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KRC TIMES

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2026

VOLUME:1, ISSUE 565 | SILCHAR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 02, 2025. EAST AND NE INDIA EDITION | e-mail: krctimes@gmail.com ,www.krctimes.com

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PERSPECTIVE

"Listen to your heart. It knows all things."
~ Paulo Coelho

UPPL chief Pramod Boro files nomination from Dotma

GUWAHATI
United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) President and incumbent BTC Chief Executive Member (CEM), Pramod Boro, filed his nomination on Tuesday from the Dotma constituency for the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) elections slated for September 22.

The nomination rally turned into a massive show of strength as thousands of UPPL supporters gathered in Kokrajhar. Assam Cabinet Minister UG Brahma also accompanied the party president, underscoring solidarity within the ruling camp.

Meanwhile, senior UPPL leader Khampa Borgoyari entered the fray from the Deborgaon constituency, further consolidating the party's grassroots presence.

This was Boro's second nomination after he filed papers from the Goibari constituency in Tamulpur on Monday, a move seen as a strategic step to widen UPPL's electoral base.

Speaking after filing his nomination, Boro said, "The people of Bodoland have witnessed our development and governance. I am confident UPPL will return to power with a single-party majority."

As nominations gather momentum, the BTC polls are shaping into a fierce showdown between regional heavyweights, with UPPL eyeing another term in power.

WHO SAID WHAT

This is a colossal blunder on our part. It's hard to believe, but what's going on here? It (Secondary sanctions) won't work with India. The Indians have made it clear that they will not cut off the importation of oil from Russia. Indians are not going to cave," he told the podcast platform

Daniel Davis
US EXPERT

'VVIP' Movement Alert Suggests PM Modi's Manipur Visit Around Mid-September

GUWAHATI:
Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to visit ethnic violence-hit Manipur on September 13 or 14.

For the past few days, speculation has been rife over the visit, and it has gained strength after an official note of Manipur's General Administration Department stating, "At the outset, Chief Secretary, Government of Manipur, welcomed all the members/officers present in the preparatory meeting for the proposed VVIP visit on September 2025."

"The visit needs to be organised in a grand manner. Request the Secretary, GAD (General Administration Department) to take forward the discussion," it also read.

It cited Kangla in Imphal and the Peace Ground in Churachandpur as the venues of the events involving the VVIP whose name was not mentioned.

Officials remained tight-lipped but an MLA of the ruling BJP al-



most confirmed PM Modi's visit. "The PM's visit is almost confirmed," he told on Tuesday wishing not to be named. This will be PM Modi's first

visit to the state since an ethnic conflict between Meiteis and Kuki-Zo tribals, and resultant violence left more than 250 people dead and around 60,000 others displaced.

It has been months that the violence has subsided but the State has remained ethnically partitioned even after more than two years since the violence broke out.

The Meiteis and the Kuki-Zo tribals still cannot go to each other's areas.

Earlier, the Congress slammed PM Modi umpteen times for not visiting Manipur despite the massive destruction in the State.

Meanwhile, the PM will also visit Assam. He is likely to visit Mizoram as well to inaugurate the 51.38-km Bairabi-Sairang railway line.

In Assam, he will take part in the year-long centenary celebrations of Bharat Ratna Bhupen Hazarika and lay the foundation for various development projects.

Two hand grenades recovered near Manipur MP's residence in Imphal



IMPHAL
Security personnel on September 1 recovered two hand grenades near the residence of Manipur Rajya Sabha MP Sanajaoba Leishemba in Imphal, police said.

The explosives were spotted at the main gate of Bal Bidya Mandir School, located about 50 metres from the MP's residence at Palace Compound. CRPF personnel de-

ployed at the school detected the grenades and immediately alerted authorities.

A bomb disposal squad later examined the devices and confirmed that both were without detonators, making them incapable of being triggered. Police have registered a case at Porompat police station and launched an investigation to identify the group responsible and the motive behind the act.

Assam's Semiconductor Innovation Showcased at National Tech Summit



GUWAHATI
Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma highlighted the display of the first "Made in India" semiconductor chips at Semicon India 2025, noting that two of the chips proudly represent Assam.

The showcased chips include the Tata OSAT Chip and the Neural Amplifier Frontend IC developed by NIT Silchar.

In a social media post, Sarma emphasized Assam's role in India's growing semiconductor ecosystem, stating that the state is steadily contributing to the nation's journey in chip manufacturing and technology development. The event marks a significant milestone for Assam, reflecting the state's increasing focus on high-tech industries and innovation in alignment with India's push for self-reliance in semiconductors. The government is working on the next phase of the India Semiconductor Mission and Design-Linked Incentive Scheme, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday.

During the inaugural address of Semicon India 2025, Modi said the base of digital infrastructure is critical minerals, and the country has started working on the Critical Minerals Mission and is committed to meeting the growing demand for rare earth minerals.

"We are working on the next phase of the India Semiconductor Mission," Modi said.

He said that the days are not far when the smallest chip made in India will drive the biggest change in the world.

"The government is going to give shape to the new DLI (design-linked incentive) scheme," Modi said.

CM Warns: Jail for Provocations During Madani Assam Visit

GUWAHATI
Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has reiterated his government's uncompromising stand on land encroachment, stating that eviction drives on government grazing reserve (VGR) and professional grazing reserve (PGR) lands will continue regardless of criticism.

His comments came against the backdrop of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind (JUH) president Maulana Mahmood Madani's visit to eviction-hit areas in Goalpara, which has triggered a fresh political storm in the state.

Sarma, who claimed he "permitted" Madani's team to visit the reclaimed land, said the move was deliberate to expose the ground realities to the delegation.

"Just yesterday, I allowed them to visit the reclaimed land in Goalpara so they could see the ground reality for themselves. They should see how dangerous the situation becomes when land is encroached upon. Now that he has witnessed it with his own eyes, he will think twice before encouraging such actions," the Chief Minister said.

Making his position clear, Sarma minced no words to slam the JUH leader, threatening to "lock him up" if he "crosses the line."

"Who is Madani? Is he God? His influence only rises during Congress rule; under the BJP, he holds no sway. When Congress

is in power, he matters. Under my government, he is irrelevant. If he crosses the line, I will have him locked up. I am the Chief Minister, not Madani. Let it be clear, if unknown individuals encroach on VGR or PGR land, eviction will be certain."

Criticism of Madani's visit has cut across party lines, with Assam Jatiya Parishad (AJP) chief Lurinjyoti Gogoi alleging that the Jamiat leader's arrival was intended to disturb communal harmony.

"Mahmood Madani is in Assam to ignite disharmony. He has made communal statements, and the Chief Minister should not take this lightly. The AJP demands that Madani and his associates be immediately put under house arrest so they cannot create unrest," Gogoi said in Duliagan, on Monday. He further questioned Madani's links with AIUDF chief Badruddin Ajmal. "What is the relation between Madani and Ajmal? The hostel in Goalpara, close to Ajmal's residence, is sheltering seven Jamiat members. Usually, people are informed about Jamiat delegations, but this time they arrived quietly via road from Bagdogra. How dare they conduct a press conference in Assam without permission? The CM must take strict action," Gogoi added.

Defending his position, Maulana Madani addressed the media in Guwahati on Tuesday, where

he rejected allegations of spreading communal hatred and instead highlighted the need for fairness in eviction drives.

"A country operates through a process, and when that process is manipulated, it is wrong. The Supreme Court has given clear guidelines, and any eviction must follow them. Targeting a particular community is not acceptable. Conduct evictions, but do it according to the principles of humanity and law, not hostility," he remarked.

Madani acknowledged that illegal encroachment was a problem but stressed rehabilitation.

"If there are foreigners, then they should be deported according to due process. But demolishing homes without rehabilitation is barbaric. There should be proper provisions for those affected," he said.

On being asked about Sarma's remarks of sending him to Bangladesh or jail, Madani responded calmly, "I am doing my work, and the Chief Minister is doing his. If he wishes to send me to Bangladesh or jail, I am ready. But our organisation works for nation-building, not just for one community but for everyone."

Sarma, however, insists that only strong action will ensure long-term security and stability. "Only when people see the strict action taken by this government, will they truly realise the BJP's resolve," he declared.

High Tariffs Threaten Indian Tea Exports Worth \$87 Million

GUWAHATI
The tea industry has voiced concern over the recent curbs imposed by the US on Indian goods, stating that the developments stand to hit the industry hard. The US, which is the fourth largest destination of Indian tea, recently imposed a 50% tariff on Indian goods.

While the US is the fourth largest importer of Indian tea by volume, it happens to be the second largest importer of Indian tea by value, purchasing USD 87.77 million worth of tea in 2024-25 (Apr-Mar).

Data shows that Indian tea exports to the US had been on an increasing scale before the sudden imposition of a 50% tariff by the US.

India exported 17.54 million kg of tea to the USA in 2024-25 (Apr-Mar) out of its total tea exports, which was 257.88 million kg. The exports to the US, valued at USD 87.77, constitute about 7% of the total exports of Indian tea.

In 2023-24 (Apr-Mar), 13.83 Mkg of tea worth USD 68.67 million was exported to the US against India's total tea export of 250.73 million kg. This constituted about 6% of the



total exports of Indian tea.

"The US is the fourth largest destination of Indian tea as far as Indian tea export is concerned. As for the Indian tea industry being adversely affected by the US tariff, it will definitely have a negative impact on the Indian tea industry. However, we are hopeful that both countries will settle their differences soon in the best interests of trade between the two countries," Bidyayandana Barkakoty, adviser, North Eastern Tea Association (NETA), told The Assam Tribune.

India exports about 20% of its tea production and the balance 80% is consumed domestically in the Indian market.

In 2024-25, India produced 1,315.77 million kg. While 17.54 million kg of tea export to the USA is just 1.33% of India's total production, the same is 7 per cent of India's total tea exports.

"As our goal is to achieve 300 million kg of exports, every market, including the US market, is very important for the Indian tea industry," Barkakoty added.

The Indian Tea Association has raised alarm over the sharp decline in tea auction

prices at major centres in Kolkata, Guwahati, and Siliguri, citing increased production, excess arrivals, and weak demand as the primary reasons. From mid-July to mid-August, average prices dropped by Rs 32 to Rs 74, putting severe financial pressure on producers. The association stressed that a Minimum Sustainable Price (MSP) for made tea is now essential to ensure production costs are covered with reasonable margins, while also serving as a safeguard against unfairly cheap imports.

Highlighting the challenges, the association pointed out a 57.14 per cent surge in low-cost tea imports in the first half of 2025, with Kenya as a major contributor, which has further hurt domestic market dynamics.

It urged stricter import regulations, including pre-import conditions and a minimum import price, to protect the industry. Additionally, it expressed concern over the recent 50 per cent tariff imposed by the US on Indian goods, warning that the move could dent Indian tea exports, particularly as the US remains a key market, importing over 17 million kg in 2024 and 6.26 million kg till May this year.

Seven staff suspended for misleading infant death probe at GMCH

GUWAHATI
The Assam Government's health department suspended seven staff members for misleading the probe and failing to maintain records following an infant's death.

Reports state that the tragic death of a four-day-old infant at Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) sparked outrage across the state.

In response, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma ordered a high-level probe and directed the government to suspend multiple staff members for negligence and misconduct.

Doctors admitted the infant, daughter of Sinta Deka and Utpal Boroloi, with jaundice, and she allegedly fell from a phototherapy machine in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) recently.

Sarma called the incident "deeply painful and shameful," adding, "Such a lapse is unacceptable. This is not just a mistake; it is also a crime, intentional or unintentional."

The Chief Minister appoint-

ed a three-member inquiry panel, including the Director of Medical Education, an Additional Chief Secretary, and an AIIMS official, and tasked them with submitting their findings within four days. He admitted negligence occurred despite adequate infrastructure, noting that three babies had been placed on one machine. "Since 2006, I have never come across such an incident," he remarked.

Following the inquiry, authorities suspended seven staff members for six months, including senior doctors Dr. Anupama Deka and Dr. Dipankar Hazarika, Nurse-in-Charge Gonti Devi, ICU technician Ishanjyoti Talukdar, and others, for misleading the probe and failing to maintain records.

Additionally, Srimanta Sankaradeva University of Health Sciences (SSUHS) rusticated two postgraduate trainees, Dr. Hrishikesh Thakuria and Dr. Pooja, for six months due to grave misconduct and tampering with hospital documents.



VOLUME:1, ISSUE 565

WHERE ARE THE DEBATES?



Parliamentary debates are not just routine legislative formalities; they are the lifeblood of a vibrant democracy. In India, Parliament has long been hailed as the temple of truth, where voices from diverse regions and communities converge to deliberate on issues that shape the nation's destiny. Every speech delivered within the hallowed halls carries weight, not merely as a statement but as a record of democratic dialogue, preserved for posterity. Historically, these debates have played a transformative role. Members of Parliament have used this platform to spotlight the aspirations and concerns of their constituencies, drawing national attention to local issues. This mechanism ensures inclusivity, allowing governance to be informed by the lived realities of the people. Beyond the chambers, citizens have followed these sessions with keen interest. Live broadcasts make it possible for millions to witness spirited exchanges, reinforcing public trust in the democratic process.

In the digital age, the significance of parliamentary debates has amplified. Any meaningful discussion inside Parliament quickly becomes a trending topic on social media, influencing public opinion and sometimes even Government decisions. These discussions set narratives that dominate national discourse. Unlike outside forums, Parliament enforces a unique standard—no member can knowingly lie on its floor. This sanctity underlines its role as a forum of truth and accountability. Parliamentary debates also serve as a crucible for refining legislation. When bills are tabled, they undergo rigorous scrutiny, with both ruling and opposition members contributing ideas. Constructive criticism often leads to the addition of essential provisions or the removal of problematic clauses, strengthening the legislation. The dialectical nature of debates—where pros and cons are laid bare—ensures that laws reflect collective wisdom rather than unilateral dictates.

Unfortunately, this noble tradition faces a grave crisis. The frequency and quality of debates have seen a sharp decline in recent years. Increasingly, contentious issues are being stonewalled rather than debated. Opposition members often storm the well of the House, leading to adjournments or complete washouts of sessions. The recent Monsoon session, nearly consumed by relentless protests over electoral roll reviews, is a stark reminder of this malaise.

The consequences of such a deadlock are severe. When working hours are curtailed and session after session becomes unproductive, democracy suffers. Key legislation gets delayed, critical reforms are stalled, and governance faces uncertainty. While the Government accuses the opposition of anarchic behaviour, the opposition counters with charges of authoritarianism. This blame game does little to address the vacuum left by the absence of meaningful debate. The ultimate losers in this equation are the citizens, who expect their representatives to speak, question, and legislate—without disrupt.

The grandeur of democratic deliberation is replaced by the din of slogans, which neither enlightens the public nor strengthens governance. Instead of being a temple of truth, Parliament risks becoming a theatre of confrontation. This is not just a procedural lapse; it is a democratic deficit that threatens institutional credibility.

In this bleak scenario, parliamentary committees have emerged as the saving grace. Operating beyond the glare of cameras and partisan theatrics, these committees exemplify collaborative politics. Members from different parties sit together, debate constructively, and produce detailed reports that inform governance. These committees uphold the spirit of informed deliberation that the main House often fails to deliver.

Yet, committees cannot replace the grandeur and transparency of full-fledged parliamentary debates. They work behind the scenes; the nation needs debates in the open, under the watchful eyes of the public. For that to happen, both Government and opposition must rediscover the virtue of dialogue. The Government should allow debates, however uncomfortable, while the opposition must adopt responsible dissent.

Disruption cannot be a substitute for deliberation. The health of a democracy is measured not by the noise in its streets but by the quality of its debates in Parliament. Without dialogue, the Government cannot showcase achievements, nor can the opposition highlight shortcomings. Parliamentary paralysis is a collective failure—a sign that the democratic process is losing its essence. Restoring the primacy of debates is not just desirable; it is imperative.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Never go back to a place where you have been happy. Until you do it remains alive for you. If you go back it will be destroyed.
- Agatha Christie

India-Russia nuclear partnership offers a blueprint for the Global South energy future



SITAKANTA MISHRA

The India-Russia nuclear energy partnership represents a significant case study in global energy cooperation, offering a replicable template for developing economies. In the context of unprecedented energy demand driven by demographic shifts in the Global South and the exponential growth of artificial intelligence (AI), this collaboration provides a model for achieving energy security, promoting technological transfer, and advancing climate objectives.

The future of global energy consumption is disproportionately tied to emerging and developing economies. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), these nations account for over 80 per cent of the increase in global energy demand. Specifically, India and China are forecast to drive 60 per cent of the global electricity consumption increase between 2025 and 2026. This surge is not merely a consequence of population growth but is fundamentally linked to rapid industrialisation, urbanisation, and rising living standards. India's per capita electricity consumption, which reached 1,395 kWh in 2023-24, demonstrates a clear upward trajectory as millions of citizens join the middle class and integrate into the digital economy.

This baseline growth is compounded by the burgeoning energy requirements of emerging technologies, most notably AI. Data centres, the physical infrastructure of the digital age and the core of AI operations, are projected to more than double their electricity demand by 2030, reaching approxi-

mately 945 TWh—an amount comparable to the current electricity consumption of Japan. While projections vary, some estimates suggest that by 2027, servers dedicated to AI could alone consume between 85 and 134 TWh of electricity annually.

This presents a critical challenge for developing nations: to meet this colossal, non-negotiable power demand while simultaneously decarbonising their energy mix to meet global climate commitments. In this environment of soaring demand and climate pressure, nuclear energy emerges as a strategic, high-capacity solution. Nuclear power offers a high capacity factor (often exceeding 90 per cent), providing consistent, baseload power 24/7. This stability is critical for industrial processes and, most importantly, for powering energy-intensive data centres that cannot tolerate interruptions.

From a cost perspective, the Levelised Cost of Electricity (LCOE) for advanced nuclear power was estimated at approximately \$110/MWh in 2023, according to the US Energy Information Administration (EIA).

This is higher than the LCOE for utility-scale solar PV, which was estimated at around \$55/MWh in the same year.

However, LCOE models often fail to account for the "value" of dispatchable power—the ability to generate electricity on demand—which is a key attribute of nuclear energy. The reliability and stability provided by nuclear plants justify a higher LCOE, particularly for nations seeking energy independence and robust industrial growth. For developing economies, nuclear

power is about providing the foundational energy security required for sustained economic and technological development. The India-Russia nuclear partnership, centred on the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KNPP), serves as a robust blueprint for this model. Unlike traditional arrangements where a foreign vendor simply sells a reactor to a client nation, this partnership is defined by a deep, long-term commitment to technology transfer and capacity building. The formal collaboration began with an intergovernmental agreement in 1988 for the construction of two 1,000 MWe reactors. This foundational agreement was later formalised with a 1998 intergovernmental agreement and a subsequent 2010 framework agreement on additional nuclear power plant units at Kudankulam and new sites.

This sustained, multi-decade timeline of agreements underscores a commitment that transcends short-term political fluctuations. The KNPP project in Tamil Nadu, India, is the most tangible outcome of this partnership. The project utilises Russian-designed VVER-1000 pressurised water reactors. Crucially, the collaboration extended beyond the physical construction. Russian state-owned company Rosatom worked directly with India's Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL). This joint endeavour facilitated significant technology transfer, allowing Indian engineers and scientists to gain first-hand exposure to advanced light water reactor technology.

This process was not about simply operating a foreign-built plant, but about developing the indigenous expertise required to design, construct, and operate a complex nuclear programme independently.

The partnership also included Russian support in strengthening India's nuclear safety and regulatory frameworks, ensuring compliance with international standards set by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The Russian side benefited from knowledge of construction in a tropical monsoon climate. This co-development model differentiates the India-Russia partnership from a one-way vendor-client transaction. The success and structure of this partnership have already been applied elsewhere. The Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant in Bangladesh is a direct example, featuring two VVER-1200 reactors with a total capacity of 2,400 MWe. A significant portion of the project is funded by a Russian loan, with India providing technical and operational support. This trilateral arrange-

ment, with Russia as the primary technology provider and India as a trusted partner, validates the model as a blueprint for other nations in the Global South seeking nuclear energy programmes. India, having absorbed knowledge from this partnership, is leveraging its enhanced capabilities to pursue ambitious energy goals. The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) aims to nearly treble installed nuclear capacity from 8,180 MW to 22,480 MW by 2031-2032. The co-development approach equips India with strategic autonomy, enabling it to meet surging domestic energy needs and participate in the global nuclear energy market.

The author is Dean, School of Liberal Studies, Pandit Deendayal Energy University, Gujarat

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

I spoke with the Prime Minister of India @NarendraModi . I informed about the talks with President Trump in Washington with the participation of European leaders. It was a productive and important conversation, a shared vision among partners on how to achieve real peace. Ukraine reaffirmed its readiness for a meeting with the head of Russia. Almost two weeks have passed, and during this time, when Russia should have been preparing for diplomacy, Moscow has given no positive signal – only carried out cynical strikes on civilian targets and killed dozens of our people. I thank the Prime Minister for his words of condolences to the families and loved ones of the victims. We coordinated our positions ahead of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit. The end of this war must begin with an immediate ceasefire, with the necessary silence. This position is understood and supported by everyone. It is impossible to speak meaningfully about peace while our cities and communities are under constant fire. India is ready to make the necessary efforts and to deliver the appropriate signal to Russia and other leaders during the meetings on the sidelines of the summit. Thank you. We also discussed our bilateral relations, preparations for exchange of visits, and the holding of a meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Commission. There is potential we can realize. I will be glad to meet the Prime Minister in the near future.
- Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine



Manipur Faces Rising Dengue Threat: New Study Maps Hotspots and Urges Action

R.K. NEETUSANA

Dengue fever, a mosquito-borne disease caused by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, is spreading at an alarming rate across Manipur, according to a recent study conducted by our research group which used advanced GIS mapping tools to track its spread in different time periods. The study which was carried out between 2021 and 2024, reveals how certain areas of the state have become a consistent "hotspots" for the disease, with cases multiplying more than twelvefold over just three years.

The disease, sometimes called "breakbone fever" because of its severe joint pain, can range from mild to life-threatening. In India, dengue cases are monitored by the National Centre for Vector Borne Disease Control (NCVBDC), and Manipur reports data through four sentinel hospitals — RIMS, JNIMS, Churachandpur District Hospital, and Thoubal District Hospital.

The factors such as climate change, rapid urban growth, poor waste disposal, and irregular water supply are creating the perfect breeding conditions for dengue-carrying mosquitoes. Using Geographic Information

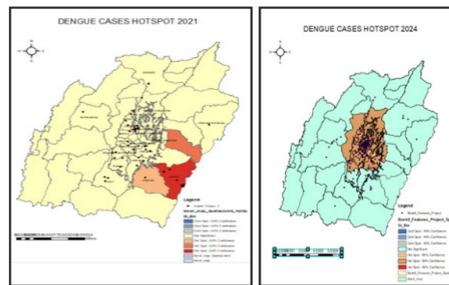


Figure: Dengue cases distribution in different districts of Manipur for the year a) 2021 b) 2024

System (GIS) technology, we mapped where dengue cases occurred each year and looked for any spatial patterns. We examined climate data, population density, literacy rates, land use, and vegetation cover, as well as infrastructure issues like waste management and water supply.

The results and findings were striking. To summarize, in the year 2021, Manipur recorded 203 dengue cases. That number rose to 503 in 2022 — a

2.5-fold jump. But in 2023, cases exploded to 2,548, more than twelve times the 2021 total. In 2024, the disease's spread became even more concentrated in certain districts as discussed in subsequent section.

Hotspot analysis revealed how the geography of dengue changed over time. In 2021 and 2022, only a few areas, such as Tengnoupal and Porompat, showed significant clustering of cases. By 2023, eleven blocks — including Bishnupur, Lamphelpat, Lamsang, Lilong, and Thoubal — were marked as hotspots, most of them in the valley districts where population density is highest. The study also confirmed that climate plays a critical role. Higher rainfall, elevated humidity, and warmer temperatures all contribute to mosquito breeding. Poor waste disposal and irregular water supply allow stagnant water to collect, providing ideal breeding grounds for *Aedes aegypti*. Researchers believe that the maps

and models from such research study can be turned into an early warning system, helping health officials and policy makers to focus on various strategic and control efforts before the dengue outbreaks spiral out of control. We must focus and stress to the need for a long-term improvements in sanitation, drainage, and water management in every hot spots region in various districts.

We should see to it - "The spread of this disease isn't just a health issue — it's an environmental and infrastructure challenge". "If the decision makers address the root causes, the number of these cases can be reduced drastically and can save many lives."

With dengue season in Manipur, which normally peaks during the monsoon months of June to October every year, every citizen of the region must be given proper education and awareness about the do's and don't about this disease. As the state braces for another rainy season, the message from this study is clear: dengue can be fought — but only with targeted action, smart planning, and community cooperation.

(R.K. Neetusana, PhD Scholar & Prof. Dr. Ing. Oinam Bakimchandra, NIT Manipur)

Assam CM distributes seed capital to 15,671 women under entrepreneurship scheme

GUWAHATI:

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on September 1 distributed cheques to 15,671 self-help group members in Patharkandi, Karimganj district, as part of the Mukhya Mantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan (MMUA). The programme was held at Mundamala playground in Sribhumi.

The scheme, aimed at supporting over 35 lakh women across Assam, provides seed capital for income-generating activities in agriculture, livestock, handloom, and allied sectors. Each beneficiary received Rs 10,000 in the first phase.

"The beneficiaries can use the funds for any productive activity on their own or collectively with other women in self-help groups to run commercial activities. The fund can also be used by a member of the beneficiary's family for business," Sarma said while addressing the gathering.

He added that the initiative will progress in stages. A government survey next year will assess how the initial



funds are used. Women who invest the first instalment productively will qualify for the second instalment of Rs 25,000, half of which will be covered by the state

and the rest by banks. A third instalment of Rs 50,000 will follow, bringing the total to Rs 85,000 per beneficiary. The Chief Minister urged women

not to divert the funds to non-productive purposes. "On positive utilisation of the fund, the government will give another instalment of seed capital," he said, assuring full support for those committed to entrepreneurship.

Sarma also announced that financial incentives under Orunodoi 3.0 will roll out from September 17. Beneficiaries will receive Rs 1,250 per month along with an additional Rs 250 subsidy for LPG cylinders. From November, the government plans to provide rice, sugar, and salt at subsidised rates.

Highlighting other initiatives, Sarma mentioned the Nijut Moina scheme and a proposed stipend of Rs 300 per month for HSLC students to ensure nutritious food intake.

Food and Civil Supplies Minister Kaushik Rai, Animal Husbandry Minister Krishnendu Paul, MP Kripanath Malla, MLAs Vijay Malakar, Siddique Ahmed, Kamalakhya De Purkayastha, and Mission Director of the Assam State Rural Livelihood Mission Kuntal Moni Sarma Bordoloi were among the dignitaries present.

Nagaland Christian Forum urges Assembly to avoid discussion on 'Satanic Worship'



KOHIMA

NJCF formally appeals to Assembly Speaker against satanic worship dis-

ussions. Letter by NJCF President describes satanic worship as alien to Naga society. NJCF argues satanic worship is not an organised religion.

The Nagaland Joint Christian Forum (NJCF) on Monday appealed to the Speaker of the Nagaland Legislative Assembly, Sheringain Longkumer, to refrain from raising the issue of 'satanic worship' in the House.

In a formal letter addressed to the Speaker, NJCF President N. Paphino emphasized that satanic worship lacks the framework of an organized religion and remains a practice widely condemned across societies and faiths.

He cautioned that any discussion in the Assembly could inadvertently give visibility to a practice that is "alien to Naga society."

Paphino further noted that activities associated with evil, violence, or immorality are already discouraged both under civil law and spiritual teachings, rendering legislative attention unnecessary.

IIT-Guwahati team develops nanosensor for rapid detection of toxic water pollutants

GUWAHATI

A research team at IIT-Guwahati has created a nanosensor capable of detecting hazardous pollutants in water, including mercury and antibiotic residues, within seconds. The sensor, developed using milk protein and thymine, relies on carbon dots that emit a glow under ultraviolet light. When exposed to contaminants like mercury or tetracyclines, the glow dims, offering a quick visual cue of contamination. Tests showed the device can deliver results in less than 10 seconds.

Water contamination has become a growing global concern due to rapid urbanisation, industrial discharge, and pharmaceutical misuse. Substances like tetracyclines, widely used antibiotics for respiratory illnesses, often seep into the environment when improperly disposed of, fueling antibiotic resistance. Mercury, particularly in its organic form, is linked to cancer, cardiovascular issues, and severe neurological disorders. To ensure adaptability, the IIT-Guwahati team tested the nanosensor across different mediums, including tap water, river water, milk, urine, and serum. The institute noted that while the research remains at the laboratory stage, the early results show strong potential for safeguarding public health and water quality.

Six, including two militants held in Manipur crackdown; drugs, liquor, cash seized

IMPHAL

Multiple arrests made including insurgent cadres from KCP and PREPAK. Over 2 kg of methamphetamine tablets and Rs 204 lakh cash seized from suspects. Illicit liquor of 260 litres and a four-wheeler confiscated in Kakching district. Manipur Police and security forces carried out a series of successful operations on September 1, leading to multiple arrests and seizures across the state. Police arrested Laikhuram Bhogendra Singh alias Inao, a 58-year-old active cadre of KCP (NOYON), from Imphal East, while security forces nabbed PREPAK cadre Irengbam Ibomcha Meitei alias Anthony from the Gourangor area under Lamlai police station.

Two residents of Andro Khuman Leikai, Imphal East, were detained from the Buffalo farm area in Kakch-

ing district with 260 litres of illicit liquor and a four-wheeler.

In another major operation, security forces apprehended Makakmayum Musharaf and Mrs. Ruhani from Lilong Hangamthabi, Thoubal district, and seized 2,357 kg of methamphetamine WY tablets, cash worth Rs 204 lakh, six mobile phones, notebooks, multiple identity cards, a walkie-talkie set with charger, and jewelry items.

As part of its ongoing campaign against vehicle-related offences, police also removed tinted films from six vehicles in different parts of the state on August 31.

The coordinated actions reflect the state's continued crackdown on illegal activities, ranging from narcotics and illicit liquor trade to insurgent movements and traffic violations.

Major Boost for Silchar: Municipal Corporation Status Granted, Rs.50 Lakh for Jawan's Family

SILCHAR

Silchar will enter a new era of urban governance as the Silchar Municipal Board is being officially upgraded to the Silchar Municipal Corporation (SMC) from September 2.

The move, notified in the Assam Gazette on November 28, 2024, expands the civic jurisdiction to several new areas, promising improved infrastructure, streamlined planning, and better amenities.

As per the order issued by the Commissioner Sriшти Singh, all land and building permissions across the new jurisdiction will now be processed exclusively by the Corporation.

Sharing her thoughts, Commissioner Singh said: "This upgrade reflects Silchar's growing importance as an urban hub. Our aim is to deliver efficient governance, modern infra-



structure, and improved civic services across the expanded limits."

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has announced

a recent operation in Jammu's Akhnoor sector.

The 22-year-old jawan, hailing from Doyapur village of Udharbond constituency in Cachar district, died following the collapse of a watchtower during an operational deployment.

Rajya Sabha MP Kanad Purkayastha, while consoling the bereaved family on Monday, conveyed the Chief Minister's message. "The Chief Minister had wished to personally visit the grieving family but could not due to prior engagements in Patharkandi. He asked me to assure them of the State government's one-time financial assistance of Rs 50 lakh," Purkayastha told the media.

He further informed that the Chief Minister had spoken to the martyr's mother, conveyed his condolences and promised to meet the family during his next visit to Silchar.

No Panchayat falls under Grade-D, while 42 achieve Grade-A: Tripura CM

AGARTALA

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Monday, September 1 praised the performance of Panchayats in Tripura, noting that not a single Panchayat in the state has fallen under the lowest Grade-D category of the Panchayat Advancement Index. Instead, 42 Panchayats secured Grade-A rankings, while 728 and 406 Panchayats received Grade-B and Grade-C respectively.

Speaking at the inauguration of a two-day Panchayati Raj Capacity Building Programme at the State Panchayat Resource Centre, A.D. Nagar, Dr. Saha called on representatives to strengthen the grassroots democratic structure through sincere and account-



able functioning. "Panchayats are the backbone of democracy and the foundation of governance in rural India. If our three-tier Panchayat system is strong, the state and the nation will automatically grow stronger," the Chief Minister said, emphasizing that effective Panchayats are essential for the successful implementation of central and state schemes.

Dr. Saha underlined transparency as the most powerful weapon in public life. "We have moved past the era when Panchayats were turned into political hubs during the Left regime. Today, we must focus on serving the people by sincerely implementing schemes meant for their welfare," he added.

Highlighting the economic significance of rural Tripura, he

said, "Nearly 60-70% of our population lives in villages. The state's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) and per capita income are closely tied to rural economic development. That is why we are working for all-round development—whether in drinking water, health, education, or other basic services. Since the arrival of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, rural development has been a top priority." The Chief Minister also pointed out that Tripura has improved its ranking in the Panchayat Devolution Index, rising to 7th place this year from 13th in 2015. Panchayat Minister Kishor Barman, Secretary Abhishek Singh, Director Prasun Dey, and other dignitaries were also present at the event.

Jamiat alleges 50,000 Muslims targeted in Assam eviction drive, seeks CJI's intervention

GUWAHATI

Muslim organisation Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind has alleged that Muslim families are being disproportionately targeted in eviction drives in Assam and appealed to Chief Justice of India B R Gavai to take suo motu cognisance of what it called an "unlawful campaign."

Jamiat president Maulana Arshad Madani expressed alarm over the ongoing drive in Assam, claiming that "more than 50,000 Muslim families" are facing eviction with bulldozers being used to demolish homes solely on the basis of religion.

His remarks came days after the Assam government carried out the second phase of its eviction operation inside Rengma Reserve Forest in Golaghat district, displacing nearly 230 families to clear encroached land. The first phase of the drive, conducted in early August at Uriamghat along the Assam-Nagaland border, had removed encroachments from around 9,000 bighas of forest land, affecting about 1,500 families, many of them Muslims, according to officials.

A statement issued after a

meeting of the Jamiat's working committee in Delhi said the organisation was deeply concerned about the "rise in communalism, extremism, and religiously motivated discrimination against minorities, especially Muslims." It also criticised what it described as "a campaign by communal forces against madrasas and mosques" despite the Places of Worship Act being in place. Addressing the meeting, Madani alleged that "a planned campaign is underway to target Muslim-populated areas in Assam and forcibly displace their residents." He added, "By doing so, it is not just Muslim settlements that are being bulldozed—it is the Constitution and the rule of law in Assam that are being crushed." Accusing Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma of disregarding constitutional principles, Madani urged the judiciary to intervene. "In light of the recent campaign, under which nearly 50,000 families have been displaced solely on the basis of their religion, we call upon the Chief Justice of India to take suo motu notice and initiate legal action against all those involved," he said.

Mizoram to launch anti-narcotics operation along Myanmar border

AIZAWL

With drug trafficking and addiction emerging as a growing threat, Mizoram will launch an intensive anti-narcotics operation from September 1, targeting smuggling routes along the Myanmar border as well as urban streets.

A senior police official said on Saturday that the campaign will be led by the state police under Inspector General of Police (IGP) H Ramthlengliana, in coordination with the influential Young Mizo Association (YMA). After a week-long survey, teams have identified key entry points and trafficking corridors across Champhai district, which shares a porous border with Myanmar.

During a consultation with community leaders at Champhai on Friday, the IGP admitted that only about 10 per cent of narcotics entering Mizoram are intercepted, underscoring the need for stronger collective action.

"Champhai remains the prime channel for drug smugglers. Of the 370 narcotics-related cases registered statewide last year,



170 were from Champhai alone. Even this year, more than half of the 150 cases recorded till mid-August were from the district," he noted.

Ramthlengliana urged local leaders and

the public to support enforcement agencies in combating the crisis. He pointed out that the Assam Rifles, responsible for guarding the border, are not stationed directly at the frontier, allowing traffickers easy passage

in and out of Myanmar. "This situation makes preventive measures extremely difficult, yet not impossible, if the public and civil society join forces with security agencies," he stressed.

As part of the upcoming operation, additional police personnel will be deployed along vulnerable stretches of the border, working with YMA units and local residents. The drive will continue until December 31, focusing on disrupting supply lines and addressing drug use on the streets.

Home Minister K Sapdanga, voicing concern earlier, said drug abuse has made Mizoram's streets unsafe even for men, let alone women and children, particularly after dark. He assured that the police have drawn up comprehensive plans to restore security in public spaces.

According to Sapdanga, enforcement bodies including the police, excise and narcotics wing, and other allied departments will work with civil society organisations to launch a full-scale offensive against drug smuggling, abuse and addiction.

"Our objective is to ensure that the lives and property of the common people are no longer endangered by the menace of drugs," the minister said. Both the state government and Municipal Board must file compliance reports before the next hearing, scheduled eight weeks from the August 29 order date.

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Maratha quota: Jarange's fast enters fifth day; Mumbai police issues notice asking to vacate Azad Maidan

MUMBAI: Mumbai Police on Tuesday issued a notice to Manoj Jarange and his supporters, asking them to vacate Azad Maidan in the city as the activist's hunger strike over the demand for Maratha quota entered the fifth day.

The notice came hours after the Bombay High Court on Monday asked the government to ensure that the streets are vacated of the protesters by noon on Tuesday, noting that they have violated all pre-agitation conditions laid down by the police.

Describing the situation as grim on Monday as Jarange continued his agitation at Azad Maidan in south Mumbai, the HC, during a special hearing, observed that all pre-agitation conditions have been violated and asked protesters to stay within confines of the designated area for stir.

Noting that Mumbai was "literally paralysed" due to Maratha agitation, the HC stated it was giving an "opportunity" to Jarange and protesters to ensure all streets are vacated and cleaned by Tuesday noon.

A bench of Justices Ravindra Ghuge and Gautam Ankhad said since the protesters do not have valid permission to continue the stir, it expects the Maharashtra government to follow the due procedure laid down in law by initiating appropriate steps.

The government shall also ensure no more protesters enter the city henceforth, it said. As the HC came down heavily on protesters for not remaining at Azad Maidan - the designated place for the agitation - and blocking vital areas and roads in south Mumbai, the 43-year-old activist asked his supporters to follow the court directives and not inconvenience people by

roaming on streets.

Jarange, who is demanding inclusion of Marathas in the OBC category for reservation benefits, stopped drinking water on Monday afternoon, but took some sips in the evening while addressing his supporters after the HC directives.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis said his administration will implement the HC directives on the Maratha quota protest and added the Mahayuti government is deliberating on finding legal options to resolve the standoff.

The high court noted the protesters have gathered at vital places such as the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) and Churchgate railway stations, Marine Drive promenade and even the HC building.

"We are giving Jarange and his supporters an opportunity to rectify the situation immediately and ensure the streets are vacated and cleaned up by Tuesday noon," the bench said.

The HC, while posting the matter for further hearing on Tuesday, said if by then Jarange's health worsens, the government shall administer medical assistance to him.

Advocate General Birendra Saraf told the court that permission for the protest was granted only till August 29. Maratha community members stop a train during their protest seeking reservation for the community under the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category, at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) in Mumbai, Monday, Sept. 1, 2025.

Jarange and his supporters have violated every single condition and undertaking, he argued.

If Jarange's statement that lakhs of more such protesters will come in, then how does the state government plan to deal

with the situation, the court asked.

"He has said he will go on a fast till death and will not leave Mumbai till his demands are met. He (Jarange) is giving a clear threat. Why is the state government not getting the roads cleared? As per the assurance given by Jarange, life in Mumbai will not come to standstill. Every assurance is violated," the bench said.

"Why are the protesters not sitting only at Azad Maidan and loitering everywhere else, the court sought to know. We want normalcy. Protesters are bathing and cooking and defecating on the streets," the HC said.

Earlier on Monday, doctors examined the health of Jarange, who launched his hunger strike on August 29. The activist accused CM Fadnis of deliberately delaying a decision on the issue. "It is so easy to take a decision (on providing quota to Marathas). The government has to just say it is implementing Hyderabad, Satara and other gazetteers and declare all Marathas in Marathwada as Kumbhis.

The distribution of such certificates can be done by district collectors and tehsildars," Jarange claimed. Some protesters dumped leftover food, empty water bottles and wrappers on road medians, the station platforms and even on tracks, and civic workers were seen cleaning the waste and other trash from the areas. On a road outside Azad Maidan, some pro-quota protesters were on Monday seen playing cricket as the agitation acquired myriad colours with agitators, who have descended on Mumbai from all over Maharashtra, engaging in different activities to keep themselves busy and boost morale of each other.

India to hold significant share in \$1 trillion semiconductor market: PM Modi



NEW DELHI

India will hold a significant share in the \$1 trillion semiconductor industry, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday. Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the third edition of 'Semicon India - 2025', Modi also mentioned that a total of ten semiconductor projects are currently underway, involving an investment of over eighteen billion dollars — more than Rs 1.5 lakh crore.

"Global semiconductor market has already reached \$600 billion, and in the coming years, it is expected to surpass \$1 trillion. India is advancing in the semiconductor sector. India will hold a significant share in this \$1 trillion market," said Modi.

At the event, Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini

Vaishnav presented the first test chips from four sanctioned projects to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Vikram chip, developed by ISRO's Semiconductor Laboratory, is India's first fully Make-in-India 32-bit microprocessor, engineered to perform reliably under the extreme conditions of launch vehicles. Modi, comparing the chip to a digital diamond, emphasized that the power of the 21st century is now concentrated in the small chip. "Oil was black gold, but chips are digital diamonds", the Prime Minister stated that oil shaped the previous century, and the fate of the world was determined by oil wells. The global economy fluctuated based on how much petroleum was extracted from these wells.

"Though tiny in size, these chips possess the potential to accelerate glob-

al progress significantly," said Modi. Modi also highlighted the removal of red tape in approving semiconductor projects in the country. The Prime Minister said, "The shorter the time from file to factory, and the lesser the paperwork, the sooner wafer work can begin." He stressed that the government is working with this very approach. The National Single Window System has been implemented, enabling all approvals from both the Centre and States to be accessed on a single platform. As a result, investors have been freed from extensive paperwork, he further added.

"The Semicon India programme was launched. He added that by 2023, India's first semiconductor plant had been approved, in 2024, several more plants received approval and in 2025, five additional projects were cleared.

He further stated that in total, ten semiconductor projects are now underway, involving an investment of over eight billion dollars — more than Rs 1.5 lakh crore," said Modi.

The Prime Minister highlighted that semiconductor parks are being developed across the country under a plug-and-play infrastructure model, offering facilities such as land, power supply, port and airport connectivity, and access to a skilled workforce. Affirming that India is moving beyond backend operations and progressing towards becoming a full-stack semiconductor nation, Shri Modi reiterated that the day is not far when India's smallest chip will drive the world's biggest change. He stated, "Our journey began late... but nothing can stop us now." The Prime Minister informed that CG Power's pilot plant commenced operations on August 28, just 4-5 days ago. He added that the pilot plant of Kaynes is also about to begin.

Test chips from Micron and Tata are already in production. He reiterated that commercial chip production will begin this year, underscoring the rapid progress India is making in the semiconductor sector. He also mentioned that India is creating a robust semiconductor ecosystem that will make the nation self-reliant and globally competitive. The Prime Minister noted that design centers being developed in Noida and Bengaluru are working on some of the world's most advanced chips—capable of storing billions of transistors.

He emphasized that these chips will power the immersive technologies of the 21st century. Modi stated that India is currently working on the National Critical Mineral Mission and is committed to meeting its demand for rare minerals domestically. He added that over the past four years, significant progress has been made on critical minerals projects.

"The day is not far when the world will say: Designed in India, Made in India, Trusted by the World," said the Prime Minister.

INTERNATIONAL

North Korea's Kim Jong Un travels to Beijing to watch military parade alongside Putin and Xi Jinping

SEOUL

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is heading to Beijing by train on Tuesday to attend a military parade with his Chinese and Russian counterparts, North Korea's state media reported. The event could potentially demonstrate three-way unity against the United States.

Kim and Russian President Vladimir Putin are among the 26 world leaders who'll join Chinese President Xi Jinping to watch Wednesday's massive military parade in Beijing that commemorates the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II and China's fight against Japan's wartime aggressions.

It's set to be Kim's first time attending a major multilateral event during his 14-year rule, and the first time Kim, Xi and Putin, all key challengers of the U.S., have gathered at the same venue. None of the three countries have confirmed a private trilateral leaders' meeting.

The North's official Korean Central News Agency reported early Tuesday that Kim left Pyongyang for Beijing by his special train on Monday to participate in the celebrations. KCNA, citing Foreign Ministry official Kim Chon Il, said that Kim Jong Un was traveling with top officials including Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui.

In a closed-door briefing to lawmakers, South Korea's National Intelligence Service said Kim's train entered China early Tuesday and was expected to reach Beijing later in the afternoon. The intelligence service said Kim will likely receive special protocol and security measures on par with those given to Putin, according to Lee Seong Kweon, a lawmaker who attended the meeting.

The spy agency said Kim may stand alongside Xi and Putin on the rostrum at Tiananmen Square during Wednesday's parade, and anticipated



that he will hold bilateral meetings with the Chinese and Russian leaders and interact with other heads of state at a reception and cultural performance as he seeks to further break out of isolation and expand his diplomatic footing, Lee said.

Kim's travel marks his first visit to China since 2019 and the fifth visit in total since he inherited power upon his father's death in late 2011.

Putin arrived in China on Sunday to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a regional summit, as well as the Beijing parade. Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov told Russia's TASS news agency on Sunday that a meeting between Putin and Kim on the sidelines was "under consideration."

North Korea observers are paying keen attention to Kim possibly meeting Xi bilaterally as well and holding even a trilateral meeting with Xi and Putin. The three leaders have met bilaterally previously but have yet to hold a trilateral meeting.

North Korea's foreign policy priority has been Russia in recent years as it has been supplying troops and ammunition to support Russia's war

against Ukraine in exchange for economic and military assistance.

According to South Korean assessments, North Korea has sent around 15,000 troops to Russia since last fall. In its latest briefing to lawmakers, the South Korean spy agency said it believes roughly 2,000 of them have so far died in combat, Lee said. Kim has also agreed to additionally send thousands of military construction workers and deminers to Russia's Kursk region, and the agency assesses that the first 1,000 are already in Russia, Lee said.

North Korea's relations with China have reportedly turned sour in recent years, but experts say Kim likely hopes to restore ties as China is North Korea's biggest trading partner and aid benefactor and he would want to brace for the end of the Russia-Ukraine war.

Since aligning with Russia, North Korea has become more vocal in international affairs beyond the Korean Peninsula, issuing diplomatic statements on conflicts in the Middle East and in the Taiwan Strait, while portraying itself as a part of a united front

against Washington. Some experts say Kim's presence at the multilateral event in Beijing is part of efforts to develop partnerships with other nations close to China and Russia.

Kim's trip comes as President Donald Trump and new liberal South Korean President Lee Jae Myung have repeatedly expressed their hopes to restart talks with North Korea. North Korea has been shunning talks with the U.S. and South Korea and pushing to expand its nuclear and missile arsenals since Kim's earlier round of diplomacy with Trump collapsed in 2019.

Before departing for China on Monday, Kim visited a North Korean missile research institute to review progress on developing a new engine for a "next-generation" intercontinental ballistic missile, KCNA reported. The North in recent years has tested various versions of ICBMs capable of reaching the U.S. mainland, and analysts say the next-generation ICBM likely refers to a long-range weapon with multiple nuclear warheads that can defeat U.S. missile defense systems.

Trump aide Navarro calls 'show of unity' between Modi, Xi, Putin 'troublesome'

TIANJIN

A day after his "Brahmins profiteering at the expense of Indian people" remark sparked a storm in India, President Donald Trump's top trade adviser Peter Navarro on Monday described the show of unity between India, Russia and China as "troublesome."

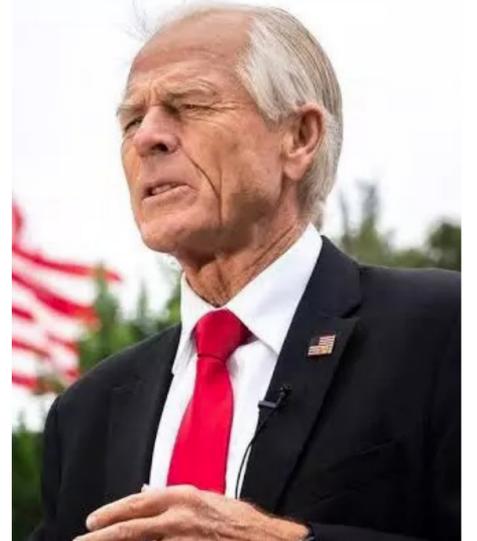
Navarro's remarks came after the public display of bonhomie by the leaders of the three countries on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Tianjin on Monday.

"It's troublesome," Navarro said at the White House on Monday when asked about the "show of unity" between Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"It was a shame to see Modi getting in bed as the leader of the biggest democracy in the world with the two biggest authoritarian dictators in the world, Putin and Xi Jinping. That doesn't make any sense," the Trump administration's senior counselor for Trade and Manufacturing said.

His remarks, and the display of camaraderie between Modi, Putin and Xi, came against the backdrop of possibly the worst phase in India-US relations in over two decades, with the strain exacerbated by President Trump's tariff policy and constant criticism of New Delhi by his administration.

"I'm not sure what he (Modi) is thinking, particularly since India has been in a cold war and sometimes a hot war with



China for decades. So we hope that the Indian leader comes around to seeing that he needs to be with us and Europe and Ukraine and not with Russia on this and he needs to stop buying the oil," Navarro said.

Navarro has been consistently targeting India over the last few days following the major downturn in ties between Washington and New Delhi.

In an interview with Fox News on Sunday, Navarro said, "I don't understand why he is getting into bed with Putin and Xi Jinping when he's the biggest democracy in the world. I would just say the Indian people, please, understand what's going on here. The Brahmins are profiteering at the expense

of the Indian people. We need that to stop."

The Trump administration has imposed 25 per cent reciprocal tariffs on India and an additional 25 per cent levies for Delhi's purchases of Russian oil, bringing the total duties imposed on India to 50 per cent, among the highest in the world.

India has called the tariffs imposed by the US "unjustified and unreasonable."

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

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

Manipur Violence and the PUCL Report: When Fact-Finding Becomes Framing



The recently released report of the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) on the Manipur violence of 2023-2025 has ignited controversy for all the wrong reasons. Billed as a "fact-finding" exercise, the document reads less like a balanced investigation and more like a political indictment of one community. By asserting that the violence was "not spontaneous but orchestrated, enabled by armed Meitei vigilante groups like Arambai Tenggol and Meitei Leepun, and facilitated by state complicity and law enforcement failure," PUCL presents a selective account that discounts vital evidence - including verified testimonies pointing to Kuki-militant aggression preceding the May 3 conflagration. This one-sided framing ignores an inconvenient reality: Meiteis were the first to suffer targeted attacks and mass displacement from Kuki-dominated areas. The assertion that the Kuki-Zo community alone was victimized erases this early trauma, distorting a deeply complex tragedy into a morality play where culpability is assigned along political, not factual, lines.

Misreading the Ground Reality
PUCL's treatment of Meitei defense groups is a case in point. The report depicts Arambai Tenggol (AT) as an armed vigilante outfit that engineered the violence. In truth, AT was founded in 2020 as a socio-cultural and religious body, with no record of militarization before May 3, 2023. The first major instance of weapon looting in the valley - the storming of the Manipur Police Training Centre at Pangei - occurred only on May 4, after Kuki militants had already carried out coordinated assaults. Those raids, while unlawful, were widely interpreted as desperate, defensive reactions to a wave of attacks that had begun in Kuki-dominated hill districts.

More damning to PUCL's thesis are videos and forensic records from May 3 showing armed Kuki militants wielding sophisticated weaponry - including AK-47s - during assaults in Churachandpur and Bishnupur. These incidents directly contradict the report's characterization of the tribal solidarity protests as "peaceful marches" disrupted by Meitei aggression.

When the Governor of Manipur later ordered the surrender of illegal and looted arms in February 2025, Meitei groups complied; many Kuki groups

openly refused. The Eastern Kuki-Zo Village Volunteers even declared that they would not return weapons until separate administrative status was granted. Official tallies show that the volume of surrendered arms was higher in the valley than in the hills - a fact completely absent from PUCL's accounting.

Violence in Context, Not Isolation
To treat the bloodshed of May 3 as an isolated eruption is to ignore years of combustible policy disputes. Among the triggers:

"Anti-drug campaigns that destroyed extensive poppy cultivation in hill areas, disproportionately affecting Kuki livelihoods.

"Eviction drives and joint surveys targeting illegal encroachment of Reserved and Protected Forests, much of it linked to settlements opposed by Kuki groups.

"Talk of an NRC-like exercise to identify illegal immigrants, perceived by Myanmar-origin Kuki-Chin-Zomi communities as a direct threat.

"The Meitei Scheduled Tribe demand and proposals to delete 'Any Kuki Tribes' (AKT) from the ST list, both of which inflamed fears of land-right erosion.

"Breakdown of the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreements with key Kuki militant outfits, citing extortion, encroachment, and repeated violations.

These structural flashpoints were widely discussed across communities. Yet, where protests in Naga-dominated districts over the same ST issues ended peacefully, Kuki-dominated areas spiraled into violence. PUCL never addresses this pivotal disparity.

A Timeline the Report Ignores
The path to May 3 was marked by deliberate, escalating provocations:

"April 27, 2023 (Churachandpur): Local youths vandalize an open gym scheduled for inauguration by then-CM N. Biren Singh.

"April 28: The Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum (ITLF) calls a shutdown. Later that day, the Churachandpur Range Forest Office is torched by mobs chanting "No more Reserved Forest."

"April 29: Kuki miscreants desecrate the Salai Taret flag at a private residence.

On March 27, a Manipur High Court order directing the state to consider Meitei ST inclusion prompted the All Tribal Students' Union (ATSUM) to announce a Tribal Solidarity March for May 3. The march passed without violence in Naga areas but exploded in Churachandpur, Kangpokpi, and Tengnoupal - with Kuki militants initiating attacks on Meitei settlements and government offices.

By nightfall on May 3, temples were desecrated, villages burned, and homes

abandoned under gunfire. The first rape victim - a 37-year-old Meitei woman in Churachandpur - was assaulted that evening, hours before the infamous naked parade of two Kuki women in Thoubal on May 4, which Meitei civil groups condemned publicly and punished internally.

Displacement and State Abdication
PUCL claims that "Kuki-Zo communities were driven out of the valley" while "Meitei communities left tribal hill-dominated areas." The phrasing suggests symmetrical displacement - yet the chronological record shows that Meiteis fled first, driven from Kuki-dominated districts by targeted arson and armed raids. What followed in the valley - the burning of Kuki homes and churches - was retaliation, not the opening salvo.

Worse still was the state's catastrophic operational failure. Instead of defending mixed settlements, authorities prioritized evacuation. Once civilians were removed, unguarded neighborhoods were systemat-

ically destroyed - often within hours. This choice, more than any ethnic hostility, guaranteed the scale of loss and entrenched mutual mistrust.

Political Cover for Militant Agendas
Evidence of premeditation is abundant. On May 3 alone, Kuki mobs attacked and burned multiple Forest Offices - a symbolic and strategic target, aligning with long-standing disputes over land demarcation. The same day, arms were looted from a Churachandpur gun shop. Just weeks earlier, cadres of the Kuki Independent Army had raided a designated SoO camp, escaping with weapons. Many of these groups enjoyed tacit or explicit political patronage.

By mid-May 2023, ten Kuki-Zomi MLAs - including BJP ministers - demanded separate administration, asserting that the Manipur government had "miserably failed" to protect tribal citizens. By 2025, Kuki-Zomi political and militant organizations were meeting in Guwahati, jointly suspending engagement with the Government of India and conditioning peace on "substantive political dialogue" toward autonomy.

The Kuki National Organisation (KNO), which had earlier pledged electoral support to BJP candidates based on promises of expedited settlements, now stood at the center of a hardened separatist lobby - a shift obscured entirely in PUCL's treatment.

A Narrative That Feeds Partition
Perhaps most troubling is PUCL's framing of Manipur as a "de facto ethnic partition," depicting valley districts as Meitei fortresses and hill districts as Kuki-Zo enclaves. Such language is not neutral analysis; it risks legitimizing separatist claims and hardening psychological borders.

By referring to state police as "Meitei police," PUCL echoes ethnonationalist rhetoric that reduces legitimate state institutions to ethnic caricatures. This erodes public trust in law enforcement and feeds precisely the zero-sum logic that militant actors exploit.

The Cost of a Flawed Inquiry
Taken as a whole, PUCL's report is not merely incomplete; it is dangerously misleading. It omits documented triggers, downplays the scale of Kuki militant armament, and attributes pre-planned assaults to spontaneous outrage by Meitei groups. Its reliance on earlier "fact-finding missions" already discredited and legally challenged - including that of the Editors' Guild of India - further undermines its credibility.

Such selective storytelling deepens wounds instead of healing them. In a state as fractured as Manipur, false balance is no substitute for truth. Justice can only emerge from a clear, unsparring record of who did what, when, and why - not from ideological comfort zones dressed up as human rights advocacy.

The Justice Ajay Lamba Commission is still expected to deliver its official findings. Until then, the ethical burden on civil society groups is immense: to prioritize verifiable truth over factional narratives. Manipur does not need manufactured indictments. It needs clarity, accountability, and the courage to confront uncomfortable facts across all lines.

Anything less will not write the history of reconciliation - only the prologue to another round of violence.

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Business establishments, educational institutions, individual service providers etc. can enlist themselves or advertise their products or services at the most reasonable cost in InfoCom Diary. Send your details to InfoComSolutions@krccfoundation.org Submit Here: <https://bit.ly/InfoComDiaryForm>

STUDENTS' INTERNSHIP

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

NE INDIA WRITING STAR CONTEST

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

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KRC TIMES

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North East Integration Rally

Peace | Progress | Prosperity

2026

4th January - 4th February 2026

www.northeastintegrationrally.in



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



10 JAN
Barak Festival: Peace Progress & Prosperity



Barak Festival 2025
 January 10-12, 2025
 Silchar, Assam

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

Barak Festival
 Adventure Sports, Art & Culture Promotion

BROADCAST PARTNER

KRC TIMES

REGISTER HERE

Contact: info@krcfoundation.org
 WP: 0721300019

12 JAN
River-Climate Conclave
 Climate change will accelerate on Global Change, pollution and over-exploitation. 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

River-Climate Conclave
 Climate Change, Pollution, Over-exploitation

10 JAN
Media Conclave
 Media Conclave: Write Stories, Write Blogs, Write the Fund, Talks and Conferences are part of the 'Barak Festival 2025'. Theme: 'One for All, All for One'. Write the journal, news stories, press releases, poster & generate the press releases, press releases, newsletters.

BARAK FESTIVAL 2025
 PAINTING CARNIVAL
 NE CULTURAL FEST
 E-SPORTS

FILM FESTIVAL | EXHIBITION
 BOOK BANK | SPEECH & DEBATE | RACE RACING | RACE CAR RACE

APPLY NOW

Contact: info@krcfoundation.org
 WP: 0721300019

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 & Colleges, Extension School, (Public Speaking) Colleges. In an online event, former students of NE India Schools and Colleges can participate.

5E SUCCESS 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'

PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST
 Send us your best photos!

www.krcfoundation.org

Barak Festival
 Band Night | 10 JAN
 Musical Night | 11 JAN

APPLY NOW

Contact: info@krcfoundation.org
 WP: 0721300019

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

BARAK FESTIVAL PRESENTS E-SPORTS TOURNAMENT

APPLY NOW

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

Watch Out! Film Festival

www.krcfoundation.org

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

APPLY NOW

Contact: info@krcfoundation.org
 WP: 0721300019

10-12 JAN
Book Bank
 The Big Campaign Book Bank at Silchar, Assam | Online

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

Painting Carnival
 Water Colour painting and Draw Race Campaign