

# KRC TIMES

## STAY-ENRICHED

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### PERSPECTIVE

The Afghan Foreign Minister, Amir Khan Murtaza, has come to India and held a press conference. However, he did not allow any female journalists to attend. In Islam as practiced by the Taliban, women are expected only to stay at home, bear children, and serve their husbands and children. These misogynistic men do not want to see women anywhere outside the home—not in schools, not in workplaces. They refuse to grant women human rights because they do not consider women to be human. If the male journalists had any conscience, they would have walked out of the press conference. A state built on vile misogyny is a barbaric state—and no civilized nation should recognize it. — Taslima Nasreen, Author

## Himanta Biswa Sarma backs demography mission, vows to 'detect, delete, deport'

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday described the Centre's newly announced Demography Mission as a "decisive step" to protect India's identity, security, and cultural heritage.

Asserting that Assam has long borne the impact of illegal immigration, Sarma claimed that Muslims now constitute over 38 per cent of the state's population.

He said the formation of a high-powered committee under the Demography Mission marks a "historic and much-needed step" to scientifically study demographic shifts and address them through what he termed the "3-D policy – Detect, Delete, and Deport."

"A decisive move to protect identity, security, and cultural heritage," Sarma wrote in a post on X, while sharing a table showing demographic trends in Assam since 1971.

According to the figures cited by the Chief Minister, the Hindu population in the state declined from 72.51 per cent in 1971 to 61.46 per cent in 2011, while the Muslim population increased from 24.56 per cent to 34.22 per cent during the same period.

The Demography Mission was first announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his Independence Day address, aiming to study population patterns and their implications for national identity and resource management.

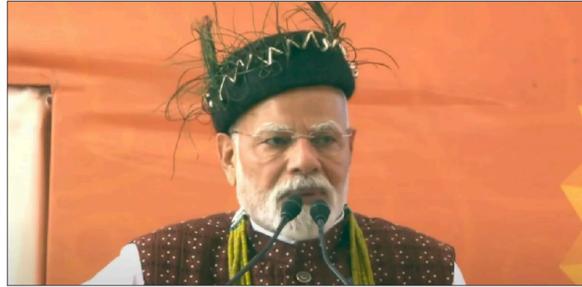
### WHO SAID WHAT



**Heartiest congratulations to Dr. Patrick Herminie on his victory in the Presidential Elections in Seychelles. The waters of the Indian Ocean are our shared heritage and nourish the aspirations and needs of our people. I am confident that our time-tested and multi-faceted relations will deepen and gain further momentum in his tenure as President. My best wishes to him for the tenure ahead.**

~ Narendra Modi, PM of India

## Northeast no longer periphery, Arunachal mirrors Viksit Bharat: PM Modi



NEW DELHI

For the first time, the northeast is not the periphery but the pulsating heart of India's growth story, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday. The Prime Minister further stated that from new airports to empowered self-help groups, and from connectivity to creativity, Arunachal Pradesh mirrors the spirit of Viksit Bharat.

PM Modi shared an article on X, written by Union Minister Jyotiradiya Scindia, that underscores

the transformation and growing importance of Arunachal Pradesh in the nation's development journey. "From new airports to empowered SHGs, from connectivity to creativity, Arunachal Pradesh mirrors the spirit of Viksit Bharat. A must-read piece by Union Minister Scindia," the Prime Minister posted on X.

According to Scindia, our 'Ashtalakshmi' is no longer a distant frontier but a vibrant hub of India's progress. "I share my awe-inspiring visit to Arunachal Pradesh's Ziro Valley, witnessing its rapid transfor-

mation while cherishing its timeless cultural heritage, all aligned with PM Modi's transformative vision of a Rising Northeast," the minister highlighted.

In the article, Scindia said every time I set foot in the Northeast, "I feel reenergised and refueled". "Many call it the periphery of India, however it is the very heart, beating in many colours, sounds, and textures. A garland of pearls, strung together by countless communities, cultures, and ways of life, woven seamlessly into the eternal rhythm of nature. No wonder our Prime Minister calls it the Ashtalakshmi - a region of diversity and opportunity," he noted.

Ziro Valley is known for the world-renowned Ziro Music Festival. It is ranked among the world's top music festivals. "Local artisans showcased their crafts, and thanks to Digital India and the Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile trinity, cashless payments were effortless. Every chime of 'payment complete, was more than a transaction; it was the sound of empowerment," wrote the minister.

## Popular govt in Manipur may take shape by November, say BJP legislators

IMPHAL

Three Manipur BJP MLAs, who returned from New Delhi on Saturday after holding meetings with Central leaders, said they were given an assurance that a popular government would be formed in the State soon.

BJP legislator Karam Shyam told reporters at the Imphal airport that they met BJP North East in-charge Sambit Patra and national general secretary BL Santosh during their stay in the national capital.

The Centre had imposed the President's Rule in Manipur after Chief Minister N Biren Singh resigned, amid ethnic violence between Meiteis and Kuki-Zo groups. The State Assembly, which has a tenure till 2027, has been put under suspended animation. Also Read - IED found at Umsning market in Meghalaya's Ri-Bhoi; safely defused "We have been given assurance that a popular Government will be formed soon. No tentative timing for

government formation is given, but it could be by November," Shyam said. Another BJP legislator, Dr Sapam Ranjan, said they are optimistic about the assurance given by the Central leadership.

At least 26 BJP MLAs, including former Chief Minister N Biren Singh and Speaker Th Satyabrata, have been camping in New Delhi for more than a week. Before leaving the State, the legislators had said that they were going to seek an appointment with the Prime Minister and the Union Home Minister to discuss the prevailing situation in the State. One MLA Th Shyamkumar, before leaving the State, had said that he would consider resigning as a legislator if they failed to meet the Prime Minister and the Home Minister during their visit to the national capital. More than 260 people were killed and thousands have been rendered homeless in ethnic violence between Meiteis and Kuki-Zo groups since May 2023.

## Shyamkanu Mahanta submits letter to withdraw Supreme Court petition in Zubeen Garg death case



GUWAHATI

Shyamkanu Mahanta, one of the prime accused under investigation in the death of Assam's legendary singer Zubeen Garg, has submitted a letter to the Supreme Court seeking permission to withdraw his petition filed on September 30, 2025.

The petition, filed while Mahanta was in Singapore, had sought the transfer of the investigation from the Assam CID to the CBI or NIA and requested the appointment of a retired Supreme Court judge to oversee the probe.

Filed through his legal counsel, advocate Raj Kamal, the plea had named the Government of India, the Assam Government, the DGP of Assam, the CBI, and the NIA as respondents. Sources familiar with the matter said the petition had yet to gain momentum, particularly since the Supreme Court was closed until October 6, 2025.

Records from the Supreme Court indicate that an Interlocutory Ap-

plication seeking withdrawal of the petition was submitted on October 8, 2025, through a letter dated October 7, 2025. The application formally requests that Mahanta be allowed to retract his earlier plea before the Court considers it for hearing.

Earlier, the petition had faced several procedural observations, including requirements to amend the listing proforma, provide colored photographs, correct headings, and clarify prayers for interim relief. These steps reflected the standard scrutiny petitions undergo before admission.

Mahanta's original petition was seen as a preemptive legal measure ahead of his return to India, aimed at ensuring central oversight of the investigation. With the appeal to withdraw now filed, the Supreme Court will decide whether to permit the retraction. The ongoing investigation by the Assam CID is expected to continue without any interference from the petition.

Authorities remain vigilant given the high-profile nature of the case. Legal experts note that an appeal to withdraw the petition does not prevent the investigation or potential future legal proceedings against Mahanta. The case continues to draw significant public and media attention across Assam and the northeastern region.

## Singapore Police actively assist in Zubeen Garg death probe: Assam CM

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma emphasized the growing international cooperation in the investigation into the untimely death of cultural icon Zubeen Garg, stating that Singapore Police are actively involved and the inquiry has entered a critical phase.

Speaking to the media, Sarma acknowledged the Singapore Police for their consistent engagement and dedication to the case.

He confirmed that Indian investigators are in regular contact with their Singapore counterparts, who are also conducting an independent inquiry.

"The Singapore government is showing commendable seriousness. They've been sending crucial queries and gathering key information, including questions recently sent to Zubeen's family, which we've already addressed," said Sarma.

He further explained that the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is managing all official exchanges between the two nations.

Authorities have already submitted documents, including evidence and formal requests, to the Singapore Attorney General's office for legal processing.

In addition to government-level cooperation, Sarma pointed to the increasing involvement of the Assamese community in Singapore.

He noted that members of the diaspora are closely following developments and have offered support through digital outreach. "Some groups wanted to connect through video conferencing, but we're holding off for now. We believe the emotional and moral pressure will yield results soon," he remarked. On a separate front, Chief Minister Sarma provided an update on the push to secure Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for six communities in Assam: Koch Rajbongshi, Matak, Moran, Tai Ahom, Chutia, and tea tribes.

The government has completed most of the groundwork for a classification report, and it will present the report to the state Assembly on November 25.

"We're confident about in-

cluding Koch Rajbongshi, Moran, and Matak. However, further discussion is ongoing for Chutia and Tai Ahom. Internal disagreements, some groups favor inclusion, others oppose, are making the process more complex," he said.

Sarma criticized the Congress party for what he described as a divisive approach. According to him, a past memorandum from Congress recommended ST status for only a limited number of tea tribe groups, sparking further demands and confusion.

"Congress's move to include just 36 out of 112 tea tribes has led to more unrest. Their selective stance has worsened the situation," he argued.

Looking ahead, Sarma underlined the importance of the upcoming Assembly session, where the government plans to introduce a comprehensive resolution aimed at balancing the rights of both existing and aspiring ST communities.

"We're striving for an inclusive solution, one that protects the interests of current tribal groups while ensuring overdue recognition for those who deserve it," he concluded.

# Arunachal Pradesh clears 2,200 MW Oju hydropower project

GUWAHATI

A 2,200 megawatt hydropower project was cleared to come up in the Upper Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh, signalling the state government's intent to rapidly expand hydropower generation within its borders. The Oju Hydroelectric Power Project (HEP) is the latest of several large dams proposed to boost the state government's hydropower profile.

The Oju HEP was cleared by the centrally-appointed Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) on September 12, on the condition that the Navayuga Engineering group—the project developer—integrate simulations of glacial lake outburst flood scenarios into its design. "The Committee advised that a real-time monitoring and early warning system (EWS) shall be established in coordination with State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) and local administration, along with community awareness and mock drills for preparedness," the EAC said, in light of growing glacial lakes in the region.

The Oju HEP is the second major dam to secure clearance in the Subansiri river



basin. The Subansiri Lower Dam, a 2000 MW run-of-the-river project (harnessing the natural flow of a river) further downstream, was awarded clearance in 2003, but faced widespread opposition from local communities and activists about the negative impacts from 2010 to 2019. "When the Subansiri Lower Dam was being cleared, one of the conditions was that there would be no further construction upstream," said Himanshu Thakkar, coordinator of South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers and People. "This was appealed and now projects such as Oju have been allowed on a case-to-case basis."

The environmental impact assessment for the Oju HEP says that there are no protected areas or biodiversity reserves at

the site of the power project. However, the Upper Subansiri district is almost entirely covered by forests including alpine scrub, moist evergreen, and temperate forests. The full, cumulative impact of multiple dams on the river system is also uncertain. The Subansiri basin falls in Seismic Zone V, the most vulnerable category, and the data used for the river's carrying capacity was last published in 2014—over a decade ago.

The Subansiri river in North Lakhimpur, Assam. The river basin falls in Seismic Zone V, the most vulnerable category for severe earthquakes. Image by Joli via Wikimedia Commons (CC BY-SA 4.0).

Clearance for the Oju HEP comes amid a big push from the state government to generate more hydroelectricity and "secure" border areas close to China. The Arunachal Pradesh state cabinet announced 2025 to 2035 to be the "Decade of Hydropower". The state plans to commission 13 large hydropower projects over the next three years and generate 19,000 MW of hydropower by the end of the decade. "This is a decade-long mission to fast track all green energy projects," chief minister

Pema Khandu said at a press event in August. "Green energy will be our strength, export, and identity."

"The speed with which projects are being cleared in Arunachal Pradesh raises concerns about the quality of impact assessments. We've seen with the Subansiri Lower Project that mistakes about downstream impacts were made, that needed to be corrected," said Sumit Vij, assistant professor at Wageningen University in the Netherlands. A critical assessment of the EIA for the Lower Subansiri Dam found that it only surveyed downstream impacts up to seven kilometres from the dam site and failed to record important endangered species like the Ganges river dolphin, which is commonly found in the river. Indigenous communities involved in clearance processes have raised similar concerns for dams planned across the state. In the case of the 2,880 MW Dibang Multipurpose Project, located in the eastern frontier of the state, communities objected to the loss of their traditional lands that served as grazing grounds for mithun and on which they cultivated medicinal plants.

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## MISSION TERROR- FREE J&K

The Union Home Minister's recent security review on Jammu & Kashmir and his assertion that the terror ecosystem in the Union Territory has been "almost crippled" is not empty rhetoric. It is the latest milestone in a long, costly, multi-dimensional campaign that the present regime has pursued with consistency, coordination and an unapologetic resolve to deny militants their safe havens, finances and local support networks. That outcome has not been accidental. It is the product of sustained operational pressure, sharper intelligence, legal action, administrative reforms and a willingness to use calibrated force when required.

Tactically, the security architecture has been tightened across the board. The strengthening of counter-infiltration grids along the Line of Control and International Border, more effective patrolling, and the seasonal preparation to deny terrorists the chance to exploit snowfall reflect better planning and resource allocation. Intelligence-led operations – frequent, coordinated and followed through – have made the difference between arrests and merely disrupting temporary plots. The pattern is clear: when a terror incident occurs, meticulous investigations have not only neutralised perpetrators but also traced and detained financiers, handlers and facilitators. Hawala operators and money conduits, once shadowing the insurgency, have been targeted; assets frozen and bank accounts attached. That is how a network collapses: choke the money, choke the movement.

Equally telling is the administrative and legal posture. The State's insistence on prosecuting separatists and alleged collaborators in long-standing terror cases and removing Government employees found complicit in anti-national activities has reduced impunity. Where separatist politics used to be accompanied by a functioning parallel economy and protection for underground actors, the tightening of legal levers and the consistent application of law have eroded the space in which violent networks once reproduced themselves. The result: an organisational backbone fed decades of insurgency is now heavily degraded.

In the aftermath of these measures, a remarkable transformation has occurred in the social and street-level dynamic of the Valley. The cycle of hartals, shutdowns, stone-pelting and suicide attacks that once paralysed life in Kashmir has been effectively broken through a blend of law enforcement, community engagement, and targeted development initiatives. The Government's zero-tolerance policy against street violence, backed by firm policing and the dismantling of overground networks that mobilised mobs, has restored confidence among citizens. Schools, colleges, shops and offices that once remained shut under separatist diktats now function normally. Youth who were earlier lured into violent protest are today being mainstreamed through sports, entrepreneurship, and skill development programmes. Employment drives, scholarships, and cultural exchange initiatives have opened new avenues of aspiration, gradually undercutting the radical ecosystem that thrived on anger and alienation. The result is visible – the Valley that once echoed with slogans of separatism now resonates with the sound of normal life returning.

India's foreign policy and military signalling have also been deliberately recalibrated to deter external sponsorship. The post-attack responses – surgical, aerial and otherwise – have been framed as a no-compromise doctrine. Whether through special operations or decisive air actions, the message sent to sponsors across the border has been specific: cross-border attacks invite a robust, proportionate and technologically sophisticated response. That deterrence, combined with diplomatic pressure, constrains external actors' freedom to operate.

Operationally, complacency is the enemy. The Home Minister's insistence on vigilance ahead of winter-when militants historically attempted infiltration-is sensible. The mountainous hinterlands, dense forests and remote hamlets remain difficult terrain; the "last legs" of underground and over-ground sympathisers can still permit sporadic incidents. Thus, layered defences combining human intelligence, technology (drones, surveillance grids), community policing and local development projects that reduce the pull factors of militancy must continue. The Government's achievements to date-dismantling financial networks, jailing alleged separatist operatives tied to terrorism, and delivering surgical blows to external sponsors-are impressive. The regime has caught the bull by the horns and delivered unprecedented operational results. The backbone of organised terror has been broken in ways that previous decades did not manage. Yet the war is not over. But the intent is clear: terrorism has no place in Jammu and Kashmir, and ultimately, the scourge of terrorism will be eradicated.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

The freedom of the press works in such a way that there is not much freedom from it. - Grace Kelly

# Award spats beyond ignoble Nobels



MADHAVAN NARAYANAN

Is the Nobel Prize not so noble? The question pops up almost every year, as the awardees—often in the peace and literature categories—are criticised for being less deserving, or because they are seen to serve some political agenda of the West by design. Whatever the squabble, it is undeniable that like the Oscars, there is a special charm in the awards that take names to the stratosphere of global recognition.

The truth of the awards lies perhaps between the recognition of excellence and socially useful work on the one hand, and some debatable values in a world where the shadow of Western imperialism still looms. But it takes a Donald Trump to make the Nobels rise skyhigh in the controversy stakes. In the US president we have the rare phenomenon of a public figure not-so-subtly lobbying about him deserving the award, utterly unmindful of the understated elegance of some of its winners—including Bob Dylan, who faced criticism for not deserving the literature prize and then coolly refused to show up for the award ceremony.

On current reckoning, the Nobel's monetary value is about 11 million Swedish Kronas, or a bit more than ₹10 crore. A nouveau-riche denizen of the National Capital Region may snigger about the award being worth less than the prize of a fancy apartment in Gurugram, where a penthouse sold for ₹190 crore last year. But it is what it is: something money can't buy, even if you are the man who owns Trump Towers.

"I'm not politicking for it," Trump said when a peace agreement was signed between Armenia and

Azerbaijan. "I have a lot of people that are." He must have got lost somewhere in the yawning space between a peace broker and a real estate broker.

The awards season brings back memories of a pleasant summer afternoon at the Nobel Prize Museum in Stockholm, where I noted with awe the details of some of the most deserving winners and personal souvenirs bequeathed to the museum. I stepped out to find a military band playing ABBA hits. It couldn't get more Swedish.

Not all find the mostly Swedish award (the peace prize is given by Norway) ennobling. After all, Alfred Nobel instituted the awards in 1895 after inventing dynamite. Some explosive conversations are naturally in order.

Besides Dylan, controversial Nobel winners include chemistry laureate Fritz Haber, who invented chemical weapons used in the First World War, economist Milton Friedman for being in bed with Chile's military dictators, and former US secretary of state Henry Kissinger, who won the peace prize while the Vietnam War was raging. It's no surprise that a latter-day Republican who dodged the Vietnam draft has been coveting the honour amid allegations of being a war abettor.

Beyond the controversies, it is undeniable that the Nobel honours scientists who quietly usher in magnificent social revolutions and would be largely unsung in public were it not for the award. I must doff my hat to this year's winners, who include path-breakers in immunology in quantum computing, and numerous others who make Stockholm's Hall of Fame a genuine one.

The \$50,000 (₹44 lakh) Ramon Magsaysay award, named after a late Philippine president, and sometimes called 'Asia's Nobel' is far more controversial than the Swedish one because it is said to serve US geopolitical interests. Winners of the award set up by a fund founded by the American Rockefeller family include journalist Ravish Kumar and musician T M Krishna, considered anti-establishment by conservative critics. Notably, communist K K Shailaja, Kerala's former health minister lauded for her work during the pandemic, declined the award after consulting her CPI(M) colleagues, who did not like Magsaysay's anti-communist history. Last year, Sandeep Pandey returned the award he received in 2002 to protest against American support for Israel in the Gaza conflict.

A far less controversial honour, the Right Livelihood Award, sometimes called an alternative to the Nobel, offers roughly €0,000-100,000 (₹0.5-1 crore) each to three winners every year for their work related to health, education, sustainable development, and human rights; another awardee gets an honorary prize without the money. Instituted in 1980 by German-Swedish philanthropist Jakob von Uexkull, the honour's Indian winners include social reformer Ashgar Ali Engineer and environmentalist Vandana Shiva.

That brings me to the dubious-yet-honourable Ig Nobel awards, a satirical take on the original that carries no monetary compensation, but is given to research that makes people laugh. The list is long, amusing and annoying in equal parts. It includes someone who analysed bacteria found in chewing gum stuck to sidewalks, two psychologists who concluded that people who believe they were kidnapped by aliens probably were, and a mathematician who calculated the precise odds that Mikhail Gorbachev is the Antichrist.

Too many West-decided prizes? It's time newly-minted billionaires from emerging economies like India stepped up with a reverse swing and set up prizes that might well shift the world's focus elsewhere. Of what good is a touted 'Asian century' when its coveted honours are still rooted in the Occident? Deserving awards must defy geographical constraints.

These "lucky" souls, lighting solitary candles in rented rooms or dim corridors, are learning a new kind of courage: self-reliance. They don't have mom to serve them mithai or dad to tell Diwali tales. Instead, they make do with three-minute

two psychologists who concluded that people who believe they were kidnapped by aliens probably were, and a mathematician who calculated the precise odds that Mikhail Gorbachev is the Antichrist.

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### DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

**The richest people I know: Don't shout expensive brands from the rooftops, They quietly wear simple clothes. They don't roar down the street in Ferraris, They roll up in a Toyota Innova, but on time. They don't live in marble mansions with infinity pools, They live in apartments where the wifi works. They don't post themselves sipping champagne, They live a quiet life below the radar. Wealth whispers. Insecurity shouts. Real money is in stocks, startups and silent compounding, Not in reels, Chanel bags and Armani dresses. Stop performing. Start building.**

~ Harsh Goenka, Chairman, RPG Enterprises



## THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS FOR THOSE FAR FROM FAMILY

DR VIKAS SHARMA

As Diwali bathes homes in the warm glow of diyas, laughter, and the aroma of festive feasts, a different kind of "celebration" is unfolding—a quiet one, punctuated with duty and sprinkled with sacrifice. For the "fortunate" tribe of resident doctors, MBBS students, engineers, and young professionals living far from home, Diwali is not the grand gathering seen on Instagram stories. Instead, it's a solitary candle on a desk, a few hurried texts, and maybe a video call squeezed in between shifts. Instead of vibrant garlands and family feasts, there's cafeteria food, worn-out notepads, and, of course, the bittersweet satisfaction of duty.

Picture the resident doctor, shuffling between patient wards while his phone buzzes with family photos and messages about firecracker choices back home. Meanwhile, he's tackling his own "explosive" situations in the ER. His day's brightest light? The flicker of a vending machine, offering an over-sweetened tea he mentally rebrands as "mithai." Duty first, festival later, he tells himself though

his heart drifts homeward with every pause. After all, what could provide a more glamorous Diwali than the bustling corridors of a hospital?

Then there's the MBBS student, thousands of miles from home, who gets his Diwali cheer from the glowing laptop screen that allows a brief glimpse into his family's celebration. He lights a lone candle on his desk, trying to summon some Diwali magic as his textbooks tower around him and deadlines hover like an ominous cloud. His "Diwali feast"? A waiting cup of instant noodles as he pushes through one more assignment. Who knew adulthood could add such "flavor" to the festival of lights?

For these young professionals, Diwali has shifted from a vibrant family festival to a personal ritual of resilience.

Everyone at home may be lighting diyas together, but they're immersed in the "important" work-missing out on family gatherings, celebrating with dropped video calls, and perfecting the art of solo festival cheer. As their homes sparkle without them, they fill the silence with introspection, self-discovery, and the "joys" of growing up.

Some, however, have another "task" for the season: waiting. He's busy with rounds, tests, and an assortment of patient charts, yet his mind keeps straying to someone miles away—a certain someone who's knee-deep in competitive exam prep. If only he could send over a cup of mithai-flavored tea and a good-luck charm for her textbooks! He dreams of them finally being together, but until then, he keeps trusting "the process" (because, of course, waiting isn't excruciating at all).

And she? Well, she's too busy exploring her potential, proving herself, and discovering new layers of independence.

No doubt she'd love to wish him a Happy Diwali... if she weren't fully booked with self-reflection, intellectual evolution, and a mountain of practice questions. After all, who has time for festivals when there's a whole self yet to be discovered?

These "lucky" souls, lighting solitary candles in rented rooms or dim corridors, are learning a new kind of courage: self-reliance. They don't have mom to serve them mithai or dad to tell Diwali tales. Instead, they make do with three-minute

video calls interrupted by hospital announcements or reply to midnight texts reading, "Missing you here." Yes, they're missing out, but who's counting?

They walk a delicate line between the art of "being fine" and "not at all lonely." Behind those brave faces, they know the pain of sacrifices made for dreams that somehow keep them warm as the chill of missing home bites a little harder.

Every small diya they light becomes a reminder of their chosen path, requiring patience, courage, and a dash of humor.

While families light diyas side-by-side, these young dreamers light their own, embracing Diwali as a festival of quiet courage and fierce self-compassion. In a way, it's a different kind of feast—one built on resilience, solitude, and the invisible glory of a life built on sacrifice.

After all, they are the ones who remind us that Diwali is not only about being surrounded by loved ones but about keeping a flame alive within—a flame that grows brighter with each moment of solitude and every step closer to their dreams.

## Manipur govt clarifies: Historic Rajbari in Shillong under careful restoration, not demolished

IMPHAL

The Manipur government has issued a clarification regarding reports circulating in the media and on social platforms concerning the condition and dismantling of the historic Rajbari building located in Shillong.

According to the statement released by the Executive Engineer-I, Planning & Development Authority, the Rajbari building is over 80 years old, having existed prior to 1949, and has suffered significant structural deterioration due to the absence of timely repairs over the decades.

The building was declared to be in a dilapidated state, prompting the government to take restoration measures.



A Detailed Project Report (DPR) titled "Infrastructure Development of Heritage Complex,"

Shillong" was prepared at the request of the Department of Art & Culture, Government of Manipur, and submitted to the North Eastern Council (NEC), Government of India. The NEC examined the proposal in detail and approved it in July 2023.

The DPR includes the reconstruction and restoration of the Rajbari building, which had become structurally unstable due to moth-eaten wooden posts, rafters, purlins, and rainwater leakage.

The clarification stated that an initial dismantling of one section of the building was undertaken, but further inspection revealed the risk of total collapse, leading to the careful manual dis-

mantling of the entire structure.

Authorities emphasised that all dismantled materials, such as wooden doors, windows, and wall panels, have been properly preserved for reuse wherever possible. The reconstruction will strictly adhere to the original architectural design, including room dimensions and overall height, ensuring that the heritage essence of the Rajbari building remains intact.

"The reconstruction and restoration are being carried out with the sole intention of preserving the building for future generations. There is no intention to erase the historical identity of the Rajbari," the statement concluded.

## TMC delegation visit to Tripura a 'scripted drama', BJP denies vandalism at party office



AGARTALA

The Tripura BJP on Saturday dismissed claims of vandalism at the TMC office in Agartala, asserting that the visiting TMC delegation came to the state merely to "stage a scripted drama" but failed in its attempt.

Speaking at a press conference, state BJP chief spokesperson Subarata Chakraborty said, "There was no van-

dalism at the TMC office. No tables or chairs were damaged, and no physical attacks were reported. The office remains intact."

Chakraborty alleged that the six-member TMC delegation arrived with an agenda to malign Tripura's reputation in West Bengal, pointing to the ongoing law and order issues there, including attacks on BJP MPs and MLAs, as a contrast to Tripura's situation.

Also Read: Tripura man dies by suicide after allegedly attacking wife and daughter-in-law

Addressing reports that TMC leaders were stranded at the airport due to a lack of vehicles, he said, "Vehicle owners may have chosen not to assist the delegation, which had come only to stage a drama."

The TMC delegation had visited Tripura after alleging that its state headquarters had been vandalized by BJP supporters earlier this week. BJP, however, rejected all such claims, maintaining that the visit was politically motivated and unsuccessful.

## Two held with country-made firearms in Meghalaya's North Garo Hills



SHILLONG

Two individuals carrying country-made firearms were arrested in North Garo Hills district after they met with an accident and were subsequently beaten by local residents, police reported on Sunday, October 12.

According to authorities, the incident occurred on Saturday night when a motorcycle carrying the duo collided with a tree along NH-51 near Berubari under Bajendoba Police Station. Residents at the scene informed police about the accident, prompting an immediate response.

Upon reaching the location, police found the injured individuals identified as Walchang K. Sangma, a resident of Salmanpara in South West Garo Hills, and Miskelbirth Sangma, alias Niksengbirth, from Gabil Bisa in East Garo Hills, lying by the roadside.

During the subsequent investigation, authorities recovered country-made firearms from their possession. The duo was taken into police custody, and further inquiries are underway to determine the origin of the weapons and the circumstances leading to the accident.

The police have urged residents to avoid taking the law into their own hands while expressing appreciation for the community's prompt reporting of the incident.

## Mizoram records heaviest rainfall as widespread showers lash northeast region

AIZAWL

Widespread rainfall continued to soak several parts of Northeast India with Mizoram experiencing the heaviest downpour in the region, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). As per data from the IMD's Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC) in Guwahati, Chawngte in Mizoram recorded 13 cm of rainfall during the past 24 hours — the highest in the region. Other major rainfall totals were reported from Khawzawl (9 cm), Bagafa (9 cm), Kolasib (9 cm), Sumpura (6 cm), and Dullavchera (6 cm). Light to moderate rain occurred at most places across Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Tripura, while several areas in Assam and Manipur witnessed scattered showers. In Arunachal Pradesh, a few pockets recorded light rainfall.

The IMD noted that day temperatures remained near normal across much of the Northeast but

were appreciably below normal in Nagaland and Tripura. Night temperatures stayed largely stable, with a slight increase noted in parts of Nagaland, Manipur, and Tripura. Looking ahead, the IMD forecast light to moderate rain in parts of Mizoram and isolated rainfall over Nagaland and Tripura within the next 24 hours. Dry weather is expected to prevail across Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, and Manipur. The department also warned of thunderstorms accompanied by lightning at isolated places over Mizoram on Saturday, followed by thunderstorms and heavy rain at isolated locations across Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Tripura on Sunday. Moderate rainfall is likely to continue over Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, and Tripura through the coming days, with no significant change expected in maximum temperatures across the region.

## Tripura aims for food grain self-sufficiency with urban farming push: Minister



AGARTALA

Tripura is taking significant steps to become self-sufficient in food grain production, with districts like Dhalai and Khowai expected to achieve self-reliance soon, Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister Ratan Lal Nath said on October 11.

The state government is intensifying efforts to boost agricultural productivity and promote urban farming in city areas.

Minister Nath made the announcement during a state-level program at the State Agriculture Research Station, AD Nagar, where three major agricultural schemes—PM Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana, National Mission on Pulses, and National Mission on Natural Farming—were launched in the presence of Chief Minister Prof. (Dr.) Manik Saha. These schemes, unveiled recently by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Agriculture Minister

Shivraj Singh Chouhan, aim to strengthen food sustainable farming practices across the state.

"The PM Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana targets 100 districts nationwide with low food grain output, including North Tripura. Through this, we aim to expand cultivation areas, enhance food grain production, and strengthen agricultural capacity in districts like Khowai and Dhalai," Nath said. He added that while South Tripura, Sepahijala, and Gomati districts are already self-sufficient, others are steadily catching up.

Tripura has achieved notable success in rice cultivation, ranking sixth in the country with an average yield of 3,299 kg per hectare, surpassing the national average of 2,882 kg per hectare.

In pulses production, the state records 856 kg per hectare, slightly below the national

average of 881 kg per hectare. Sepahijala leads in agricultural credit distribution, followed by South and West Tripura, with North Tripura lagging.

The minister emphasized a renewed focus on pulse cultivation, organic farming, and reducing dependency on imports. "Earlier, we relied on imports for potatoes, but within three years, Tripura will become self-sufficient in potato and onion production. Our farmers are hardworking and resilient, and with favorable rainfall, Dhalai and Khowai will soon achieve self-sufficiency in food grains," Nath said.

The government is encouraging farmers to adopt organic and sustainable practices, ensuring steady production growth despite limited cultivable land, while leveraging the state's abundant rainfall to overcome challenges such as insect infestations.

## Assam tribal body opposes ST status plan for six communities



GUWAHATI

The All Assam Tribal Sangha (AATS) has expressed concerns over the Central Government's plan to grant Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to six Assam communities, Tai Ahom, Moran, Motok, Koch-Rajbongshi, Chutia, and Tea Tribes, stating that

the move could affect the rights and identity of existing recognized tribal communities.

In an executive meeting held at the Tribal Rest House in Paltanbazar, Guwahati, chaired by Sukumar Basumatary, the Sangha labeled the proposal a "dangerous political conspiracy" by the Central and State

governments aimed at short-term electoral advantage.

The organization demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2019, and cautioned that a statewide protest would follow if the decision is implemented.

The AATS argued that granting ST status to these socially, educationally, and economically advanced communities could allow them to contest Assembly and Parliamentary seats reserved for genuine tribal groups, gradually eroding political representation for indigenous tribes.

It also warned that this could limit access to education, employment, and self-governance opportunities for existing tribal populations. Referring to a precedent in 1996,

the Sangha noted that the temporary inclusion of the Koch-Rajbongshi in the ST (Plains) list resulted in a Koch-Rajbongshi candidate winning the Majuli ST-reserved Assembly seat and securing most reserved positions in professional institutions.

While emphasizing that it is not against the progress of the six communities, the AATS asserted it would "resist at any cost" any action that threatens the rights and survival of Assam's indigenous Scheduled Tribes.

The Sangha called on both Central and State governments to clarify how the six communities could be included without harming the interests of recognized tribes and stressed that any unilateral inclusion would trigger a strong and united movement across the state.

## Manipur: Indian Army distributes sanitary kits to 300 schoolgirls on Girl Child Day



IMPHAL

A total of 300 schoolgirls were given sanitary kits to promote menstrual hygiene, self-care, dignity, and key aspects of adolescent health and empowerment, as part of the International Day of the Girl Child 2025, held under the theme "The Girl I Am, The Change I Lead - Girls on the Frontlines of Crisis."

The Indian Army's Red Shield Division, in collaboration with the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), Andro, Imphal East district, celebrated the day at its school campus on Saturday.

The school principal, Rani Rose, expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Indian Army for their con-

tinuous support toward community development and the holistic growth of students, and reaffirmed the commitment to empowering girls through education, awareness, and leadership. She highlighted that such initiatives go beyond ensuring security, also strengthening confidence and purpose among young girls. A special lecture by Maj Memthoi KH (Retd) focused on career guidance, mental wellness, and health and hygiene.

The interactive session motivated students to explore new career opportunities, including the Indian Armed Forces, while reinforcing the importance of emotional resilience and physical well-being.

## We want to strengthen Industry Association, says Anurag Bajpai

BISWADEEP GUPTA

IMPHAL: There is an important need for strengthening the Industry Association to connect them to other associations, echoed Anurag Bajpai, Additional Chief Secretary (Textile, Commerce & Industries and Transport), Government of Manipur, at the sidelines of the Manipur Global Buyers And Sellers Summit 2025, inaugurated by the Governor of Manipur last Friday.

He stated that the Buyer-Seller Summit is important as it will provide an opportunity to showcase the industrial strength of Manipur products, and that the government is looking to connect local entrepreneurs with Southeast Asia.

Bajpai said that 'we need modes of communication; we are looking at international connectivity in cargo service; Railways up to Imphal will be reaching very soon, and we also need to develop logistic services. He mentioned that the Imphal Airport is already ready with a cargo terminal, and now the time has come to connect the same with international destinations.

Handloom and agricultural products, nat-



ural medicine, and biofuel from Bamboo are the focus areas that the Government would like to give special focus. We are trying to bring in Industries from outside and also inte-

grate local entrepreneurs in the supply chain so that they also become partners in the whole industrial ecosystem, the Additional Chief Secretary informed.

We are also trying to develop an industrial estate in each district of Manipur and strengthen the local industries, and provide them with facilities like industrial estate, local sheds and marketing platforms to provide inner strength, he disclosed.

This Business Summit is a restart from the setback of the last two years, echoed Anurag Bajpai.

With the theme 'Bridging Business Sans borders', the two-day event was organised in Imphal under the RAMP initiative of the Ministry of MSME. Jointly organised by the Directorate of Trade, Commerce & Industries, Manipur Industrial Development Corporation Limited (MANIDCO) and Manipur Chamber of Commerce & Industry (MCCI) had three Plenary Sessions where experts from Myanmar, Bangladesh, Thailand, Assam Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Confederation of Nagaland Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Arunachal Chamber of Commerce and Industry Business leaders, academicians and government officials deliberated.

A Souvenir was also released on the occasion, and a video presentation on the potential of Manipur's industrial strength was showcased. A stall for entrepreneurs was also made available during the summit.

The summit ended with a beautiful rendition of local music and a fashion show showcasing Manipuri Handlooms and creations, enticing the delegates and invitees.

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## Safety cannot exist where dignity is denied: CJI Gavai on condition of women in India

NEW DELHI

Voicing serious concern over the vulnerability a girl child faces in the digital era due to online harassment, cyberbullying and digital stalking and deepfake imagery, the Chief Justice of India (CJI) B R Gavai on Saturday called for the enactment of specialised statutes and training of law enforcers and decision makers.

The CJI said this, while speaking at the national annual stakeholders consultation on "Safeguarding the Girl Child: Towards a Safer and Enabling Environment for Her in India."

"The protection of the girl child must be a core priority of digital governance. Laws dealing with online sexual exploitation, digital trafficking, and cyber harassment must be paired with effective enforcement, education and awareness initiatives," said CJI Gavai.

The CJI highlighted that safety cannot exist where dignity is denied, voices are silenced, or dreams are constrained by circumstance. He also added that the collective conscience of a nation is measured by how it treats its most vulnerable, and therefore the strength and destiny of a nation are inextricably linked to the well-being and empowerment of its daughters.

The CJI stressed to secure girl child's safety is not merely to protect her body, but to free her spirit. "To create a society where she can hold her head high in dignity and where her aspirations are nourished by education and equality ...

We must confront and overcome the deep-rooted patriarchal customs that continue to deny girls their rightful place," he underlined.

Justice Gavai also spoke on the issue of the vulnerability the girl child faces, and exposed them to disproportionately high risks of sexual abuse, exploitation and harmful practices such as female genital mutilation, malnutrition, sex-selective abortions, trafficking and child marriage against their will.

"There is a need for a deeper examination of the social, economic and cultural barriers that continue to impede girls' lives," he pointed out.

The CJI Gavai questioned that lawyers should not be reluctant to hire women because of assumptions about maternity leave, time constraints, or perceived 'commitment issues'. "Such biases are unfair and counterproductive.

Lawyers have a duty to ensure that the principles they advocate in court and in public life are reflected in their own workplaces and professional conduct," he added.

The CJI said that lawyers and judges share additional common goals in strengthening the justice system. "We must ensure that the legal system and legal discourse do not remain confined to metropolitan cities, but are accessible to every citizen, even those living in the remotest corners of the country.

Inclusion is achieved only when the common person can understand, relate to,

and feel connected with the legal processes, the exchanges between lawyer and judge, the judgments delivered, and the mechanisms of justice itself," he pointed out.

The CJI—while quoting Rabindranath Tagore's "Where the Mind is Without Fear"—said India's dream of true freedom will remain incomplete "as long as any girl in the country lives in fear of violence, discrimination, or denial of opportunity."

The CJI, taking his own example, as how he was born into a low-caste family, said that that did not mean that he was born untouchable. "The Constitution recognised my dignity as equal to that of every other citizen, offering not just protection, but the promise of opportunity, freedom, and social recognition," the CJI said.

Reminding his own lawyer's days, he said, he once represented an individual from a low-caste community in which no one had ever become a doctor. The appointment he sought was more than just a routine claim. It was a breakthrough for him and for his entire community.

"I was able to help secure his appointment, and what may have seemed like an ordinary case to some became a milestone of progress and hope.

For that individual, it was a new beginning; for his community, it was a journey toward possibility. One person's achievement can inspire thousands, showing how access to opportunity can transform lives and communities.

## US Ambassador-designate Sergio Gor meets PM Modi; calls meeting 'incredible' amid efforts to reset ties

NEW DELHI

US Ambassador-designate Sergio Gor met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday, describing it as an "incredible" meeting and said that "the US values its relationship with India," expressing optimism in the future "under the strong leadership of President Donald J Trump and Prime Minister Modi" even as sharp trade and tariff tensions continue to test bilateral ties.

Gor's visit comes at a crucial moment, as India and the US work to navigate trade and tariff-related challenges that have weighed on the relationship in recent times.

"It's an honour and a privilege to be here today," Gor said after a series of engagements with key Indian officials. "We had a great series of meetings, including with Foreign Secretary Misri, with the External Affairs Minister, Dr Jaishankar, and with the National Security Advisor, Doval. And we just finished an incredible meeting with Prime Minister Modi, where we discussed bilateral issues, including defence, trade, and technology."

Gor said the two sides also discussed critical minerals - an increasingly strategic domain for both economies amid global supply chain realignments. "We also discussed the importance of critical minerals and the importance of that to both of our nations," he added.

In a gesture to reflect the personal rapport between the leaders, Gor presented Prime Minister Modi with a framed photograph from a White House press conference earlier this year, featuring President Donald Trump's handwritten message: "Mr Prime Minister, you are great."

"The US values its relationship with India, and under the strong leadership of President Donald J. Trump and Prime Minister Modi, I'm optimistic about the days ahead for both



of our nations," Gor said.

Prime Minister Modi, in a post on X, said: "Glad to receive Mr. Sergio Gor, Ambassador-designate of the US to India. I'm confident that his tenure will further strengthen the India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership."

Gor also met External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri earlier in the day. "Discussed the India-US relationship and its global significance. Wish him the best for his new responsibility," Jaishankar posted on X.

Gor's visit comes as both sides attempt to reset ties amid continuing trade disputes. The Trump administration's decision to impose tariffs on key

Indian exports, including a 25% additional duty linked to India's purchases of Russian oil, had soured relations significantly. However, momentum for renewed engagement has picked up in recent weeks.

Following a phone call between Modi and Trump, both sides acknowledged "good progress" in restarting stalled trade negotiations. US Assistant Trade Representative Brendan Lynch's recent visit to Delhi and follow-up trips by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and EAM Jaishankar to Washington have added to the momentum.

Gor, a close aide of former President Trump and a key figure in Republican political circles, arrived in

India alongside US Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources Michael J. Rigas for a six-day visit. At his Senate confirmation hearing last month, Gor had underscored India's strategic value, saying, "India is one of the most important relationships America has in the world." He also noted that the two nations are "not that far apart on making a trade deal."

A possible bilateral meeting between Modi and Trump on the sidelines of the ASEAN Summit in Malaysia later this month remains on the cards, contingent on the pace of diplomatic progress and Trump's final decision to attend the event.

## INTERNATIONAL

## Cross-border clashes escalate as Afghanistan attacks Pakistani posts in 'revenge operation'

ISLAMABAD

Afghan security forces attacked Pakistani border posts late on Saturday in response to what the Taliban government called repeated violations of its territory and airspace, underscoring deepening security tensions between the neighbours.

Afghan state-run media said over a dozen Pakistani soldiers were killed, but there was no immediate confirmation from Islamabad. Several unconfirmed social media posts, accompanied by purported visuals, claimed that an aircraft belonging to the Pakistani military was shot down by the Afghan Taliban.

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemned what he called as "provocations" by Afghanistan and vowed a "strong" response, while Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi warned that Kabul would be given a "befitting reply like India," a reference to the crisis earlier this year that saw the two nuclear-armed rivals step closer to war.

The cross-border attacks come after Afghan authorities accused Pakistan of bombing capital Kabul, and a market in the country's east earlier this week. Pakistan did not claim responsibility for the assault.

The Taliban government's Defense Ministry said on Sunday morning its forces had conducted "retaliatory and successful operations" along the border. Defence ministry spokesman Enayat Khawarazm told the operations had ended at midnight.

"If the opposing side again violates Afghanistan's territorial integrity, our armed forces are fully prepared to defend the nation's borders and will deliver a strong response," the ministry added.

State-run media, RTA, said the "revenge operation" had captured three Pakistani military posts, resulting in the deaths of 15 soldiers in an area bordering southern Helmand province.



Taliban officials from Kunar, Nangarhar, Paktia, Khost, and Helmand provinces -- all located on the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan -- confirmed of the clashes.

"This evening, Taliban forces began using weapons. We fired first light and then heavy artillery at four points along the border," a senior official in Pakistan's Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province, bordering Afghanistan, told AFP.

"Pakistani forces responded with heavy fire and shot down three Afghan quadcopters suspected of carrying explosives," he continued.

A senior Pakistani security official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media, said Afghan forces opened fire in several northwestern border areas in the province of Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa, including the districts of Chitral, Bajaur, Mohmand, Angoor Adda and Kurram. The official also said troops responded with heavy weaponry near Tirah in Khyber district and across the frontier in Afghanistan's Nangarhar province.

A second Pakistani security official, who also spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media, said at least one person was killed and another wounded when a mortar shell fired from the Afghan side landed in Tiri village, Kurram district.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi called on his country's neighbours "to exercise restraint", while Qatar's Foreign Ministry expressed concern over the escalations and the potential repercussions for the security and stability of the region.

It urged both sides to prioritize "dialogue, diplomacy and restraint."

The Torkham border crossing, one of two main trade routes between the two countries, did not open on Sunday at its usual time of 8 am. The two countries share a 2,611-kilometer (1,622-mile) border known as the Durand Line, but Afghanistan has never recognized it.

Pakistan accuses Afghan authorities of harboring members of the banned group Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan. Islamabad says the group carries out deadly attacks inside Pakistan, but Kabul denies the charge, saying it does not allow its territory to be used against other countries.

The TTP, trained in combat in Afghanistan and claiming to share the same ideology as the Afghan Taliban, is accused by Islamabad of having killed hundreds of its soldiers since 2021.

In recent months, TTP militants have intensified their campaign of violence against Pakistani security forces in the mountainous areas bordering Afghanistan.

Islamabad accuses Afghanistan of failing to expel militants who use Afghan territory to launch attacks on Pakistan, an accusation denied by authorities in Kabul. The TTP and its affiliates are behind most of the violence -- largely directed at security forces.

Earlier this year, a UN report said the TTP "receive substantial logistical and operational support from the de facto authorities", referring to the Taliban government in Kabul.

Pakistani Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif told parliament on Thursday that several efforts to convince the Afghan Taliban to stop backing the TTP had failed.

"We will not tolerate this any longer," Asif said. "United, we must respond to those facilitating them, whether the hideouts are on our soil or Afghan soil."

## 'Don't want tariff war but not afraid of one': China counters Trump's 100% tariff threat



BEIJING

China signaled on Sunday that it would not back down in the face of a 100% tariff threat from President Donald Trump, urging the US to resolve differences through negotiations instead of threats.

"China's stance is consistent," the Commerce Ministry said in a statement posted online. "We do not want a tariff war but we are not afraid of one."

The response came two days after Trump threatened to jack up the tax on imports from China by Nov. 1 in response to new Chinese restrictions on the export of rare earths, a key ingredient for many consumer and military products.

The back and forth threatens to derail a possible meeting between Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping and end a truce in a tariff war in which new tariffs from both sides briefly topped 100% in April.

Trump has raised taxes on imports from many US trading partners this year, seeking to win concessions in return for tariff reductions. China has been one of the few countries that hasn't

backed down, relying on its economic clout. "Frequently resorting to the threat of high tariffs is not the correct way to get along with China," the Commerce Ministry said in its online post, which was presented as a series of answers from an unnamed spokesperson to questions from unspecified media outlets.

The statement called for addressing any concerns through dialogue.

"If the US side obstinately insists on its practice, China will be sure to resolutely take corresponding measures to safeguard its legitimate rights and interests," the post said.

Both sides accuse the other of violating the spirit of the truce by imposing new restrictions on trade.

Trump said China is "becoming very hostile" and that it's holding the world captive by restricting access to rare earth metals and magnets.

China's new regulations require foreign companies to get special approval to export items that contain even small traces of rare earth elements sourced from China. These critical minerals are needed in a broad range of products, from jet engines, radar systems and electric vehicles to consumer electronics including laptops and phones.

China accounts for nearly 70% of the world's rare earths mining and controls roughly 90% of global rare earths processing. Access to the material is a key point of contention in trade talks between Washington and Beijing.

The ministry post said that export licenses would be granted for legitimate civilian uses, noting that the minerals also have military applications.

The Chinese Commerce Ministry post said that the US has introduced several new restrictions in recent weeks, including expanding the number of Chinese companies subject to US export controls. It also said that the US is ignoring Chinese concerns by going forward with new port fees on Chinese ships that take effect Tuesday. China announced Friday that it would impose port fees on American ships in response.

# The Frankenstein Moment: How Dr. Yunus's regime turned on the army it rode to power

AMINUL HOQUE

The mask has finally slipped. On 8 October 2025, the so-called International Crimes Tribunal—resurrected and repurposed as the most potent political weapon of Dr. Muhammad Yunus's illegitimate interim government—issued arrest warrants against 30 individuals, including Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and 24 military officers, 14 of whom are still in active service. The order, signed by Justice Md. Golam Mortuza Majumder of Tribunal-1, instructs authorities to present all accused before the court by 22 October.

Never before in Bangladesh's history has a civilian court sought to arrest such a large number of serving military officers. The resulting tension within the armed forces is both palpable and unprecedented. What we are witnessing is not a pursuit of justice, but a calculated assault on the very institution that once ensured the state's stability.

From the day Dr. Yunus and his unelected cohort seized power, they have sought to use the judiciary—and this tribunal in particular—as a blunt instrument to destroy the Awami League and erase Sheikh Hasina's legacy. In pursuit of that vendetta, the tribunal was re-engineered, its laws amended unconstitutionally by executive fiat, and its leadership handed to none other than Barrister Tazul Islam, the former defence lawyer of convicted war criminals.

The latest "amendment," rammed through on 6 October, demonstrates the tribunal's grotesque political motive. It decrees that anyone merely accused under the tribunal's law must be suspended from any constitutional or public position and barred from contesting elections. In other words, accusation itself equals conviction—a perversion of justice so blatant that it mocks every principle of due process and human rights. In this Orwellian system, lawlessness has become law, and vengeance masquerades as justice.

The Army in the Crosshairs  
The warrants against serving and retired officers are no coincidence. The accused include former heads of DGFI and RAB intelligence—essentially targeting the very organs that guard the state's security architecture. The tribunal did not consult the armed forces, nor did it allow them to provide institutional input. By treating departmental allegations as grounds for immediate "expulsion," the regime has deliberately crippled the military's autonomy and challenged its professional integrity. The message from the Yunus regime is brutally simple: either serve as our pawns, or face prosecution.

By turning legal machinery against its own protectors, the regime has opened a Pandora's box—one that could see a steady stream of politicized cases designed

to break the army's morale, reduce it to submission, and neutralize it as an independent force.



## The Irony of Betrayal

This betrayal carries a bitter irony. The Yunus administration rose to power on the shoulders of the military, which deployed nationwide under the pretext of "restoring order." Yet after fourteen months of collaboration—willing or otherwise—the army finds itself the latest casualty of the very machine it enabled.

Why this sudden hostility? Because the regime's architects no longer need the army's protection. Having already dismantled constitutional institutions—from the Election Commission to the Supreme Court—they now move to domesticate the military. The army's cooperation lent legitimacy to a government that has suppressed civil rights, enabled mob violence, and empowered radical elements. The public's trust in the forces has eroded. Now, with their image tarnished, Dr. Yunus and his deep-state backers are tightening the leash.

The army can either remain a tool in their hands—or be dragged through the courts as scapegoats.

The General Who Lost His Army  
Here lies the heart of the tragedy. On 5 August 2024, General Waker-Uz-Zaman stood before the nation and claimed that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had resigned. We now know he lied. He promised to "protect the people's safety." Fourteen months later, Bangladesh has descended into mob rule, chaos, and fear—under his watch, and sometimes under his command.

He vowed to uphold the spirit of the Liberation War; yet freedom monuments have been vandalized, Mujib's legacy desecrated, and freedom fighters humiliated, all as he remained silent.

He declared there would be "no bloody corridor." Yet the corridor now turns to be the reality, paved with the footprints of foreign troops under the guise of "joint exercises."

He pledged elections within 18 months—another lie. He swore the military would not be used politically—yet his soldiers have been seen acting as the street muscle of a party that doesn't even exist on paper, firing upon unarmed citizens in Gopalganj.

But one promise he has kept: the one he made, perhaps unwittingly, to the enemies of 1971. With quiet devotion, he has overseen the rehabilitation of Jamaat-e-Islami, whose leaders he once called "Amir-e-Jamaat" with reverence. Under his

watch, the ideological poison of Pakistani revivalism has seeped back into Bangladesh. Militant preachers like Jashimuddin Rahmani have re-emerged, emboldened, sometimes even speaking from army vehicles.

For fourteen months, the armed forces have oscillated between complicity and paralysis—sometimes silent, sometimes servile—while the Yunus regime dismantled the republic brick by brick. Perhaps they believed they could share power and protect themselves. But as the old saying goes, when the city burns, temples too are not spared.

Frankenstein Turns on Its Creator

Today, the creature they nurtured has turned on them. This is Bangladesh's Frankenstein moment. By undermining the military's morale, humiliating its officers, and dragging them into politically engineered trials, Dr. Yunus seeks to complete the conquest of the state—not through tanks, but through terror masked as law.

Even more telling is the image of the Army Chief himself reportedly pleading with the Chief Justice to protect his officers—only to be refused. That spectacle alone reveals how far the mighty have fallen.

A soldier is trained to die for his commander's word. He believes his superiors will, in turn, defend him. What happens when that faith collapses? When soldiers see their commander powerless—reduced to a pawn in a regime's cynical game—the institution itself begins to die from within.

And that, perhaps, is exactly what Dr. Yunus intends. The arrest warrants are not the end—they are merely the first shots in a war to break the army's soul.

History will not forgive the generals who stood by as the republic they once vowed to protect was handed over to its sworn enemies. Nor will it forgive the regime that mistook vengeance for justice and submission for peace.

When the army falls silent, tyranny speaks the loudest. And Bangladesh, once again, stands at the crossroads of its destiny.

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



**11 JAN**  
**Adventure Sports**  
Trekking | Canyoneering | Sport Climbing | Disaster Management Technique | Water Sports  
[www.krcfoundation.org](http://www.krcfoundation.org)



**11 JAN**  
**Barak Valley Conclave**  
Potential Issues and Challenges of Barak Valley by different stakeholders. Includes NGOs, and Government officials, for better planning, awareness, and disaster management and preparedness programs. Participation through invitation only. Different awards are provided.

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



**JAN'25**  
**Online Global Fest**  
All can participate online and send a video clip on Poems, Songs, and Dance Performances, Bengali, English, Hindi & Manipuri. Last Date: 31st December 2024.



BROADCAST PARTNER



REGISTER HERE

Contact: [info@krcfoundation.org](mailto:info@krcfoundation.org)

**12 JAN**  
**River-Climate Conclave**  
State leaders will deliberate on Climate Change, pollution and river flooding. The Conclave will focus on the importance, technical and practical of River Barak, Planning & Geography, environmental and health in the River Barak, Climate Change.



**11 JAN**  
**Media Conclave**  
Media Conclave: Media Conclave, Workshops, and the Fund, Talks and Conferences are part of the 'Barak Festival 2025'. Theme: 'One for All, All for One'. Welcome journalists, students, photographers, media & corporate PR, sponsors, guests, speakers, members.



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Barak Festival 2025

**10-12 JAN**  
**Science Studio**  
Use a glimpse of Science to arts through digital. Class VI-XI | Teachers | Seniors, Administrators | Parents. Raw science into real-life experiences of students.

**10-12 JAN**  
**E-Sports**  
Full Blown! Don't miss! CASH PRIZES | Trophy



**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'.



**11 JAN**  
**film festival**  
Award-Giving (one month) Film from Manipur. Short Films from Barak Valley, NE India, W. Media Talk | Exhibitions | Meet & Greet.



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



Contact: [info@krcfoundation.org](mailto:info@krcfoundation.org)

**10-12 JAN**  
**Book Bank**  
Anti-ill Campaign Book Bank at Silchar | Free | Issue

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

**Painting Carnival**  
Water Colour and Oil and Saw Paper Campaign

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