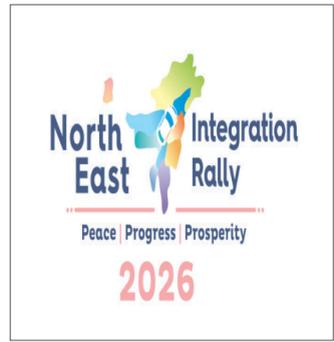




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PERSPECTIVE

There's a pleasure in recognising old things from a new viewpoint.

Rapid glacier melting in Arunachal Pradesh sparks flash flood concerns

GUWAHATI
Rapid melting of glaciers in the Eastern Himalayas, particularly in Arunachal Pradesh, has raised alarms among scientists, with measurements showing a record 1.5-metre ice loss at the Khangri glacier in Tawang's Gorichen mountain region.

The Centre for Earth Sciences and Himalayan Studies (CES & HS) has been closely monitoring the glacier using biomimetic and computational intelligence technologies. Satellite data from Sentinel-2 spanning 2016 to 2025 reveal a growing number of pro-glacial lakes and retreat of the glacier under the Mago Chu basin. Experts warn that the accelerated melting poses a significant risk of flash floods.

A stark example came on October 3, 2023, when a permafrost landslide into South Lhonak Lake triggered a glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) along the Teesta River to Bangladesh, spanning 385 km. The disaster claimed 55 lives, left 74 missing in Sikkim, and caused extensive infrastructural damage. Rani Lake, another glacial lake near the Gorichen mountain region, is now considered at risk of a similar Sikkim-type GLOF due to the ongoing glacier meltdown. Scientists attribute this trend to rising global temperatures, which are accelerating glacier retreat and expanding proglacial lakes. According to the latest monitoring report by the Central Water Commission (CWC), over 400 glacial lakes across India are showing concerning expansion trends.

WHO SAID WHAT

Heartiest congratulations to Dr. Andrew Holness on leading the Jamaica Labour Party to victory for the third consecutive time. Looking forward to deepening India-Jamaica bonds of friendship and further strengthening cooperation between our two countries.

~ Narendra Modi, PM, India

Manipur turmoil 'BJP-made', secrecy over PM's visit signals guilt, says Congress MP

IMPHAL
The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) not announcing the likely visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Manipur was an "admission of guilt", Congress MP Bimol Akoiijam said on September 5. He claimed that the saffron party was guilty of "creating a mess" in the ethnic strife-torn state.

Speaking to media on the sidelines of a programme here, the MP from Manipur said, "I don't know whether he (PM) is coming or not... we have only heard that there will be a VVIP visit to the state."

"If it is the Prime Minister, why does he not openly say that he is coming to Manipur? I take this as an admission of guilt on their part for creating this mess and tragedy in my state," he said.

Asked about people's expectation from the PM if he visits Manipur, the parliamentarian



said that people of the state "are generally not happy with him... a lot of us want him to publicly apologise to the people."

"People of my state are magnanimous enough to forgive him, provided he takes concrete and sincere steps to ensure that the internally displaced persons

ing peace in the state, the MP said.

There must be fresh elections in the state and the voices of the people must be heard as the BJP, despite having an absolute majority, "squabbled among themselves and we landed up with President's Rule", the Inner Manipur Lok Sabha MP said.

"We have witnessed this tragedy under BJP rule, so many lives were lost... the party doesn't deserve to govern the state," he said.

The Manipur Assembly, cutting across party lines, had adopted a resolution for the withdrawal of suspension of operations (SoO) agreements as there have been allegations of involvement of these cadres in the violence and these need to be investigated, he said.

"Never in the history of the country have people been divided like this," he said.

"The government has com-

pletely failed to protect the lives and property of the citizens... people are still languishing in relief camps and they are not able to return home even after two years," the Congress leader said.

Overt violence may have ended in the state but the people living in relief camps are facing violence every day: humiliation, some have not seen their children, there are missing people - these are all forms of violence, he said.

"The rest of the country must know what is happening in Manipur but unfortunately, many have fallen prey to the bandwagon of misinformation... this is unfortunate," he added.

Besides, some people want this violence to continue to serve certain vested interests, Akoiijam alleged.

The Congress leader was here to meet INDIA bloc Vice Presidential candidate B Sudershan Reddy.

Nearly 65,000 Myanmar refugees seek shelter in North-East India since 2021

IMPHAL
Nearly 65,000 people from Myanmar's north-west region have crossed into India's north-eastern states, particularly Manipur and Mizoram, seeking protection since February 2021, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Former Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh expressed concern over the rising influx, saying, "When I warned about this long ago, very few paid attention, including my colleagues. Today, UNHCR reports that nearly 64,300 Myanmar nationals have crossed into India since 2021. The unofficial numbers could be much higher, even multiple times more. We cannot afford to sit idle. We need to work harder before this issue consumes us." The UNHCR report states that around 6,800 arrivals have been registered with the agency in New Delhi. The influx has been exacerbated by in-



tensified fighting in Myanmar's Chin and Sagaing regions in May 2024, prompting more people to enter Mizoram.

In Manipur, authorities reported the deportation of approximately 360 of the 5,800 identified illegal migrants in Kamjong district, while biometric data of over 5,100 individuals was collected to aid future deportations. Special teams have been deployed to monitor arrivals across five border districts.

The humanitarian situation worsened following Cyclone Remant in late May 2024, which caused significant damage in Mizoram and Manipur. Food, shelter, clean water, sanitation, and healthcare have been identified as the most urgent needs for the refugees. Officials and humanitarian agencies have called for coordinated action to address both the immediate relief requirements and long-term management of the growing refugee population in the region.

SRIBHUMI TENSE: 12-hour bandh against Karimganj renaming sees partial response, clashes

SRIBHUMI
The border district of Sribhumi witnessed a partial response to the 12-hour shutdown called by the Karimganj Zila Naam Paribartan Pratirudh Samiti on Saturday, protesting the renaming of Karimganj.

While offices, courts, and educational institutions at the district headquarters remained open, passenger vehicles stayed off the roads, private vehicles however continued to operate.

Tensions flared in the morning as picketers supporting the shutdown clashed with members of the BJP, Bishwa Hindu Parishad, and Bajrang Dal at multiple locations across the district.

In Badarpur, police resorted to lathi-charge to disperse crowds assembled on the road. Most of the protesters who gathered in support of the bandh were reportedly students (see video).

Consequently, several women and a few male supporters of the



strike were detained by the Sribhumi police. The shutdown was supported by the Left parties, Congress, and the Citizens' Committee, who have held meetings and extensively pro-

noted the strike over the past few days.

They are demanding the reversal of the district's renaming from Karimganj to Sribhumi.

Local MLA Kamalakhaya Dey Purkayastha said that only a small group of people opposed the renaming, as called for by the bandh.

"While coming here, I met a few members of the minority community, and they assured me that they have no issues with the name Sribhumi and wholeheartedly support the government's move. We all must sit down and work together to further India's traditions, rather than fighting over a name," he said. Refuting reports that the bandh had only a partial response in the district, Congress, which had backed the shutdown in Sribhumi, claimed that the strike was a huge success.

"The bandh garnered support from people across all walks of life. To convey a misleading message, the administration, backed

by a few organisations, forcefully opened some shops. But across the district, people have come together to support the bandh," said Abdul Hakim Choudhury, a Congress leader.

The district administration had pre-emptively enforced Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nyay Suraksha Sanghita (BNSS) on Friday.

The majority of the general public, along with the ruling BJP and its allied organisations, opposed the shutdown and urged people not to participate.

According to orders issued by the Sribhumi District Commissioner, strict restrictions were enforced from 5 am to 8 pm on September 6, prohibiting gatherings of more than five people, shutdowns, protests, or processions.

Despite the heightened political tension, the partial bandh indicates that while opposition groups mobilised support, the majority of the district continued with normal activities.

Gaurav Gogoi says PM Modi's visit to Manipur marks start of long peace process

GUWAHATI
Senior Congress leader and Deputy Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Gaurav Gogoi, on Friday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's likely visit to Manipur should be seen as the start of a long journey toward peace in the state, rather than its conclusion.

Speaking on the sidelines of a programme in Guwahati, Gogoi emphasised that normalcy has not yet returned to Manipur, noting the absence of an elected government.

"We cannot say that normalcy has returned to Manipur. The PM's visit is not the end goal; it is only the beginning of a long journey to restore peace, justice, reconciliation, and democracy," he said.

Gogoi stressed the importance of healing relationships among the people of Manipur and addressing their aspirations. He criticised the delay in the Prime Minister's visit, noting it should have taken place two years ago.

"As they say, justice delayed is justice denied. The people of Manipur have waited far too long for the PM's visit. The first thing he should do is apologise for this delay," he added.

Addressing other political developments, Gogoi also commented on Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's claim regarding the SIT re-

port on alleged links between Pakistan national Ali Tauqeer Sheikh and his associates in India, scheduled for submission on September 10. He said the Congress would continue to highlight what it describes as scams under the BJP government in the state.

Gogoi further addressed allegations made by Sarma about his wife, Elizabeth Colburn, asserting that any visit to Pakistan was personal and not official.

On the recently issued Immigration and Foreigners' (Exemption) Order, 2025, Gogoi said it undermines the Assam Accord and should have been first debated in Parliament. The order allows religious minorities from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan—including Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, and Christians—who entered India by December 31, 2024, to remain in the country.

Gogoi also praised INDIA bloc Vice-Presidential candidate B. Sudershan Reddy, highlighting his experience as a former Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court and his understanding of the political and social complexities of Manipur and the wider Northeast.

"He is familiar with the concerns and aspirations of the Northeast and can highlight them at the highest forum. I am confident he will exceed public expectations," Gogoi said.

Nagaland becomes India's 3rd most literate state, literacy soars to 95.7%



KOHIMA
On the occasion of State Level Teachers' Day 2025, commemorating the birth anniversary of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Nagaland Chief Minister Dr. Neiphiu Rio lauded the tireless efforts of teachers in shaping the state's education landscape, highlighting that Nagaland now ranks as India's third most literate state with a literacy rate of 95.7%, up from just 21.95% at the time of statehood in 1963.

Speaking at the NBCC Convention Hall, Rio called teachers the backbone of the education system and emphasized their role in nation-building, urging them to continue fostering curiosity, critical thinking, and compassion among

Other reforms include mother-tongue-based education in collaboration with Nagaland University, certification of tribal language teachers, and the introduction of music education at the elementary level in partnership with the Department of TaFMA and Yamaha Inc.

Advisor for School Education and SCERT, Dr. Kekhrielhoulie Yheme, emphasized the three pillars of reform: upgrading infrastructure, improving governance, and enhancing the school ecosystem to ensure that no child is left behind, whether in urban or remote rural areas.

The programme also featured reflections from Masakui Rungsum, Consul General of India, Vancouver, who praised teachers as mentors, motivators, and the cornerstone of society. Messages from the President, Prime Minister, Education Minister of India, and Governor of Nagaland were read out during the event. Thirteen teachers received the State Teachers' Award, while four schools—Government Middle School Dobagaon, Government Middle School Naga New Model Sumi, St. Joseph School Tuensang Town, and The Vineyard Kohima—were recognized for Excellence in School Safety (SSB Phase 2).

CM Rio reaffirmed the state government's commitment to ensuring quality education for every child, integrating NEP 2020, SDG-4 on Quality Education, and the NIPUN Bharat Mission, and strengthening Nagaland's position as a leading state in literacy and educational innovation.



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SCO UNITED AGAINST TERROR

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Tianjin has reaffirmed an enduring truth: terrorism is not a local problem; it is a global scourge that demands a united, uncompromising response. The unanimous condemnation of the Pahalgam attack and the clear rejection of “double standards” in the fight against terror mark a significant diplomatic moment—especially for India. This is the second major international platform, after the recent BRICS summit, where India has succeeded in highlighting terrorism as a core global security challenge, even in the presence of countries that have historically adopted ambiguous positions on the issue. What makes this achievement even more noteworthy is the contrast with the last SCO foreign ministers’ meeting, which failed to reach a consensus on a joint statement against terrorism. This declaration, therefore, is more than symbolism; it is a reflection of changing geopolitical equations and the growing recognition that terrorism threatens not only regional stability but also the global economic order.

India’s stand has always been consistent and uncompromising: terrorism and talks cannot go together. Prime Minister Modi delivered a strong message—calling out “double standards” and urging the international community to oppose terrorism in every form—in the presence of Pakistan’s Prime Minister, making the statement even more powerful. Pakistan’s attempt to raise concerns about terrorism during the summit exposed its duplicitous stance, given its well-documented role in sponsoring cross-border terror. This duplicity is now harder to conceal when multilateral declarations explicitly call for action against sponsors, organisers and enablers of terrorism.

Equally significant is China’s position. Historically, Beijing has shielded Pakistan diplomatically, blocking UN sanctions on Pakistan-based terror groups and individuals. Yet, at Tianjin, China joined the consensus, endorsing language that condemns terrorism “in all forms” and rejects the practice of using terrorist groups for “mercenary purposes”. This shift is not altruistic; it reflects China’s growing realisation that selective tolerance of terrorism is a strategic liability, especially in an interconnected world where instability anywhere can reverberate across supply chains, trade and investment flows.

The broader geopolitical context cannot be ignored. The world is grappling with economic fragility exposed by ongoing tariff wars, disruptions in global trade, and rising energy insecurities. In such an environment, developing nations—already burdened by billions in security expenditures—can ill afford the costs of prolonged conflict and terrorism.

For the Global South, the message is clear: resources wasted on countering terror are resources diverted from growth, infrastructure and human development. Without peace, the dream of economic parity with developed nations remains elusive.

The SCO was conceived as a platform to counter Western dominance and foster regional cooperation. However, this vision can only be realised if member states address mutual concerns honestly and build trust. For India, this means accountability from both Pakistan and China—whether on cross-border terrorism or infrastructure projects in Indian-claimed territories. For China, if it truly seeks a formidable partnership with Russia and India to counterbalance Western influence, it must rethink its policy of strategic indulgence toward Pakistan. Continued support for Pakistan’s state-sponsored terror infrastructure will remain the single biggest obstacle to India-China rapprochement.

Foreign policy, as always, is a game of give and take. India understands this dynamic. It has shown through surgical strikes, the Bala-kot airstrikes, and Operation Sindoor that it will act unilaterally when necessary. But India also knows that lasting impact requires a coalition of willing nations, united not just in words but in coordinated action. The recent summits have shown glimmers of this possibility. The next step must be to translate declarations into deliverables. China, as a major power, must use its influence to nudge Pakistan away from using terrorism as an instrument of state policy.

The way forward is clear: economic cooperation and security cannot exist in isolation. Just as nations converge on trade and energy for mutual benefit, they must also converge on eliminating terrorism as a shared mission. The SCO summit has brought friends and foes to the same table; now, it must ensure that this rare consensus becomes a sustained commitment.

Tianjin SCO Summit 2025 The Rise of a Multipolar Global Order

PROF D MUKHERJEE

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), founded in 2001 from the original “Shanghai Five,” has evolved from a regional security grouping into one of the world’s most influential multilateral platforms. Bringing together major Eurasian powers—China, Russia, India, Central Asian Nations and more recently Iran and Belarus—the SCO has steadily widened its mandate from counterterrorism and border management to economics, energy, digital cooperation, and global governance. The 15th SCO Summit, held in Tianjin, China, from August 31 to September 1, 2025, symbolized this evolution at its peak. It was the largest assembly in the group’s history, bringing together over twenty heads of state and leaders from more than ten international organizations. In many ways, Tianjin resembled the Bandung Conference of 1955: a historic moment when the Global South articulated an alternative vision of world order, challenging Western dominance and asserting a collective identity.

The summit adopted the theme ‘Upholding the Shanghai Spirit: SCO on the Move’, emphasizing mutual trust, equality, consultation, and shared growth. The leaders of all nine permanent member states attended, including Xi Jinping, Vladimir Putin, and Narendra Modi, alongside counterparts from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Pakistan, Iran, and Belarus. Observers and dialogue partners such as Mongolia, Turkey, Nepal, Myanmar, Malaysia, and Egypt were present, as were representatives from the United Nations and ASEAN. This unprecedented breadth of participation underscored the SCO’s expanding global appeal. The agenda stretched across pressing concerns: regional and international security, economic resilience, energy cooperation, counterterrorism, digital connectivity, artificial intelligence governance, and climate change. Far from being a closed Eurasian forum, Tianjin projected itself as a laboratory for multipolar governance—seeking to rival the G7 and NATO in scope if not yet in institutional maturity.

At the heart of the summit lay a collective determination to challenge the unilateral dominance of the United States. China’s President Xi Jinping framed the SCO as a platform for constructing a fairer multipolar order. He proposed institutional innovations such as an SCO Development Bank, a common energy platform, the extension of \$1.4 billion in loans to member states, and the sharing of China’s BeiDou satellite navigation system. Such initiatives were designed to reduce reliance on U.S.-dominated institutions like the IMF, World Bank, and GPS. President Putin echoed this sentiment, portraying the SCO as an embodiment of ‘genuine multilateralism’ and warning against the neocolonial use of financial instruments by Western powers.

Against the backdrop of Trump’s escalating tariff wars with new duties imposed on Chinese electric vehicles and Indian pharmaceuticals—the SCO leaders presented a united economic front. The strategic message was clear: Washington’s attempt to contain China, Russia, and India individually would face a coordinated pushback when these powers converged under the SCO framework.

Among all the leaders present, Narendra Modi’s role was particularly watched, both in Asia and in the West. India has increasingly styled itself as a voice of the Global South, a mantle it carried forward from the 2023 G20 Delhi Summit, where Modi championed the inclusion of the African Union. In Tianjin, he reiterated, in essence, India’s principle of ‘Grow and Let Grow’, positioning his country as a constructive rather than coercive power. PM Modi further reiterated that SCO must endeavour to coming out of the shell of double-standards and contrarily it should subscribe to the catalytic



provider and creator of ‘Security, Connectivity and Opportunity’ not only for the SCO member nations but all nations across.

Modi was firm in condemning terrorism, calling for zero tolerance towards state sponsors and financiers of extremist networks. His statement was interpreted as a pointed message to Pakistan, but it also reinforced India’s credibility in Eurasian security cooperation. Simultaneously, Modi balanced this hard line with a broader narrative of inclusive growth, sovereignty, and connectivity without coercion. This twin message—strong against terror, soft in diplomacy—helped solidify India’s reputation as a responsible leader capable of bridging divides across East and West, North and South.

The visual spectacle of Modi seated alongside Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin encapsulated a profound geopolitical recalibration. While India continues to partner with the United States through QUAD and Indo-Pacific initiatives, her willingness to engage at the highest levels with China and Russia signalled a commitment to strategic autonomy. This triangular moment—RIC unity-generated unease in Washington. For the Trump administration, already struggling with crises in Ukraine, West Asia, and its stalled Greenland and Panama policy narratives, the Tianjin summit was a reminder that American leverage was waning. Instead of isolating Russia and China, the U.S. found itself facing a trio of major powers projecting resilience and cooperation.

The anxiety in Washington was most vividly expressed through Peter Navarro, White House Trade Counsellor, who erupted in a Fox News interview shortly after the summit. On the one hand, Navarro called Modi a “great leader” and praised India as the world’s largest democracy. On the other, he attacked Modi for “getting into bed with Putin and Xi,” accusing India of acting as a “laundromat for Kremlin” by refining and reselling Russian oil to Western markets. His choice of words—particularly the reference to “Brahmins profiteering at the expense of the Indian people”—sparked widespread criticism, blending cultural stereotypes with economic frustration.

Navarro’s outburst betrayed more than anger at India’s independent foreign policy. It revealed the Trump administration’s frustration at its own unfulfilled promises: peace in West Asia, resolution in Ukraine, a stable South Asia after the April 2025 Pahalgam-Kashmir attack, and domestic economic revival. By misadventure of scapegoating India, Navarro inadvertently exposed the hollowness of Washington’s global leadership claims. Navarro went further in branding the Ukraine conflict as “Modi’s War,” suggesting that India’s oil trade enabled the Kremlin’s war machine. The Tianjin summit decisively countered this narrative. Putin and Xi asserted that the conflict was the consequence of NATO

expansion and Western coercion, not Indian complicity. Modi himself avoided inflammatory rhetoric but reiterated India’s consistent position: dialogue, diplomacy, and respect for sovereignty.

By collectively framing the war as the responsibility of the U.S. and its European allies, SCO leaders undermined Washington’s attempt to globalize blame. The contrast between Navarro’s accusatory language and the SCO’s measured declarations highlighted the deepening divergence in narratives—an erosion of U.S. credibility and an affirmation of SCO as a platform for alternative perspectives. The Tianjin Declaration of 2025 mapped out a bold institutional future for the SCO. Plans to establish a Development Bank, intensify cooperation with BRICS+, and deepen partnerships in AI, fintech, and climate governance underscored the group’s ambition to rival Western-led systems. The growing acceptance of India’s “Grow and Let Grow” philosophy across Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America demonstrated that the Global South increasingly looks to New Delhi as a moral and strategic leader.

As the SCO expands its global footprint, the U.S. faces the prospect of losing its status as the uncontested superpower. A new world order, multipolar in structure and pluralistic in orientation, is emerging. India, with its blend of hard and soft power, stands at the heart of this transformation—neither beholden to Washington nor subsumed by Beijing, but charting its own path as a global pivot. The 15th SCO Summit in Tianjin was not merely another international gathering; it was a turning point in global affairs. By offering a platform where China, Russia, and India could converge, and where the Global South could articulate its aspirations, the SCO positioned itself as a genuine alternative to Western hegemony. The frustration of U.S. leadership, encapsulated in Navarro’s biting remarks, only amplified the symbolism of Tianjin.

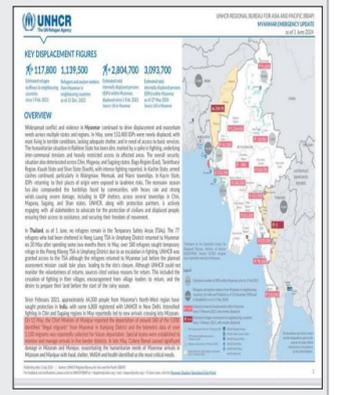
The Tianjin SCO Summit of 2025 reaffirmed India’s stature as a pivotal voice in the emerging multipolar order, yet it also highlighted the dilemmas born of her geography and history. For her, the challenge lies in sustaining strategic autonomy while managing uneasy ties with immediate neighbours. Relations with China remain unsettled by border disputes and competing ambitions in the Indo-Pacific, while Pakistan continues to harbour and sponsor terrorism. Bangladesh, once a steady partner, has begun to test her bilateral patience, adding to the complexity of her regional environment. The key takeaway from Tianjin is that she must treat multilateral platforms like the SCO not merely as ends in themselves, but as instruments to reinforce stability, constrain hostile behaviour, and expand her leadership of the Global South. Balancing firmness with diplomacy, her strategy will depend on resili-

ence against neighbours’ provocations while deepening global influence through inclusive engagement. Summarily, for India, the summit was significant.

Modi’s projection of strength against terrorism alongside his emphasis on inclusive growth elevated her credibility as a global leader. In a world defined by multipolarity, her policy of ‘Grow and Let Grow’ resonates as both practical and aspirational.

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

When I warned about this long ago, very few paid attention, including my colleagues. Recently, UNHCR reports that nearly 64,300 Myanmar nationals have crossed illegally into India since 2021. The unofficial numbers could be much higher, even multiple times more. We cannot afford to sit idle. We need to work harder before this issue consumes us. ~ N. Biren Singh, Former CM, Manipur



THESE REFORMS ARE MORE LIKE GST 1.2 THAN 2.0

SALEM DHARANIDHARAN

On September 3, the 56th GST Council meeting, chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, unveiled goods and services tax reforms labelled GST 2.0, which would be effective from September 22.

Listening to the longstanding demand of consumers, the changes collapse the multi-tier tax structure—with rates of 0, 5, 12, 18 and 28—into a dual-slab model of 5 percent for essentials like unpacked foodgrains, fresh vegetables and select medicines, and 18 percent for most other goods and services, including electronics, cement, small cars and electric vehicles. A 40 percent rate targets ‘sin goods’ like tobacco and pan masala.

As the GST system was flawed to begin with, any change to simplify and rationalise it is a welcome step. But the question one has to ask here is, is it sufficient?

India expects a 7.8 percent real GDP growth in the first quarter of 2025-26, painting an optimistic picture. But it masks deep economic challenges as GDP as a metric fails to capture rising inequality, weak consumer demand and high unemployment.

For nearly a decade, sluggish consumer demand has plagued India. This is evident in the latest numbers available for some bellwether industries—urban consumer goods growth slowed to 2.6 percent during January-March 2025, passenger car sales dropped 1.4 the next quarter, and two-wheeler sales shrank 6.48 percent in July over comparable periods in 2024.

The International Labour Organisation’s 2024 report revealed 83 percent of India’s unemployed are young (aged 15-29), underscoring the crisis. One of the major reasons for low consumption is increased inequality,

as it reduces money in the common man’s hand and transfers it to the super rich. As per an Oxfam report from the same year, the richest 21 people in India hold as much wealth as the bottom 70 crore people put together.

As Adam Smith identified many centuries earlier, one of the major reasons for high inequality is taxation policy. Indirect taxes—which are levied on the rich and poor alike—such as GST and excise comprise about half of revenues. In contrast, it’s a third for the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development countries. The Indian incidence disproportionately burdens the poor, who spend 22 percent of their income on fuel—the highest share globally—due to 300 percent excise duty hikes since 2014.

The 2025 GST reforms, with a dual-slab model (5 percent for essentials, 18 percent for most goods), offer limited relief but fail to address fuel duties.

This regressive taxation stems from offsetting corporate tax cuts (35 percent to 22 percent), costing ₹2 lakh crore, which failed to boost investment, with private gross fixed capital formation at an 11-year low of 32.4 percent in 2023-24, down from 40 percent in 2015.

The Oxfam report shows the top 1 percent hold 40.1 percent of wealth, draining resources from 70 crore poorer citizens. To revive demand, the government must reduce fuel excise duties and reconsider corporate tax cuts, as lower oil prices would ease costs across goods, spurring consumption and economic recovery.

Though the latest changes are hailed as a revolutionary reform, more anomalies remain in the GST rates for items, revealing inequities and irrationality. Ultra-luxury items like polished diamonds enjoy nil tax under

specific schemes, boosting a ₹1.2 lakh crore sector, while processed agricultural products—crucial for reducing 30 percent produce waste worth ₹92,651 crore a year—face 18 percent GST, stifling Tamil Nadu’s 70 lakh farmers. Zero-rating these could boost farmer incomes by 20-25 percent, per the Indian Council of Agricultural Research.

The textile sector, employing 4.5 crore nationally and 1 crore in Tamil Nadu, faces 18 percent on garments above ₹2,500, undermining competitiveness amid 50 percent U.S. tariffs and a 10 percent export decline in 2023.

While 33 lifesaving drugs are now exempt, diagnostic kits and medical devices, at 5-18 percent, burden Tamil Nadu’s healthcare system that serves 7.8 crore people, hampering affordability and access. These disparities highlight the reforms’ failure to support critical sectors and state economies.

The latest reforms failed to democratise the GST Council, where the Centre holds 33 percent of the total votes and each state, irrespective of their size or economic output, have 2 percent. With each resolution requiring 75 percent votes to pass, passing any resolution without the consensus of the Union government has become impossible.

Only four states—Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Telangana and Maharashtra—contribute about 50 percent of total GST collection, but have only 8 percent of the GST Council votes; they cannot, therefore, pass any resolution on their own.

A lack of consultation can also be evinced from the half-backed rollout of GST 2.0. The states were not fully consulted about the resulting loss of revenue and how it would be offset. The ideal step would have been for

the Union government to work on a financial model to see the range of revenue losses for each state, and discuss with them on offsetting their losses. This affects industrialised states like Tamil Nadu, which could lose potentially ₹6,000-15,000 crore revenue for the next fiscal year. So high net GST-contributing states would now face lower GST revenue.

In order to compensate for the sudden revenue loss for states, the Union government should consider extending the compensatory cess that can undo the partial loss of revenue. Though the Finance Commission has recommended 42 percent of the revenue from divisible pool to be divided among states, only 31 percent is devolved with the states, simply because of very high cess and surcharge (which constitute the non-divisible pool) of 23 percent.

The Union government should consider reducing the non-divisible pool and extend the divisible pool. The Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act’s debt cap of 25 percent of gross state domestic products, with a 3 percent fiscal deficit (extendable to 3.5 percent), constrains Tamil Nadu. Relaxing the cap to 30 percent would help states, ensuring fiscal autonomy and driving India’s growth.

The intent to simplify taxation is welcome and will ease some burden off the common man. But reforms without robust safeguards for state federalism and financial risk reducing states to municipalities. States need fiscal autonomy to provide basic infrastructure—such as education and healthcare—and welfare schemes for its population. Only if individual states grow can the country grow as a whole.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“You have power over your mind - not outside events. Realize this, and you will find strength.”

“Not end game”: Gaurav Gogoi terms PM’s Manipur visit start of “long journey” for peace

GUWAHATI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s likely visit to Manipur should not be seen as the end of a goal, but rather as the start on a long journey to bring peace back to the state, Assam Congress President Gaurav Gogoi said.

Speaking on the sidelines of a programme in Guwahati, on September 5, Gogoi said, “We cannot say that normalcy has returned to Manipur... there is no elected government, so Modi’s visit should not be seen as the end goal.”

It is only a start on a “long journey to bring peace, justice, reconciliation and democracy back to Manipur”, the Congress MP said.

Gogoi said that till the time the “relationship between the people of Manipur do not heal, their aspirations are not met, I hope the BJP understands that the



PM’s visit is not the end but only a beginning which has come very much delayed”. The visit should have hap-

pened two years ago and there are still many more milestones to overcome, the Assam Congress president said.

“As they say that justice delayed is justice denied, people of Manipur have been denied of the PM’s visit for far too long,” he said.

He hoped that when the PM arrives, the first thing he does is to “apologise to the people of Manipur for not showing up for the last two years”.

Regarding Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma’s claim that the SIT will submit its report on the investigations into alleged links between Pakistan national Ali Tauqeer Sheikh and his partners in India on September 10, Gogoi said the Congress will continue to highlight the various “scams” under the BJP government in the state.

The chief minister has been attacking Gogoi over his wife Eliz-

abeth Colburn’s alleged connection with Pakistan’s spy agency ISI.

Sarma had alleged that Gogoi’s wife had “good relations” with the Pakistan Army and even the MP had visited Pakistan “in personal and not official capacity” and stayed there for 15 days.

On the new Immigration and Foreigners’ (Exemption) Order, 2025, Gogoi said that it has negated the Assam Accord and such an important matter should have been first discussed in Parliament.

The order of the Ministry of Home Affairs allows minorities from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan, including Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Christians, who entered India till December 31, 2024, to escape religious persecution will be allowed to stay in the country.

Gogoi was attending the media interaction of INDIA bloc Vice

Presidential candidate B Sudershan Reddy here.

“As a former Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court, he is familiar with the situation in Assam and the other northeastern states,” Gogoi said.

He is familiar with the political complexities of a state like Manipur and has the knowledge, wisdom and experience about the concerns and aspirations of the Northeast, which he can highlight at the highest forum, the opposition leader said.

“I hope my colleagues from across the political aisle realise how, at this point, we need someone who understands Manipur, the Assam Accord and other issues of the Northeast,” he said.

Gogoi asserted that he was confident that Reddy would do much better than what the people’s expectations are.

Government schemes must uplift people of grass root – Nirola Phangchopi

SUSHANTA ROY

DIPHU: The Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan is a nationwide initiative launched by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, with the vision of empowering tribal communities through awareness and inclusion in government schemes.

The central objective of this campaign is to bridge the gap between policy and people, ensuring that the most vulnerable sections of society benefit directly from welfare measures.

The program was instituted at Diphu Orbit Bhavan, Deputy Commissioner Nirola Phangchopi emphasized that the core mission of the Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan is to uplift tribal communities from the grass-roots level to higher standards of socio-economic development.

She explained that “Adi” signifies the original or ancient, symbolizing the government’s responsibility to elevate tribal populations from traditional ways of life to modern progress.

The Deputy Commissioner highlighted that departmental officials and staff from Education, Social Welfare, Public Health Engineering, and Health have been assigned the responsibility of spreading awareness.

Their task is to inform tribal people about the intent and scope of various government welfare schemes so that no eligible beneficiary is left out.

Drawing attention to the Orunodoi scheme in Karbi Anglong district, she noted that although 91,500 beneficiaries were targeted, only 82,775 have been covered, leaving nearly 10,000 still deprived. She remarked that lack of awareness often leads to missed opportunities and called on all departmental heads to intensify efforts to create ‘informed communities’.

The Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan thus seeks not only to inform but to empower, ensuring that development truly reaches from the grass-roots upward.

BJP faces setback in West Karbi Anglong as former MLA resigns

SUSHANTA ROY

DIPHU: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in West Karbi Anglong, suffered a setback after Dr. Mansing Rongpi, a prominent political figure and former four-time MLA from Baithalango legislative assembly constituency, resigned from the party.

Dr. Rongpi has cited ‘dissatisfaction with the party’s current direction’ as the principal reason in his resignation letter. Dr. Rongpi submitted his resignation letter to Assam BJP state president Dilip Saikia through the West Karbi Anglong district BJP president at the district office in Ghelani, Donkamokam on Thursday.

Dr. Rongpi expressed deep frustration with the internal dynamics of the BJP, stating, “Where is the old BJP? It has been taken over by newcomers. There is no respect or recognition for old-timers like us.” His remarks reflect growing discontent among veteran party members and point to deepening rifts within the BJP’s regional unit. Dr.

Rongpi’s political career spans decades, marked by significant achievements. He was elected to the Assam Legislative Assembly for three consecutive times from 2006 to 2016 as a Congress candidate from the Baithalango LAC. In 2016, he switched allegiance to the BJP and won a bye-election as a BJP candidate. However, in the 2021 assembly elections, the BJP’s decision to deny him a ticket appears to have fueled his disillusionment, culminating in his resignation. The departure of a stalwart like Dr. Rongpi, who commands a strong legacy in West Karbi Anglong, is expected to create ripples within the BJP’s ranks in the region, previously faced internal conflicts in West Karbi Anglong, and this development could exacerbate tensions as the BJP gears up for upcoming electoral challenges in Assam.

Dr. Rongpi’s exit raises critical questions about the party’s organizational unity and its ability to retain veteran leaders in the hill districts.

Meghalaya police files 790-page chargesheet in Raja Raghuvanshi murder case

SHILLONG

The Meghalaya Police on Saturday filed a 790-page chargesheet in the Raja Raghuvanshi murder case against five accused in the Judicial Magistrate 1st Class, Sohra Sub-division Court in Shillong.

Along with the chargesheet, substantial material evidence and enclosures have also been filed in the court. The police have named Sonam Raghuvanshi, Raj Kushwaha, Vishal Singh Chauhan, Ashish Singh Rajput, and Aanand Kurmi as key accused in the Raja Raghuvanshi murder case and have been booked under the 103 (1) 238 (a)/ 61(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

“On 21.05.2025, Shri Raja Raghuvanshi and his wife Santi. Sonam Raghuvanshi of Indore Madhya Pradesh came



to Shillong for their Honey-moon Trip and then went on to Sohra. On 26.05.2025, the

couple were reportedly missing from Sohra. Accordingly, a search operation was launched immediately to find the duo,” the press release from Meghalaya police stated.

“After several days of intensive search by Sohra Police, SOT, NDRF, SDRF, trekking groups and local people from surrounding villages, a body was found on 02.06.2025, identified to be of (L) Raja Raghuvanshi from a deep gorge at Arliang Riat Kunongrim, Umblai near Wei Sawdong, Sohra. In this connection, Sohra PS Case No. 07/2025 u/s 103(1)/238(a)/309(6)/3(6) of BNS Act was registered,” the press release added.

“A 790 page charge sheet against the arrested accused along with substantial material evidence and enclosures has been filed in the court of the Judicial Magistrate 1st Class,

Sohra Sub-Division Court today,” the press release said.

Raja Raghuvanshi, a newlywed who went to Meghalaya on his honeymoon along with his wife Sonam Raghuvanshi, was found dead in a gorge near Sohra (Cherrapunji) on June 2. Sonam, who had been missing for many days, was later found near a roadside dhaba along the Varanasi-Ghazipur highway. The couple, both residents of Indore in Madhya Pradesh, had gone missing during their honeymoon trip to Meghalaya.

Earlier, as part of its investigation, the Meghalaya Police SIT reconstructed the crime scene as part of its investigation into the murder of Raja Raghuvanshi. The murder scene was recreated by the SIT team in Sohra in the presence of the accused, Sonam Raghuvanshi, and three others.

“Assam has crossed 8 Lakh MT mark in paddy procurement”: CM Sarma

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday announced that the state had achieved a historic milestone by crossing the 8 lakh metric tonne (MT) mark in paddy procurement under the Minimum Support Price (MSP) scheme during the Kharif/Marketing Season (KMS) 2024-25.

The chief minister called it a “historic achievement” in the state’s journey toward agricultural prosperity.

In a post on X, the Chief Minister said, “I am proud to share that during KMS 2024-25, Assam has achieved a record milestone in paddy procurement under MSP. For the first time ever, Assam has crossed the 8 Lakh MT mark in paddy procurement – a historic achievement in our journey



of prosperity.”

CM Sarma added that the state procured 6,97,802.74 MT of paddy in the first crop cycle and 1,04,757.98 MT in the second crop cycle till September 5, 2025. This brought the total procurement to 8,02,560.72 MT.

On Tuesday, Union Minister for Textiles Giriraj Singh assured that all cotton arriving in the market that falls under MSP guidelines will be procured without disruption this

season, as he reiterated the government’s commitment to the welfare of cotton farmers.

He reaffirmed the government’s vision to protect the interests of cotton farmers by ensuring a remunerative price for their produce. The Union Minister chaired a high-level review meeting in New Delhi in the presence of top officials from the ministry, Lalit Kumar Gupta, CMD, Cotton Corporation of India (CCI), to assess the preparedness for Minimum Support Price (MSP) operations for cotton during the upcoming Kharif/Marketing Season 2025-26. Cotton procurement will commence on October 1, 2025. In line with the government’s Digital India vision, all processes—right from procurement of cotton by the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) under MSP operations

to sale of stocks—are now completely faceless and paperless, strengthening farmers’ and other stakeholders’ confidence and trust in MSP operations, said the Union Minister.

For the first time, uniform norms have been laid down for the establishment of procurement centres, factoring in key parameters such as cotton cultivation area, availability of functional APMC yards and at least the availability of one stock processing factory at the cotton procurement centre.

As a result, a record 550 procurement centres have been set up across major cotton-producing states.

Procurement of cotton under MSP will commence from October 1 in the North States, October 15 in the Central States and from October 21, 2025, in the South States.

Govt to set up women’s university in Tripura: CM Manik Saha

AGARTALA

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha has announced that the state government is working to set up a Women’s University to empower the women of the state, the Tripura CMO said.

He also announced that the present government has been trying to reduce the gap in Dearness Allowance (DA) between Central and state government employees.

According to a press release, CM Saha said this while addressing the 64th Teachers’ Day 2025 programme at Rabindra Satabarshiki Bhavan on Friday.

“You may go into other professions for the sake of money, but teachers have chosen teaching profession out of passion and responsibility. Taking charge of the future generation, you have joined this noble profession. Teachers are like the roots of a tree, while students are the branches, fruits, and flowers that receive nourishment from them. Because of teachers, the country and the nation progress, as the foundation is very important. Teachers build this foundation through sacrifice,” he said.



He also said that before entering the classroom, teachers always try to give something new to students.

“In the teaching profession, mental, physical, and emotional energy is necessary. Teachers are inventors who instill knowledge and values in students. Teachers make students’ lives shine. They are the backbone of a nation, and people depend on

them. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has introduced the National Education Policy, which has been implemented in Tripura as well. New initiatives have also been introduced. Our government is working to bring in new reforms and recruit the best teachers through a transparent process,” the Chief Minister said.

As per the release, Manik Saha, who is

also the Education Minister of the state, said that the present government has opened three new government colleges. Under the Mukhyamantri Kanya Atmanirbhar Yojana, female students have been provided with scooters to encourage them in pursuing higher education.

“We must work for the progress of girls. For that, we have waived fees for girl students in government colleges. Our state government is also working to set up a Women’s University to empower girls. Many universities have expressed their desire to open campuses in Tripura, as peace now prevails here. We are trying to develop the state into an education hub. MBBS seats have also been increased along with the establishment of Dental and Nursing colleges,” he said. He informed that earlier people had to join protest rallies for DA and DR.

“However, we have given 29 per cent, and now the total DA and DR stand at 32 per cent. In the coming days, we are trying to reduce the DA and DR gap with the Central government,” he added.

On this occasion, CM Saha handed over the Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar Samman to Dr. Atul Debbarma, Eminent Educationist, the Dr. Shyamaprasad Mukharjee Samman to Samir Chakraborty, Eminent Social Worker, and the Maharani Tulisibati Samman to Pranati Debbarma, Headmistress of DC Para Hemanta Smriti Vidyalaya.

KOHIMA

Peleno Petenilhu, a dedicated educator from John Government Higher Secondary School, Viswema, Kohima, has brought pride to the teaching fraternity of Nagaland and the state at large by receiving the prestigious National Teachers Award 2025.

She was honored alongside 65 outstanding educators from across India during a ceremony held at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi, on 5th September 2025.

India is home to approximately 9.8 million teachers, including 4.88 million in government schools and 3.54 million in private institutions (as per 2021-22 UDISE+ data). To be recognized among such a vast and diverse teaching community is a remarkable achievement—one that highlights Peleno’s exceptional dedication and impact.

With a career spanning over two decades, Peleno has consistently demonstrated her commitment to nurturing young minds with compassion, creativity and purpose. She began her teaching journey at Government High School Seikhezou, and since 2014, she has been an integral part of John Government Higher Secondary School, Viswema, where she continues to inspire students and colleagues alike through her guiding philosophy: “Education with Empathy, Leadership with Purpose.”

One of her most impactful contributions is the initiative “Each One Teach One”, which mobilizes Class

12 students to mentor juniors from underprivileged backgrounds. This unique peer-learning model embodies her belief that education extends beyond textbooks and classrooms. The initiative has not only empowered mentees but has also instilled leadership and empathy in the mentors — living proof of her motto: “Inspire One, Empower Many.”

For Peleno, teaching is not just a profession but a lifelong mission. Her personal efforts to reduce student dropouts — including home visits, sponsoring admission fees and even providing mobile phones to disadvantaged learners — reflect her deep-rooted belief in “Transforming Lives Through Compassionate Teaching.”

As President of the English Professional Learning Community (PLC) in Kohima District, she actively fosters collaboration among educators. Through WhatsApp groups, online meetings, and in-person trainings, she facilitates peer learning and professional development. She has also contributed to digital education by creating e-content for the ABHYAAS Learning Management System (LMS) and by developing lesson plans for the DIKSHA platform.

In recognition of her unwavering commitment and lasting impact, Peleno was also conferred the State Teacher Award in 2024. Her life and work truly embody the belief that: “One Teacher Can Transform Countless Futures.”

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“Mamata Banerjee’s party will be finished after next elections”: BJP’s Dilip Ghosh



KHARAGPUR

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Dilip Ghosh on Saturday took a jibe at West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, claiming that the Trinamool Congress party will be “wiped out” after the upcoming assembly elections.

The BJP leader compared the current situation in West Bengal with the downfall of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Congress in the state.

Speaking to ANI on the Chief Minister’s remarks in the assembly, Ghosh

said, “Mamata Banerjee’s party will be finished after the next elections. See the condition of CPM and Congress. They are so corrupt that government offices are in chaos, and there is no law and order... As a result, people here are suffering. Just as people have taught a lesson to CPM and Congress, they will also face the same fate.”

He further alleged that the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) had pushed government systems into disarray through corruption and mismanagement.

On Thursday, Mamata

Banerjee, while speaking in the state assembly, attacked the Bharatiya Janata Party, asserting that not a single BJP MLA will remain in Bengal and they will face inevitable defeat.

She further added that no party that wages linguistic terror against Bengalis can ever win Bengal.

“I condemn BJP for their persecution of Bengalis. A time will soon come when not a single BJP MLA will remain in Bengal. The people themselves will ensure it. BJP will face inevitable defeat, for no party that wages linguistic terror against Bengalis can ever win Bengal,” Mamata Banerjee said.

Mamata Banerjee further called the BJP a party of “vote chor”, stating that it is corrupt to its core.

“BJP is a party of vote-chorers, corrupt to the core, persecutors of Bengalis, and masters of deception. BJP is a national disgrace, and I condemn them in the strongest terms,” she said.

The Trinamool Congress moved a motion under rule 169 condemning the alleged incidents against the Bengali-speaking people across the country.

The remark came at a time when political rivalry between the BJP and TMC had been intensifying ahead of the upcoming assembly elections.

PM Modi will not address General Debate at high-level UNGA session

UNITED NATIONS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will not address the General Debate at the annual high-level session of the United Nations General Assembly later this month, according to a revised provisional list of speakers issued here.

The 80th session of the UN General Assembly will open on September 9. The high-level General Debate will run from September 23-29, with Brazil as the traditional first speaker of the session, followed by the US.

US President Donald Trump will address world leaders from the iconic UNGA podium on September 23, his first address to the UN session in his second term in the White House.

According to a revised provisional list of speakers for the high-level General Debate of the 80th session of the General Assembly released Friday, India will be represented by a ‘minister’.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will address the session on September 27.

According to a previous provisional list of speakers issued in July, Modi was scheduled to address the General Debate on September 26. The heads of government of Israel, China, Pakistan and Bangladesh are scheduled to address the UNGA General Debate on September 26.

Modi had travelled to the US in February this year for a bilateral meeting with Trump at the White House in Washington. Trump has imposed tariffs totalling 50 per cent on India, including 25 per cent for Delhi’s purchases of Russian oil.

The UNGA list of speakers for the General Debate is provisional and there is always possibility of changes in schedules and speakers ahead of the commencement of the high-level week.

The list will continue to be updated accordingly.



Women, the UN General Assembly will convene a high-level meeting centred on the theme “Recommitting to, resourcing and accelerating the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls”.

The meeting will reflect on progress since the landmark 1995 conference in Beijing and highlight achievements, best practices, gaps, and ongoing challenges in advancing gender equality worldwide, the UN said.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres will convene a Climate Summit on September 24 to serve

as a platform for world leaders to present their new national climate action plans and seize the benefits of the new clean energy era.

Other high-level meetings to be held during the week include Summit for a Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Global Economy; Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health and Well-being; 30th Anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth; Launch of the Global Dialogue on AI Governance; International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons; and Situation of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar.

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INTERNATIONAL

I’ll always be friends with Modi; India & US have special tie, nothing to worry about: Trump



WASHINGTON

Amid current tensions between Washington and Delhi over tariffs and purchase of Russian oil, US President Donald Trump said India and the United States have a “special relationship” and there’s nothing to worry about as the two countries “just have moments on occasion”. “I’ll always be friends with (Narendra) Modi... He’s a great prime minister. He’s great. But I just don’t like what he’s doing at this particular moment. But

India and the United States have a special relationship. There’s nothing to worry about. We just have moments on occasion,” Trump said in the Oval Office on Friday.

The president was responding to a question on whether he is ready to reset relations with India, as ties between the two countries continue to reel under possibly the worst phase in over two decades.

Trump also said he is “very disappointed” that India would be buying “so much oil” from Russia. “I’ve been very disappointed

that India would be buying so much oil from Russia, and I let them know that. We put a very big tariff on India, 50 per cent tariff, very high tariff. I get along very well with (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi, he’s great. He was here a couple of months ago,” Trump said in response to a question on his social media post that the US has lost India and Russia to China.

In the Truth Social post, Trump said that “Looks like we’ve lost India and Russia to deepest, darkest, China. May they have a long

and prosperous future together!”

Trump had also posted an old photo of Modi with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese leader Xi Jinping. Trump’s post on social media came days after the bonhomie among Modi, Xi and Putin at a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in the Chinese city of Tianjin drew global attention. To a question on how trade talks are going with India and other countries, Trump said, “They are going great. Other countries are doing great. We’re doing great with all of them. We’re upset with the European Union because of what’s happening with not just Google, but with all of our big companies.” Meanwhile, Trump administration’s Senior Counselor for Trade and Manufacturing, Peter Navarro, said in a post on X that India’s highest tariffs cost US jobs.

“India buys Russian oil purely to profit/revenues feed Russia war machine. Ukrainians/Russians die. US taxpayers shell out more. India can’t handle truth/spins,” Navarro said. National Economic Council Director Kevin Hassett said that Trump and his trade team are disappointed that India continues to “fund” Russia’s Ukraine war.

“I think the trade team and the president are disappointed that India continues to fund Russia’s Ukraine war, and hopefully it’s a diplomatic issue that will have positive development soon,” Hassett told reporters at the White House on Friday.

Israel strikes high-rise building as it sets sights on taking over Gaza City

DEIR AL-BALAH

Israel struck a high-rise building in Gaza City on Friday after an evacuation warning, as the military stepped up operations aimed at seizing control of the famine-stricken city of some 1 million Palestinians. Strikes elsewhere in Gaza City killed at least 27 people, health officials said.

The military accused Hamas militants of using high-rises in the city for surveillance and planned ambushes, and said it would carry out “precise, targeted strikes” on militant infrastructure in the coming days.

Israel has begun mobilizing tens of thousands of reservists and is repeating evacuation warnings as part of its plan to widen its offensive, which has sparked opposition domestically and condemnation abroad.

Palestinians said Friday’s strike targeted the Mushtaha tower in Rimal, an upscale neighborhood before the war. Gaza City resident Ahmed al-Boari said people fleeing Israeli operations elsewhere in the city had sought shelter in and around the building. Satellite imagery showed a large number of tents nearby.

It was not immediately clear if anyone was wounded or killed in the strike.

Israel said it struck the building because it was used by Hamas for surveillance. Photos of the building taken before Friday’s strike showed that its roof was already heavily damaged from earlier raids.

Israel has declared Gaza City, in the north of the territory, to be a combat zone. Parts of the city are already considered “red zones” where Palestinians have been ordered to evacuate ahead of expected heavy fighting.

That has left residents on edge, including many who returned after fleeing the

city in the initial stages of the war, which has already displaced around 90% of the territory’s population.

The offensive has also sparked widespread protests among Israelis who fear it will endanger hostages still held in Gaza, some of whom are believed to be in Gaza City. There are 48 hostages still held in Gaza, 20 of them believed by Israel to be alive.

Hamas released a propaganda video Friday of two hostages in Gaza City. The video shows Guy Gilboa-Dalal in a car, at one point joined by another hostage, Alon Ohel.

Gilboa-Dalal speaks, likely under duress, pleading for an end to the war and the return of hostages. He was last seen in a video more than six months ago with another hostage, Evyatar David, as they watched other hostages being released during a ceasefire.

Israel has killed more than 64,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza’s Health Ministry, which does not say how many were civilians or combatants but says women and children make up around half the dead.

Palestinians run for cover during an Israeli airstrike on a high-rise building in Gaza City, Friday, Sept. 5, 2025, after the Israeli army issued a prior warning.

Israeli settlers descended on the Palestinian village of Khatat A-Daba in the occupied West Bank overnight, attacking residents with clubs and pepper spray, said Palestinians who arrived at the village in the attack’s aftermath.

Video obtained from Palestinian activist Adeb Huraini, 26, showed an older man with cuts on his head and leg, and a woman whose headscarf was soaked in blood.

Another video shows Basel Adra, a local activist, holding a baby with blood on its head, calling for help

and saying there is “a lot of blood.” Adra said nine Palestinians were hospitalized after the attack.

Adra helped direct “No Other Land,” an Oscar-winning documentary about settler violence in the area. The Israeli military demolished much of the village last month.

The military did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Israeli and Palestinian human rights groups protested new U.S. sanctions aimed at Palestinian civil society, saying in a joint statement that they would inflict “severe harm on key human rights organizations that have worked for decades to protect Palestinians.”

The Trump administration on Thursday announced sanctions on three Palestinian groups — Al Haq, Al Mezan, and the Palestinian Center for Human Rights. The new measures would make it harder for them to receive donations from the United States.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the U.S. was targeting the groups over their involvement with the International Criminal Court’s efforts to investigate, arrest and prosecute Israelis.

Last year, the ICC issued arrest warrants for Netanyahu and his former defense minister, alleging crimes against humanity in Gaza. The United States and Israel have rejected the allegations and the U.S. has sanctioned a number of ICC judges and prosecutors.

“The U.S. is effectively punishing the very act of addressing human rights violations and abuses,” said Ammar Dwaik, head of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights. “This criminalizes accountability and sets a dangerous precedent worldwide that governments can silence investigators.”

Manipur Art Festival Kicks Off with Vibrant Celebrations

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BISWADEEP GUPTA

IMPHAL

The two-day Manipur Art Festival began on Saturday at the Manipur State Film Development Society (MSFDS) Complex in Imphal, promising a spectacular showcase of artistic talent and cultural heritage. The festival was inaugurated by esteemed senior artists Ch. Premananda Roy, Ksh Sarat Singh and Chandam Lalit Singh setting the tone for a weekend of creativity and innovation. A highlight of the event was the participation of six Internally Displaced People (IDP) artists, who captivated the audience with their performances. The festival features 11 art stalls, each showcasing diverse art forms, including art exhibitions, fashion installations, face painting, and photography.



Attendees can look forward to interactive workshops, engaging children's activities, and a delightful array of local culinary delights. The event is organised by R&V Art House, with Robin Wahengbam, Director and Co-founder, revealing that the main motive behind the festival is to provide a platform for local artists to showcase their talent, aligning with the agenda of "Art for All." This marks the fourth edition of the Manipur Art Festival. Previous editions were held in 2018, 2019, and a virtual edition in 2023. The festival promises to be an unforgettable experience, celebrating the rich artistic heritage of Manipur and beyond.



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2026

4th January - 4th February 2026

www.northeastintegrationrally.in



ACTIVITY PROGRAM





BARAK FESTIVAL

JANUARY 10-12, 2025

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 NE Cultural Fest. School, College, University Department, Individual & Group Competition.



11 JAN

Adventure Sports

Tracking | Canyoneering | Sport Climbing | Disaster Management Technique | Water Sports



11 JAN

Barak Valley Conclave

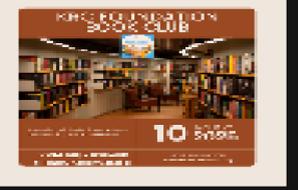
Potential Issues and Challenges of Barak Valley to be discussed by stakeholders. Includes: KCCs, and D'gongal and can register for free. Registration: 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM, and present on 6:00 PM. Participation is through invitation only. Different awards are provided.



10 Jan

Barak Festival: Peace Progress & Prosperity





JAN'25

Online Global Fest

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



BROADCAST PARTNER



REGISTER HERE

CONTACT: info@krcfoundation.org

12 JAN

River-Climate Conclave

State leaders will deliberate on Climate Change, pollution and river flooding. The Conclave will focus on the importance, technical and practical of River Barak, Training & Geography expertise and certification. River Barak, Climate Change.



11 JAN

Media Conclave

Media Conclave: Media Experts, Webinars, and the Fund, Talks and Conferences are part of the 'Barak Festival 2025'. Theme: 'One for All, All for One'. Media Conclave: Media Experts, Journalists, Blogger & content creators, sponsors, guides, speakers, members.



Barak Festival

Adventure Sports, Art & Culture Promotion

11 JAN

5E For Success Conclave

The 4th 5E 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 & College Extension, School, Public Speaking (College). In an online event where students of NE India Schools and Colleges can participate.



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PAINTING CARNIVAL

NE CULTURAL FEST

E-SPORTS

FILM FESTIVAL | EXHIBITION

BOOK CLUB | WORKSHOP | GUEST | NEW BARRAK | RECORDS

CONTACT: info@krcfoundation.org

10-12 JAN

Science Studio

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



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'.



Barak Festival

Band Night 10 JAN

Musical Night 11 JAN

10-12 JAN

E-Sports

Full-Blown Demos | CASH PRIZES | Trophy



11 JAN

film festival

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





CONTACT: info@krcfoundation.org

10-12 JAN

Book Bank

Anti-Book Campaign | Book Bank | e-books | e-audio | e-video

Book Club

Meet Authors, Publishers, Read & Discuss, Buy and Sell Books

Painting Carnival

Water Colour and other Drawing Campaign

5E SUCCESS

STUDENT INTERNSHIP

Discover valuable experience and learn more about the Industry.

APPLY NOW

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