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PERSPECTIVE

India vs Pakistan. Heart says don't watch, mind says does it even matter, patriotism says boycott, sanity says cheer your team. Even my mai-baaps are giving mixed signals. What on earth should I do?
~ Harsh Goenka, Chairman, RPG Enterprises

Manipur battered by intense rains, flash floods and landslides



IMPHAL
Manipur is facing serious damage and disruption following torrential rains over the past 24 hours. Several low-lying areas and hill districts have reported flash floods, waterlogging, and landslides, reported.

According to the news agency, Yaingangpokpi, Santikhongbal and Sabungkhok Khunou in Imphal East have been inundated. In Imphal West, Kakwa and Sagolband are also submerged. Houses and residential compounds have been waterlogged.

Landslides were reported in Awangkhum (Noney district), as well as in the hill districts of Senapati and Kamjong.

Major rivers, Imphal, Nambul and Iril have seen water levels rising significantly, though so far below danger marks.

Most parts of the northeastern state have recorded moderate to heavy rainfall in the past 24 hours, with forecasts of more downpour on Sunday.

WHO SAID WHAT



In 2011 when Dr Bhupen Hazarika passed away not a single person came from the Government of India to pay their respects. Today that wound has been healed with none other than Hon'ble Prime Minister himself leading #BhupenDaAct100 celebrations and paying tributes to Sudhakanta.
~ Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, CM Assam

PM's visit meaningful only if normalcy restored, priority given to indigenous people: Manipur MLA Imo Singh

IMPHAL

Sagolband MLA Rajkumar Imo Singh stated that a memorandum, endorsed by hundreds of residents from his constituency, would be submitted to the Prime Minister. The collective appeal emphasizes restoration of peace, protection of indigenous communities, and concrete measures to resolve the ongoing crisis in the state.

Taking to social media platform X, Singh stated that the memorandum would reflect the long-standing demands of the people, including the reopening of highways, completion of border fencing, detection of illegal immigrants, regulation of the Free Movement Regime (FMR), implementation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Manipur, constitutional safeguards for indigenous communities, and the safe return of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

"Hundreds of people will be coming to my residence to sign the memorandum. While



we may hold different views, we must stay united for the greater cause of Manipur's peace and development. The visit of the Prime Minister will be meaningful only when it leads to full normalcy, with priority given to the protection of indigenous people," Singh wrote.

The memorandum, addressed to the Hon'ble Prime Minister, was titled "Collective Appeal for Restoration of Peace, Protection of Indigenous People, and Lasting Solutions in Manipur." It underlined the urgent need to rebuild confidence among communities and ensure that displaced families are safely rehabilitated with adequate support.

The appeal also highlighted the importance of national security measures by urging the regulation of the FMR and completion of fencing along the international border. It further called upon the Centre to take firm steps against illegal immigration and to introduce constitutional provisions that safeguard Manipur's indigenous identity.

The MLA expressed optimism that with the Prime Minister's intervention, Manipur could overcome the current challenges and achieve lasting peace. "We firmly believe that under your leadership, the identity of Manipur can be safeguarded and the aspirations of our people fulfilled," the memorandum read.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday, September 13 landed in Manipur, where he interacted with displaced families in Churachandpur and lauded the resilience of the state's people.

Upon his arrival in Churachandpur, the Prime Minister received a warm welcome from locals. Addressing the gathering,

he recounted how heavy rains had grounded his helicopter, forcing him to travel by road. Describing the experience as "a blessing in disguise," PM Modi said the detour allowed him to witness the people's enthusiasm firsthand. "It was a memorable journey. The energy and warmth of the people along the way deeply touched me," he remarked.

During the visit, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone for projects worth over Rs 8,500 crore in Manipur, aimed at strengthening infrastructure and expanding healthcare access in the state. He emphasized that the initiatives would transform lives by boosting connectivity, improving facilities, and creating opportunities for local communities.

Calling Manipur "the land of courage and determination," PM Modi praised the spirit of its people and the natural beauty of its hills, which he said reflect the relentless hard work and resilience of the state's citizens. "I salute the spirit of the people of

Manipur," he said while assuring the government's continued support for the state's development.

Former Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh on Saturday, September 13 extended a warm welcome to Prime Minister Narendra Modi ahead of his state visit, voicing optimism that the trip would usher in "peace and lasting progress" for Manipur.

In a message shared on X, Biren Singh wrote: "A heartfelt welcome to Manipur, Adarniya Pradhan Mantri Narendra Modi Ji. The people of Manipur hold a sincere hope that this moment will lead us to peace and lasting progress. Together, we look ahead with trust that tomorrow will be safer, stronger, and more prosperous."

However, the visit drew sharp criticism from the Congress. The party termed the trip "tokenism," alleging that it amounted to a "pit stop" and a "grave insult" to the people of Manipur, given the state's ongoing challenges.

PM Modi lays foundation stones for health, infra projects worth Rs 6,300 crore in Assam's Darrang

"NEXT ERA BELONGS TO THE NORTHEAST": PM MODI

MANGALDOI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday laid the foundation stones for health and infrastructure projects worth Rs 6,300 crore at Mangaldoi in Assam's Darrang district.

He launched the construction of Darrang Medical College and Hospital, along with a nursing college and a GNM school.

The combined investment in these healthcare projects is worth Rs 570 crore, officials said.

The PM also laid the foundation stones for the 2.9 km-long Narengi-Kuruwa bridge with an estimated cost of Rs 1,200 crore and the 118.5 km-long Guwahati Ring Road project, connecting Kamrup and Darrang districts in Assam and Ri Bhoi in Meghalaya.

The cost for the Ring Road project was estimated at Rs 4,530 crore.

The PM will, later in the day, inaugurate the newly constructed over Rs 5000-crore bamboo-based ethanol plant and the Rs 7,230-crore Petro Fluidised Catalytic Cracker Unit at the Numaligarh Refinery in Golaghat district.



Modi had arrived in Assam on Saturday evening and attended Bharat Ratna awardee Bhupen Hazarika's birth centenary celebrations.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, addressing a public rally in Darrang on Sunday, September 14 launched a

strong attack on the Congress while highlighting the achievements and future vision of the BJP-led "double-engine government" in Assam.

Taking a jibe at the opposition, Modi remarked, "When the 'Kamdaar' (hardworking) defeats the 'Namdaar' (dynastic), and if the

Kamdaar cries out in pain, they torture him even more, saying you don't even have the right to cry. How can you cry being a Kamdaar in front of the Namdaar? The people of India—music lovers, art lovers, those dedicating their lives for the soul of India—should ask the Con-

gress why they insulted Bhupen Da." He stressed that respecting Assam's cultural legacy, safeguarding it, and accelerating the state's development remain top priorities of the BJP government.

The Prime Minister further announced development projects worth nearly ₹6,500 crore, asserting that these initiatives will transform Assam into a hub of connectivity and healthcare excellence. He underlined that the country is marching forward with the vision of building a "Viksit Bharat," where the Northeast will play a crucial role. "Twenty-five years of the 21st century have passed. The coming years belong to the East, to the Northeast," he said.

Highlighting connectivity as a key driver of growth, Modi emphasized the government's focus on expanding roads, railways, and airways, alongside strengthening digital connectivity through 5G, internet, and broadband networks. These advancements, he said, are not only improving lives but also boosting business opportunities and preparing the region for a brighter future.

Human Rights Commission writes to Assam DGP over journalist attack in Lumding, seeks report



LUMDING

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has taken suo motu cognisance of media reports regarding the brutal assault of journalist Sujit Sarkar, popularly known as Hari, near the Lumding Railway Institute in Assam on the night of September 7.

According to initial accounts, Sarkar was allegedly attacked by a group of nearly 20 individuals while he was returning home after work. The assail-

ants reportedly beat him and looted his gold chain, mobile phone, watch, and motorcycle. Police arrived at the scene shortly after the incident, rescued the journalist, and shifted him to Lumding Civil Hospital for treatment. Authorities have detained two persons for questioning and registered a First Information Report (FIR).

The NHRC has expressed deep concern over the incident, stating that such attacks raise grave issues of human rights violations. The Commission has issued a notice to the Assam Director General of Police, directing submission of a detailed report within two weeks.

The assault sparked outrage among media circles and local residents. The Lumding Press Club, along with citizens, has strongly condemned the attack, urging stringent action against those responsible and demanding enhanced safety measures for journalists working in the region.

Meanwhile, police officials confirmed that the investigation is underway. However, they also noted that counter-allegations have emerged suggesting the journalist may have been under the influence of alcohol during the incident.

Sushmita Dev Slams Assam CM: 'Confused, Unable to Handle State Unrest

GUWAHATI

Trinamool Congress MP Sushmita Dev on Sunday, September 14 launched a sharp attack on Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, accusing him of misleading communities with contradictory statements on issues of D-Voters and Aadhaar card distribution.

Dev alleged that the chief minister was "in complete confusion" while attempting to pacify growing discontent against the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the state. Referring to a recent incident in Tinsukia that went viral on social media, she said Sarma had promised protection to Hindu Bengalis and assured them Aadhaar cards, despite the fact that the Centre had already announced no new Aadhaar issuances from October 1.

"The Hindu Bengalis of Assam must understand that Aadhaar has nothing to do with citizenship. The BJP itself, along with the Election Commission of India (ECI), has categorically stated this," Dev asserted. She maintained that linking Aadhaar to citizenship status was "a deliberate attempt to mislead" vulnerable communities.

On the contentious issue of D-Voters (doubtful voters), Dev



stressed that the matter falls strictly under the jurisdiction of the Election Commission of India, not the state government. She pointed out that the D-Voter category was introduced in 1997 during an intensive revision drive and that only the ECI has the authority to remove such tags after due verification.

She further warned that the forthcoming State-wide Reverification (SIR) exercise would once again force people to submit documents to prove their citizenship, with the final decision resting solely with the ECI. "The chief minister has absolutely no role in this process," she said.

Citing the Immigrants Exclusion Act of 1950, Dev highlighted that under the BJP's declared standard operating procedures, district administrations could issue a 10-day notice to suspected individuals. "If one fails to provide satisfactory documents, they can be asked to leave Assam and be deported to Bangladesh. Otherwise, they risk being confined in detention centres or forcibly pushed back by border forces," she cautioned. Dev accused the BJP of playing politics with sensitive issues, adding that communities in Assam continue to feel betrayed by "unfulfilled promises and misleading assurances."

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PAPER TO PIXELS

What is the true meaning of a certificate? I found asking myself the question while reading about some Andhra Pradesh colleges withholding certificates from nursing students and asking them to work for a "service period" of a year in an affiliated hospital before being "released". A nurse quoted in the story was planning to apply for a job in her home state, Kerala, using the certificate. The coercive clause delayed her life plan.

It's baffling how such a modern form of bonded labour exists, under which apart from paying college fees one has to work for a stipulated period too. No wonder the legal validity of such a contract is facing public interest litigation now.

But I do understand collaterals. The talk of an 'original certificate' brought back memories of thick papers signed by calligraphic hands, with stamps of approval that made faking difficult. One carefully saved a 'provisional' certificate, followed by its 'original'. Employers usually returned the original after inspection of copies duly attested by a government officer or an equivalent. But then, there were some nasty employers who held back the originals as collaterals to prevent employees from leaving.

Legally, a certification is proof of qualification that the dictionary defines as "action or process of providing someone or something with an official document attesting to a status or level of achievement". By that yardstick, the Supreme Court has clarified that Aadhaar is sufficient as a certificate of residency to enable a voter identity, but not as a proof of citizenship. The prime minister's post-graduation certificate has been a subject of legal banter over its verification.

All such questions, however, should be buried in the sands of time with new technologies that enable easy, foolproof verification and transmission. We know about the biometrics that go with Aadhaar, whose project leader Nandan Nilekani pointed out that it is a "number, and not a card". What is often touted as an Aadhaar card is a print-out reporting the unique identification number. This essentially means that an Aadhaar number is associated with a person with certifiable features, including a proof of residency.

What we are waiting for now is the Aadhaar revolution's equivalent in certificates concerning education, academic credits and experience, and evolve from the current know your customer framework to another KYC—know your candidate. We have the DigiLocker model cutting across educational institutions and domains to stop the exploitation of students and job-seekers and reduce bureaucratic red tape, but progress has been slow. It needs to be adopted the way we have done with land records. As India marks 50 years of the cult classic Sholay, I recall visiting Ramnagar, the film's hilly shooting site that is also a pioneering area for digitisation of farm records. I was taken on the pleasant drive outside Bengaluru by Rajeev Chawla, the IAS officer who led Karnataka's Bhoomi project, which became a case study on e-governance at Princeton University.

Chawla showed me how digitisation, once done, meant that a farmer could get a bank loan against a printout directly verifiable with government records, and bypass corrupt local record-keepers (patwaris) who could harass them. Last year, the Union government reported that 95 percent of India's rural land records have now been digitised—after early struggles by the likes of Chawla, who had to train people, forge technology partnerships and build processes that made it all possible.

In certification, DigiLocker holds promise as a secure, cloud-based platform allowing citizens to store, access, and share digital copies of their official documents including Aadhaar, driving licences, and educational certificates. This allows real-time document verification, secure sharing with unique document codes, and user-controlled access. The verification works through digitally signed and secure QR codes on documents so that details are authenticated against the signature and data stored by the issuer in the DigiLocker system. People like the harassed nursing student in Andhra Pradesh should embrace this, and the government needs to loudly advertise it.

Under India's IT laws, universities must accept documents from DigiLocker National Academic Depository (NAD) as legally valid alternatives to physical copies. However, they are not mandatorily bound to join the system—and that is a loophole impeding faster adoption.

The government has been setting deadlines for institutions to join the NAD, and the University Grants Commission has also been stepping up pressure on affiliated bodies. The DigiLocker scheme was launched in 2015 and the NAD in 2017. Evidently, the pace of progress has not matched that of Aadhaar usage. Both state-level universities and private institutions need to be pressured to embrace the NAD.

The arrival of blockchain as a technology to store records in a foolproof way strengthens the system. The NAD already uses blockchain for storing degrees from many accredited institutions. Blockchain stores certificates with unique digital footprints in an immutable, decentralised ledger to prevent forgery at any level.

What we could do is not only legally and administratively push private institutions to make the DigiLocker system as ubiquitous as Aadhaar, and add digitally-signed contracts to it. This might save people from falling prey to dubious private contracts that often fail to withstand legal scrutiny.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Beware of the man who does not return your blow; he neither forgives you nor allows you to forgive yourself.

- George Bernard Shaw

UPRISING IN NEPAL INDIA'S RESPONSE!

DR. D.K. GIRI

Nepal has been suddenly plunged into an unprecedented political crisis that set public structures including the Supreme Court and the Parliament on fire. The houses of politicians were not excluded. The former Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and his wife, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the outgoing government were physically assaulted in their house. What was worse is that about 22 people were killed by the Nepal Security Agencies while controlling the uprising. Reportedly, the revolt was triggered by an accidental death of a youth and the sudden suspension of social media. Both these developments sent an outrage among the so-called Gen-Z. It started with a small group and snowballed into a country-wide agitation.

Who are the participants in this uprising and who is the vanguard? Like many such revolts witnessed across the world including in South Asia, the uprising in Nepal was spontaneous without a particular leadership and was self-mobilised. The uprising in Bangladesh which made the then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina flee into India, in Sri Lanka throwing out Rajapaksha brothers of the country, Arab Spring and at the time of writing, the agitation in France. These are led by Gen-Z, the youths born roughly between 1995 and 2010 who are net-savvy and are highly dependent on social media for their professional as well as personal interactions.

The movement has been collectively mobilised without any frontline leaders although mature leadership has come up in the form of Balendra Shah, an independent political leader and the Mayor of Kathmandu, and a new political party Rashtriya Swatantra Party, opposed to the mainstream parties. How long their leadership of this movement will continue, is a matter of conjecture, especially when Balendra Shah is making radical demand like dissolution of the Parliament and a fundamental change of the political structure. However, according to the latest reports, the army has taken over and has asked the former Chief Justice of Nepal, Sushila Karki to be the Interim Chief. This is a repeat of Bangladesh. Let's keep our fingers crossed.

Without any doubt, the uprising was instigated by the ban on social media. Like many such movements, the uprising in Nepal is fast including many other issues such as deep structural failures of Nepal's democratic experiment bordering on political dysfunction, rampant corruption, nepotism and the lavish lifestyles of political elites' children while the rest are caught in under development and deprivation; above seven lakh youths have emigrated out of the country in search of jobs and livelihoods. This is not new as such movements assume a broader platform. Way back in 1975, the Nava Nirman Movement led by youths and students initially against corruption in India, turned into 'total revolution' under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narain. In Arab Spring, a protest by a fruit vendor against the local authorities in Tunisia turned into a movement for democracy across the Arab world.

Could the uprising be anticipated by the government of KPS Oli? The answer is yes or no. The Nepali politics past the monarchy has been unstable. Since the new Constitution was adopted making Nepal into a Republic in 2008, fourteen



governments have been in power, making a new government every 14 months. There have also been movements for revival of monarchy. The alliance formation has been crazy in Nepal. The three big players – The Communist Party of Nepal (CPN-UML) headed by KPS Oli and the Nepali Congress of Sher Bahadur Deuba and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) led by Pushpa Kamal Dahal, known as Prachanda have alternated in power between three of them.

Observers from inside and outside Nepal are contemplating what will happen next? KPS Oli has resigned a day after the uprising. The Nepali army has so far taken a neutral stance while backing up the law and order. The Opposition holds that the current crisis stemmed from the undemocratic alliance between the Nepali Congress and CPN (UML) who instead of ensuring checks and balances have formed a coalition to come to power by undermining democratic norms. Their record of political corruption, misuse of proposed constitutional amendments to weaken smaller parties and suppression of dissent within their own ranks have eroded public trust and instigated widespread frustration. They appeal to the youth for embarking upon peace and dialogue while recognise their concerns against corruption and freedom of expression.

The dominant view in Nepal is that a caretaker government within the constitutional framework ensuring inclusion at a broader scale including the youth should be put in place. Such an arrangement will restore stability, pave the way for necessary reforms to strengthen democracy in Nepal and ensure accountability for the tragic deaths caused by indiscriminate police firing. But who will initiate this process? Although involvement of army generally in politics and in the government formation in particular is not a healthy practice in a democracy, a facilitating role played by the army in a fragile democracy may be accepted.

How is India responding to it? Given the current tenuous ties between India and its

neighbours, it is good opportunity for India to help stabilise democracy in Nepal. The Himalayan state of Nepal has a strategic location and is sandwiched between two big powers – India and China. Both the Communist parties look upto China while the Nepali Congress is India-friendly. Be that as it may, India has maintained close contacts with all three of them. This is time for New Delhi to give them a helping hand whereas China cannot do so without any experience of democratic politics.

The diplomatic reaction from India is studied and neutral as it should be. The MEA said that India is closely monitoring the unfolding situation in Nepal post the resignation of KPS Oli on Tuesday, September 9, "We are closely monitoring the developments in Nepal since yesterday and are deeply saddened by the loss of many young lives. Our thoughts and prayers are with families of deceased. We also wish speedy recovery for those who were injured". The Prime Minister's reaction was more touching and meaningful. "The violence in Nepal is heart-rending. I am anguished that many young people have lost their lives," Modi wrote in a post on X on Tuesday. Stressing that "stability, peace and prosperity of Nepal are of utmost importance", he appealed to "all my brothers and sisters in Nepal to support peace".

The India-Nepal ties are special and different from India's relations with rest of her neighbours. Nepal has borders of 1,750 km (466 miles) with five Indian states, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Sikkim, Bihar and West Bengal. More than 3.5 million Nepalis work in India without restriction under 1950 Treaty.

In addition to this, 32,000 Gorkha soldiers of Nepal serve in the Indian Army. The people-to-people ties are very close, in colloquial terms it is called Roti-Beti relations (sharing a meal and marrying daughters in their respective communities). Yet, India seems to have lost that 'Midas touch' in dealing with Nepal. This was largely because of the interference by China in internal affairs of Nepal.

India had taken its eyes off its neigh-

bours in its quest for a world role. But that should start by having a secure and stable neighbourhood. Uprisings took place in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and now in Nepal. In Bangladesh, it was partly directed against India. So far, it is not the case in Nepal. New Delhi has great opportunity in converting this crisis into a diplomatic opportunity.

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

One of the most significant highlights of Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri @narendramodi ji's visit to Manipur took place in Churachandpur district, when Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla made a firm statement concerning a core issue that has afflicted Manipur for decades and is deeply connected with the violence in the state. He addressed the issue of illegal immigration in Manipur, reminding the crowd in Churachandpur district that we cannot afford our lands to be encroached or illegally inhabited by people from beyond the borders. He further assured that both the State and the Central Government are committed to taking effective steps to address this challenge. What makes the announcement extremely significant is that it was made in the presence of Hon'ble PM Modi who was sitting right next to Hon'ble Governor Shri AK Bhalla on the podium. Understandably, the Hon'ble PM Modi could not personally make this announcement due to various reasons. However, the governor addressed this core issue in PM's place, and this speaks volumes.
~ Sanajaoba, Research Scholar, Department for South-East Asian Studies, Manipur University.



India's Commitment to Justice and Strategic Precision

DR SUNIL BHARDWAJ

Operation Sindoor, a punitive campaign against terrorist infrastructure, was catapulted by India in response to a devastating Pakistan backed terror attack on innocent tourists in Pahalgam on April 22, 2025, where 26 civilians were killed that sent shockwaves through the nation. It was not just an attack – it was a massacre marked by the selective targeting of identity, a gruesome reminder of the darkest side of religious extremism claiming innocent lives. It was an apparent attempt to foment communal violence in India. A doctrine that subjugates Pakistani minds from the times of Muhammad Ali Jinnah to Muhammad Zia-Ul-Haq to Pervaz Musharraf to Asif Ali Zardari and so on.

Pakistan has a documented history of transgressing principles of democracy, human rights, and international law, often characterized by military rule and the military's pervasive political influence and for decades, India's responses to such provocations were often reactive and restrained. Even in 2016 surgical strike and the 2019 Balakot airstrikes, India exercised restrained force targeting specific terrorist infrastructure and avoided striking deep into Pakistan's mainland. But, this time under the resolute leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi the narrative has seen a paradigm shift and objective was to dismantle Pakistan's terror factories operating in Pakistan. India's security landscape has undergone a complete overhaul in the past decade, marked by assertive postures and calibrated military responses to threats across its borders. Our former Prime Minister and visionary statesman Late Atal Bihari Vajpayee accentuated at

many occasions to strike a balance between India's commitment to peace and to protect India's sovereignty as top priority. Now, India is not only prepared to defend its sovereignty but is also willing to take bold initiatives when its sovereignty is challenged or national interests are threatened. In a volatile region where traditional hostilities continue to simmer and hybrid warfare tactics are increasingly employed, Operation Sindoor was planned under Prime Minister's leadership with precision and foresight. Vegetius, a Roman writer who penned 'De Re Militari'. The Art of War said that, 'If you want peace, prepare for war' means 'Peace without Power is Utopian'. Throughout the development with Pakistan PM Modi stayed focused on objective against terrorism and established that 'terrorism and its sponsors will be treated alike'. India's offensive strikes targeted key Pakistani airbases Noor Khan and Rahim Yar Khan besides terrorist camps like Sawai Nala, Sayed Na Bilal, Abdullah Bin Masood, Balakot, Kotli, Dungi, Muridkeet with surgical precision. Sites like Markaz Subhan Allah in Bahawalpur and Markaz Taiba in Muridke were not arbitrary targets they were the nerve centres behind some of the most heinous attacks on India, including the IC814 hijacking, the 2001 Parliament attack, and the 26/11 Mumbai carnage. Camps in Sialkot, Muzaffarabad, and Barmala served as hubs for fanatical indoctrination and recruitment. Meanwhile, the Sarjal facility at Tehra Kalan was identified as a key weapons storage site, and Kotli and Muzaffarabad functioned as forward launchpads for terrorists infiltrating Indian territory. Operation Sindoor stands as a

defining example of this transformation—an operation that not only displayed India's defense preparedness and integration of tri-Services but also conveyed an explicit message of strategic clarity, resilience, and deterrence to adversaries.

Another facet of this operation was the fusion of indigenous hi-tech capabilities with contemporary warfare techniques. The operation showcased India's ability to synergize intelligence, surveillance, and advanced weapon systems into an effective strike capability. By leveraging cutting-edge indigenous defense technologies alongside well-trained forces, India reaffirmed its doctrine: credible deterrence coupled with calibrated response. From surveillance drones to precision strike platforms, India relied heavily on its growing defense manufacturing ecosystem, aligned with the Atmanirbhar Bharat vision. The Indian drone market is projected to reach \$11 billion by 2030 which will account for 12.2% of the global drone market.

The policy reforms, focus on domestic R&D, ban on imported drone since 2021 and the launch of PLI (Production Linked Incentive) schemes have been catalyzing this rapid innovation. Indigenous defense production has reached Rs 1.27 lakh crore in FY 2024-25 while exports crossed to Rs 23,622 crores in FY 2024-25, 34-fold increase from year 2013-14 fueled by robust R&D, private investment and strategic reforms. Operation Sindoor has proved that India's indigenous air defense as well as electronic warfare network remained superior to many of foreign supplied weaponry to Pakistan like 'PL-15 missile' of China, UAV named 'Yiha' or

'YEEHAW' of Turkey and many other long-range rockets, quadcopters and commercial drone which were successfully intercepted and destroyed during the operation. Make in India initiative launched by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in September 2014 continues to power the growth of the Indian defense sector. This self-reliance not only strengthens operational capabilities but also reduces dependency on foreign suppliers in critical times.

The success of Operation Sindoor underlines the growing maturity of India's defense-industrial complex under NDA regime.

Furthermore, the psychological and diplomatic impact of the operation was profound. India's prudent, focused and mensurable kinetic and non-kinetic efforts have played an indispensable part in shaping global geo-political and strategic environment in India's favour. The abeyance of 65 years old Indus water treaty (IWT) was perhaps the most radical move in recent chronicle because the Indus water system supports 237 million people and contributes to one-fourth of Pakistan's GDP through crops like wheat, rice and cotton etc. By keeping the Indus water treaty in abeyance India has sent a clear message that the 'Blood and Water cannot flow together'. Suspending the IWT is a powerful non-kinetic weapon which will severely weaken Pakistan's economy and morale, and mark a historic shift in India's strategic doctrine. It gives India a strategic upper hand in rethinking, redesigning and renegotiating Indus Water Treaty (IWT) in present context after Pakistan credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross boarder terrorism.

‘Op Sindoor huge success with blessings of Maa Kamakhya’: PM Modi recalls “Sudarshan Chakra Mission” in Assam

DARRANG

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday hailed Operation Sindoor and dedicated its success to Maa Kamakhya and Lord Krishna in Assam's Darrang.

Addressing a public meeting, during his first visit to Assam after Operation Sindoor, PM Modi said, “Yesterday was my first visit to Assam after Operation Sindoor. Operation Sindoor was a huge success with the blessings of Maa Kamakhya. Today, I am having a different holy experience by coming to this land of Maa Kamakhya.”

Wishing the public on the occasion of Janmashtami celebrations in Durrang, PM Modi recalled his Independence Day speech and hailed the idea of “Sudarshan Chakra” for national security.

“It is also an icing on the cake that Janmashtami is being celebrated in this region today. From the Red Fort, I had



said, I remembered Chakradhari Mohan. I remembered Shri Krishna, and I have put forth the idea of a Sudarshan Chakra in the future security policy before the people,” he said.

“This region is the centre for Assam's identity. I am fortunate to have a darshan of the public of a land full of inspiration and courage,” the Prime Minister added.

In his Independence Day address from the Red Fort, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the ambitious “Sudarshan Chakra Mission,” aimed at bolstering India's national security over the next decade.

“In the next ten years, by 2035, I want to expand, strengthen, and modernise this national security shield. Drawing inspiration from Lord Shri Krishna, we have chosen the path of the Sudarshan Chakra... The nation will be launching the Sudarshan Chakra Mission. The entire modern system should be researched, developed,

and manufactured in India, harnessing the talent of our youth. This powerful system will not only counter terrorist attacks but also strike back at the terrorists,” he said from the Red Fort.

“India aims to develop its own Iron Dome-like defence system, named Mission Sudarshan Chakra, designed to safeguard critical sites, including civilian areas,” he added.

Earlier today, PM Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the Darrang Medical College and Hospital, GNM School and B.Sc. Nursing College in Assam's Darrang.

He also laid the foundation for the Guwahati Ring Road Project that will enhance urban mobility, decongest traffic, and improve connectivity in and around the capital city, and the Kuruw-Narengi Bridge over the River Brahmaputra, improving connectivity and promoting socio-economic development in the region.

Meghalaya honeymoon murder: Sonam files bail petition, claims ‘flaws’ in charge sheet



SHILLONG

A Sohra court in Meghalaya has fixed September 17 for the hearing of a bail petition filed by Sonam Raghuvanshi, the prime accused in the sensational murder of her husband Raja Raghuvanshi during their honeymoon in the state. Judicial Magistrate First Class of Sohra sub-division took up the petition on Friday. However, the prosecution sought time to examine case records before responding. Additional Public Prosecutor Tushar Chandra informed.

Sonam's counsel has argued that there are “flaws” in the voluminous charge sheet filed by

Meghalaya Police in the case. Last week, police submitted a 790-page charge sheet against Sonam, her alleged boyfriend Raj Kushwaha, and three hired hitmen — Vishal Singh Chauhan, Akash Rajput, and Anand Kurmi. Raja Raghuvanshi, an Indore-based businessman, was brutally murdered by the contract killers at a secluded parking lot near Weisawdong in Sohra in May, while he was on his honeymoon. According to investigators, the murder was allegedly orchestrated by Sonam and Kushwaha.

The case came to light after the couple went missing in Meghalaya, triggering a nationwide search. Raja's body was later discovered, and Sonam surrendered before police in Uttar Pradesh even as the other accused were apprehended by Meghalaya Police.

The murder, marked by chilling premeditation and a trail of betrayal, has shocked the state and drawn nationwide attention.

‘Not even 10 minutes for woes’: Manipur Kuki BJP MLA

IMPHAL

In a rare public rebuke from within the ruling party, BJP MLA Paoliennial Haokip from the Kuki community has criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's short stopover in Manipur, questioning the purpose of the visit and calling it a waste of public resources.

Speaking after the Prime Minister's programme in Imphal, Haokip said the people of Manipur had hoped Modi would come to hear their grievances and aspirations. “But not even ten minutes were spared to listen to our woes—not even from party MLAs,” he said.

Calling the visit mere optics, Haokip added, “I'll meet and greet him when he has time to listen to the woes and aspirations of my people.” His comments reflect simmering dissatisfaction among sections of the BJP in Manipur, where the ongoing crisis has left tens of thousands displaced for over two years.

The Prime Minister's visit, marked by inaugurations and public announcements, has drawn sharp criticism from both the Opposition and sections of civil society, who expected a concrete roadmap for peace and rehabilitation in the violence-hit state.

Meanwhile, a group of 10 legislators from Manipur from the Kuki community submitted a joint memorandum to Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his first-ever visit to Churachandpur, appealing for an early political settlement and the creation of a separate Union Territory with a legislature. The memorandum, signed by MLAs cutting across BJP, KPA and Independent affiliations, stated that the minority community had been subjected to unprecedented “ethnic persecution” in Manipur, alleging state complicity in violence that forced them out of the valley areas.

North East Integration Rally 2026 launches quiz competition ahead of debut



KOLKATA/GUWAHATI:

The North East Integration Rally (NEIR) 2026, a first-of-its-kind cultural journey across all eight northeastern states, has launched its quiz competition through its social media platforms.

The rally, which will debut in January, is designed as a non-competitive car and motorcycle expedition blending adventure with cul-

tural exchange and social purpose. Organisers said the quiz is part of the run-up to the event, inviting wider engagement from young people and cultural enthusiasts.

NEIR is open to youth groups, NGOs, cultural organisations, adventure clubs, professionals, influencers and storytellers from India and abroad. Registration, however, requires more than enthusiasm — participants must commit to discipline, respect and responsibility, which the organisers describe as the rally's core values.

The event is being organised by the KRC Foundation, which has worked for more than two decades in education, employment, entrepreneurship and cultural exchange. According to the foundation, NEIR builds on this legacy by offering a platform “where adventure meets purpose.”

For registration and details, interested participants can visit <https://northeastintegrationrally.in>

Manipur's third Lok Adalat settles 298 cases with Rs 4.69 crore in settlements

IMPHAL

A total of 298 cases were successfully resolved during the third National Lok Adalat of 2025, with settlements amounting to Rs 4,69,31,411.

The event, held on Saturday, took place across all District Courts and the High Court of Manipur, officials confirmed on Sunday.

A total of 3,595 cases, including both pre-litigation matters and pending civil cases, were up for resolution during the Lok Adalat.

These cases covered a range of disputes, such as matrimonial issues, bank recovery cases, Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) cases, disputes under the Negotiable Instruments Act, land acquisition matters, as well as cases involving unpaid electricity, water, and telephone bills.

Justice A. Bimol Singh, Judge of the High Court of Ma-



nipur and Executive Chairman of the Manipur State Legal Services Authority (MASLSA), along with Justice A. Gujeshwar Sharma, also a Judge at the High Court, visited

the Lok Adalat sittings at the Lamphel Court and Thoubal Court Complex.

In an interaction with the media, Justice Bimol Singh emphasised that the National Lok Ada-

lat is held four times annually to ensure timely and amicable dispute resolution.

The next Lok Adalat is scheduled for December 13, 2025. Justice Bimol urged the public to take advantage of this alternative dispute resolution mechanism by submitting both pending and pre-litigation matters to the appropriate District Legal Services Authority or Court, ensuring these cases are included in the next sitting.

He also highlighted that, in line with directions from the Supreme Court of India, a 90-day special mediation campaign is currently being organised across all districts of Manipur to facilitate quicker resolutions.

The event was organized by the Manipur State Legal Services Authority (MASLSA) in collaboration with the High Court Legal Services Committee and the District Legal Services Authorities (DLSA).

Agartala prepares for Durga Puja; administration enforces restrictions and interim orders

AGARTALA

As the festive fervour builds, Agartala, the capital city of Tripura, is preparing for its most extravagant celebration of the year, Durga Puja, the state's biggest festival after West Bengal.

The city transforms into a dazzling spectacle, illuminated like a galaxy with magnificent pandals ranging from fifty lakhs to crores, drawing lakhs of devotees and pilgrims from across the country.

With such massive footfall anticipated, the Agartala Municipal Corporation (AMC) has enforced a series of restrictions and interim orders to ensure smooth traffic management, public safety, and peaceful festivities.

AMC Mayor Dipak Majumder remarked, “Durga Puja was once considered the greatest festival of



Hindu Bengalis, but today it has become a universal celebration. The grandest festivities in Tripura take place in the AMC area of Agartala, where over 806 pujas are organised,

making it the cultural heartbeat of the state.”

The Mayor further highlighted AMC's responsibilities during the festival—maintaining cleanliness,

curbing traffic congestion, and keeping pollution under control.

He noted that the Joynagar immersion ghat alone witnessed the immersion of more than 400 idols every year, making it the largest immersion site in North Tripura.

Acknowledging the state leadership, Majumder praised Chief Minister Manik Saha for ensuring disciplined and peaceful celebrations across the city and even extending festivities to remote regions.

“This year's Durga Puja will be celebrated in a more complete and vibrant way than ever before,” Dipak Majumder asserted.

As Agartala prepares itself, the festival promises not just devotion, but also a spectacular blend of tradition, culture, and community spirit—drawing the nation's eyes to the heart of Tripura.

Chaos erupts at viral ‘Patta Baba's’ camp in Sribhumi after stampede leaves several injured

RAMKRISHNA NAGAR

A massive crowd gathered in Ramkrishnanagar's Garerband area on Saturday, September 13 as thousands flocked to collect what are popularly believed to be “healing leaves” from a local spiritual figure known as Patta Baba. The rush to obtain the leaves led to chaotic scenes, with estimates suggesting that nearly 50,000 people assembled at the site.

The overwhelming crowd resulted in a stampede-like situation, forcing authorities to step in. A large contingent of police and paramilitary forces was deployed to bring the situation under control.

Karimganj Deputy Commissioner, who later visited the spot, held a meeting with local residents. Following the discussions, it was decided to temporarily suspend the distribution of the leaves for several days. The administration also announced the formation of a management committee to streamline the process and ensure adequate arrangements for devotees

traveling from distant areas. Furthermore, a cap has been imposed, limiting leaf distribution to no more than 3,000 people per day.

Officials highlighted that a similar situation unfolded earlier in the week when nearly 20,000 people had gathered to receive the leaves, again leading to unruly scenes that required heavy police presence.

Despite the administrative restrictions, the faith of the devotees remains unwavering. Many continue to arrive with patients in ambulances, on wheelchairs, and even carrying them in their arms, claiming that consuming Baba's leaves has brought them recovery from various ailments. Baba himself has asserted that the leaves are beneficial in treating certain illnesses, fueling the growing influx of followers.

The district administration has urged people to remain calm and cooperate with the measures, stressing that crowd management is necessary to avoid untoward incidents.

Scientists identify new Labeonine fish species in Manipur's Nambashi Valley

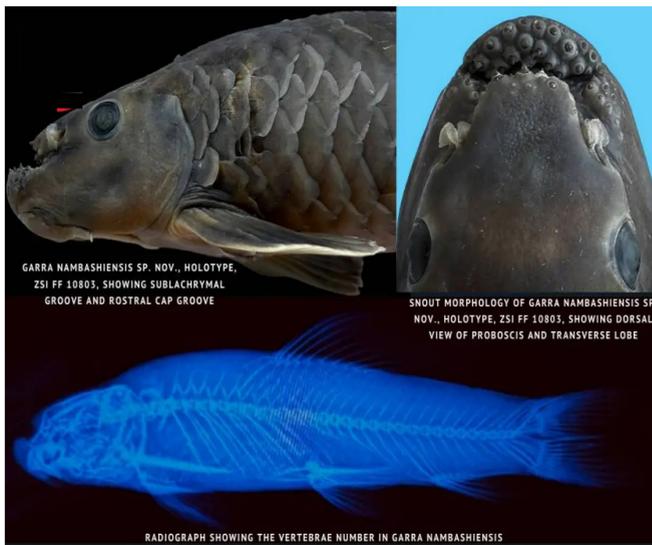
IMPHAL

A new freshwater fish species has been identified in Manipur, according to a study published in the peer reviewed journal, Zootaxa.

Garra nambashiensis – a new species of Labeonine fish – was found by a research team led by Dr Bungdon Shangningam of Dhanamanjuri University (DMU), Imphal, in Taretlok, a tributary of the Chindwin river, near the Nambashi Valley at Kasom Khullen in Kamjong district.

The other research team members are Kongbrailatpam Babyrani Devi, Thonbamliu Abonmai, and Kh Rajmani Singh. When contacted, Dr Shangningam, associate professor of DMU, said that following identification of the new fish species, a study paper was submitted to the journal in March this year.

This new species is distinguished from other members of the group as it has a quad-



rate-shaped unilobed proboscis with a row of 7-8 medium to large-sized conical acanthoid tubercles on anterolateral margin, a black spot on each side of opercle, dorsal-fin base with 8-11 scales, and

presence of six distinct narrow black stripes extending to the posterior margin of the hypural plate.

Dr Shangningam, a resident of Chakpikarong village in Chandel

district and a post doctoral fellow from the Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata, said: “This species falls within the 90-140 mm (9-14 cm) size range and it is locally known as Nutungnu.”

According to Zootaxa's citation, the new species was collected from swift-flowing riffles with algae-covered gravel beds and mixed substrate comprising cobbles, boulders, pebbles, sand, fine silt, and coarse sediments.

Currently, 60 species of Garra have been recorded from various river systems in the North East, encompassing the Eastern Himalayan and Indo-Burma regions. Of these, 32 are grouped in the ‘proboscis species group’ and occur in the Chindwin, Brahmaputra, Barak, and Kaladan river systems. Eight species have been recorded from the Chindwin river system alone, including the recently described G. chingaiensis, the study stated.

Garra nambashiensis is known to be available in the Taretlok river in Kamjong district bordering Myanmar.

In March 2018, Dr Shangningam had discovered Pethia poiensis, locally known as ngakha macha, in the Challou river in Ukhrul district.

Quest!

Abraham Lincoln gave a speech in 1856 that was so interesting that reporters forgot to take notes. To this day it is known as “Lincoln's Lost Speech”.

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‘Not single word of regret, nor did he apologise’: P Chidambaram on PM’s Manipur visit



NEW DELHI

Congress leader P Chidambaram on Sunday criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his visit to Manipur, accusing him of failing to apologise for not coming earlier and questioning the short duration of his stay.

In a post on X, Congress Rajya Sabha MP Chidambaram claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has “not even bothered” to visit Manipur and “did not apologise for not coming.”

The Congress leader wrote, “In the 2023 riots in Manipur, 258 people lost their lives, 1,108 people were injured, 532 places of worship were damaged, 60,000 people were displaced, thousands of people are still in

refugee camps today. For two years, Prime Minister Modi has not even bothered to visit Manipur.” Mr. Modi, who went to Manipur yesterday, did not express a single word of regret, nor did he apologise for not coming for two years. Can you buy the people of Manipur for Rs 7,300 crore projects, Rs 1,200 crore projects?” he added.

This is PM Modi’s first visit after an ethnic conflict erupted in Manipur in May 2023, and the discord between the Meitei and Kuki communities has persisted for a significant length of time.

The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of multiple development projects worth over Rs 7,300 crore at Churachandpur and inaugurated projects worth over Rs

1200 crore in Imphal.

Amid a political row over the visit, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh also took a dig at PM Modi.

In a post on X, Ramesh criticised the PM for spending less than five hours in the state, questioning his commitment to addressing the plight of Manipur’s people.

“The people of Manipur have been undergoing tremendous pain, distress, suffering, and agony for the past 28 months ever since the state erupted. The people of Manipur have waited patiently for the PM to visit the state. He has finally obliged them today. But he was in the state, from landing till take-off, for less than 5 hours,” he said.

Highlighting the brevity of the visit, Ramesh further remarked on X, “The PM has the time (and the inclination) to spend days campaigning and travelling across the world. But is Manipur worth only so much to him? It is shockingly insensitive.”

He concluded with a Hindi phrase, “der aae par durust nahi aae” (PM’s visit delayed, however, not adequate).

Meanwhile, during his visit to Manipur on Saturday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi appealed to various ethnic groups in Manipur to shun violence and work towards restoring peace in the state. He stated that a new dawn of “hope and confidence” is emerging in the northeastern state.

Learned men like Dayanand Saraswati, Mahatma Gandhi, KM Munshi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and many others accepted Hindi and

Hindi should be language of science, judiciary, and police: Amit Shah



GANDHINAGAR

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said there was no conflict between Hindi and other Indian languages, and stressed that it should not just serve as a spoken tongue but must also become a language of science, technology, the judiciary, and police.

Addressing the inaugural session of the 5th Akhil Bharatiya Rajbhasha Sammelan, Shah said Indians must preserve their languages and make them “immortal”, urging parents to speak to children in their mother tongue.

“There is no conflict between Hindi and other Indian languages.

Learned men like Dayanand Saraswati, Mahatma Gandhi, KM Munshi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and many others accepted Hindi and

promoted it. Gujarat, where Gujarati and Hindi have coexisted, is an excellent example of the development of both languages,” he said.

The Union minister said, “Hindi is not just a spoken language or a language of administration.

Hindi should also be the language of science, technology, justice and police. When all these works are done in Indian languages, then the connection with the public is automatically established.”

Shah said that while Sanskrit has given us “the Ganga of knowledge, and Hindi has taken this knowledge to every home, and that knowledge has reached every person through our local languages.”

He said parents must always speak to children in their mother tongues.

“This is very important for the child’s future, as many psychologists and educationists have confirmed that a child thinks in his mother tongue. As soon as you impose a language other than the mother tongue on a child, 25 to 30 per cent of his mind’s capacity will be spent in translating it,” Shah said.

He further said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has worked to strengthen local languages through various types of technology, and the Home Ministry has created Bhasha Anubhag (Indian languages department), which will promote Hindi and other languages.

“For this, we are using science and technology a lot,” he said.

Shah said that Hindi has a place in education in Gujarat, a development which was made possible due to lead-

ers like Mahatma Gandhi, Dayanand Saraswati, etc, who urged people to communicate with each other and promote Hindi in every state.

“As a result of this, a child from Gujarat can go anywhere in the country, do business and get acceptance,” he said.

He pointed out that Bahubhashi Anuvad Sarthi is being used for translations powered by advanced technology.

“By training this software, we will keep enriching it further, and in the coming days, the citizens of a country will be able to communicate in their own language through this,” he said.

He said that one cannot aspire for independence and self-respect if the language of communication is not one’s own.

The Hindi Shabd Sindhu, which started with 51,000 words, has now crossed 7 lakh words, and by 2029, it will become the largest dictionary among all languages in the world, Shah said.

“I assure you that by 2029, this Hindi Shabd Sindhu will become the largest dictionary among all languages of the world.

Through this dictionary, we have also made Hindi flexible. Many Hindi scholars insist that Hindi should be Sanskrit-rich. No one has any objection to this. But the empty space has to be filled with Indian languages. Only then will Hindi feel familiar to all the people of India. And Hindi can be made a spoken language only when it becomes flexible,” he said.

“We have to make many such changes with time. Those who do not change with time become history. I believe that our language is history, it is the present as well as the future.

And that is why the use of the experiment with Shabd Sindhu is to make Hindi very useful, flexible and useful for the masses,” he said.

INTERNATIONAL

‘You and I have to be determined’: New Nepal PM vows to follow protesters’ demands to end corruption



KATHMANDU

Nepal’s new leader vowed Sunday to follow protesters’ demands to “end corruption” as she began work as interim prime minister, after “Gen Z” youth demonstrations ousted her predecessor.

Sushila Karki, the 73-year-old former chief justice, has been tasked with restoring order and addressing protesters’ demands for a corruption-free future ahead of elections in six months.

Protests began on Monday sparked by a ban on social media and quickly escalated, with parliament and key government buildings set ablaze, as they fed into long-standing economic woes in Nepal.

“We have to work according to the thinking of the Gen Z generation,” said Karki, in her first public comments since taking office on Friday.

A fifth of people in Nepal aged 15-24 are unemployed, according to the World Bank, with GDP per capita standing at just \$1,447.

“What this group is demanding is end of corruption, good governance and economic equality,” she added.

“You and I have to be determined to fulfil that.”

Newly elected Prime Minister of Nepal’s interim government Sushila Karki speaks with officials at the prime minister’s office in Kathmandu on September 14, 2025. Karki held a minute’s silence

on Sunday for those killed in the unrest, before meetings began in the key government complex of Singha Durbar — where several buildings were set on fire during mass protests on Tuesday.

At least 72 people were killed in two days of protests, and 191 injured, the government’s chief secretary Eaknarayan Aryal said Sunday, increasing an earlier toll of 51. It was the worst unrest since the end of a decade-long civil war and the abolition of the monarchy in 2008.

The appointment of Karki, known for her independence, came after intense negotiations by army chief General Ashok Raj Sigdel and President Ram Chandra Paudel, including with representatives of “Gen Z”, the loose umbrella title of the youth protest movement.

Thousands of young activists had used the Discord app to name Karki as their choice of leader. “The situation that I have come in, I have not wished to come here. My name was brought from the streets,” Karki said.

Parliament has been dissolved and elections set for March 5, 2026.

“We will not stay here more than six months in any situation, we will complete our responsibilities and pledge to hand over to the next parliament and ministers,” she added, in a speech to the nation.

Newly elected Prime Minister of Nepal’s interim government Sushila Karki speaks with officials

at the prime minister’s office in Kathmandu on September 14, 2025.

Workers put up a new signboard for the prime minister’s office in a building within the complex but which was not torched.

Paudel, who swore Karki into office, said late Saturday that “a peaceful solution has been found through a difficult process.”

Paudel called it a “very difficult, complicated, and grave situation” in the Himalayan nation of 30 million people. “I sincerely appeal to everyone to make the most of this opportunity... in making the election on March 5 a success,” he said.

Soldiers have scaled back their presence on the streets, where they had been deployed in large numbers after the protests. But more than 12,500 prisoners who escaped from jails during the chaos are on the run, and present a daunting security headache.

Regional leaders have congratulated Karki, including Nepal’s two giant neighbours, India and China.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said New Delhi supported “peace, progress and prosperity” in Hindu-majority Nepal, while Beijing’s foreign ministry said it wanted to “push China-Nepal relations steadily forward.”

Buddhism is the country’s second-largest religion, and the Dalai Lama, the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader, wished Karki “every success in fulfilling the hopes and aspirations of the people of Nepal in these challenging times.”

Trump’s travel ban keeps international students from coming to US for college

WASHINGTON

With the Taliban barring women from college in her native Afghanistan, Bahara Saghari set her sights on pursuing higher education in the United States.

Saghari, 21, practiced English up to eight hours per day for several years, eventually winning an offer to study business administration at a private liberal arts college in Illinois.

She was hoping to arrive this fall, but her plans were derailed again, this time by US President Donald Trump’s travel ban. “You think that finally you are going to your dream, and then something came up and like, everything’s just gone,” Saghari said.

Thousands of students are among the people affected by the Trump administration’s travel ban and restrictions on citizens from 19 countries, including many who now feel stranded after investing considerable time and money to come to the US.

Some would-be international students are not showing up on American campuses this fall despite offers of admission because of logjams with visa applications, which the Trump administration slowed this summer while it rolled out additional vetting. Others have had second thoughts because of the administration’s wider immigration crackdown and the abrupt termination of some students’ legal status.

But none face bigger obstacles than the students hit with travel bans.

Last year, the State Department issued more than 5,700 F-1 and J-1 visas — which are used by foreign students and researchers — to people in the 19 travel ban-affected countries between May and September. Citizens of Iran and

Myanmar were issued more than half of the approved visas.

Pouya Karami, a 17-year-old student from Shiraz, Iran, focused his college search entirely on the US. No other country offers the same research opportunities in science, he said. He was planning to study polymer chemistry this fall at Pittsburg State University in Kansas, but he had to shelve those plans because of the travel ban.

Karami deferred admission until next year and is holding out hope. He is still preparing for his embassy interview and reaching out to US politicians to reconsider the travel ban’s restrictions on students. “I’m doing everything I can about it,” he said.

The full travel ban affects citizens from 12 countries spanning Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the Caribbean. It blocks most people from obtaining new visas, although some citizens from the banned countries are exempt, such as green card holders, dual citizens and some athletes. Seven other countries have tighter restrictions that also apply to student visas.

When Trump announced the travel ban in June, he cited high visa overstay rates and national security threats from unstable or adversarial foreign governments as reasons for putting countries on the list. He has called some of the countries’ screening processes “deficient” and said he plans to keep the ban in place until “identified inadequacies” are addressed.

In Myanmar, the family of one 18-year-old student made his education their top priority, saving paychecks for him to go abroad for college. They risked their stability so he could have the chance to live a better life, said the student, who asked to

be identified by only his nickname, Gu Gu, because he is worried about being targeted by the Myanmar or US government for expressing criticism.

When he shared a screenshot of his acceptance letter to the University of South Florida in a family group chat, it exploded with celebratory emojis, Gu Gu said. He had been waiting for visa appointments to be announced when one night, his mother woke him to ask about news of a US travel ban. In an instant, his plans to study at USF this fall were ruined.

Many students his age in Myanmar have been drafted into the military or joined resistance groups since the military ousted the elected civilian government in 2021.

While a civil war rages, he had been looking forward to simple freedoms in the US like walking to school by himself or playing sports again. “I was all in for US, so this kind of breaks my heart,” said Gu Gu, who was unable to defer his acceptance.

Saghari, the Afghani student, postponed her July visa interview appointment in Pakistan to August after learning of the travel ban, but ultimately canceled it. Knox College denied her request to defer her admission.

She later applied to schools in Europe but encountered issues with the admissions process. A German university told Saghari she would need to take another English proficiency test because an earlier score had expired, but taking the test the first time was already a challenge in Afghanistan’s political climate.

She has been accepted to a Polish university on the condition she pay her tuition up front. She said her application is under review as the school validates her high school degree.

TRACKS OF TRANSFORMATION: Railways redefining the Northeast



In the mist-clad hills and deep valleys of India's Northeast, a revolution is unfolding on steel tracks. What was once considered a distant terrain is now being threaded together with ambitious railway projects signalling not just connectivity, but a new era of commerce, mobility, and integration for India's northeastern frontier.

According to a release from the Ministry of Railways, over the past decade, the Northeast has seen its railway map redrawn at an unprecedented pace. Long-pending projects have moved from survey sheets to reality, with new stations opening in states that had none for over a century, and capitals finally connected to the national network.

Among them is Mizoram's 51 km Bairabi-Sairang railway line, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a milestone that has finally put Aizawl on India's railway map. From the bustling hub of Guwahati to the serene borders of Mizoram and Nagaland, new lines are stretching across mountains, tunnels, and rivers, promising to transform not just connectivity but also the very rhythm of life.

Once dependent on a handful of isolated stations, the region now stands at the cusp of a railway renaissance. Since 2014, railway allocations to the area have multiplied five times, touching Rs 62,477 crore.

Of this, Rs 10,440 crore has been set aside for the current fiscal year. With projects worth 77,000 crores underway, the region is seeing the largest wave of rail investment in its history. In Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur, and beyond, long-delayed projects are finally linking capitals to the national grid.

In Tripura, the railway line has reached the borders, Meghalaya has seen its first railway station, while

Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and Assam push forward with new lines, electrification, and doubling works. Each state's journey shows how railways are shaping the Northeast.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 51 km Bairabi-Sairang line, built at a cost of over 8,070 crore, finally bringing Aizawl's grand debut onto the railway tracks.

The state also witnessed the flagging off of three new train services, the Sairang-Delhi Rajdhani Express, the Sairang-Guwahati Express and the Sairang-Kolkata Express.

Mizoram's railway journey began in the late 1980s with Bairabi station near the Assam border, as a Metre-Gauge station in the late 1980s.

In 2016, it was upgraded to broad gauge under the 83.55 km Kathakal - Bairabi Gauge Conversion Project, receiving its first freight train with 42 wagons of rice and a passenger service flagged off virtually by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Looking ahead, the ongoing 223 km Sairang-Hbicchuah project aims to extend tracks to Mizoram's southern border, opening direct trade routes to Myanmar and Southeast Asia via Sittwe port.

Dimapur, opened in the early 20th century, remained Nagaland's lone railhead for over 100 years.

In 2022, Shokhuvi ended that isolation, becoming the state's second station.

The 82.5 km Dimapur-Kohima new line is progressing with Dhansiri-Shokhuvi section commissioned in October 2021 and the first passenger service, the Donyi Polo Express rolling out in August 2022.

The Shokhuvi-Molvom section was completed in March 2025, while the remaining section from Molvom to Zubza (near Kohima) is in progress.

By October 2026, the Molvom-Pherima stretch (14.09 km) is set to open, followed by the Pherima-Zubza section (37.57 km) in December 2029, a milestone that will finally bring rail connectivity to Nagaland's capital, Kohima.

The 152 km Badarpur-Agartala line was converted to broad gauge in April 2016 and The Agartala-Sabroom line (112 km) extended railways till the southernmost part of Tripura,



ra, close to the Bangladesh border in phases between 2016 and 2019.

The entire railway network in Tripura has been electrified, and doubling works up to Agartala are planned.

Jiribam station, close to the Assam border, was converted from metre gauge to broad gauge in March 2016 under the 49.61 km Arunachal-Jiribam project.

The 110.625 km Jiribam-Imphal line is under progress. The first section from Jiribam-Vangaichungpao (11.8 km) was commissioned in February 2017 followed by Vangaichungpao-Khongsang (43.56 km) section.

Khongsang-Awangkhul (9.1 km) by March 2026, Awangkhul-Noney (9.15 km) by March 2027, Noney-Imphal (37.02 km) by March 2028.

Between 2014 to 2017, 833.42 km of Metre-Gauge tracks in the Northeast, including 671.52 km in Assam, were converted to Broad Gauge. Major gauge conversions include Lumding-Silchar (210 km), North Lakhimpur - Sripani (81.46 km), and Katakhal - Bairabi (75.66 km), among others.

Sections of Double Line Projects like Lumding-Fur-

kating (140 km) will commence from 2026, while sections of Digaru-Hojai (102 km) have been completed between 2020 and 22.

The completion of new lines includes sections of Bogibeel bridge and connecting lines (73 km, 2018), Tetelia - Kamalajari (10.15 km, 2018), and others.

Naharlagun station, connecting Itanagar, was commissioned in April 2014 under the 21.75 km Harmuti-Naharlagun New Line Project.

The Balipara-Bhalukpong line was converted to broad gauge in May 2015 as part of the 505 km Rangiya-Murkongselek project.

The Murkongselek-Pasighat line is under construction: Murkongselek-Sille (15.6 km) due October 2025; Sille-Pasighat (10.55 km) due February 2026.

Final Location Surveys (FLS) completed for new lines to Tawang, Pasighat-Parashuram Kund-Wakro, and Bame-Aalo-Mechuka.

The 44.96 km Sevok-Rangpo line is under progress and targeted for completion by December 2027, providing Sikkim's first railway connectivity.

became Meghalaya's first railway station in 2014 under the 19.62 km Dudhnoi-Mendipathar project, which contains 8.67 km of railway tracks inside Meghalaya.

As per the release, the story of railways in the Northeast is one of persistence and progress. In little more than a decade, the region has witnessed century-old Metre-Gauge lines upgraded, long-delayed projects revived, and capital cities like Aizawl and Imphal finally placed on the railway map.

Assam has emerged as the backbone with electrification and doubling, while frontier states like Mizoram, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh push tracks toward borders and trade gateways. Tripura has already reached Bangladesh, and Meghalaya and Sikkim await their turn.

Together, these milestones mark more than engineering feats; they signal a Northeast steadily moving from isolation to integration, with steel tracks carrying the promise of growth, connectivity, and new horizons.

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.

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BARAK FESTIVAL

JANUARY 10-12, 2025

ACTIVITY PROGRAM



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



11 JAN
Adventure Sports
 Trekking | Canyoneering | Sport Climbing | Disaster Management Technique | Water Sports
www.krcfoundation.org



11 JAN
Barak Valley Conclave
 Potential, Issues and Challenges of Barak Valley by different youth organizations.
 Includes: KOCs, and D' group and can register for free. (patron, associate & life membership) and present the proposals. Participation through invitation only. Different rewards are provided.



10 JAN
Barak Festival 2025
 KRC Foundation Book Club
 10 Books

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

Barak Festival

Adventure Sports, Art & Culture Promotion

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

11 JAN
Media Conclave
 An Online Event



REGISTER HERE

Contact: info@krcfoundation.org

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'.
 Welcome your valuable students, journalists, media & corporate representatives, guides, speakers, members.

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



CONCLAVE
 'From School to Campus to Corporate'

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'



Barak Festival 2025

Contact: info@krcfoundation.org

10-12 JAN
E-Sports
 Full-Blown 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



Barak Festival 2025

Contact: info@krcfoundation.org

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

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



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

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



Watch Out! Film Festival

APPLY NOW

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