Giving Ceremony | Film from Manipur, Short Films from Barak Valley, NE India, Ws, Media Talk, Exhibitions, Meet & Greet.



10-12 JAN
Book Bank
 #NoOneLeftBehind Campaign | Book Bank | Donate | Reuse | Recycle

5E SUCCESS
STUDENT INTERNSHIP
 Discover valuable experience and learn more about the Industry.

APPLY NOW | 071 8562 5 | www.krcfoundation.org



10-12 JAN
Book Club
 Meet Authors, Publishers, Read & Discuss, Buy and Sell Books



10-12 JAN
Painting Carnival
 Water Colour painting and Draw-Paint Campaign