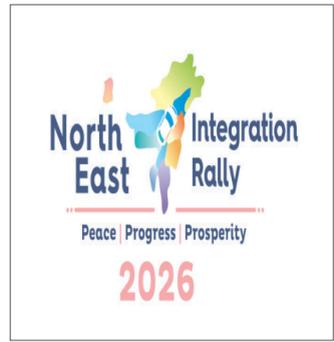




# KRC TIMES

## STAY-ENRICHED



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### PERSPECTIVE

**Grok Companions can teach you how to speak almost any language! ~ Elon Musk, American Entrepreneur**

**'38% and growing': Himanta calls for pressure on Miya muslims, predicts demographic shift**

**GUWAHATI**  
Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on October 10 claimed that the Miya community is projected to become the largest in the state, with their population share expected to rise to around 38 percent in the upcoming census.

Speaking at a public meeting in Dibrugarh, Sarma said, "This time, when the census takes place and the results are out, it will be found that the percentage of the Miya community has increased to 38 percent. If any statistical department makes a projection, it will clearly show that they are set to become the largest community in Assam — and that is the truth." He asserted that Assam's indigenous population would remain secure "only if the Miya Muslims are kept under pressure," adding that the government must bring a new law in the Legislative Assembly to safeguard the interests of indigenous Assamese people. Reiterating his government's ongoing land and eviction drives, the Chief Minister said, "Eviction notices have already been issued in Goalpara and Behali. We are not stopping any work. The pressure on illegal encroachments will continue."

Sarma's remarks have drawn strong reactions across political circles, with critics calling them polarising, while his supporters hailed the statement as a firm stance to protect Assam's demographic and cultural integrity.

#### WHO SAID WHAT



**Spoke to my friend, President Trump and congratulated him on the success of the historic Gaza peace plan. Also reviewed the good progress achieved in trade negotiations. Agreed to stay in close touch over the coming weeks.**

~ Narendra Modi, PM India

## Congress hits out at Conrad Sangma, alleges NPP plotting to unsettle Manipur government

IMPHAL

Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee president Keisham Meghachandra on Friday slammed the National People's Party (NPP), accusing it of contributing significantly to the political and social instability in the strife-torn state. His remarks come amid Meghalaya Chief Minister and NPP chief Conrad K Sangma's two-day visit to Manipur.

Calling the visit a 'political manoeuvre', Meghachandra claimed it was aimed at reviving the NDA's diminishing influence in Manipur, which has been grappling with ethnic unrest since May 2023.

In a post on social media platform X, the Wangkhem MLA alleged, "The National People's Party has become a close ally and political partner of the BJP. Sangma's visit is clearly intended to strengthen the NPP's organisation in the state and cement ties with the BJP, a move to breathe life into the NDA's weakened base in Manipur."



The Congress leader blamed both the BJP and the NPP for failing to uphold peace and unity in Manipur. He accused the alliance of failing to deliver justice, protect the state's integrity, or bring an end to the violence that has plagued the region.

"Since 2017, the BJP and its ally NPP have played a major role in destroying the stability and spirit of the state. Truly, BJP and NPP are two faces of the same coin," Meghachandra said.

More than 260 people have been killed and thousands dis-

placed in the ongoing ethnic conflict between the Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities.

In light of the prolonged crisis, the Centre imposed President's Rule in Manipur following the resignation of Chief Minister N Biren Singh. The state assembly remains under suspended animation, although its tenure continues until 2027.

During his visit, Sangma met with civil society groups, internally displaced individuals, and Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla. He reiterated his party's call for the restoration of peace and the formation of a democratically elected government in the state.

However, Meghachandra dismissed these overtures, stating, "The people of Manipur have clearly rejected the BJP-led NDA, whose years of misrule, corruption, and divisive politics have pushed the state into deep unrest."

He added, "The Congress party stands firmly with the people in their fight to restore democratic values and rebuild the true idea of Manipur."

## Assam government nears 2 lakh job appointments, surpassing 1 lakh pledge



GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on October 10 highlighted the state government's remarkable progress in public recruitment, announcing that Assam is on track to deliver nearly two lakh appointments, surpassing its initial pledge of one lakh.

Speaking after the declaration of ADRE and other results, Sarma said, "Once again, we have delivered on our promise of clean, transparent, and merit-based recruitment. Assam stands tall — setting a new benchmark for honesty, fairness, and opportunity

in public appointments."

He emphasised that the government has not only met but exceeded its targets, reflecting its commitment to the youth of Assam. "The future of our young generation is secure, and their hard work defines success in this New Assam," the Chief Minister said, underlining the administration's focus on merit-based opportunities.

The announcement is being seen as a milestone in Assam's public service recruitment process, setting a record for both transparency and scale, and reinforcing the government's promise to empower the state's youth through employment.

## GST Paying Dividends for Tripura, Says CM — 'One Nation, One Tax' a Success



AGARTALA

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Thursday, October 9 said the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) has significantly boosted revenue collection and strengthened the economic foundation of both the state and the nation.

Speaking at a public programme, the Chief Minister credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership for implementing the "one nation, one tax" system, which has simplified taxation and ensured transparency in financial governance.

Dr. Saha stated that before GST, citizens had to bear the burden of multiple taxes under different systems. "The GST has not only unified the tax structure but also made it simpler and people-friendly," he said.

Explaining the recent reform measures, the Chief Minister said,

"Earlier, there were five stages in the GST structure. Now, it has been simplified into two slabs — 5% and 18%. This has provided great relief to the common man and helped reduce monthly expenses by nearly 4%."

Highlighting the benefits, Saha mentioned that essential household products such as soap, shampoo,

toothpaste, and bicycles now attract only 5% GST, easing the financial strain on middle-class families. He further noted that life and health insurance have been exempted from GST, while life-saving medicines, diagnostic kits, and medical devices are taxed at either zero or 5%, ensuring affordability in healthcare.

The Chief Minister also emphasized the advantages extended to the agricultural sector. "Farmers too are benefitting as tractors and rice harvesters now fall under the 5% GST bracket, and the tax rate on cement has been brought down from 28% to 18%," he said.

Dr. Saha concluded by asserting that the GST regime has not only streamlined India's taxation system but also laid the foundation for long-term economic growth, improved state revenues, and welfare-driven fiscal management.

IMPHAL

In a major administrative reshuffle aimed at strengthening law enforcement and improving coordination, the Manipur government has transferred 31 senior police officers, including 16 Indian Police Service (IPS) officers, and assigned them additional responsibilities, according to an official notification issued on Thursday, October 9.

The order, released by the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms, reflects a significant reorganization within the state's police hierarchy across key departments, ranges, and districts.

As per the notification, IPS officer Ningshen Worgam, currently serving as Inspector General (Narcotics and Border Affairs), has been entrusted with additional charge as IGP (Zone 2). DIG (Range 2) Jogeshwar Haobijam has been transferred as DIG (Armed Police-1), succeeding Herojit Meetei, who will now serve as DIG (Armed Police-2).

Similarly, M. Pradip Singh, who previously held dual charges as DIG (Range 1) and DIG (Armed Police-2), has been posted as DIG (Range 2) in addition to DIG (Intelligence). Goulungmuon Singsit, the for-



mer DIG (Range 4), has been assigned critical responsibilities as DIG (CID/CB), NAB, and Cybercrime. Among district-level changes, Imphal East SP Rakesh Balwal has been promoted as DIG (Range 1) while retaining additional charge as DIG (Range 3). Shivanand Surve, earlier SP of Thoubal, replaces him as Imphal East SP.

Kangpokpi SP Manoj Prabhakar has been transferred to Thoubal as SP, and IPS officer

Abhinav will take over as SP of Kangpokpi. Meanwhile, Chura Chandpur SP Prakar Pandey has been posted as SP of Jiribam, replacing Semmi Ramror, who has been appointed Commanding Officer (CO) of the 7th Indian Reserve Battalion.

In another notable change, Bishnupur SP Ksh Ravikumar Singh has been made CO of 6th Manipur Rifles, replacing Th. Shangkar Deba, who assumes charge as Bishnupur SP.

## Mental Health Struggles Behind Spike in Student Suicides: GMCH Specialist



**ON THE EVE** of the World Mental Health Day, Dr Chakravarty said that mental health problem is basically a disease of the brain and should be treated like any other disease. But some people, mostly in the urban areas, are reluctant to get early treatment because of the taboo associated with mental health, and that leads to further complications.

GUWAHATI

Rise of mental health issues, particularly among the young generation, has become a matter of serious concern, which even leads to an increase in the number

of suicides among students. However, mental health issues can be treated at an early stage. This is the observation of Dr Suresh Chakravarty, Head of the Department of Psychiatry of Gauhati Medical College.

On the eve of the World Mental Health Day, Dr Chakravarty said that mental health problem is basically a disease of the brain and should be treated like any other disease. But some people, mostly in the urban areas, are reluctant to get early treatment because of the taboo associated with mental health, and that leads to further complications.

Dr Chakravarty revealed that most of the affected people are in the age group of 18 to 25 years. Cut-throat competition is one of the main reasons for students facing mental health issues. Expectations of parents and teachers often lead to anxiety among students, which leads to depression and suicide. The Supreme

Court of India had also opined that the increase in suicide among students is a systemic failure. Substance abuse is another factor behind the spurt of mental health cases. For example, Guwahati now has more liquor shops than book shops. Substance abuse for a long time can lead to mental health issues, and such people need treatment.

Dr Chakravarty pointed out that a change in the social fabric in India is another cause of the increase in mental health issues. Earlier, people used to live in joint families, and they could discuss their problems. But in the present day of nuclear families, people do not have anyone to discuss their problems, and thinking too much about problems

can lead to mental health issues. Competition in work workplace can also lead to anxiety. "We are witnessing too much violence. The children are also seeing incidents of violence on TV and reading about such activities in newspapers. That leads to mental disturbance," Dr Chakravarty added. On the ways to deal with it, Dr Chakravarty pointed out, "We cannot change the world. That is why anyone feeling anxiety or other mental disturbances should immediately seek treatment. If the disease persists for a long time, it will need long-term treatment. Early detection is the key, and there is a need to create awareness among the people about mental health," he added.

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## GEN Z AND THE ECONOMY

Today, India is on the edge of history. In just a few years, we are set to become the world's third-largest economy, behind only the United States and China. Our GDP has already crossed 4.1 trillion dollars in 2025, and according to IMF estimates, we are on track to reach 5 trillion dollars by 2027. This makes India not just the fastest-growing major economy but also a nation that has the potential to redefine the global economic order. In 2024 alone, India recorded over 139 lakh crore rupees worth of UPI transactions, and today we are home to more than 1.20,000 start-ups and over 110 unicorns, making us the world's third-largest start-up ecosystem. Our global image is stronger than ever before, and the dreams of becoming a developed nation by 2047 no longer look impossible. But this progress will only continue if the youth of today, especially Gen Z, make the right choices for the nation. If the energy of the youth is diverted into chaos, politically motivated agendas, or blind emotional movements, then all the gains we are making as a country will slip away, and our economy will pay the price for mistakes made in the present.

The young generation must understand that there are always two paths. One is the path of growth, unity, innovation, and constructive action. The other is the path of anger, division, and short-term political slogans. In countries like Bangladesh and Nepal, we saw how politically motivated movements captured the minds of the youth. At first, they looked like movements for justice or democracy, but soon they were hijacked by groups who only wanted power. What followed was economic slowdown, falling investor confidence, job losses, and a broken future for every youth who had marched on the streets. In Nepal, political instability kept FDI inflows under \$1 billion annually, while in Bangladesh, massive protests that even led to a change in government slowed growth from 7.9% in 2018 to a projected 5.4% for FY 2025-26 (IMF). Leaders gained power, but ordinary young people lost opportunities. India is a vast and diverse nation with major global responsibilities. Losing trust in institutions and relying on short-term political slogans would have serious consequences.

Our strength rests on the neutrality of institutions like the judiciary, the election system, the armed forces, and the Constitution. Governments change, but institutions remain. If young people start believing every court verdict is political, every government action is biased, and street protests are the only real power, we weaken the very system that protects us. Foreign investors also look at these institutions. They invest in India because they trust the independence of courts, the working of democracy, and stable laws. If that trust breaks, investments will leave. No global company wants to put money in a country where courts are ignored, laws keep changing, and policies bend under street pressure. This is not just theory-between 2014 and 2020, India improved from 142nd to 63rd in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business rankings due to reforms and stronger institutions. Without such trust, foreign direct investment-\$71 billion in FY 2023-24-would not have come.

Gen Z must realize that India's economic future depends directly on social stability. Already, India is adding over a million youth to the labour force every month (CMIE, 2024).

To provide jobs to the millions entering the workforce every month, India needs steady growth above 7% annually. That growth must come from foreign investment, entrepreneurship, innovation, and global partnerships.

If protests and political slogans dominate the streets, investors will pull back. The rupee will weaken, inflation will rise, industries will slow, and unemployment will grow. We saw this in 2012-13, when policy paralysis and political unrest pushed growth down to 5.46% and sharply weakened the rupee (World Bank data).

Gen Z's role is not only to dream but also to protect the systems that make those dreams possible—courts, election bodies, and the rule of law. Criticism is natural in democracy, but constant mistrust weakens institutions. When all verdicts are seen as biased and all policies as conspiracies, India's image as a stable economy fades. Without stability, there is no growth; without growth, there is no future.

The coming decades will test whether Gen Z chooses growth or chaos. If we remain united, if we trust our institutions, if we focus our energy on science, technology, education, and entrepreneurship, then India will rise as a global economic superpower. We will not only be the third-largest economy, but we will also be a respected and stable power that gives leadership to the world. But if we allow politically motivated forces to divide us, if we spend our energy attacking our own judiciary, if we weaken our own democratic systems, then our future will not be of strength but of regret.

The decision lies with the youth. Governments will change, leaders will come and go, but the responsibility of choosing wisely lies with Gen Z. The future of India is in their hands, and the choice is clear. Either we protect our institutions and secure our economic rise, or we lose ourselves in the noise of political games and pay the price with jobs, growth, and peace. History will remember which path we chose.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

Wonder is the feeling of a philosopher; and philosophy begins in wonder:

- Socrates

# Beyond the three Ts for an India-China partnership



R GOPALAKRISHNAN

Industrialist Harsh Goenka posted on social media that, as a patriot, he was utterly confused. He first boycotted Chinese noodles, then Turkish baklava, then cancelled his Maldives holiday, and then stopped consuming McDonald's and Coke. He admitted to be a confused deshbhakt. His voice is that of many citizens. The world has indeed become too complex.

Travel, trade, and tradition are three Ts that bring nations together. This piece is about India and China. At the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's Tianjin Summit last month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had 'positive' meetings with the Chinese leader. Some observers are gleeful because bullying has been rebuffed. Memorialising the opening of Japan's market by Commodore Matthew Perry in 1854, others feel that India should use a 'Perry moment' to reform. Yet, a third group cautions that India should tread carefully. Perhaps all three perspectives have some merit.

Any two nations connect like a dumbbell. On one side, there are easy-to-measure factors like trade and investment, travel and people exchange and ideas and cultural interchange. On the other side, there are difficult-to-measure factors like politics and ideologies, national self-interest and mutual benefit. The dumbbell must be stable for it to be effective.

Before the US meltdown, I wrote two columns in this paper advocating that India must build relationships with China through travel, trade and thoughts. Many warmed up to the idea,

a few were critical. Too much suspicion exists between the two countries. In a brief review of my columns, the doyen of foreign policy and author of a recent book, *Echoes of the Past: Deep Threads of Indian Diplomacy*, Ambassador Lakhon Mehrotra, expressed his valuable thoughts.

He stated, "The idea of India and China working together based on their great civilisational bond, and following a mutually open-door policy in line with their historical fraternity, were interesting." My citing of Chanakya and Sun Tzu prompted him to point out that both had advocated acquisition of military capabilities for defence against enemies, simultaneously following the diplomatic route. Both thinkers advocated constantly adding to the power of the state to become the commanding force of its time. This merits India's attention. For India's foreign relations to grow stronger, the Indian economy must grow stronger.

China has become the commanding force in Asia. India is not there. India needs to grow for two decades at 4-5 percentage points higher than global growth (as China did for twenty years) before flexing muscle. China will not treat India as an equal; India has no choice but to adjust to this reality in the short term. This asymmetry of power increases the challenges for India's cooperation with China. As a celebrated student of Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, Mao Zedong would probably have endorsed China's policy of two steps forward, one step back. The cement in relationships—trust—is missing, given our experience of 1962 and 2020. That is why India must take cautious steps and not go whole hog.

A somewhat unique feature of China and India is that they have coexisted peacefully for centuries. Their differences are of relatively recent origin. In fact, the serious difference is about the relevance of the colonial McMahon line, which the Chinese just do not accept. For India, it is, of course, not a small matter. Both nations are culturally strong and aware of their cultural heritage. Both are restoring their past positions of strength, but China is well ahead of India.

Maybe, India can explore its own idiosyncratic approach by combining Indian capabilities with Chinese technology. This is not a matter of national ego. Indian private industry needs to spend three-times of the current expenditure on research and technology-building. China reportedly started by copying and imitating, but almost simultaneously built its own global research and development competencies. India Inc has failed to do this for decades.

China has soared in skills, research and academics. China boasts twice the manufacturing capacity, it dominates in electric vehicles, fourth-generation nuclear reactors and now produces more active patents and top-cited scientific publications annually. Militarily, China features the world's largest navy, bolstered by shipbuilding capacity that is 200 times larger than the US's.

Already the Indian government is approving selective Chinese technology joint ventures in India in the fields of electronics and automobiles. Pharma, financial services

and artificial intelligence could follow! The richness and resilience of people-to-people relations between nations influences relations. It is in this context that travel, thoughts and trade feature. Study by university students, tourism, joint ventures rather than just short-term trades, all of these and more help. They are proven instruments in geopolitics. India must play the long game like the Chinese Weiqi game, invented thousands of years ago. Some leaders must change, bringing in fresh mindsets. Coming closer is possible. Circumstances make allies of nations. Converting suspicion and competition to trust and collaboration is not easy. If business pragmatism drives other major nations, why not have it drive India and China to work together?

### DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

**ED, Imphal Sub-Zonal Office has provisionally attached 03 immovable properties totalling to the tune of Rs. 71 Lakh in the form of residential property held by Smt. Konsam (O) Sheityabati Devi W/o Shri K. Jiban Kumar Singh, the then Finance Officer in-charge, Manipur University to the tune of Rs. 23.95 Lakh and two pieces of agricultural land held by Lourembam Rameshwar Meitei (Contractor), Proprietor of M/s Lourembam Enterprises to the tune of Rs. 48 Lakh, situated in Imphal on 30/9/2025 under PMLA, 2002 in connection with siphoning off the funds of Manipur University. ~ Enforcement Directorate**



## GANDHI'S STRUGGLE FOR PEACE IN NOAKHALI: A JOURNEY THROUGH VIOLENCE AND COMPASSION

### SANGRAM DATTA

In the long, tumultuous history of India's path to independence, some episodes stand out for the sheer intensity of human suffering they reveal. One such chapter is the Noakhali riots of 1946, a tragedy that exposed the raw fault lines between communities in Bengal on the eve of Partition. Nearly three-quarters of a century later, the incident continues to attract international attention. On 2 October 2019, BBC News Bangla revisited this dark chapter in a report titled "Gandhi in Noakhali: The Bloody Chapter of a Communal Massacre", highlighting the horrors of the time and Gandhi's courageous intervention.

### A NATION ON EDGE

By mid-1946, undivided Bengal was a tinderbox. The Great Calcutta Killings of 16 August 1946 had claimed nearly 4,000 lives, leaving over 100,000 homeless, and the aftershocks rippled across eastern India. Suspicion and animosity between Hindus and Muslims spread like wildfire, and communal distrust became inseparable from political discourse.

In Noakhali, a coastal district in what is now Bangladesh, tensions erupted on 10 October 1946 during the festival of Kojagori Lakshmi Puja. A rumour concerning Sadhu Triyambakananda, a visiting Hindu monk, sparked violent backlash. The monk, falsely accused of claiming he would please the goddess with the blood of Muslims rather than goats, became the symbolic pretext for a massacre that was already waiting to happen in a

region rife with resentment.

Markets were looted, homes torched, and landlords targeted. Rajendralal Chowdhury, a prominent zamindar, was killed when his estate was attacked. Chittaranjan Ray Chowdhury, another landlord, reportedly killed his family before taking his own life under siege. Violence quickly spread across Noakhali and neighbouring areas — Lakshmipur, Begumganj, Chhagalnaiya, and parts of Comilla — resulting in the deaths of more than 5,000 Hindus. Women faced sexual violence, and thousands were coerced into "voluntary" conversion to Islam, leaving a deep scar on the social fabric.

### THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

To understand the full magnitude of Noakhali, one must recognise the role of Golam Sarwar Hossaini. Far from being merely a religious leader, Hossaini was a political force. As head of the Noakhali Peasants' Association (Krishak Samiti), he championed agrarian reforms, fought against exploitative moneylenders, and sought to abolish unfair rents. His popularity among poor Muslim farmers placed him in direct conflict with the Hindu landed elite.

The Congress Party's ambivalent approach to Hossaini — courting him briefly, then distancing itself — transformed a legitimate class struggle into a communal confrontation. Hossaini's dual identity as a reformist leader and a religious authority complicated the situation: his influence could not be ignored, yet it provoked

fear and resentment among the region's Hindu elite.

### GANDHI'S PILGRIMAGE OF PEACE

In this climate of fear and hatred, Gandhi decided to enter Noakhali, arriving in November 1946. He did not come as a politician; he came as a pilgrim of peace. Over the course of nearly three months, he walked barefoot across 116 miles, visiting 47 villages devastated by violence. He prayed with survivors, spoke to Muslim villagers, and sought to rebuild trust between communities torn apart by bloodshed.

Gandhi's approach was deliberate and deeply personal. In each village, he listened first, offering empathy before preaching reconciliation. His methods were simple yet profound: he urged forgiveness, restraint, and the value of human life. Yet, even amidst this moral authority, his mission faced challenges.

One anecdote, highlighted in the BBC Bangla report, illustrates the tense atmosphere he confronted. Gandhi's goat, whose milk he depended on, was stolen. Later, during a meeting with Hossaini in Chatkhil, the very goat's cooked meat was presented before him — a gesture meant either to mock the Mahatma or to test his composure. Gandhi, characteristically, said little. He continued his peace mission, aware that symbolic gestures of defiance could not undo the real human suffering around him.

### THE LIMITS OF MORAL AUTHORITY

Gandhi's efforts, though heroic, were constrained by the structural realities of the time. Violence flared again in early 1947, this time in Bihar, where Muslims were

massacred in retaliation. Despite his interventions, the communal logic of revenge and the political realities of the impending Partition made his mission inherently fragile. On 2 March 1947, Gandhi left Noakhali, his work unfinished. He expressed profound despair at the continuing plight of the region. "The situation in Noakhali is so unbearable that the Hindus must either leave — or perish," he said, acknowledging the grim reality that moral persuasion alone could not resolve deep-seated hatred. His departure left behind a wounded land and a stark reminder that peace, even when championed by the greatest moral authority, is not easily restored in the aftermath of mass violence.

### A LESSON FROM HISTORY

The Noakhali massacre is not merely a historical event; it is a cautionary tale. It demonstrates how freedom, pursued without reconciliation and understanding, can carry the weight of tragedy long after the guns fall silent. Gandhi's journey through Noakhali was a testament to courage, compassion, and resilience — but also to the limits of human intervention in a society fractured by distrust and animosity. As the BBC News Bangla report reminds us, the echoes of Noakhali continue to resonate even today, serving as a powerful reminder that the pursuit of peace requires vigilance, empathy, and the courage to confront hatred wherever it emerges. Gandhi's pilgrimage remains a beacon for those who seek reconciliation, even in the darkest hours of human history.

# Karbi man killed in Assam-Meghalaya border clash

GUWAHATI

A Karbi man was killed on Thursday in a clash between villagers along the Assam-Meghalaya border, three days after the Inter-State Border Peace Committee had resolved to suspend all agricultural activities in the disputed area.

Jorabat waterlogging crisis The deceased has been identified as Orivel Tinung, 45, a resident of Tapat village under Donka sub-division of West Karbi Anglong. The clash reportedly erupted when a group from Meghalaya's West Jaintia Hills' Lapangang allegedly began harvesting paddy, prompting opposition from Tapat villagers.

Several others sustained



injuries as police resorted to tear gas shelling to disperse the crowd and restore order, a police officer told the press.

The disputed border region has witnessed simmering tensions over paddy harvesting for months, with recurring reports of skirmishes and arson.

On October 6, the inter-state peace committee had formally resolved to halt agricultural activities until a lasting settlement was reached. Earlier, in July, Meghalaya Deputy Chief Minister Sniawbhalang Dhar, during a visit following incidents of arson in the area, had assured that the state would raise the matter with Assam authorities.

Meanwhile, hours after Thursday's incident, Assam's Border Protection and Development Minister Atul Bora convened a departmental review meeting on the implementation of the Annual

Action Plan for FY 2025-26. Attended by senior officials, including Joint Secretary Madhumita Nath and Director Subhalaxmi Deka, the meeting focused on efforts to restore peace along the border. Bora later posted on social media, "Lasting peace and stability along inter-state border areas will greatly benefit people on both sides and pave the way for accelerated development." Both states claim ownership of the area. Meghalaya refers to it as Block I and asserts historical claims over the land, while it is administered by the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) in Assam. The block, along with five others disputed areas, are slated to be taken up in the second phase of border talks between the two states.

AGARTALA

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Thursday, October 9 reaffirmed his government's commitment to ensuring quality education and socio-economic upliftment of tribal communities through the Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) initiative. Speaking at the inauguration of a newly constructed EMRS at Jampujala in Sepahijala district, Saha emphasized that the schools will not only provide holistic education but also help preserve the unique tribal culture, traditions, and languages of the state. "Eklavya Model Residential Schools were first conceptualized in 1997-98, but the mission gained significant momentum after Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister. These institutions aim to bring equality in education for vulnerable tribal students," the Chief Minister stated.

Out of the 21 EMRSs sanctioned for Tripura by the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 12 have already been made func-

tional, providing free residential education to around 5,000 tribal students. The newly inaugurated Jampujala EMRS has the capacity to accommodate 480 students, and has commenced its first academic session with 60 students. Dr. Saha further announced that once all sanctioned EMRSs become operational, over 10,000 tribal students from classes 6 to 12 will benefit from free, quality education and residential facilities. "This initiative will surely bring a positive transformation in the tribal areas of Tripura," he added.

Highlighting the state government's ongoing efforts to strengthen tribal welfare, the Chief Minister said that 29 new hostels have been constructed across rural regions to facilitate uninterrupted education for tribal students. Currently, around 34,000 tribal students reside in 407 government-run hostels, with steps being taken to appoint wardens for effective administration.

## Manipur Congress accuses police of obstructing youth Congress signature campaign in Imphal

IMPHAL

Manipur Congress president Keisham Meghachandra accused the state police of obstructing a peaceful signature campaign organised by the Youth Congress at Imphal's iconic Ina Market.

In a post on X, Meghachandra condemned what he described as "excessive actions" by police personnel who stopped the Youth Congress team while they were conducting the nationwide campaign titled "Vote Chor, Gaddi Chhod." "I strongly condemn the excessive actions of the police personnel who obstructed our Youth Congress team at Ina Market, Imphal, while they were peacefully conducting the nationwide signature campaign today," the state Congress chief said.

The incident reportedly took place at Khwairamband Ina Keithel, less than 200 metres from the Raj Bhavan, where Congress workers were prevented from proceeding further with their campaign. Meghachandra said the initiative was carried out "in a democratic and non-violent manner," as Youth Congress members went door-to-door and shop-to-shop to connect with the public and voice concerns against corruption and injustice.

"The use of police force to stop such peaceful democratic activities is unjustified and undemocratic," he said, adding that attempts to silence young voices "only expose the fear and failure of the BJP government in Manipur."

He urged the authorities to uphold democratic principles, respect the right to peaceful protest, and refrain from misusing police powers to suppress opposition activities.

## HITO flags violation of SC ban on liquor outlets along national highways in Meghalaya

SHILLONG

The Hynniewtrep Integrated Territorial Organisation (HITO) has lodged a formal complaint with the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, alleging widespread violations of the Supreme Court's 2016 directives and central government guidelines that prohibit the sale of alcohol along national highways in Meghalaya. In a letter addressed to the Secretary of the Ministry, HITO said that an RTI reply obtained from the Office of the Commissioner of Excise, Government of Meghalaya, confirmed that no No Objection Certificates (NOCs) had been obtained from the Ministry for wine shops operating along national highways within the state.

The Excise Department, according to the RTI response, also admitted that there is "no legal definition or basis" for the so-called "Shop Code" or "Shop Open" classifications under which such establishments are functioning. HITO termed this a "blatant regulatory failure," questioning

how the outlets were permitted to operate in defiance of national law and judicial orders. The organisation cited the Supreme Court's December 15, 2016 order banning liquor vends within 500 metres of national and state highways to curb road accidents caused by drunk driving. The apex court's directive was later reinforced through several clarifications, but HITO alleged that the Meghalaya government has "failed to act despite clear directions."

Referring to a report in The Shillong Times dated September 2, 2025, titled "HC puts onus on Govt, disposes of PIL on proposed wine shops along highway in EKH", HITO noted that even the Meghalaya High Court had held that the responsibility for enforcement rested squarely with the state government. "The continued operation of these wine shops not only violates apex court directives but also endangers lives on our roads."

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that his government deserves full credit for ensuring swift progress in the investigation into the death of singer Zubeen Garg, who passed away in Singapore last month.

He asserted that the BJP government acted promptly to bring the suspects to justice, something he claimed would not have happened under Congress rule.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a programme in Dhemaji, Sarma said, "People are demanding justice for Zubeen Garg, and we are doing everything to ensure it. We have arrested all those suspected of being involved in the case. If anyone deserves credit for this effort, it is the BJP government."

The chief minister said that five people have been arrested so far for their alleged roles in the case, adding that the Special Inves-



tigation Team (SIT) is progressing "on expected lines." The charge sheet, he said, will be filed within the stipulated three-month period.

The five arrested are Zubeen's cousin Sandipan Garg, his manager Siddhartha Sharma, musician Shekharjyoti Goswami, singer Amritprava Mahanta, and North East India Festival organiser Shyamkanu Mahanta. All are currently in police custody.

## Eklavya schools to empower Tripura's tribal students with quality education: CM Manik Saha

## Himanta Biswa Sarma credits BJP govt for fast-paced probe into Zubeen Garg's death case

"failed to deliver justice in any case." He added, "During Bhupen Hazarika's death, the Congress took three days just to decide on the land for his cremation, and not a single central minister attended. In contrast, the BJP government went all out for Zubeen Garg and did everything within our capacity. There's no such example elsewhere in the country." He expressed confidence that the people of Assam would appreciate the government's effort and reiterated that the administration remains committed to seeing justice served.

Following Zubeen Garg's death on September 19 while swimming in the sea in Singapore, more than 60 FIRs were lodged across Assam against several individuals, including the festival organisers. On Sarma's direction, the Director General of Police transferred all FIRs to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), which formed a Special Investigation Team to conduct a consolidated probe.

## Assam BJP holds extended executive meeting in Dibrugarh to finalise 2026 poll strategy

GUWAHATI

The Assam unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has nearly finalised its roadmap for the 2026 assembly elections during an extended executive committee meeting held in Dibrugarh, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

Speaking to reporters after the session, Sarma described the meeting as "very constructive," adding that the party's leadership had followed up on several key organisational and strategic matters. "We have almost finalised the strategy for next year's assembly polls," the chief minister said.

The day-long deliberations included back-to-back meetings of the BJP's core committee and



office bearers, both focused on evaluating the party's current position and preparing for the electoral battle ahead.

According to Sarma, the

discussions will continue on October 10, after which Assam BJP president Dilip Saikia will brief the media on the decisions taken during the two-day meet.

During October 9th session, both Sarma and Saikia conducted a detailed review of the party's organisational structure and campaign preparedness across districts.

The high-level meeting was attended by Union ministers Sarbananda Sonowal and Pabitra Margherita, BJP national secretary and MP Kamakhya Prasad Tasa, state in-charge Harish Dwivedi, and state general secretary (organisation) Ravindra Raju, among other senior leaders. The two-day brainstorming session in Dibrugarh marks one of the party's most significant preparatory exercises ahead of the 2026 assembly polls, aimed at consolidating its organisational strength and voter outreach strategy across Assam.

## 4,100 Inner Line Permits issued at Mizoram railway stations since launch of Bairabi-Sairang line

AIZAWL

At least 4,102 Inner Line Permits (ILPs) have been issued to visitors arriving at various railway stations in Mizoram since the inauguration of the Bairabi-Sairang railway line on September 13, police said on October 9.

According to Aizawl Additional Superintendent of Police Lalringliana Pachuau, a total of 4,064 ILPs were issued from four counters at Sairang railway station near Aizawl, where 14 policemen have been deployed to manage the process. Kolasib Superintendent of Police David H. Lalhangliana added that another 38 ILPs were issued across four railway stations within Kolasib district.

The figures were shared during a review meeting chaired by Home Minister K. Sapdanga to assess the impact of the new railway line on ILP issuance and related security concerns.

Officials noted a 30-40 per cent decline in the number of ILPs issued at the Vairengte check-gate in Kolasib district, as well as a similar drop in the number of maxicabs operating between Mizoram and neighbouring states, following the launch of train services linking Aizawl with Delhi, Kolkata, and Guwahati.

The Inner Line Permit is a mandatory travel document under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1873, allowing Indian citizens to enter protected areas such as Mizoram. Non-residents must obtain the permit before entry.

Meanwhile, the Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZIP), the state's apex student body, voiced concern over what it termed as a "mismatch between the number of visitors and ILPs issued." MZIP president C. Lalremruata said the organisation's leaders, during an inspection at Sairang railway station on Thursday, found that "several visitors managed to slip out without securing ILPs."

Lalremruata also pointed to inadequate manpower at ILP counters and the absence of excise officials to monitor the illegal import of alcohol into the dry state. The MZIP urged the government to strengthen enforcement at railway stations to prevent illegal entry and smuggling activities.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 51.38-km Bairabi-Sairang railway line on September 13, marking Mizoram's first rail connection to the national capital through the newly launched Rajdhani Express, alongside new trains to Kolkata and Guwahati.

## 'Bridging Business Sans Borders': A statement of confidence in Manipur's potential as a strategic gateway for global trade in NE, says Governor

BISWADEEP GUPTA

IMPHAL: Governor of Manipur, Ajay Kumar Bhalla, graced the inaugural session of the Manipur Global Buyers and Sellers Summit 2025 held at the City Convention Centre, Imphal. The two-day Summit, organised under the theme 'Bridging Business Sans Borders,' is being held as part of the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) initiative of the Ministry of MSME, Government of India. The event is jointly organised by the Directorate of Trade, Commerce & Industries, Manipur Industrial Development Corporation Ltd. (MANIDCO) and Manipur Chamber of Commerce & Industry (MCCI).

The Governor also visited the various stalls set up as part of the Summit by local entrepreneurs and industries, showcasing Manipur's diverse range of indigenous products and innovations. The event witnessed participation from neighbouring countries such as Myan-



mar, Bangladesh, and Thailand, as well as representatives from Japan and several North Eastern states of India, along with local entrepreneurs and businesses, highlighting Manipur's growing potential as a hub for regional and international trade.

Addressing the gathering, the Governor highlighted that Manipur represents a unique blend of natural abundance, creativity and resilience, a dream come true for anyone seeking diverse opportunities.

From the lush hills to the fertile valleys, the State offers distinctive products such as black rice (Chak-Hao), organic produce, handloom and handicrafts, each enriched by the ingenuity of its people. He also highlighted Manipur's abundant human resource, skilled, adaptable and enterprising, and noted the growing strength of the State's IT and service sectors, which are contributing significantly to employment generation and innovation. Governor

observed that despite recent challenges, communities across Manipur, including those once displaced, have shown remarkable resilience, re-engaging in economic activity and creating value-driven products that are now reaching both national and international markets.

Emphasising the growing entrepreneurial spirit of the State, the Governor described the Summit as more than an event — a statement of confidence in Manipur's potential as a strategic gateway for global trade in the Northeast. He commended the concerted efforts of the Directorate of Trade, Commerce and Industries, MANIDCO, MCCI, in partnership with national programmes such as the RAMP initiative of the Ministry of MSME, for strengthening women-led enterprises and promoting local entrepreneurship. With improved logistics, expanding digital platforms, and proximity to Southeast Asia, he expressed optimism that Manipur is poised for rapid growth through global partnerships, sustainable production, and inclusive innovation.

Anurag Bajpai, Additional Chief Secretary (Textiles, Commerce & Industries and Transport), and Dr. Basudev Singh, President, Manipur Chamber of Commerce & Industry, also graced the occasion.

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Psychology says, the best things in life are usually found when you are not looking for them.

## Govt to launch 'Dalhan Atmanirbhar Mission' to achieve self-sufficiency in pulses production



NEW DELHI

To achieve self-sufficiency in pulse production, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to launch the 'Dalhan Atmanirbhar Mission', an ambitious initiative aimed at boosting both production and productivity over the next five years.

With a budget outlay of Rs 11,440 crore, the government plans to distribute 12.6 million quintals of certified seeds to help increase pulse production from the current 24 million tonnes to an ambitious target of 35 million tonnes. Additionally, it aims to raise productivity from the current 880 kilograms per hectare to 1,130 kilograms per hectare.

India's pulses acreage has shrunk over the past four years, subsequently affecting production, increasing the import bill, and causing a crash in domestic prices, which has discouraged farmers from taking the risk of planting pulses. Ironically, India remains the largest producer, consumer, and importer of pulses.

"This comprehensive strategy is designed to enhance and ensure a steady supply of pulses in the country," said Shivraj Singh Chouhan, the Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. He further explained that the programme would include intercropping, growing pulses on paddy fallow land, and purchasing the produce at the minimum support price (MSP).

"For this initiative, we plan to distribute 12.6 million quintals of certified seeds, with 8.8 million quintals allocated to targeted farmers across different regions," Chouhan stated.

In response to concerns that farmers receive lower prices for their produce, which discourages them from planting pulses, Chouhan announced that the government would increase public procurement of pulses from 25% to 100% to ensure that farmers earn a fair income.

The government will promote a pulse production scheme in 416 selected districts under the Prime Minister Dhan Dhanya Scheme. This initia-

tive will involve the convergence of 36 schemes across 12 departments.

"These districts will be chosen based on criteria similar to Aspirational Districts, where the production and productivity of pulses are low. The government will provide irrigation, quality seeds, storage facilities, and transportation, while the overall scheme will be monitored by NITI Aayog," Chouhan added.

It is worth mentioning that the government's record imports of pulses have led to a crash in domestic prices. Currently, Tur pulse prices are Rs 1,838, Moong prices Rs 2,250, and Urad prices Rs 2,000 below the MSP, which has allegedly discouraged farmers from taking the risk of growing pulses this year, despite favourable monsoon conditions.

Despite a good monsoon in the kharif season, total pulse acreage has only marginally increased from 11.89 million hectares (mh) to 11.98 mh compared to last year, as of the end of September. Among major pulse crops, Arhar/Tur (pigeon pea) has seen a minor decline, along with moong and moth beans, while other pulses, except urad, have shown an increase of 1.42 mh.

"It is a concern, which is why we launched the mission to upscale production," Chouhan told The New Indian Express. Prime Minister Modi will launch the scheme on October 11 in Pusa, Delhi.

Meanwhile, M. L. Jat, Director General of the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR), mentioned that excessive rainfall this season has prevented many pulse-growing regions, such as Bundelkhand, from planting pulse crops.

## NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday addressed the maiden India-Australia Defence Industry Business Round Table in Sydney, reaffirming the growing synergy between the two nations across strategic, industrial, and technological domains.

Speaking at the event, Singh said, "Under the banner of our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, established in 2020, we stand at a pivotal juncture to re-position our defence relations, not merely as partners, but as co-creators of a secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific." He added, "This Round Table is not merely a dialogue, it is a declaration of intent to make India and Australia natural allies in business, industry and innovation."

Highlighting the foundation of bilateral ties, Rajnath Singh recalled a series of high-level engagements, including the India-Australia Summit in November 2024, the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in October 2024, the visit of the Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister to India in June 2025, and his own ongoing visit to Australia. "Both India and Australia are part of the Commonwealth of Nations. Our shared history is built on democracy, diversity, liberty, and similar governance structures," he said.

The Defence Minister emphasized that strong bilateral ties rest on three pillars: government-to-government collaboration, people-to-people connect, and convergence of business interests. "Our defence industrial partnership, based on joint R&D, innovation, co-creation and co-production, still has untapped potential," Singh noted.

Singh highlighted India's economic and industrial achievements: "India is globally the fourth-largest economy and the fastest-growing large economy in the world. Our defence production touched Rs 1.51 lakh crore (USD 18 billion) last financial year, an 18% increase from the previous year. Defence exports reached Rs



23,622 crore (USD 2.76 billion), with Indian companies now exporting to nearly 100 countries."

Calling for closer industrial collaboration, he said, "I see this forum as an important instrument to make India and Australia natural allies in business and industry too. This alliance has compelling economic reasons to be successful and mutually beneficial."

Singh highlighted opportunities for co-development in high-end defence systems, including propulsion technologies, autonomous underwater vehicles, flight simulators, advanced materials, and shipbuilding. "Our shipyards have a proven track record in building and maintaining a wide

range of naval platforms. Indian yards can offer refit, mid-life upgrades, and maintenance services to the Royal Australian Navy and vessels under Australia's Pacific Maritime Security Program," he added.

He also welcomed Australia's proposal for a reciprocal provision of defence articles and services MoU, calling it a testament to mutual trust. "Importantly, Australia has identified India as a Top Tier Partner, removing certain regulatory barriers to enable easier technology sharing," Singh noted. The Round Table was jointly organised by the Ministry of Defence (India), the Australian Department of Defence, Newland Global Group,

and the Australia-India Business Council. It was attended by Assistant Minister for Defence of Australia Peter Khalil, India's High Commissioner to Australia Gopal Baglay, senior military officials, diplomats, and industry representatives.

Singh concluded by urging the Australian business community to collaborate and innovate with India: "Together, we can develop cutting-edge technologies, build advanced platforms, and ensure our industries are strategic enablers of peace and security in the region. This is an opportunity to build a partnership that is not only economically beneficial but also strategically transformative."

# INTERNATIONAL

## 7.6-magnitude earthquake strikes off southern Philippines, may cause tsunami



MANILA

An offshore earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 7.6 hit off a southern Philippine province Friday morning, prompting officials to order villagers to evacuate from nearby coastal provinces due to a possible tsunami.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said the potential damage was being assessed and rescue teams and relief operations were being prepared and

would be deployed when it was safe to do so.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said it was expecting damage and aftershocks from the earthquake, which was centered at sea about 62 kilometers (38 miles) southeast of Manay town in Davao Oriental province and was caused by movement in a fault at a shallow depth of 10 kilometers (6 miles).

Children evacuated schools in

Davao city, which has about 5.4 million people and is the biggest city near the epicenter, about 250 kilometers (155 miles) west of Davao Oriental province.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Honolulu said hazardous waves were possible within 300 kilometers (186 miles) of the epicenter.

It said waves up to 3 meters (10 feet) above normal tides were possible on some Philippine coasts, and smaller waves were possible in Indonesia

and Palau.

Office of Civil Defense deputy administrator Bernardo Rafaelito Alejandro IV warned that tsunami waves could hit six nearby coastal provinces from Davao Oriental up to two hours after the earthquake struck at 9:43 a.m. He asked people to immediately move to higher ground or further inland away from coastal areas.

"We urge these coastal communities to be on alert and immediately evacuate to higher grounds until further notice," Alejandro said in a video news briefing.

"Owners of boats in harbors and those in the coastal areas...should secure their boats and move away from the waterfronts," he said.

Indonesian authorities issued a tsunami warning for northeastern regions of Papua and North Sulawesi, about 275 kilometers (170 miles) from the epicenter. Indonesia's Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics Agency said in a statement that residents in the area should be aware and stay away from beaches and riverbanks.

The Philippines is still recovering from a Sept. 30 earthquake with a magnitude of 6.9 that left at least 74 people dead and displaced thousands of people in the central province of Cebu, particularly Bogo city and outlying towns. One of the world's most disaster-prone countries, the Philippines is often hit by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions because of its location on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," an arc of seismic faults around the ocean.

The archipelago also is lashed by about 20 typhoons and storms each year, making disaster response a major task of the government and volunteer groups.

## Venezuela's Maria Corina Machado wins the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize

## WASHINGTON

Venezuelan opposition activist Maria Corina Machado has been named the winner of the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize on Friday.

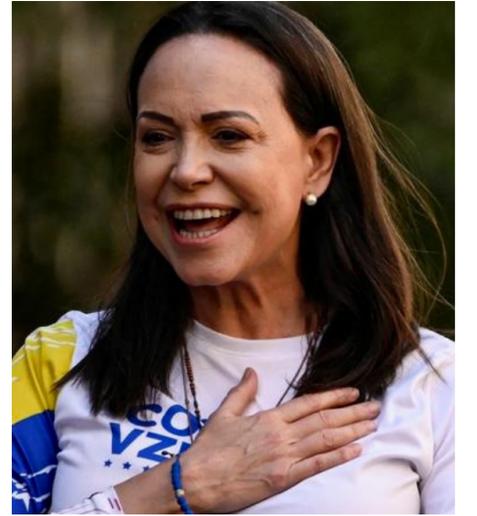
The announcement dashed the hopes of US President Donald Trump, who had long sought the honour. Longtime Nobel watchers said that his chances remained remote despite various notable foreign policy interventions for which he has taken personal credit.

The former opposition presidential candidate in Venezuela was lauded for being a "key, unifying figure in a political opposition that was once deeply divided — an opposition that found common ground in the demand for free elections and representative government," said Jørgen Watne Frydnes, chair of the Norwegian Nobel committee.

"In the past year, Miss Machado has been forced to live in hiding. Despite serious threats against her life, she has remained in the country, a choice that has inspired millions. When authoritarians seize power, it is crucial to recognize courageous defenders of freedom who rise and resist."

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro's government routinely targeted its real or perceived opponents ahead of last year's presidential election.

Machado was set to run against Maduro, but the government disqualified her. Edmundo González took her place. He had never run for office before. The lead-up to the election saw widespread repression including disqualifications, arrests and human rights violations.



ists, declared him the winner despite credible evidence to the contrary.

The election results announced by the Electoral Council sparked protests across the country to which the government responded with force and ended with more than 20 people dead. They also prompted an end to diplomatic relations between Venezuela and various foreign countries, including Argentina.

Machado went into hiding and has not been seen in public since January. A Venezuelan court issued an arrest warrant for González, who moved to Spain and was granted asylum.

Experts say the committee typically focuses on the durability of peace, the promotion of international fraternity and the quiet work of institutions that strengthen those goals.

Groups cited as possible winners by the Peace Research Institute Oslo include Sudan's Emergency Response Rooms, a commu-

nity-led network that has become the backbone of the country's humanitarian response to its civil war; the International Council of Justice and the International Criminal Court; and the Committee to Protect Journalists, a US-based group that promotes press freedom and compiles a list of journalists killed on duty.

Last year's award went to Nihon Hidankyo, a grass-roots movement of Japanese atomic bombing survivors who have worked for decades to maintain a taboo around the use of nuclear weapons.

The peace prize is the only one of the annual Nobel prizes to be awarded in Oslo, Norway.

Four of the other prizes have already been awarded in the Swedish capital, Stockholm this week — in medicine on Monday, physics on Tuesday, chemistry on Wednesday and literature on Thursday.

The winner of the prize in economics will be announced on Monday.

## NE Integration Rally 2026 to Spotlight Languishing Crafts and Forgotten Artisans of Northeast India



**RECOGNISING the UNRECOGNISED**



**SILCHAR**

The North East Integration Rally (NEIR) 2026, set to traverse all eight northeastern states over a month-long journey, is undertaking a unique mission: to draw attention to the region's fading crafts and the artisans who have struggled to preserve them.

Organised by the Knowledge Resource Centre (KRC) Foundation, the rally will commence in Kolkata on January 4, 2026, and conclude in Guwahati on February 4, covering Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura. Beyond promoting peace, integration, and regional development, the event is designed to document and celebrate the living cultural heritage of Northeast India.

In an effort to strengthen this focus, Biswadeep Gupta, Managing Trustee of KRC Foundation, has invited Prof (Dr.) Sukamal Deb to collaborate with the rally. Dr. Deb, renowned for his work in building community-based institutions and fostering sustainable livelihoods, will lead the identification and documentation of languishing crafts and the artisans who continue to preserve them despite social and economic challenges.

The rally plans to honour five traditional artisans or craftsmen from each state, recognising their exceptional contribution to sustaining endangered crafts. The stories, techniques, and experiences of these artisans will be compiled into a high-quality publication, designed as a reference for researchers, policymakers, cultural institutions, and anyone interested in the region's intangible heritage.

"The Northeast is home to around 40 crafts that are at risk of disappearing. Our artisans have kept these traditions alive for generations, often without



**DO MORE MATH.**

recognition. This initiative is about acknowledging their resilience and giving them the respect they deserve," said Gupta.

The NEIR 2026, themed Peace, Progress & Prosperity, will go beyond crafts to engage communities through exhibitions, youth rallies, and campaigns on tourism, climate action, disaster management, and adventure sports. It aims to foster connectivity, cultural exchange, and a sense of regional identity while showcasing the economic and social potential of the Northeast.

Dr. Deb's engagement is expected to bring depth to the rally's efforts. Having worked closely with communities across nearly 3,000 villages in the Northeast, he brings an on-ground understanding of local cultures, crafts, and livelihoods. His approach emphasises practical, inclusive development, rooted in the idea that lasting peace depends on meaningful work, income, and dignity—an idea especially resonant in a world where over 650 million people live in extreme poverty, including roughly 7% of India's population.

With Dr. Deb's guidance, NEIR 2026 aims to create not just awareness but tangible impact, connecting traditional knowledge with contemporary platforms, inspiring youth, and empowering artisans economically and socially.

The rally promises to be more than a journey—it is a movement that celebrates diversity, documents heritage, and nurtures the Northeast's identity, culture, and potential. Through this effort, the KRC Foundation envisions a Northeast that is integrated, empowered, and recognised for its rich cultural and human resources.

With Prof (Dr) Sukamal Deb's expertise, the project 'Recognising the unrecognised' craftsman will be a reality in the North Eastern Region of India. Under his leadership, Anant Centre for Documentation, Development of Crafts, Anant National University, Ahmedabad was established, and he contributes to many universities, organisations and projects in Inclusive Rural Development to attain sustainable development goals.



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### 11 JAN Barak Valley Conclave

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### 11 JAN film festival

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

Watch Out! Film Festival

Barak Festival

Band Night 10 JAN

Musical Night 11 JAN

REGISTER NOW

### 10-12 JAN Book Bank

Free Book Campaign | Book Bank | Donate | Buy | Sell

### Book Club

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

### Painting Carnival

Water Colour painting and Draw Paint Campaign

5E SUCCESS

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