

# KRC TIMES

## STAY-ENRICHED

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### PERSPECTIVE

India-UK friendship is on the move and is filled with great vigour! A picture from earlier today, when my friend PM Starmer and I began our journey to attend the Global Fintech Fest. ~ Narendra Modi, PM India

### '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

In the near future, your Tesla will drop you off at the store entrance and then go find a parking spot. When you're ready to exit the store, just tap Summon on your phone and the car will come to you. ~ Elon Musk, American Entrepreneur

## Manipur: BJP MLAs return from New Delhi with optimism



IMPHAL

Some BJP MLAs, in New Delhi for the past few days to ask for central leaders to reinstate a popular government in Manipur, returned to

Imphal on Saturday.

They expressed optimism that their demands would be fulfilled soon.

MLAs Karam Shyam, Sapam Ranjan Singh, Heikham Dingo, Konthoujam Govindas, and Khumukcham Joykishan reached Imphal.

The MLAs said the central leadership has shown positive intent toward restoring an elected government in the state, which has been under President's Rule since earlier this year.

MLA Karam Shyam said that unlike previous meetings, the latest round of discussions reflected a "visible concern and commitment" from central leaders.

"Earlier, there was little mention of reinstating a popular government. But this time, BJP North East in-charge Sambit Patra and party general secretary B.L. Santosh expressed clear interest in the matter. We are hopeful that a popular government will be

formed soon," he said.

Sapam Ranjan Singh, another MLA, said that the "delegation's primary objective was to brief central leaders on the prevailing situation in Manipur and press for the early restoration of an elected government."

"We raised the necessity of installing a popular government to ensure stability and public trust. The discussions were positive and we expect a favourable outcome soon," he said.

Around 25 BJP MLAs had been camping in Delhi for the past few days, seeking an audience with the party's top leadership.

On October 10, a six-member delegation led by Manipur Legislative Assembly Speaker Th. Satyabrata Singh, former Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, and former ministers Thongam Biswajit, Yumkham Khemchand, Govindas Konthoujam, and Kh. Ibomcha met BJP general secretary B.L. Santosh at his residence,

## Over 600 trucks stuck on Aizawl-Silchar road, worsens after rain, truckers file PIL



AIZAWL

The condition of the dilapidated Aizawl-Silchar highway has worsened further following heavy rainfall on October 8, exacerbating the plight of truckers and commuters. Hundreds of trucks, particularly empty vehicles heading towards Assam, were stranded along the National Highway 306, with the situation worsening by the day.

According to the Kolasib Police, 622 trucks — 587 of them heading towards Assam from Khamrang and 35 going towards Aizawl from Kawnpui — were stuck for over 24 hours on Thursday. On Friday, the number of stranded trucks rose, with 320 empty trucks still unable to move towards Assam. The report noted that the cessation of heavy rainfall allowed 861 trucks, including 280 heading towards Aizawl and 581 towards Assam, to resume

their onward journey by Friday morning.

H Laldingliana, president of the Mizoram Truck Drivers' Association (MTDA), expressed frustration over the worsening road conditions. "Despite repairs made two months ago between the Sairang and Kawnpui stretch, the road has deteriorated to such an extent that it is now extremely dangerous to ply on it. Many empty trucks have been left stranded, and a few have even turned upside down," he said.

As a result of the perilous road conditions, the MTDA has suspended the transport of foodstuffs from the State Food, Civil Supplies, and Consumer Affairs warehouses between Aizawl and north-western Mamit district since October 2. Also Read - NPP opposes separate administration in Manipur, CM Conrad Sangma calls for dialogue The truckers have also taken the issue to court, filing a public interest litigation with the Gauhati High Court regarding the deteriorating state of the road. The Court has accepted the PIL, bringing further attention to the urgent need for road repairs. While the heavy rains have since subsided, truckers are still facing delays, and the situation remains critical for the transportation of goods.

## Nagaland government staff to start pen down strike from October 14



KOHIMA

Government departments across Nagaland will observe a pen-down strike beginning October 14, with multiple service associations joining the coordinated action. The Joint Coordination Committee issued formal guidelines on October 9 to manage the disruption while protecting critical services for the public.

Emergency and healthcare operations will continue uninterrupted during the strike period. The government has explicitly excluded power supply maintenance, water distribution, road repairs, sanitation services, and medical personnel from the work stoppage. Law enforcement agencies will also remain operational

to ensure public safety and order.

All service associations affiliated with the Coordination Committee have been directed to ensure the strike proceeds peacefully and that clear instructions reach employees about what constitutes essential services. The Nagaland School Teachers Association, an affiliated body, has already complied with the directives and issued validation of its participation.

The Coordination Committee clarified on October 10 that all affiliated service associations must adhere to the strike action. Officials noted that non-governmental agencies unrelated to the strike have issued opposing directives, creating confusion. The committee emphasised that compliance applies only to organisations officially affiliated with the coordinating bodies.

Government employees have been asked to observe strict attendance protocols at their workplaces, while department heads must ensure documentation of who participates in the strike. Associations representing government workers are responsible for communicating the guidelines clearly to prevent public inconvenience.

The committee stated that departments or associations may identify additional services beyond the standard list that warrant exemption based on their specific operational needs.

## Manipur Governor presides over IPS rank pipping ceremony at Raj Bhavan



IMPHAL

The Governor of Manipur, Ajay Kumar Bhalla, presided over a formal rank pipping ceremony at Raj Bhavan, Imphal, celebrating the promotion of two distinguished Indian Police Service (IPS) officers, Rakesh Balwal, IPS, and Ningshem Vashum, IPS.

During the ceremony, the Governor placed the new rank insignia on the officers, marking their formal elevation in service.

Both officers were recently promoted to the rank of Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIGP), in recognition of their dedicated service and exemplary contributions to law enforcement.

Congratulating the officers, Governor Bhalla expressed his appreciation for their commitment and extended his best wishes for continued success in serving both the State and the Nation.

The ceremony was also attended by senior police officials, including ADGP (Intelligence) Ashutosh Kumar Sinha and ADGP (L&O) Lupheng Kailun, reflecting the significance of the event in the state's law enforcement hierarchy.

A solemn yet historic ceremony at Raj Bhavan, Imphal, on October 10 brought together the spirit of courage and sacrifice as the Governor of Manipur, Ajay Kumar Bhalla, felicitated 18 gallantry award winners and honoured the families of fallen soldiers from the state. The event marked the first-ever occasion in Manipur where gallantry awardees were collectively recognised under the Governor's initiative. The ceremony celebrated the bravery and dedication of soldiers who have served across battlefronts and peacekeeping missions, reflecting Manipur's enduring legacy of military service. Cash awards were presented to the recipients and the next of kin of

those who laid down their lives in the line of duty.

Among the awardees were Major Maneo Francis PF and Subedar P Prabin Singh, recipients of the Shaurya Chakra; Squadron Leader Rizwan Malik and Constable (L) Deepak Chingakhom, honoured with the Vir Chakra; and several Sena Medal awardees including Lt Col K Bijayendra Sharma, Lt Col Mutum Ajoy Meitei, and Maj S Maningba Rangmaei.

Battle casualty honours were conferred on the late Maj M Pritam Singh and CFN (L) Wakambam Peter Singh. Lt Col Lemjoy Chara received the Vishist Seva Medal, while Naik M Rangayung was mentioned in despatches.

Addressing the gathering, Governor Bhalla lauded the valour of Manipuri soldiers who have served with distinction from Siachen to Kargil, in counter-insurgency zones, and in international peacekeeping operations. He highlighted that recent missions, including Operation Sindoor, underscore India's growing defence capability and the resolve of its armed forces.

Emphasising the state's deep-rooted military heritage, the Governor said the courage of Manipuri soldiers continues to inspire the nation. He also paid tribute to the families of martyrs, acknowledging their resilience and sacrifice.

## Kaziranga grasslands shrink by 318 sq km in 110 years, threatening wildlife

### GUWAHATI

A new study by the Dehradun-based Wildlife Institute of India (WII) has revealed that the iconic grasslands of Kaziranga Tiger Reserve in Assam — vital for species like rhinos, elephants, and swamp deer — have shrunk by 318.3 sq km between 1913 and 2023.

To put this in perspective, the loss is almost equivalent to the area of Kolkata city or about half the size of Mumbai, according to WII researcher Umar Saeed.

The researchers analyzed historical topographic maps, satellite imagery spanning 110 years, and climate data from 1980 to 2022 to study land-use and climate dynamics in the Brahmaputra floodplain.

Their findings show that while grasslands have steadily declined, forest cover has expanded dramatically — from just 0.6 sq km in 1913 to 229.2 sq km in 2023.

Waterbodies, which had initially expanded until 2013, have started shrinking in the past decade, reflecting changes in river morphology and hydrology.

Climatic trends over the century in-



dicating subtle shifts: maximum temperatures have slightly dipped from 37.5°C to 36°C, while minimum temperatures have risen from 6°C to 8°C, resulting in warmer nights. Relative humidity and rainfall have increased, improving soil moisture levels.

The study, titled 'A Century of Land Use and Climate Dynamics Transforma-

tion at Kaziranga Tiger Reserve', was presented at WII's 18th Internal Annual Research Seminar.

Scientists highlighted that both human activities and climate changes are driving these ecological transformations in the UNESCO world heritage site.

While forest expansion may seem positive, the loss of open grasslands poses

serious challenges for Kaziranga's herbivore populations.

"Grasslands sustain megaherbivores and cervid species. Rhinos, swamp deer, hog deer, and sambar require extensive grasslands for foraging and survival," explained Saeed, adding that Kaziranga is also home to the last remaining original populations of wild water buffalo (Bubalus arnee).

The researchers further noted that invasive plant species, including Mikania micrantha and Chromolaena odorata, are encroaching on grasslands, impacting the feeding and behavior of key herbivores.

"Megaherbivores play a crucial role in the food web of Kaziranga. Continued grassland depletion could significantly affect their populations in the long term," said Saeed and fellow researcher Rashmi Das, whose study spanned 2019 to 2024.

The WII scientists stressed the urgent need for adaptive management strategies that focus on habitat regeneration, maintaining hydrological balance, and building climate resilience to protect this sensitive floodplain ecosystem.

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## BRIDGING INDIA'S SKILL GAP

The launch of the Rs 60,000-crore Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through upgraded ITIs marks a historic milestone in India's journey toward building a skilled and employable workforce for the 21st century. The ambitious initiative aims to transform 1,000 Government ITIs into modern, industry-aligned training hubs that can truly prepare the youth for the changing face of technology and industrial processes. For decades, ITIs have served as the backbone of vocational training in India, offering courses across 169 trades and producing nearly 9 lakh trained students annually. However, despite their scale and reach, the reality is that a large portion of these graduates remain unemployable, not because of a lack of effort, but because the curriculum they follow has long outlived its relevance. The skills being imparted in many of these institutions are tailored to a bygone industrial era, while the world outside has moved toward automation, artificial intelligence, robotics, and precision manufacturing.

Courses like plumbing, electrical work, or mechanical fitting—though still necessary—are no longer sufficient to sustain a livelihood in today's technology-driven economy. Modern machines, digital interfaces, and smart systems have replaced much of the manual work that once defined industrial labour. As a result, industries across sectors—from automotive and electronics to logistics and manufacturing—are demanding a new breed of technicians and operators who can handle advanced machinery, integrate AI-based tools, and maintain automated systems.

Recognising this glaring mismatch between education and employment, PM-SETU represents a long-overdue overhaul of India's vocational training landscape. Under this initiative, special-purpose vehicles will be set up with credible industry partners to manage ITI clusters and ensure outcome-based training. The collaboration with anchor industries is crucial because it ensures that training will no longer be theoretical or outdated but tailored directly to what the job market actually demands.

The first phase of PM-SETU will roll out 15 hub-and-spoke clusters. This phased approach is both pragmatic and strategic. It allows the Government and industry to test models, upgrade infrastructure, and retrain faculty before scaling up nationwide. The hub-and-spoke model envisioned under PM-SETU is particularly noteworthy. Two hundred hub ITIs will act as centres of excellence, equipped with advanced labs, innovation centres, production units, and trainer development facilities. These will connect to 800 spoke ITIs that will extend the reach of quality training to smaller towns and rural areas. Such an ecosystem can bridge the urban-rural divide in skilling while maintaining consistency in quality. Further, the scheme's focus on strengthening five National Skill Training Institutes—in Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kanpur, and Ludhiana—as global centres of excellence underlines India's intent to compete at a global scale. By aligning these institutes with international partners, India can adopt global best practices in technical education and certification, thereby enhancing the credibility and employability of Indian workers abroad. Importantly, the scheme recognises that the future of employment is not confined to traditional manufacturing alone. Sectors like hospitality, tourism, BFSI, logistics, and IT-enabled services are expanding rapidly and require trained manpower with domain-specific technical and soft skills. The integration of vocational skill labs in Navodaya Vidyalayas and Eklavya Model Residential Schools across 12 key sectors will help inculcate an early awareness and aptitude for skill-based learning among students. This transformation is not merely about modernising buildings or machinery—it's about modernising mindsets. The move reflects a clear acknowledgement that Government jobs are shrinking, and the only sustainable path forward is to create a workforce that is self-reliant, employable, and globally competitive. A technically proficient youth population can be India's greatest strength, fuelling industries, attracting investment, and propelling the nation toward becoming a global manufacturing and innovation hub. PM-SETU has the potential to significantly impact India's economic narrative. The initiative has the potential to usher in a second industrial revolution, powered not by imported technology alone, but by homegrown, highly skilled manpower. India's demographic dividend can only translate into real growth when its youth are empowered with the right skills at the right time. The Government's vision is ambitious, but achievable—with industry collaboration, continuous curriculum updates, and a relentless focus on quality.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

No such thing as a man willing to be honest - that would be like a blind man willing to see.  
~ F. Scott Fitzgerald

# 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.

### DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

**Congratulations to new Nobel Peace Prize laureate María Corina Machado for her courageous struggle to bring democracy to Venezuela. It should inspire those engaged in similar struggles around the world - and remind those of us lucky enough to live in America that we have a solemn responsibility to constantly preserve and defend our own hard-won democratic traditions.**

~ Barack Obama, Former President of the USA

THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE 2025



## CASTE, JEALOUSY AND LIFE: THE DARK SIDE OF BUREAUCRACY

DR. SATYAVAN SAURABH

On October 7th, a reverberation rippled through Haryana's administrative machinery, exposing the bureaucracy's decency. Senior IPS officer Y. Puran Kumar shot himself in his official residence in Sector 11, Chandigarh. But this wasn't suicide; it was a suicide of caste discrimination, the struggle to climb the ladder, and the oppression inherent in this system. Now, the FIR filed by the Chandigarh police and its silence have become a knockout blow to the law. FIR No. 156, which later named DGP Shatrughan Kapoor and Rohtak SP Narendra Bijarnia as accused, and 14 others as officers on the order, is a milestone in India's administrative history. And being registered under sections 108, 3(5) of the Indian Penal Code, and section 3(1)(r) of the SC/ST Act, the case is proof that casteism still lingers in high places of power as loudly as it does in the streets of villages.

Puran Kumar's suicide note names 15 IAS and IPS officers. Each name is an accusation, and each accusation is an accusation: can't any officer with constitutional powers in this country break the shackles of their caste? "You were a surplus post," he said, and his skills were always suppressed, and caste-based threats and abuse broke him mentally." Puran Kumar's

career record confirms this conclusion. He was tough and honest in the police service, but he was repeatedly transferred to lower positions—first to IG Home Guards, then to IG Telecommunications. When he was appointed IG of the Rohtak Range in April 2023, he must have felt his hard work had paid off. But just five months later, he was transferred to the Sunaria Police Training College—and this is where his mental decline began. This is not the story of one officer, but of an entire system that values "recognition" over "competence." Reservation brings a new future to this country, but the system refuses to recognize it.

Dalit officers are often underestimated; they are called "reservation officers" instead of "qualified officers." Puran Kumar's death proved that casteism is prevalent not only in society but also in the corridors of power. Puran Kumar's wife, IAS officer Amneet P. Kumar, filed two separate petitions—one seeking action only against the DGP and Superintendent of Police, and the other demanding the arrest of all 15 officers. This is not the fight of a single officer, but of a sensitive wife and colleague seeking justice from the state. She stated that this was not just a suicide, but a premeditated murder. Several IAS, IPS, and HCS officers have expressed soli-

arity with the Puran family, who belong to the Scheduled Caste community, after the FIR was filed. This is unprecedented, as a culture of silence generally prevails in the bureaucracy, where officers often refrain from even talking about their colleagues.

But this time, the silence has been broken. Officials are currently saying that Puran Kumar's murder is not a personal killing—he was a man whose ideals demanded equality and respectful treatment. Chief Minister Nayab Saini met with the family and assured them of a fair investigation. But does this promise translate into justice? Will the state government muster the courage to remove a senior officer from the post of DGP and remove the Superintendent of Police? Or will this, like any other "internal investigation," remain confined to files? For years, there has been talk of caste-based factionalism in Haryana's bureaucracy, which influences the appointments, transfers, and promotions of officers. It's a matter of "who belongs to whom," and seniority is more important than position. And when caste becomes a factor in this factionalism, competence, honesty, and sensitivity are all marginalized. Puran Kumar's death casts a moral shadow over this system of false prestige. This incident is not just a suicide, but a murder of the soul of the system which corrupts its officials so much

mentally and racially that they are forced to give up their lives.

Following this case, some kind of open dialogue on caste discrimination within the bureaucracy may emerge. But there is also a fear that the case will become an administrative formality—as it always has been. An inquiry committee will be set up, statements will be recorded, and a conclusive report will declare it a "suicide due to personal reasons."

Every word written by the great Puran Kumar still hangs in the air like a question: "When those who administer justice themselves become unjust, who should protest?" This is the last of many instances when a compassionate officer sacrificed his life to demonstrate that the pain of casteism cannot be alleviated from the pinnacle of power. However, realizing that caste has infected Indian politics today is not only the responsibility of the government, but also of society. Puran Kumar is gone, but his suicide note makes it clear that the bureaucratic silence is also a criminal act. The system must hold accountable not only the perpetrators but also its own thinking for his death. Because until this system changes, it will always remain like a bullet for every Puran Kumar.

Dr. Satyawan Saurabh, freelance journalist and columnist.

# “Completely bifurcating Manipur not NPP’s stand”: Conrad Sangma

‘Dialogue, not violence, is the way forward’: Conrad Sangma calls for calm after Assam-Meghalaya border clash

**IMPHAL**  
Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma, on October 10, firmly opposed the creation of a separate administration for the Kuki community and the bifurcation of Manipur, which has been marred by ethnic violence since May 2023.

Sangma, visiting Manipur on a two-day tour, called for all stakeholders to come together to resolve the ongoing crisis. “Looking at a completely separate administration or completely bifurcating the state of Manipur is not the stand of the National People’s Party (NPP). We are very clear on that,” he said.

The violence between Meiteis and Kuki-Zo groups has claimed over 200 lives and displaced thousands. Kukis have been demanding a separate administration, a proposal

Sangma rejected, emphasising dialogue as the only way forward.

“We have always stressed that there is always a meeting point, which can be reached. It depends on the will, dialogue and commitment,” he said.

Sangma appealed to all communities to take responsibility for restoring peace. “It has been too long. For many years now, communities and innocent people in Manipur have been suffering. Therefore, it is the responsibility of all communities and all leaders to find a way forward,” he added.

During his visit, the chief minister met with internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Churachandpur and Moreh. He noted that while immediate normalcy may not be possible in all areas, discussions could begin in locations where peace can be restored.

He also highlighted concerns raised by the displaced, including arms and drug-related issues.

On border fencing and the Free Movement Regime (FMR), Sangma urged the Centre to involve local communities. “We are very clear that these require a lot of engagement. While the Centre intends to ensure proper identification of citizens and those who are not citizens of India, there are, of course, historical and cultural factors, which are equally important,” he said.

The FMR allows people living near the India-Myanmar border to move up to 16 km into each other’s territory without a visa. Sangma stressed, “We urge the Centre that whatever decisions the government takes, they must take local people on board to discuss and find a way.”

A day after a man was killed in a violent clash near the Assam-Meghalaya border, Meghalaya Chief Minister and NPP president Conrad K Sangma appealed for peace and urged residents not to resort to violence.

Speaking from Imphal during a two-day visit to Manipur, Sangma described the incident as “unfortunate” and linked it to long-standing “differences in terms of the border between Assam and Meghalaya.”

The clash took place on Thursday in Assam’s West Karbi Anglong district, where a dispute over paddy harvesting turned violent. According to Assam Police, residents from Meghalaya allegedly began harvesting crops in an area claimed by both states, prompting opposition from villagers in Tapat under Hamren police station. The confrontation escalated into a scuffle, leaving

one person dead and several injured.

“The Lapang area is a point of difference. We are in talks with Assam. We (Meghalaya) are maintaining our stand and Assam is maintaining its stand too. But we have discussed and are trying to resolve this issue,” Sangma said. “It is a very unfortunate incident, and I appeal to people that we should not resort to violence. We should look at dialogue to resolve the problem.” The chief minister said both states had anticipated tension during the harvesting season and deployed police personnel to maintain order. “Security forces from both sides appealed for restraint, but a scuffle broke out between the two groups. During that scuffle, one person lost his life,” Sangma noted.

He added that such incidents are not new, as farmers from both sides often cultivate in

disputed areas. “During the harvesting season, there is a problem as farmers from one side stop the other. We try to resolve the issue at the local level by involving stakeholders and forming a peace committee,” he said.

Sangma emphasised the ongoing efforts to settle the decades-old border dispute, which involves 12 areas of difference between the two states. “We have resolved six areas. For the last 52 years, no government has taken this initiative. It is only in our time that we resolved six issues. Six more are left, and we are working on that,” he said. Reiterating his call for calm, Sangma urged citizens to cooperate and rely on dialogue. “If the people talk to each other and maintain peace, the authorities will be able to resolve the issue,” he said.

## Assam minister Pijush Hazarika criticizes Congress over ‘Mayabini’ song controversy

GUWAHATI

Assam BJP Minister Pijush Hazarika on Friday, October 10 slammed the Congress party and its state president, Gaurav Gogoi, over the alleged politicization of Zubeen Garg’s popular song ‘Mayabini’. Speaking at a party meeting in Bongaigaon, Hazarika accused Congress workers of misusing an artist’s creation for political gains.

Addressing the gathering, Hazarika said, “Another unfortunate incident involving Congress! In a party meeting held in Bongaigaon, Congress workers, adorned with full party caps and symbols, under the leadership of Hon’ble MP Shri Gaurav Gogoi, shamelessly used the song ‘Mayabini’ for political promotion. This song belongs to our beloved artist Zubeen da. Turning art into propaganda is a disgrace.”

Hazarika questioned the ethical boundaries of political campaigns, adding, “How low will the Congress party stoop for votes and political interest? After such actions, we are asked why we engage politically with the artists who are the soul of our culture.”

The remarks reflect rising tensions between the BJP and Congress in Assam, particularly over the use of cultural icons and artistic creations in political mobilization.

## Female employees accused of assaulting receptionist, vandalizing property at Silchar restaurant

SILCHAR

In a disturbing incident that unfolded on Friday, October 10 night, an altercation reportedly broke out between employees of two establishments owned by the same proprietor, leading to allegations of assault and vandalism in Silchar’s Trunk Road area.

According to reports, a group of female employees from Geno Help Spa, owned by Dr. J.P. Das, allegedly attacked a young receptionist and vandalized property at Parijat Restaurant, another business under Dr. Das’s ownership. The victim, identified as Sharmila Das, who serves as the receptionist at Parijat Restaurant, alleged that five women employed at Geno Help Spa assaulted her and vandalized the premises, including the owner’s vehicle.

She claimed that earlier that day, the same individuals had stolen an institutional mobile phone, and the act was captured on the restaurant’s CCTV cameras. Upon reviewing the footage, Sharmila immediately informed Dr. Das, who imposed

a financial penalty on the accused employees. The situation allegedly escalated when, later that night, the women returned and attacked her, damaging the restaurant property and the owner’s vehicle in what appears to have been an act of retaliation. Elaborating on the motive, Sharmila alleged that the accused work as masseuses at Geno Help Spa. She said that her role involved directing clients to the spa, but client numbers had reportedly declined in recent days. The five women allegedly accused her of deliberately withholding clients from them, which led to mounting tension. Sharmila further claimed that the group conspired to frame her by stealing the company’s mobile phone. When their actions were exposed through CCTV footage, they allegedly resorted to violence. Speaking to reporters, Dr. J.P. Das confirmed that the individuals involved in the assault and vandalism are indeed his employees. He stated that the incident was a retaliatory attack following disciplinary action taken for the theft of the institutional phone.



GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on October 10 clarified his financial standing, stating that he does not own any property beyond his official salary.

## Apart from my salary, I don’t own anything: Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma

This came on the sidelines when a journalist asked the Chief Minister about allegations from opposition parties regarding his family’s property.

Speaking to reporters, Sarma said, “I don’t have property at all. My wife works for her wellbeing — she does not steal or take anything unlawfully. If someone is earning honestly, then what is the issue? Apart from my salary, I do not have anything.”

Sarma’s remarks come amid ongoing scrutiny of politicians’ assets and personal finances. By highlighting his modest means, the Chief Minister sought to reinforce his image as a public servant leading a transparent and honest life.

The statement also underlined the Chief Minister’s emphasis on integrity and lawful earnings, reflecting his continued focus on accountability in public life. Earlier on October

8, entrepreneur and wife of Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, Riniki Bhuyan Sharma, has filed a criminal defamation case against Rajiv Dal chief and Sibsagar MLA Akhil Gogoi, along with several others, over allegations of making false and derogatory statements against her and her company, Golden Threads of Assam.

The case, filed under CR Case No. 502/25 at the Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) Court, Guwahati, follows remarks made by Gogoi during a protest on September 30, 2025, where he demanded an inquiry into the mysterious death of singer Zubeen Garg in Singapore. Gogoi had allegedly accused Sharma and her company of organising an event at the North East Festival in Singapore.

Sharma’s counsel, Advocate Kishor Dutta, clarified that the accusations were

baseless and defamatory.

“During the protest, Mr Gogoi made completely false and derogatory statements against my client. Golden Threads of Assam had no connection whatsoever with the North East Festival in Singapore. My client did not participate in or organise the event,” Dutta stated.

The defamation complaint also names Taufiquddin Ahmad, Director of Pratibim-ba Live, while Sharma has instructed her legal team to initiate further proceedings against BJP leader Lurini Jyoti Gogoi and others accused of circulating misinformation on social media. The next hearing in the case has been scheduled for October 30, 2025.

Meanwhile, in a statement posted on her official Facebook account, Riniki Bhuyan Sharma expressed disappointment over what she termed as “political mudslinging.”

## Manipur positions itself as regional trade hub at global buyers and sellers summit

IMPHAL

Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla on October 10 inaugurated the Manipur Global Buyers and Sellers Summit 2025, calling the event a major step toward positioning the state as a regional gateway for international trade.

The two-day summit, themed “Bridging Business Sans Borders,” is being held at the City Convention Centre, Imphal, under the Ministry of MSME’s Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) initiative.

It is jointly organised by the Directorate of Trade, Commerce and Industries, Manipur Industrial Development Corporation Ltd. (MANIDCO), and the Manipur Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI).



Participants from Myanmar, Bangladesh, Thailand, Japan, and several northeastern states are attending the event, alongside local entrepreneurs and businesses. The summit features exhibitions of indigenous products, including black rice (Chak-Hao), handloom items, handicrafts, and organic produce, reflecting Manipur’s growing potential in

regional and global markets.

Addressing the gathering, Governor Bhalla said Manipur’s combination of natural resources, skilled human capital, and creativity gives it a strong foundation for trade and innovation. He highlighted the resilience of communities rebuilding their livelihoods and producing goods that are now reaching inter-

national buyers.

Bhalla described the summit as a “statement of confidence” in Manipur’s potential to become a strategic trade corridor linking India and Southeast Asia. He also praised the state’s growing IT and service sectors for creating jobs and supporting new business models.

The Governor urged continued support for women-led enterprises and sustainable entrepreneurship through initiatives like RAMP. He expressed optimism that improved connectivity and digital access would accelerate Manipur’s economic growth and integration with global markets.

Additional Chief Secretary (Textiles, Commerce & Industries and Transport) Anurag Bajpai and MCCI President Dr Basudev Singh also attended the inaugural session.

## Dima Hasao Congress holds candlelight gathering in memory of Zubeen Garg, demands justice for his death



HAFLONG

A candlelight gathering was organized in Haflong, the headquarters of Dima Hasao district, by the Dima Hasao District Congress Committee to pay homage to the late singer Zubeen Garg and demand justice in connection with his tragic death.

Addressing the gathering, members of the district Congress committee urged that no one should politicize Zubeen Garg’s death, emphasizing that the incident should unite the people of Assam rather than divide them. The committee called for the strictest possible punishment for all individuals involved in the alleged murder of the iconic artist.

Speaking on the occasion, Nir-

mal Langthasai, President of the Dima Hasao District Congress Committee, described Zubeen Garg as “a personality far beyond ordinary.” Langthasai said Zubeen had devoted his life to social harmony, cultural unity, and humanitarian causes, often using his art and voice to bring people together across communities.

“Zubeen was not just a singer; he was a messenger of peace and togetherness,” Langthasai said. “He worked selflessly for the welfare of others, bridging divides between Hindus and Muslims and instilling a deep sense of brotherhood among the people of Assam.”

Langthasai further asserted that the people of Assam would not remain silent until justice is delivered. “Every individual connected to Zubeen Garg’s murder must be held accountable. The voice of Assam will continue to rise until the guilty are punished,” he declared, as candles flickered in solemn remembrance.

The emotional gathering witnessed the participation of local leaders, party members, and residents, who lit candles and observed a moment of silence in honor of Zubeen Garg’s enduring legacy as an artist, humanitarian, and unifying force in Assam’s cultural landscape.

## Sustaining silk dreams: Workshop in Arunachal’s Pasighat charts new path for tribal livelihoods

ITANAGAR

In a concerted effort to bolster tribal livelihoods through sustainable sericulture, the Central Muga Eri Research and Training Institute (CMER&TI), Lahdoigarh, Jorhat, under the Central Silk Board, Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, organized a one-day workshop on “Strengthening Tribal Livelihoods through Sustainable Muga and Eri Culture in Arunachal Pradesh.” The event was held at the Department of Sericulture Farm, Silie, East Siang district, in collaboration with the Department of Sericulture, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.

The workshop sought to promote sustainable sericulture practices, disseminate the latest technological innovations, and encourage greater tribal participation in Muga and Eri culture—two vital components of the region’s traditional and economic fabric. It also emphasized women’s empowerment and rural income enhancement through silk-based entrepreneurship.

The inaugural session began with the Lighting of the Lamp followed by the opening of an exhibition showcasing cutting-edge Muga and Eri silk technologies and value-added silk products.

The ceremony was graced by Chief Guest Shri Ninong Ering, Hon’ble MLA, Pasighat West; Special Guests Smt. Yanung Jamoh



Lego, Herbal Medicine Expert and Padma Shri Awardee; Smt. Barnali Sur, Director, Department of Sericulture, Government of Arunachal Pradesh; and Shri Nagesh S, Assistant Secretary, Central Silk Board, Guwahati. The session was chaired by Dr. Kartik Neog, Director, CMER&TI, Lahdoigarh.

Delivering the welcome address, Dr. Diganta Mech, Scientist-D, CMER&TI, underscored the significance of sericulture as a sustainable livelihood avenue for tribal households.

In his keynote address, Shri Ninong Ering urged greater institutional support to ensure the long-term growth of the sericulture sector. He highlighted the potential of Muga and Eri silk in creating rural employment and promoting ecological balance, assuring continued governmental support for the initiative.

Dr. Kartik Neog outlined CMER&TI’s vision for the region, emphasizing collaborative research, field-based training, and technological dissemination. He announced plans to strengthen activities at the Regional Extension Centre in Silie, to which Smt. Barnali

Sur assured full cooperation from the state government.

During the inaugural session, three informative leaflets authored by CMER&TI scientists were released by the dignitaries:

“Indigenous Technical Knowledge (ITK) for Sustainable Development of Muga Culture” by Dr. D. Mech and Dr. Vijay N.

“Cocoon to Yarn – Eri Silk Post-Cocoon Guide” by Sh. Nishant Singhal, Sh. Roshan Lal Meena, and Dr. Vijay N.

“Muga Cocoon to Yarn – Step by Step Process” by Sh. Roshan Lal Meena, Sh. Nishant Singhal, and Dr. Vijay N.

In recognition of their significant contributions to sericulture, four progressive farmers from different districts of Arunachal Pradesh were felicitated:

Eri Sector:  
Ms. Nunu Taluk (Tekang Village, East Siang)

Mr. Obi Jomang (Remi Village, East Siang)

Muga Sector:  
Mr. Takir Taloh (Ledum Village, East

Siang)

Mr. India Moyong (Lingka Village, East Siang)

The awardees shared insights into field challenges such as seed availability and infrastructure limitations while expressing gratitude for the technical guidance provided by CMER&TI and the Department of Sericulture.

Technical and Interactive Sessions  
The post-lunch session delved into the scientific and practical aspects of Muga and Eri culture, featuring technical presentations by:  
Dr. D. Mech and Sh. Pulak Rabha on “Advances in Muga Culture and Field Management”

Sh. Nishant Singhal and Sh. Roshan L. Meena on “Post-Cocoon Technologies and Value Addition in Vanya Sericulture”

The session culminated in an open interaction where farmers and experts exchanged practical insights to enhance productivity, product quality, and income levels.

A Collective Resolve for the Future

The workshop concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Dr. Vijay N., Scientist-D, CMER&TI, who acknowledged the contributions of dignitaries, scientists, farmers, and media representatives. Participants collectively resolved to strengthen the sericulture ecosystem in Arunachal Pradesh through scientific interventions, capacity building, and sustained collaboration among research institutions, government bodies, and farmers. Calls were also made to conduct similar workshops across other promising sericulture clusters in the state to ensure inclusive development.

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## US Ambassador-designate Sergio Gor arrives in Delhi amid efforts to reset ties, resolve tariff tensions

NEW DELHI

US Ambassador-designate to India Sergio Gor arrived in New Delhi on Friday for a six-day visit, soon after his confirmation by the US Senate — a signal seen as both sides are looking to accelerate diplomatic engagement, defuse trade tensions, and potentially lay the groundwork for a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump.

Gor, a close confidant of President Trump and former White House Personnel Director, is accompanied by Michael J. Rigas, Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources at the US State Department. The visit till October 14 comes at a delicate moment in India-US relations, which have seen frictions over trade barriers, tariffs, and divergent energy policies.

Although Gor will not present his credentials or formally assume charge during this visit, his early presence in Delhi reflects a strategic push by Washington to move past recent irritants and reaffirm the broader strategic partnership. “The United States will continue to work with India to strengthen our strategic partnership and promote a safer, stronger, and more prosperous Indo-Pacific region,” the US State Department said ahead of the visit.

Trade has remained one of the thorniest issues in the relationship. The Trump administration’s decision to impose steep tariffs, doubling duties on key Indian exports to up to 50%, which includes an additional 25% levy tied to India’s continued purchase of Russian crude has drawn strong objections from New Delhi. India has labelled the actions “unfair, unjustified



and unreasonable.”

Gor’s trip could help move discussions forward on a smaller, targeted trade deal, possibly to be announced ahead of a potential Modi-Trump meeting.

Still, recent phone calls between Modi and Trump have helped ease some of the frost, and both governments have resumed trade negotiations after a brief pause. Sources suggest that Gor’s trip could help move discussions forward on a smaller, targeted trade deal, possibly to be announced ahead of a potential Modi-Trump meeting, depending on how talks progress.

Gor’s appointment itself is seen as a message of continuity and loyalty, with the envoy-designate being a Trump insider with deep links to the administration’s political and strategic core. Upon his Senate confirmation, Gor said he was “beyond grateful” to the President for the trust placed in him.

During the visit, Gor and

Rigas are expected to meet senior Indian government officials across ministries, including external affairs, commerce, and defence. Gor is also expected to meet External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar.

While no major announcement is expected this week, both sides are aiming to realign their priorities ahead of possible high-level engagements in the coming months. The Indo-Pacific, energy security, defence ties, and regional stability remain shared strategic concerns. Gor’s dual role as Special Envoy for South and Central Asia further underscores Washington’s desire to consolidate its regional strategy with India as a pivotal partner.

For now, Gor’s visit marks the beginning of what both capitals hope will be a reset balancing economic friction with long-term strategic alignment in an increasingly turbulent geopolitical landscape.

NEW DELHI

Some people in Mamata Banerjee’s inner circle must have their knives out for her. On the day of the Durga Puja carnival in Kolkata that coincided with the climate calamity in north Bengal, instead of handing her a note at the start of the event advising her to publicly commiserate with those bereaved and left homeless in the floods and landslides, the Brutus handed her a violin.

As a result, what the world saw was not just Mamata clapping and dancing with a bevy of starlets on a grand stage on the city’s arterial Red Road as the idols of goddesses rolled by on flatbeds, it even saw her pretend-playing the violin thrust into her hands.

All this, while north Bengal drowned.

How her adversaries must have smirked when cameras clicked and recorded for history the moment when a violin-playing Mamata donned the mantle of King Nero who had historically or mythically played the fiddle or lute or cithara as Rome burned.

Mamata needs to spring-clean her coterie. Someone in it who is more mindful of history than her has damaged her image more badly than the BJP could ever dream of doing.

Assembly elections in West Bengal are six months away and the Durga Carnival and north Bengal floods are sure to be major factors in the poll battle of 2026. North Bengal has consistently been Mamata’s Achilles’ heel. In poll after poll, north Bengal has denied her a total sweep of the state. Of eight Lok Sabha seats in the region, the BJP won six in 2024, while in 2021, most of the BJP’s 77 seats in Assembly came from the six districts of north Bengal—Cooch Behar, Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, North Dinajpur and Malda.

For the Trinamool Congress (TMC), any opportunity to win brownie points in north Bengal is a godsend. And at Nagrakata, it had a chance. Two visiting BJP lawmakers—an MP



and an MLA—were brutally assaulted there. A blame game followed, with the TMC claiming that Nagrakata was a BJP stronghold but disgruntled BJP supporters had attacked the BJP leaders because they had allegedly come to the spot with only some photographers for photo-ops. And no relief material. This analysis gained ground as similar, if less violent, protests met some other local BJP MLAs at a couple of other places when they went to distribute relief.

The TMC could have capitalised on this and launched a political campaign against the BJP on its non-performance and loss of ground in north Bengal. But they kind of blew it. A full 48 hours after the attack on the BJP leaders, despite the miscreants being clearly visible in video footage of attack, there have only been two arrests. Six others named in the FIR are yet to be arrested. The BJP claims the attackers are TMC goons and so allowed to go scot-free. Adding a communal twist, the BJP posted photos of the “miscreants” on X, named them and pointed out they are all of the minority community.

Mamata pursued her own brand of identity politics. She visited the

injured BJP MP Khagen Murmu in hospital but not the BJP MLA Shankar Ghosh admitted in the same institution. Why this discrimination between two BJP leaders who were injured in the same attack? Mamata’s explanation was that Murmu was a diabetes patient and his condition more complex. She also said he was not badly hurt and had a minor injury behind his ear.

The BJP claims Murmu has a fractured facial bone. It also claims Mamata visited the MP because he belongs to the Adivasi community and she may have angered her Adivasi vote bank if she had ignored him. Ghosh is not an Adivasi.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi joined issue with a long tweet. Mamata’s response was longer. Both were equally scathing. But Modi was less Prime Minister and more party leader in the tweet. Some key lines: “the manner in which our Party colleagues...were attacked in West Bengal...is outright appalling ... (and)...highlights the insensitivity of the TMC as well as the absolutely pathetic law and order situation in the state.”

Mamata paid back in kind. Modi

was trying to “politicise a natural disaster without waiting for a proper investigation,” she wrote; her punchline, “such sweeping unsubstantiated generalisations are not only immature but also... unbecoming of the highest office in the land.” Modi’s belated visit to Manipal also drew a rebuke as did his “opportunistic political theatre” in Bengal.

Modi and Mamata have publicly crossed swords on X in the past. But the exchange was always between a PM and a CM. In this latest round, two of the highest office-bearers of the country have exchanged verbal slingshots as party functionaries or karyakartas.

Amid the political battle between the BJP and the TMC, key questions about the devastation of north Bengal have been pushed to the back burner. One of the most startling videos to have emerged in the aftermath of the disaster is of hundreds of logs floating down a swollen river. The scene, say those familiar with the film, is reminiscent of Pushpa, which tells the story of a sandalwood smuggler who may be based on Veerappan.

This video clip has raised concerns about large-scale deforestation across north Bengal to apparently make way for tourist resorts and malls on the fringes of the forests. Officials have reportedly claimed the logs had floated down from the forests of Bhutan. But it would be erroneous to say the explanation has found many takers.

Almost exactly two years ago, a GLOF or Glacial Lake Outburst Flood had turned the Teesta river into a turbulent torrent that killed 100-plus people in north Bengal. Memories of the GLOF have returned to haunt those who are watching the environmental degradation of north Bengal. In the past, north Bengal, they say, would see devastating floods every 10 or 15 years. But the current disaster has come within two years of the GLOF and fears are growing that the frequency of these climate calamities will increase without policy changes.

## INTERNATIONAL

# Global research community hit as Trump administration’s NASA funding cuts stall critical Earth, space data

WASHINGTON

Researchers in space and other crucial domains such as Earth sciences, agriculture, and climate change are expressing deep concern over the federal funding cuts to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) by the Trump administration, which are allegedly impacting research worldwide.

“NASA’s data portals have been vital in providing high-quality datasets that help scientists understand local, regional, and global phenomena across various themes. Research centres everywhere rely on this open access. With updates now slowing or stopping, the flow of crucial information is disrupted,” Professor and Head of the Geospatial Research Programme at the Takshashila Institution, Bengaluru, Dr Nithyananda Yogeswaran, told.

NASA’s data portal on the Fire Information for Resource Management System (FIRMS) currently states: “Due to the lapse in federal government funding, NASA is not updating this website, and some data/information may be temporarily unavailable.”

On May 2, the US administration released its 2026 “skinny budget” request for the coming fiscal year, proposing to cut NASA’s funding by nearly 25 per cent — from USD 24.8 billion to USD 18.8 billion.

“Though some portals still share raw or processed data and interactive visual tools, the overall accessibility and frequency of updates have clearly taken a hit — affecting not only space research but also studies that protect human life and support sustainable development,”



Dr Yogeswaran added.

Regular data updates are essential for monitoring climate patterns, weather systems, natural disasters, pollution, land cover changes, social development, resource management, and even military activities.

“NASA has invested heavily over decades in developing space-based systems that monitor Earth and beyond. It’s not just about satellite images—it’s about consistent, reliable data from both remote sensing and ground-based observations collected globally for nearly half a century. For many, NASA’s archives are the go-to source for understanding how the planet has changed over time,” explained the Bengaluru-based geo-spatialist.

When asked why researchers depend heavily on NASA and why other countries or space agencies have not taken the lead in data dissemination and analysis, Yogeswaran said, “What makes NASA’s portals unique is that

they don’t just share raw data—they process and present it in ways that are easy to interpret, even for those without technical expertise. The visual formats and user-friendly interfaces make the data accessible to a wider audience. Moreover, these portals have been maintained and upgraded continuously to meet evolving scientific needs. While other nations and agencies do have data portals, none have matched NASA’s consistency, scale, or reach.”

Regarding the impact of the federal cuts on NASA on the Indian research community, the geo-spatialist said that Indian researchers, like their global counterparts, “depend heavily on NASA’s open datasets. For instance, assessing Landsat series satellite datasets through the Earth Explorer portal has long been a standard tool for accessing three decades of satellite imagery with uniform metadata. Thousands of studies and even routine academic exercises in remote sensing rely on them.

Any long-term disruption will certainly affect research output in India unless quick alternatives are developed,” he said.

On whether the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) can better position itself in data dissemination, Yogeswaran explained, “ISRO operates several Earth observation satellites and provides valuable data, but the scale cannot yet be compared with NASA’s global coverage. It’s not just about data collection — true parity requires robust data analysis, visualisation systems, and extensive research and development in developing and validating algorithms. These demand significant investment in both technology and field instruments to ensure scientific accuracy.”

He cautioned that this could be a wake-up call for space agencies across the globe, including ISRO, to scale up their information dissemination capabilities.

“This should prompt space agencies and research organisations worldwide to develop alternatives to NASA’s data sources. There’s a need for more collaborative platforms that share Earth and atmospheric science data freely and in simplified formats for wider use. Agencies like the European Space Agency (ESA) and ISRO can help bridge the gap,” added Yogeswaran.

“For any geospatialist or geoscientist, the first go-to place for downloading free satellite datasets is the US Geological Survey (USGS) ‘Earth Explorer.’ When they say that updation has stopped due to federal cuts, it impacts researchers across the world,” he added.

NEW YORK

As the recent RBI documentary notes, “Countries will rise and fall. Economies will have ups and downs. But gold will always maintain its value.”

Strangely, that’s not exactly the case with the US Treasury.

The world’s largest economy holds the world’s largest gold reserves and on last count, they crossed an estimated \$1 trillion in value. Yet, America’s most prized physical asset is unbelievably undervalued on official ledgers at just \$11 billion.

Even though the price of gold is witnessing remarkable appreciation, shooting up 54% so far this year to cross \$4,000 per ounce, the US’ official value remains fixed at the 1973 Congressional price of \$42.22 per ounce, a figure established through the Par Value Modification Act of 1973.

In other words, there’s a significant disparity between the official accounting value and the actual market value and a potential revaluation of gold reserves at current market prices could inject nothing less than \$1 trillion into the Treasury’s accounts and address nearly half of the nation’s \$1.973 budget deficit. Such a move, though, may cause substantial implications for dollar, inflation, and above all the global monetary, financial and currency markets.

That said, given the US’s rising national debt, which currently stands at a staggering \$37 trillion, there’s simply no appetite for further borrowing. At the same time, the government isn’t in a position to rein in spending at will, and it’s this financial quandary that has forced it into a shutdown for nearly two weeks now.

Repricing gold at current market prices is a quick fix to reset finances, as tapping into gold’s undervalued accounting resource could add substantial assets to the national balance sheet without requiring any physical gold sales or additional debt issuance. In fact, the government wheeled

out the idea earlier this year when Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent casually suggested: “We’re going to monetise the asset side of the US balance sheet.” His remark set off a wave of discussions, and though Bessent walked back, the prospect of a \$1 trillion windfall continues to linger.

Incidentally, the US Federal Reserve too released a note in August, where it reviewed the rare cases when countries used proceeds from valuation gains on gold and foreign exchange reserves. According to the Fed paper, over the past 30 years, only five economies have done so — Germany, Italy, Lebanon, Curacao and Sint Maarten, and South Africa.

It reasoned that the cash infusion from the revalued gold could be used to pay down debt or finance new spending. It also noted the recent US legislation proposed by Wyoming Senator Cynthia Lummi’s idea of using revaluation proceeds to create a sovereign wealth fund or a strategic bitcoin reserve, which President Donald Trump has talked about.

However, critics see it as a backdoor money printing exercise or, even, as plain old accounting manipulation.

They argue that gold revaluation would implicitly devalue the dollar relative to gold, erode confidence in the fiat system, and fuel inflation by enabling unchecked government spending.

There have been precedents where the US’s prior gold revaluation exercises led to a sharp increase in the money supply, fueling inflation and profoundly impacting both domestic and global economies.

For instance, during the Great Depression in 1933, President Franklin D Roosevelt implemented Executive Order 6102, which required Americans to surrender gold bullion to the government, with exceptions for rare and collectible coins. It revalued gold

to \$35 per ounce in 1934 via the Gold Reserve Act, which created a 69% overnight increase in the government’s gold-based wealth and effectively devalued the dollar by about 41% against gold.

Later in 1971, President Nixon suspended dollar convertibility to gold and in 1973 official gold price was set at \$42.22 per ounce, which continues till today.

If the US does revalue gold, it will shake up the global financial system, prompting similar responses from other countries, central banks and market participants. Moreover, even at current market prices, US gold reserves would offset only a portion of the total debt, though it could provide open up fiscal space.

Central banks have used revaluation proceeds to offset operating losses and maintain net profits or minimise reported net losses. In Italy, revaluation proceeds covered a one-off loss, while for Germany, it helped balance budgets without drastic cuts.

Likewise, Italy too saw revaluation gains shoring up public finances, while South Africa channelled its proceeds into banking sector reforms amid post-financial crisis recovery as recently as 2010. Lastly, Lebanon used revaluation proceeds to retire existing debt, though its debt-to-GDP ratio continued to rise even after the exercise.

As the Fed note recounts, some central banks value their gold reserves at their historic cost; others report it at current market prices.

When central banks report their holdings at current market prices (fair value), the unrealised profits or losses from valuation changes are recorded in revaluation accounts on the liability side of the balance sheet.

Practically, the unrealised valuation changes in gold reserves are often reported together with the valuation changes on forex reserves in a single entry on the balance sheet.

# The enduring appeal of thriller K-dramas



RAJKUMMAR

Thriller K-dramas have a particular pull — they're not just about shocking twists or grisly crimes. What makes them stand out is how they combine tension with emotional and moral depth. If you like stories that keep you guessing while digging into what drives people to darkness, this is a genre worth diving into.

A great K-drama thriller doesn't rush. It knows how to build tension slowly, letting clues drip until the payoff lands with force. The best ones keep you leaning forward — not because something explodes, but because something might. They understand that real suspense often comes from what's left unsaid, a silence stretched just long enough, or a shadow that lingers too long in the corner of a frame.

Character always matters more than gimmick. You can have serial killers,



WHEN YOU STOP LEARNING, YOU START LOSING INTELLIGENCE, AMBITION, AND IMAGINATION.

conspiracies, or supernatural forces, but what keeps you hooked is the humanity underneath. Detectives with doubts,

victims fighting their own fears, perpetrators trying to justify what they've done. The tension isn't just external; it's inside the characters too.

Moral ambiguity is another hallmark. These stories live in the grey zones — where heroes question their motives and villains reveal flashes of empathy. The question isn't simply who's right or wrong, but what justice even means, and who has the right to claim it.

Atmosphere plays a huge part. Lighting, pacing, sound — the way a single note holds or a camera lingers can create more dread than a chase scene ever could. The finest thrillers pay attention to micro-moments: a suspicious glance, a half-truth, a breath held too long.

And then there's the social layer. The most memorable K-dramas use thrill to mirror deeper realities: corruption, class divide, trauma, systemic injustice. That's why they feel urgent. They're not only about survival — they're about the cost of living in a world that's quietly broken.

Several shows capture this balance perfectly. Stranger (2017–2020) is a cerebral masterpiece about a prosecutor who can't express emotion, navigating a system rotted with corruption. It's deliberate, intelligent, and deeply rewarding.

Beyond Evil (2021) strips away glamour for psychological grit — two detectives in a small town chasing a serial killer, both confronting their own demons as much as the case itself. Signal (2016–present) plays with time, linking detectives across decades through an old police radio. It's haunting and emotionally charged, blending mystery with regret and redemption.

If you prefer something darker and more provocative, Mouse (2021) asks whether a psychopath can be identified before he kills — and whether science can ever tame human nature. My Name (2021) shifts gears with revenge and undercover intrigue, an action-heavy story about loss, identity, and survival. For spectacle and conspiracy, Vagabond delivers breakneck pacing and high-stakes politics. And Kingdom turns the

historical zombie trope into something layered and political — a battle against both the undead and a corrupt elite.

What's exciting about K-drama thrillers today is how they keep evolving. Genre boundaries blur; horror, fantasy, and mystery now coexist effortlessly. Characters are more complex, less moralistic, more human.

The writing feels sharper, the production richer, and the tension more psychological than ever.

These stories don't just thrill you — they unsettle you, make you question motives, morality, and sometimes, your own assumptions.

That's why K-drama thrillers aren't just good entertainment. They're reflections of a society wrestling with fear, justice, and conscience — and doing it with unforgettable style.

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### NAME CHANGE

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

### PLACEMENT SERVICES

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

### BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Business establishments, educational institutions, individual service providers etc. can enlist themselves or advertise their products or services at the most reasonable cost in InfoCom Diary. Send your details to InfoCom Solutions at: info@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

### CONNECT@ KRC TIMES



### KRC TIMES

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



**North East Integration Rally**

Peace | Progress | Prosperity

# 2026

## Registrations OPEN



Whatsapp only  +91 933 083 0083

www.northeastintegrationrally.in



**KRC FOUNDATION**

ACTIVITY PROGRAM



**12 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**

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





**11 JAN**  
**Barak Valley Conclave**

Potential Issues and Challenges of Barak Valley by different stakeholders. Includes NGOs and Governmental organization for their participation. Awards to be given to the best presentation and presentation on a topic. Participation is through invitation only. Different awards are provided.



**BARAK FESTIVAL**

**JANUARY 10-12, 2025**

**10 JAN**  
**Barak Festival: Peace Progress & Prosperity**



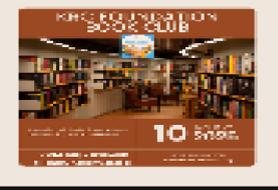
**12 JAN**  
**River-Climate Conclave**

State of the river will be discussed on Climate Change, pollution and river flooding. The Conclave will focus on the importance, treatment and protection of River Barak. Training & Geography competition and exhibition on River Barak, Climate Change.



**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.



**11 JAN**  
**Media Conclave**

Media Conclave (Workshop, Seminars, and the Panel Talks and Conferences) are part of the Barak Festival 2025. Theme: "One for All, All for One". Media professionals, students, journalists, media & corporate houses, sponsors, guests, speakers, members.



**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. Extempore, Debate, Public Speaking (College). In an online event, former students of NE India Schools and Colleges can participate.



**10 JAN**  
**Media Conclave**

Media Conclave (Workshop, Seminars, and the Panel Talks and Conferences) are part of the Barak Festival 2025. Theme: "One for All, All for One". Media professionals, students, journalists, media & corporate houses, sponsors, guests, speakers, members.



**10 JAN**  
**Barak Festival: Culture Promotion**

Adventure Sports, Art & Culture Promotion



**10-12 JAN**  
**Science Studio**

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



**DEC'24-JAN'25**  
**Photography**

Online Photography Contest: River Barak | NE India | Art & Culture of NE | NE Culture. Real-Time Photography Contest of "Barak Festival 2025".



**10-12 JAN**  
**E-Sports**

Full-Blown Demos | CASH PRIZES | Trophy



**10-12 JAN**  
**Book Bank**

Anti-Book Campaign Book Bank Drive | Donate | Reuse | Recycle

**Book Club**

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

**Painting Carnival**

Water Colour painting and Draw-Paint Campaign



**11 JAN**  
**film festival**

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



**10 JAN**  
**Barak Festival: Band Night**

Musical Night | 10 JAN



**10-12 JAN**  
**STUDENT INTERNSHIP**

Discover valuable experience and learn more about the Industry.

**applies**

- Outreach Executive
- Event Management
- Programme Coordinator

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