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PERSPECTIVE

We forget that waking up each day is the first thing we should be grateful for.

Hope Tiprasa Accord issues will be addressed soon, says CM Manik Saha

GUWAHATI
Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Saturday expressed hope that the issues outlined in the tripartite Tiprasa Accord would soon be addressed, following his recent meeting with Tipra Motha founder Pradyot Kishore Manikya Debbarma.

The Tiprasa Accord, signed in March 2024 by the Centre, the Tripura government, and Tipra Motha, aims to resolve matters concerning land rights, customary laws, language, socio-economic, and political rights of tribal communities in the state. While it was initially expected to be implemented within six months, little progress has been made in the 20 months since its signing. Speaking to reporters, CM Saha said, "I have seen him (Pradyot Kishore) make a statement after yesterday's meeting. I will reiterate the same... discussions were held on the tripartite agreement signed in Delhi. I hope the issues highlighted by the Tiprasa Accord will be resolved soon." When asked about the recent refusal by state police to grant permission for a Tipra Motha rally at Swami Vivekananda Maidan in Agartala, Saha said the rally had been postponed and that the party could best comment on the matter.

Pradyot Kishore, on Friday, described his meeting with the chief minister as a "welcome step" toward development. The meeting came three days after he announced a pan-regional forum aimed at uniting regional parties across the Northeast.

At the press conference for the forum, Pradyot Kishore was joined by Meghalaya's National People's Party (NPP) leader Conrad Sangma and others.

WHO SAID WHAT

The Supreme Court's initiative to translate over 80,000 judgments into various Indian languages is truly commendable. I am confident that this remarkable effort will be taken forward by High Courts and district courts as well.
~ Narendra Modi, PM

Major Paper Mix-Up Rocks Manipur Civil Services Mains; MPSC Forced to Cancel Two Papers



IMPHAL

A serious administrative blunder by the Manipur Public Service Commission (MPSC) disrupted the Manipur Civil Services Combined Competitive (Mains) Examination 2022 on November 9, leading to the cancellation of both General Studies (GS) Paper III and Paper IV.

The mishap occurred when candidates at examination centres in Imphal and Guwahati were mistakenly handed the question paper for GS-IV

during the morning session, which was meant for GS-III. The error was discovered shortly after the exam began, throwing the session into confusion and frustration.

Following the mix-up, the Commission announced the cancellation of both papers and said revised dates would be notified by evening. However, for the thousands of candidates who travelled from within and outside the state, the damage had already been done.

Many aspirants described the incident as yet another example of MPSC's "repeated mismanagement" that continues to undermine their trust. "When will we stop paying for their mistakes? Who compensates for our wasted years, our money, and our dashed expectations?" one candidate said.

For those who travelled long distances—some from Delhi and other states where they were preparing for national-level exams—the cancellation meant not only emotional distress but also significant financial loss. With airfares to Imphal soaring amid the ongoing unrest in Manipur, several candidates said they had spent far more than usual just to reach the examination centres.

Candidates working in private firms also voiced concern about the practical fallout. Many had taken leave or unpaid time off to sit for the exam.

This is not the first instance in which MPSC has failed the people it is designed to serve. The Commission's reputation was already hurt after a past exam was quashed by the High Court due to irregularities.

Manipur gears up for 'Tribal Frames 2025', to showcase 23 films from nine states

IMPHAL

The "Tribal Frames Manipur: National Tribal Film Festival 2025" is part of the Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh celebrations, promoting tribal cinema and cultural identity. The festival will showcase 23 films from nine states, including feature films, documentaries, short films, and an animation on Naga freedom fighter Rani Gaidinliu. Scheduled from 12-15 November 2025, the event will feature screenings, discussions, and cultural activities at the City Convention Centre and MSFDS, Imphal.

A pre-event press conference for "Tribal Frames Manipur: National Tribal Film Festival 2025 cum State Level Tribal Carnival" was held today, November 8 at the Mini Conference Hall, Forest Headquarters, Sanjenthong, Imphal. The conference was chaired by Anurag Bajpai, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Manipur.

Addressing the media, Bajpai highlighted that the upcoming festival forms a part of the Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh celebrations, aimed at promoting tribal cinema, cultural identity, and creative story-

telling from India's diverse tribal communities.

The festival is scheduled to take place from 12th to 15th November 2025 at the City Convention Centre and the Manipur State Film Development Society (MSFDS), Imphal.

Bajpai informed that the National Tribal Film Festival 2025 will showcase 23 tribal films representing nine states and union territories — Maharashtra, Odisha, West Bengal, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Manipur. The line-up includes 6 feature films, 2 documentaries, 14 short films, and 1 animation film, the latter being a 15-minute NFDC production on the life of Rani Gaidinliu, the revered Naga freedom fighter.

The four-day festival will welcome 16 national guests, 27 state delegates, and representatives from five tribal film forums and associations. It will also feature two masterclasses, panel discussions, and two "In-Conversation" sessions with eminent filmmakers and cultural experts, fostering dialogue on indigenous storytelling and tribal representation in cinema.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to inaugurate 22nd CPA meet in Kohima

DIMAPUR

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will inaugurate the 22nd annual conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) India Region Zone-III in Kohima on November 10.

The two-day conference will witness participation from presiding officers, MPs, and MLAs of Zone III of CPA India Region, consisting of eight states of the northeastern region.

The conference will be held on the theme policy, progress & people: legislatures as catalysts of change, while its sub-themes will be the role of legislatures in achieving Viksit Bharat and climate change, in the light of recent cloudbursts and landslides in parts of the northeast region.

The closing ceremony will be addressed by Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh.

A tree plantation drive will also be

organised to commemorate the conference.

The CPA India Region Zone III plays an important role in fostering regional cooperation, promoting parliamentary best practices, and addressing specific regional issues like infrastructure development and the Act East Policy for the Northeast.

Key achievements of the association include the inclusion of the Northeast region in the India-ASEAN Vision for Trade and Cooperation and accelerating infrastructure projects, enhanced trading outposts, and cultural exchanges.

The zone also focuses on improving parliamentary processes and making them more accessible and inclusive through greater use of technologies, as seen in the implementation of the National eVidhan Application (NeVA), digitalisation programme, and active public engagement.

Indian Air Force Day: Over 75 aircraft soar over Brahmaputra in Assam



GUWAHATI

The skies above the Brahmaputra River were transformed into a stunning spectacle on Sunday afternoon as the Eastern Air Command hosted a grand full-scale air show at Lachit Ghat in Assam's Guwahati.

The event marked the 93rd Indian Air Force (IAF) Day celebrations and made history as the first-ever air show of this magnitude in the Northeast. Over 75 aircraft and helicopters flew in more than 25 formations, mesmerizing a large crowd of onlookers who gathered at the venue to experience the thrilling aerial performances. The show left thousands of spectators in awe, their cheers echoing across the riverfront.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya attended as the chief guests, while Defence Min-

ister Rajnath Singh was unable to attend due to prior commitments. Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh also attended the event, adding prestige to the occasion.

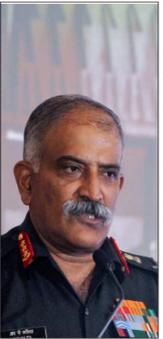
The two-hour show, which took place between 12 pm and 2 pm, featured formations from seven different air bases, including Guwahati, Tezpur, Jorhat, Chabua, Hasmara, Bagdogra, and Panagarh. Each formation highlighted the rich heritage and geography of the Northeast, with names such as Lachit, Kaziranga, Manas, Barak, and Haati (Elephant) paying tribute to the region's legacy. The opening act of the show featured the LCA Tejas, flying under the call sign "Lachit" in honour of Assam's legendary general, Lachit Borphukan. The lineup also included formidable aircraft such as the Rafale, Sukhoi-30 MKI, MiG-29, Mirage, Jaguar, Apache, IL-78 refueller, C-17 Globe-

master, C-130 Hercules, Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH Mk-1), and Antonov AN-32.

The Rafale jet stole the show with its supersonic low-level passes, sending shockwaves of applause from the crowd as it soared over the Brahmaputra. Another highlight was a formation that paid tribute to Operation Sindoor, followed by an exhilarating performance by the Surya Kiran Aerobatic Team (SKAT). The aerobatic team dazzled spectators with precision flying, executing inverted maneuvers, a DNA helix-shaped loop in Tricolour smoke, and a Trishul formation symbolizing the three branches of India's defence forces—the Army, Navy, and Air Force. The Surya Kiran team also formed a heart pierced by an arrow, dedicating it to the people of Guwahati, before finishing with a Tricolour aerial salute. The show ended with a gripping display by the Air Warrior Drill Team "Arjun," which showcased synchronized rifle drills and combat formations. As the sky filled with aircraft and the air with excitement, spectators lined the riverfront, many shielding themselves with umbrellas from the hot afternoon sun. The event concluded with a heartfelt musical tribute to cultural icon Zubeen Garg, featuring his timeless song Mayabini, adding an emotional touch to an unforgettable day.

Bangladesh's Rising Extremism Could Spill into Northeast, Cautions Ex-Eastern Command Chief

GUWAHATI



and the China border.

Speaking on the evolving security scenario, Lt Gen Kalita said there has been a "growing presence of fundamentalist elements in Bangladesh," particularly those gaining prominence after the political transition in the Sheikh Hasina government. He emphasized that these groups pose a serious threat to India's strategic and

internal security interests, especially in the northeastern states bordering Bangladesh.

Highlighting India's preparedness on the northern frontier, Lt Gen Kalita noted that both India and China have been rapidly developing military and logistical infrastructure along the border. "We have witnessed notable developments on both sides—from improved logistics facilities to the establishment of helipads and airfields—in anticipation of any future contingency," he stated.

The retired Army commander further underscored India's significant progress in fortifying its border regions. "Infrastructure and connectivity have advanced considerably in remote areas. Data and mobile networks have also been strengthened along the border belts of Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and Uttarakhand," he added.



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Lt Gen Kalita concluded by reaffirming that while India's border preparedness has vastly improved, continuous monitoring and readiness remain crucial to safeguard the nation's sovereignty and maintain stability across the northeastern frontier.

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AGARTALA

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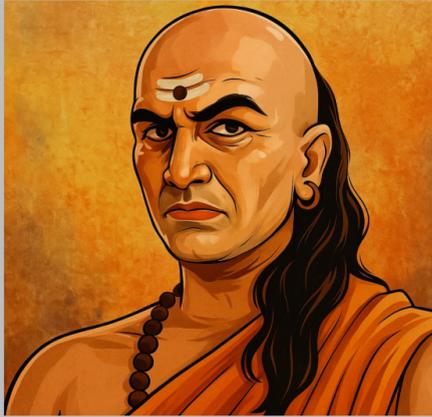
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At the press conference for the forum, Pradyot Kishore was joined by Meghalaya's National People's Party (NPP) leader Conrad Sangma and others. Both Tipra Motha and NPP are allies of the BJP and part of the BJP-led North East Democratic Alliance (NEDA). Meanwhile, Congress Working Committee (CWC) member and former minister Sudip Roy Barman commented on the meeting, saying that "real solutions" to the Tiprasa Accord must come from Union Home Minister Amit Shah and the central government.



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A FANTASY CALLED CHANAKYA



There is absolutely no historical evidence that a man called Chanakya ever lived during Mauryan times (300 BC) or that he guided Chandragupta Maurya to kingship. What we have is a story based on later Buddhist and Jain chronicles and Sanskrit plays like Mudra-rakshasa, all imagined after 500 AD, i.e. 700 years later.

Buddhists proclaimed Chandragupta's grandson, Ashoka, as champion of Buddhism. Jains told stories of how Chandragupta embraced Jainism and even fasted to death in Karnataka. Not wanting to be left behind, Brahmins argued that Chandragupta owed his success to a Brahmin minister—Chanakya, who was even identified with Kautilya, the author of Arthashastra. Today this is viewed as fact. But the Arthashastra refers to Chinese silk and Roman gold coins, both of which came to India around 200 AD, almost 400 years after Mauryan rule. The Chandragupta-Chanakya relationship is a common narrative trope found in legends around the world. The talented youth and his shrewd mentor, much like the British myth of King Arthur and the sorcerer Merlin. Rajput chronicles of the 10th century present Harit Rishi as the yogi who guides Bappa Rawal against Arab invaders. Jain narratives from 12th-century Gujarat tell us how Acharya Hemachandra discovered an orphan with royal signs, raised him within Jain discipline, then watched him become King Kumarapala, patron of temples and inscriptions. In 14th-century Deccan, the Shaivite sage Vidyaranya is widely believed to be the mentors of Hakka and Bukka, who found Vijayanagara: vision from the ascetic, execution by the warrior. Buddhist memory folds Greek Menander (100 BC) into the Milinda Pañha under the guidance of Nagasena and welds Kanishka (100 AD) to the poet-monk Ashvaghosha. The pattern travels northeast to Tibet and Mongolia, where the Lama replaces the Rishi: Kublai Khan in the 13th century seeks counsel from the Phagpa Lama, later Dalai Lamas sanctify Mongol thrones. Across cultures, the partnership is constant: one consults, the other implements.

The legend of Chanakya is simply this trans-civilisational script recast as Indian patriotism, with a dash of casteism—a Brahmin scholar manipulating politics to restore righteous order, overthrow corruption, and enthroning a "just" empire so that Brahmin wisdom may eternally guide royal might. When this story entered popular imagination, it installed a national mascot of cleverness and ruthless realism: Chanakya as India's Machiavelli, though separated by nearly two millennia. Television serials, airport novels, motivational posters, and management books celebrate him as the archetype of Indian strategy. But what they celebrate is not a documented historical individual; it is a convenient fiction that re-centres the Brahmin from ritual sidelines to the nerve centre of power.

Why do such legends thrive? Because religion desires power and power desires sanctity. Monasteries depend on royal patronage; kings depend on priestly approval. Every copperplate grant, every prasasti, every court kavya is a receipt for this transaction, stamped with divinity. The saint's alleged detachment from wealth becomes the perfect marketing line for institutional enrichment; the king's alleged obedience to wisdom becomes the perfect alibi for territorial ambition. In this arrangement, the religious teacher is portrayed as pure and above politics, yet his counsel shapes empires; he claims no interest in land, yet the realms he blesses fatten his monastery. The transaction hides behind spiritual vocabulary.

Modern India has doubled down on this fantasy. Politicians quote "Chanakya niti" as proof of timeless statecraft; business schools extract "management lessons" from aphorisms with dubious provenance; TV dramas cast him as proto-nationalist mastermind who rescued a broken land.

The cost of this romance is under-discussed. When we elevate the priestly strategist over the messy coalition of merchants, soldiers, officials, farmers, and frontier clans who actually build states, we erase material history and replace it with clerical hagiography. When we worship "strategy" as a set of cynical tricks rather than a patient reading of institutions, resources, logistics, and geography, we teach young minds to value manipulation over understanding. And when we insist that civilisational greatness requires a single guiding Brahmin, we shrink a plural sub-continent into a single caste's flattering mirror.

The refusal to ask for contemporaneous evidence is not innocent; it is political. It allows any present regime to draft a pliant sage from the past to bless its agenda. It also allows religious establishments to claim intellectual authorship of every imperial success while disclaiming every imperial atrocity. Conveniently, the sage is always right when the king triumphs, and never responsible when the king fails. The Chanakya myth is thus less about Mauryan history and more about our present hunger for a disinfected past in which power is wise, violence is necessary, and the Brahmin is indispensable.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect.

- Mark Twain

ZOHRAN MAMDANI TROUNCES TRUMPISM



PRABHU CHAWLA

In the neon-drenched canyons of New York City, where skyscrapers pierce the heavens like defiant spears, a seismic shift has occurred. It echoed the thunderous collapse of empires past. Last week, Zohran Kwame Mamdani, a 34-year-old fiery democratic socialist, stormed to victory as the second-youngest mayor in the city's storied history. Born to an Indian Hindu mother, filmmaker Mira Nair, and a Ugandan Muslim father, academic Mahmood Mamdani, this son of immigrants didn't just win an election. He obliterated the remnants of Trumpism in its spiritual heartland. With 50.4 percent of the vote, Mamdani crushed former Governor Andrew Cuomo, running as a desperate independent, and Republican Curtis Sliwa.

This wasn't a mere ballot-box triumph. It was a brutal exorcism of Donald Trump's personalised politics, his toxic brew of division, and his so-called 'Trumpian economics'. Ironically, in this very city, where extreme terrorists brought down the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001, killing nearly 3,000 Americans and others in an act of unimaginable horror, voters have chosen to repose unyielding faith in multiculturalism. As the confetti fell and the crowds roared, one truth crystallised. America's flirtation with autocratic individualism is unravelling, and Trump's plummeting acceptance is the harbinger of his inevitable fall.

Trump's rise in 2016 was a carnival of chaos. He peddled fear as policy and identity as weaponry. He ascended on the backs of the dispossessed, promising walls against 'the others' and tax cuts for the elite disguised as populism. But less than a year into his second term, the cracks are widening into chasms.

Mamdani's victory, coupled with Democratic sweeps in other key races, exposes the fragility of Trump's grip. It's a national referendum on the man's corrosive legacy. Voters in the nation's largest city, a microcosm of America's diversity, rejected Trump's exclusionary toolkit with visceral force. Mamdani turned the race into a personal battleground of identities, where heritage became both shield and sword. However, this very emphasis on leftist ideals could exacerbate national divisions. Mamdani's policies threaten to weaken the fight against illegal immigration and balloon expenditures on social measures, potentially straining the city's and the country's resources at a time when prudence is

paramount.

The campaign devolved into a raw clash of visions, with both men hurling barbs that laid bare the soul of American politics. Trump, ever the provocateur, attacked Mamdani's identity with the subtlety of a sledgehammer. In a Truth Social rant days before the election, Trump labelled Mamdani a "self-professed Jew hater" and declared that "any Jewish person who votes for him is a stupid person". It was classic Trump who stoked religious and ethnic fears to rally his base. He implied that Mamdani's Muslim heritage made him inherently suspect. Trump doubled down, accusing Mamdani of embodying "radical left identity politics that will destroy New York", tying him to supposed anti-American sentiments.

It was personal, vicious, and utterly predictable—a reflection of Trump's worldview where diversity is a threat, not a strength. Mamdani fired back with eloquence and cultural firepower that dismantled Trump's fortress of exclusion. In rally after rally, he invoked his biracial, interfaith roots as proof of America's promise. "My mother is Hindu, my father Muslim—I am the America Trump fears." But Mamdani's masterstroke came in channeling historical giants and cultural icons to eviscerate Trump's narrow nationalism.

Drawing from Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister, Mamdani quoted the independence leader's famous 'Tryst with destiny' speech. Adapting it to the American context, Mamdani thundered, "We build a noble city where all—Hindu, Muslim, Jew, Christian, atheist—dwell in unity, not the walled-off dystopia Trump peddles." It was a direct rebuke to Trump's 'America First' isolationism, invoking Nehru's vision of inclusive democracy to highlight how Trump's personalised rule fosters fragmentation.

To drive the point home, Mamdani wove in cultural threads that resonated with immigrant communities. At his victory celebration, as the crowd erupted, the Hindi song 'Dhoom machale' from the Bollywood film Dhoom blasted through the speakers. This fusion of Nehru's idealism and Bollywood's vibrancy wasn't gimmickry. It was a powerful narrative that mobilised South Asian, Muslim, and progressive voters, turning identity from a liability into a landslide catalyst. It was Mamdani's masterclass in marketing.

Mamdani's triumph doesn't stand alone. It's part of a broader Democratic resurgence that spells doom for Trump's

authority. In Dearborn, Michigan, Abdullah Hammoud, a Lebanese-American Muslim, secured reelection as mayor with a commanding margin, becoming a beacon for Arab-American communities weary of Trump's foreign policy blunders. Meanwhile, in Buffalo, New York, Democrat India Walton claimed victory as mayor. These electoral successes—three Democratic mayors, two of them Muslim—represent a stinging rebuke to Trumpism in urban strongholds.

Undoubtedly, the damage to Trump's authority is profound and multifaceted. Domestically, these losses weaken his grip on the Republican Party, where murmurs of dissent are growing louder. Midterm elections loom in 2026. With Democrats now controlling key cities and governorship like Abigail Spanberger in Virginia and Mikie Sherrill in New Jersey, the opposition has momentum. These victories embolden Democrats to counter Trump aggressively, framing every policy fight as a battle against his "autocratic individualism".

Still, this cultural triumph masks potential pitfalls. Mamdani's expansive social agenda, including robust support for undocumented immigrants and ambitious welfare expansions, could undermine efforts to curb illegal crossings, inviting chaos at the borders, and fuelling Trump's narrative of Democratic weakness on security. Mamdani's softening stances on immigration enforcement might erode public trust in border security which would provide Trump ammunition to reclaim lost ground.

Within the executive branch, Trump's influence wanes as these local leaders push back. Mamdani has already vowed to make New York a "sanctuary" against federal overreach. He has challenged Trump's deportation plans and economic policies head-on. This resistance, if sustained, could cascade, diminishing Trump's control over global economics and diplomacy. Trump's bombastic trade wars and isolationist stances rely on unified domestic support. With major cities in revolt, his leverage in negotiations with China or Europe evaporates. Allies abroad, already wary of his volatility, will see these defeats as evidence of his declining clout, making it harder to bully or bargain on the world stage.

In less than a year, Trump's second inning has devolved from triumphant return to desperate scramble. It proves that in a robust democracy, autocratic individual-

ism—where one man's ego dictates policy—crumbles under the weight of collective will. But the victors, too, cannot afford complacency. Mamdani's leftist vision, if not balanced, risks fracturing the very diversity it celebrates, turning unity into polarised silos. Looking forward, this could herald a Democratic renaissance, with figures like Mamdani inspiring a new generation to reclaim America's pluralistic soul, provided they navigate the downsides wisely. If Democrats sustain this momentum while balancing ideology with fiscal and security prudence, the midterms could deliver a congressional flip. It would dilute Trump's agenda and hasten his political obsolescence.

The golden tower may still gleam, but its foundations are rotting. In the end, Trump's fall won't be with a bang, but with the quiet roar of diverse voices singing songs he could never understand—a fitting elegy for an era of excess.

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

Cutting 1 hour of sleep tonight might seem like gaining 1 hour to get stuff done but 1 less hour of sleep actually = 2+ fewer hours of less productivity tomorrow. A foggy brain moves slower. - Unknown

From Classrooms to Chatrooms: Navigating the Digital World Safely

MOHINDER KUMAR GOSWAMI

"Technology is double edged- sword-It can empower or endanger, depending on how to use it". In today's era, education has moved from traditional classrooms and textbooks to chatrooms. Technology has revolutionized how students learn, how teachers teach and how the schools operate. Online platforms have made learning more interactive, accessible and inclusive allowing students to explore beyond traditional boundaries. Virtual classrooms promote collaboration, provide access to global resources and ensure continuity of education as seen during the pandemic.

India's National Education Policy (NEP-2020) recognizes this digital shift and emphasizing integrating technology into all the levels of education. It envisions a future ready generation equipped with digital literacy, critical thinking and problem solving (21st Century Skills). However, with this digital revolution comes a growing need for Cyber Safety. As students and teachers more spend more time in online spaces, protecting personal data and maintaining digital wellbeing have become essential.

Cybersecurity is no longer just a technical issue -it is an educational necessity. Parents must guide their children about responsible internet use, teachers must model safe online behaviour and the schools must create safe



online environments. Teachers play a key role in guiding students to use technology wisely. By incorporating lessons on the cyber ethics, online etiquette and data privacy, they can shape responsible digital citizens. Students

must follow basic safety rules by never sharing passwords, avoid chatting with strangers and think before clicking suspicious links. Parents should monitor children's online activities and encourage open communication about their

digital experiences.

Policy makers, too, have a critical role in ensuring robust cyber laws, awareness programmes and digital infrastructure to protect young users. Society members including educators, community leaders and policy makers must promote a culture of cyber awareness. In the modern world, digital empowerment begins with awareness. Preparing our students today, will ensure a safer internet tomorrow.

Capacity building is equally important not only for the students but also for the teachers and administrators.

Training programmes and regular updates on Cyber threats can strengthen the entire educational ecosystems. Students must be guided to visit verified awareness portals like Stay safe line campaign under ISEA project of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), and for reporting cybercrimes students must visit www.cybercrime.gov.in. Students must report suspicious activities on online abuse immediately.

The sooner we teach students to navigate the digital world wisely, the better equipped they will be to thrive securely in it. As classrooms evolve into chatrooms, the goal should not only be to connect learners globally but also to safeguard them digitally. Sooner we integrate cybersecurity into our education system, the better prepared our society will be for the future challenges of the digital future.

Assam CM Himanta Sarma under fire over 'secret' Adani meeting & power deal

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma is facing sharp scrutiny and explosive allegations of non-transparency following a reported "secret" meeting with industrialist Gautam Adani in New Delhi on November 2.

The meeting preceded the Assam government's decision to allocate approximately 4,500 bighas of land to the Adani Group for a massive 3,250 MW thermal power plant at Parbatjehara in Kokrajhar district.

Addressing a press conference on Friday in Guwahati, the Assam Jatiya Parishad (AJP) president Lurinjyoti Gogoi expressed grave concern and raising serious questions about the rapid approval and secretive nature of the Rs 50,000 crore project.

AJP Lurinjyoti Gogoi alleged

that the land, about 4,500 bighas, was approved for handover to "Adani Power Limited" by the previous BTC administration's Land Advisory Committee, calling it a secretive land allocation.

Gogoi claimed that the tender for the 3,200 MW thermal power plant was "secretly and hastily" concluded in October, labeling this a hasty tender process.

Furthermore, there is concern over the Controversial Power Purchase Price: Assam will reportedly purchase electricity from the Adani plant at Rs 6.30 per unit, a rate that the AJP claims is higher than those in states like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar, and was given "advance approval" by the Assam Electricity Regulatory Commission (AERC).

Gogoi further stated the land is allegedly being handed over to the Adani Group for a meagre Rs 1 per bigha. Regarding

the Timeline and Suspicious Resignation, the AJP noted that the project was approved by the APDCL Board of Directors on October 17 and October 22, and the AERC gave final approval on the proposed electricity prices on October 22.

This was followed by the significant development of the resignation of AERC Chairman Kumar Sanjay Krishna just three days later.

AJP President Lurinjyoti Gogoi heavily criticized Chief Minister Sarma's silence and lack of public disclosure regarding the project, especially the details of his half-hour meeting with Adani.

"The Chief Minister, who announces decisions and opinions on minor issues through press conferences or Facebook lives... why not pronounce a word about Adani's proposed thermal power plant?"

Gogoi questioned at the press conference. "Why is it kept secret what was discussed at Adani's residence? Why are there no photos or videos of the discussion?"

The AJP further questioned why the public was kept in the dark about a massive Rs 50,000 crore project, and why essential steps like public hearings and obtaining environmentally friendly certificates were allegedly bypassed. Gogoi demanded complete transparency, stating, "People of Assam have the right to know the truth. There must be transparency. CM must make it public."

The AJP leader has suggested a "secret understanding" behind the November 2 visit, alleging that CM Sarma is "trying to save his throne by appeasing industrialist Adani" and "trying to dust the eyes of the people of Assam on the project."

Romi Meitei's Eikhoigi Yum Selected for Screening at Telangana-North East India Techno-Cultural Festival



KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

IMPHAL: The National Award-winning Manipuri film Eikhoigi Yum (Our Home), directed by Romi Meitei, has been officially selected for screening at the Telangana-North East India Connect: Techno-Cultural Festival to be held in Hyderabad later this month.

The two-day festival, organised under the aegis of Raj Bhavan, Telangana, will be hosted at Prasad Multiplex on November 21 and 22, 2025. It aims to foster cultural exchange and cinematic collaboration between Telangana and the North Eastern states through the theme "Connecting Cultures, Creating Futures."

Eikhoigi Yum, celebrated for its sensitive portrayal of Manipuri family life and cultural values, will be showcased alongside select Telugu and North Eastern films that reflect the diversity of regional cinema in India.

Director Romi Meitei, who also serves as an Executive Board Member of the Manipur State Film Development Society (MSFDS), has played a key role in shaping Manipuri cinema both through his creative work and policy guidance within the Society. In a statement, MSFDS expressed pride in the film's selection, calling it "a reaffirmation of Manipuri cinema's growing recognition as a vital and creative force in Indian regional filmmaking." The festival, held under the patronage of the Hon'ble Governor of Telangana, seeks to strengthen people-to-people connections through culture, creativity, and innovation. MSFDS extended congratulations to Romi Meitei, describing the selection as a proud moment for Manipuri cinema and a tribute to its evolving artistic legacy.

Tripura sees sharp drop in infant and maternal deaths as healthcare improves: Manik Saha

AGARTALA

Tripura has recorded a marked decline in infant and maternal mortality rates, Chief Minister Manik Saha announced on November 8, crediting the improvement to the state's focused investment in healthcare infrastructure and services.

Speaking at the 19th annual conference of the Tripura chapter of the Association of Surgeons of India at the KLS Auditorium of Agartala Government Medical College and GBP Hospital, Saha said the state's healthcare system has undergone "unprecedented improvements" in recent years. Highlighting key developments, the Chief Minister noted that several complex medical procedures — once considered impossible within the state — are now being conducted successfully. "Kidney transplants are now being performed in Tripura, and efforts are underway to make liver transplants possible as well," he said. He added that the government's aim is to ensure that residents no longer need to travel outside the state for advanced medical treatment. Saha emphasised that the administration is working to build public trust in the state's healthcare system through modernisation and accessibility. He pointed out that both urban and rural healthcare are receiving equal attention, with new trauma centres and upgraded facilities being developed in district and sub-divisional hospitals. "The infant and maternal mortality rates have significantly come down due to continuous improvements in health services," Saha said, underlining the government's commitment to strengthening the sector at all levels. The Chief Minister also announced that telemedicine services are being expanded at Agartala Government Medical College to improve patient access. "Authorities have been instructed to set up a studio so that patients can get better benefits from telemedicine," he added.

ABSU to stage massive protest in Delhi demanding full implementation of BTR Accord, 125th Amendment Bill

ASSAM

The All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) has announced a series of protest programmes in the national capital, calling for the complete implementation of the Bodo Territorial Region (BTR) Accord and the adoption of the 125th Constitutional Amendment Bill aimed at strengthening the powers of the Autonomous Councils across Northeast India.

Addressing a press conference in New Delhi, ABSU President Dipen Boro reaffirmed the organization's commitment to ensuring that every clause of the BTR Accord is fulfilled "word for word." He highlighted that the 125th Amendment Bill holds crucial importance for enhancing administrative and financial autonomy in the region's Autonomous Councils.

As part of its agitation plan, ABSU will host a discussion meet-

ing on November 20, which will bring together leaders representing 10 Autonomous Councils from different Northeastern states. This will be followed by a mass dharna on November 21 in front of the Ministry of Home Affairs in New Delhi.

Boro further stated that leaders from various Autonomous Councils in Assam and other Northeastern states have expressed their solidarity with the movement and are expected to actively participate in the upcoming protests.

The ABSU has appealed to the Central government to honour the BTR Accord in both letter and spirit while urging for swift action on the pending constitutional amendment. The union maintains that full implementation of these measures would significantly contribute to equitable development, local empowerment, and lasting peace in the Bodo and other autonomous regions.

Arunachal: Education department mandates guidelines on bullying and ragging

GUWAHATI

The Education Department has issued detailed directives to prevent bullying and ragging in schools and educational institutes, requiring all institutions to implement strong anti-bullying measures, according to a report by The Arunachal Times.

The move follows concerns raised by Arunachal Pradesh State Commission for Protection of Child Rights Chairperson Ratan Anya, who highlighted the increasing incidents of bullying and ragging in schools and hostels, urging immediate enforcement of anti-bullying guidelines.

Under the directives, schools and institutes must clearly communicate that bullying or ragging is strictly prohibited, both in prospectuses and official guidelines, emphasizing that such acts will not go unnoticed or unpunished.

Every institute is required to form an anti-bullying or anti-rag-



ging committee responsible for creating and reviewing prevention strategies, conducting awareness and training sessions for staff, students, and parents, and monitoring incidents closely.

Names and contact details of committee members must be displayed prominently within the premises.

Residential institutions are instructed to appoint sentinels, monitors, or peer educators from prefectorial boards or trained student volunteers to prevent and monitor bullying behaviour.

The guidelines also stress educating students on human rights,

democratic values, respect for diversity, equality, and personal dignity.

Schools are encouraged to organise campaigns, training sessions, and activities to raise awareness among students, staff, and parents.

Parents are urged to actively participate by reporting incidents confidentially and attending orientation programmes.

Institutions are required to enforce penalties based on the severity of misconduct, which can include oral or written warnings, suspension, withholding of results, fines, expulsion, or transfer

to another institution in exceptional cases.

A confidential reporting system, such as complaint or suggestion boxes, must also be established and monitored regularly.

Heads of institutions must submit detailed reports on any bullying or ragging incidents, including the actions taken, to the Education Commissioner's office.

Education Minister Pasang Dorjee Sona described the directives as a "systematic response" to a complex issue, highlighting the need for collective responsibility in ensuring students' safety. "These guidelines aim to foster a safe and respectful learning environment, focusing on prevention, awareness, and swift action against incidents," he said.

The Education Minister is visiting Sainik School in Niglo, East Siang district, to assess the situation following the death of a 12-year-old student on campus on 1 November.

Menopause still ignored by society: Manipur's Health Secretary calls for greater awareness

IMPHAL

The event 'Navigating the Midlife Shift: The Menopause Journey' aimed to break the silence on women's midlife health challenges, encouraging open discussion on perimenopause and menopause. Zuringla Kengoo, Special Secretary of Health, highlighted menopause as a natural yet ignored transition, advocating for emotional support from family to manage symptoms effectively. Dr. Shyamkumar Laishram noted changing social attitudes towards taboo topics and expressed hope for similar openness about menopause, also mentioning andropause in men.

A one-day awareness programme on perimenopause and menopause titled "Navigating the Midlife Shift: The Menopause Journey" was held today at Babina Hospital. The event was organised by the MitSna

Foundation in collaboration with Babina Hospital, with an aim to break societal silence surrounding women's midlife health challenges.

MitSna Foundation, a youth-led organisation, has been actively working in the areas of education, women's empowerment, and social awareness.

Speaking as the Chief Guest, Special Secretary of Health and Family Welfare, Zuringla Kengoo, said that menopause and perimenopause are inevitable biological phases that every woman experiences. She pointed out that physical symptoms such as hot flashes, vaginal dryness, and fatigue are often accompanied by emotional challenges like anxiety, mood swings, and sleep disturbances. "Despite being a natural transition, this phase remains largely ignored by society," she observed.

Kengoo further stressed the need

for continuous awareness campaigns to help women navigate this period with dignity and support. "To fight the symptoms effectively, emotional understanding and encouragement from spouses and family members are crucial," she added.

Dr. Shyamkumar Laishram, Medical Superintendent of Babina Hospital, remarked that discussions around menstruation — once considered taboo — have now become more open, reflecting a positive change in mindset. He expressed hope that similar awareness and acceptance would soon extend to perimenopause and menopause as well.

Dr. Laishram also highlighted that men, too, undergo a similar hormonal transition known as andropause, which may cause mood swings, depression, difficulty in concentration, and physical changes such as

reduced bone density. "Understanding and empathy between partners are essential as both genders experience these natural biological shifts," he said.

During the programme, several renowned women professionals shared their personal experiences with perimenopause and menopause, underscoring how these changes impact relationships, mental health, and work-life balance. Some participants also pointed out that the emotional and physical effects of menopause can sometimes strain marital relationships and even lead to infidelity in extreme cases.

The speakers collectively emphasized that awareness, education, and open communication about menopause are vital to ensuring women's well-being and strengthening family relationships during this transitional stage of life.

25 riders from four nations race through Aizawl hills at Red Bull Tlang Ruam 2025



AIZAWL

Aizawl hosted the second edition of Red Bull Tlang Ruam 2025, Asia's first urban downhill mountain biking event, attracting 25 competitors from four countries. The 2025 course was more challenging with steeper staircases and sharper turns, testing riders' skills and highlighting Aizawl's demanding terrain. Red Bull Tlang Ruam offers winners a chance to compete in the prestigious Red Bull Global Urban Downhill, boasting Aizawl's international mountain biking profile. The city of Aizawl witnessed an adrenaline-filled weekend as it hosted the second edition of Red Bull Tlang Ruam 2025, India and Asia's first-ever urban downhill mountain biking competition. A total of 25 riders from four countries competed in the qualification and final races held on Saturday, November 8.

This year's edition was tougher and more technical than the 2024 debut, featuring steeper steps, narrow lanes, and sharper turns designed to

challenge even the most experienced riders. The event once again turned Aizawl's hilly streets into a high-speed biking trail, drawing large crowds of local spectators who lined up along the course to cheer for the participants. Red Bull Tlang Ruam, derived from the Mizo words meaning "mountain together," celebrates the city's unique terrain and culture.

The winner of this event will earn the chance to participate in the prestigious Red Bull Global Urban Downhill — Cerro Abajo, one of the world's most renowned urban downhill biking venues. Aizawl's steep roads and stair-filled landscapes make it the perfect host city for such an event. The terrain not only tests riders' stamina and technique but also enhances their adaptability and skill levels. This year's mentors — Tomas Slavik, Pedro Burns, and Victor Heresmann, all globally recognized downhill biking champions — guided the participants, sharing insights on technique and safety.

Miller B. Renthlei, a prominent voice in Mizoram's mountain biking scene, stated that the Red Bull Tlang Ruam has revolutionized the perception of cycling in the state. "It has turned biking from a casual pastime into a celebrated sport. Many young Mizos have joined the biking community after witnessing the scale and excitement of this event," he said.

"New institution represents a historic leap": Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma

GUWAHATI

Marking a new milestone in Assam's higher education sector, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday laid the foundation stone of Swahid Kanaklata Barua State University at Bholaguri in Gohpur in Biswanath district in the presence of Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

According to a release from the Chief Minister's office, it may be noted that the institution to be built on a sprawling 731 bigha of land will be Assam's first university focused on Industry 4.0 relevant courses on Technical and Vocational training.

Speaking on the occasion, the Assam CM extended heartfelt gratitude to the Union Finance Minister for laying the foundation stone of India's first Technology-based Vocational Education and Training (T-VET) university at Gohpur.

"The new institution represents a historic leap in Assam's academic and industrial journey. Recalling his visit to Gohpur ahead of the last Assembly election, when he had promised to establish a university named after Swahid Kanaklata Barua. Laying the foundation for the university amounts to fulfilment of his commitment," the Chief Minister said.

Sarma noted that, as both Education Minister in the past and now as Chief Minister, he has had the privilege of being associated with the establish-

ment of nearly 20 universities and over 25 medical colleges across the state.

"The government wanted to dedicate this new university to a great daughter of Assam whose supreme sacrifice continues to inspire generations. The very name of Swahid Kanaklata Barua evokes a deep sense of patriotism in every Assamese heart. We wanted this university to reflect the spirit of a new Assam, which is self-reliant, progressive and driven by knowledge. Our aim is to make it a true temple of human resource development," the Chief Minister said.

He mentioned that following the passage of the Act in the Assam Legislative Assembly, an academic committee comprising eminent educationists, including Professor Parmeshwar Iyer of IIT Guwahati, has been constituted to design the university's academic structure. He said that besides arts and general sciences, the university will focus on cutting-edge disciplines that define Industry 4.0 requirement such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Quantum Computing etc. Reflecting on the legacy of Assam's higher education, Sarma said that Gauhati University was established in 1948 through the vision of Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi.

"Now, 75 years after Independence, Swahid Kanaklata Barua State University will narrate the story of Assam's development and transformation in the year 2025," Sarma added.

The Chief Minister highlighted that soil from every corner of Assam collected during the Amrit Kalash Yatra under the Meri Maati Mera Desh initiative has been used in constructing the university as a symbolic gesture to connect the new institution with the collective aspirations of the people of Assam. Sarma also underlined the historic

importance of the Bholaguri Tea Estate, where the university is coming up.

He recalled that Rupkonwar Jyoti Prasad Agarwala had inspired freedom fighters of Sonitpur including Kanaklata Barua to join the Miriyi Bahini during the Quit India Movement.

The same land, he said, will now nurture a world-class university as a fitting tribute to Assam's freedom struggle and intellectual heritage.

Paying homage to Swahid Kanaklata Barua, the Chief Minister recalled the 17-year-old's supreme sacrifice during the Quit India Movement, when she was martyred while leading a procession to hoist the Tricolour at Gohpur Police Station on September 20, 1942.

"Her name will forever be etched in golden letters in India's freedom history," he said.

He added that Kanaklata Barua symbolized nari shakti, and therefore the university has been named after her as a fitting tribute.

Speaking on the rich cultural legacy of the Bholaguri Tea Estate, Sarma reminded that Assamese cinema took its first steps here.

"Jyoti Prasad Agarwala had converted the estate's factory into studio, and Joyduti, the first Assamese film, was shot in this tea garden. From this sacred land, where Assamese cinema and cultural renaissance began ninety years ago, we now lay the foundation of a university dedicated to technology-based education. This marks a golden confluence of tradition, modernity and a future full of promise," he said.

The Chief Minister further announced that heritage structures linked to Jyoti Prasad Agarwala, including the film studio, will be preserved as national assets within the university campus serving

as a living tribute to his vision and contribution to Assamese culture.

Sarma informed that the State government has sanctioned Rs 500 crore for the first phase of the project, with another Rs 500 crore to be released subsequently.

Designed as a greenfield institution, the university will eventually accommodate around 10,000 students, he said adding that the Public Works Department has been entrusted with developing a modern, eco-friendly campus in a serene natural setting. Sarma informed that the State government will establish academic collaboration between this university and an international institution to enable dual degree opportunities for students.

He had already discussed such collaborations with two leading Japanese universities during his recent visit to Japan.

He added that Gohpur will emerge as one of the key education hubs of the state.

It may be mentioned that in line with the government's commitment to compensate the workers of Bholaguri Tea Estate, Union Finance Minister Sitharaman ceremonially handed over land allotment documents to three tea garden workers during the event, marking the beginning of the formal land patta distribution process. Assam Education Minister Ranaj Pegu, Finance Minister Ajanta Neog, Health and Family Welfare Minister Ashok Singhal, MP Ranjit Dutta, MLAs Utpal Bora, Pramod Borthakur and Diganta Ghatowar, along with Swahid Kanaklata Barua's brother Kalicharan Barua and several eminent educationists, were present on the occasion.

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Bihar kids need to dream of startups, not hands up: PM Modi



PATNA

Ahead of the second phase of the Bihar assembly polls, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday that the people of Bihar "do not want a katta sarkar".

"I shudder to hear that the RJD, in its campaign, is getting children to say that they wish to become 'rangdaar' (street bully) when they grow up," he said at a poll rally in Sitamarhi. "People do not want a regime that would put a 'katta' on their heads and ask them to hold their hands up. People do not want hands up, but startup, which the NDA will facilitate. The NDA shuns 'katta' and promotes school bags, computers, cricket bats and hockey sticks," he added.

The Prime Minister, who has popularised "katta" as

a metaphor for the RJD's alleged high-handedness, charged the main opposition party with having pointed a country-made, unlicensed pistol at the head of the Congress when the ally was refusing to back Tejashwi Yadav as the chief ministerial candidate.

Speaking on record voter turnout in the first phase of the assembly election, Modi said that it was like a "65-volt jhatka" to 'jungle raj'. "They are getting sleepless nights," he added, asserting that people of Bihar have sent a strong message against corruption, misgovernance, and lawlessness that once plagued the state.

The PM launched a veiled attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over his recent fishing attempt in Begusarai during his election trail by

stating that "Bihar ki election mein doobne ki practice kar rahe hain". He said that some people were practising diving in ponds in the state at a time when Bihar's fishery sector had grown under the NDA government. PM Modi in his election rallies had several times pointed out how Bihar's fish farming had grown after the installation of the NDA government as earlier Bihar had to depend on other states for fish but now it was supplying fish to them.

Along with Rahul Gandhi, VIP chief Mukesh Sahani, who has a good support base among fishing community, also participated in the fish-catching exercise. Mallah community constitutes 2.6% of Bihar's population as per the 2023 caste survey.

In Bettiah (district headquarters of West Champaran), Modi claimed that Bettiah had witnessed the most "terrifying form of RJD and Congress's jungle raj". "These jungle raj politicians have turned Champaran, once known for its history of Satyagraha, into a stronghold for thugs and bandits," he said. "I had started my campaign by visiting the birthplace of Bharat Ratna Karpoori Thakur, and today I am bringing it to a close at the land where Babu Gandhi transformed into the Mahatma," said Modi, recalling his first rally at Samastipur.

"My campaign ends today but canvassing will continue tomorrow. But voters' job begins on the day of polling. I will come again for the swearing-in of an NDA government," the Prime Minister said.

"Main issue is 'vote chori' SIR is system to cover it up": Rahul Gandhi targets BJP, Election Commission

PACHMARHI

Claiming that democracy and the Constitution are "under attack", Congress MP and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Sunday lashed out at the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Election Commission over "vote theft", asserting that he has more evidence and will reveal it soon.

The Congress leader alleged that a large-scale "vote theft" was taking place and claimed that democracy and the "Constitution are under attack".

Addressing reporters in Pachmarhi, Rahul Gandhi alleged that around 25 lakh votes had been "stolen," asserting that one out of every eight votes had been manipulated.

"Vote chori has been done clearly. Twenty-five lakh votes have been stolen. Every one out of eight votes has been stolen. After seeing the data, I believe the same has happened in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra. This is a system of the BJP and the Election Commission. We have more evidence, and we will show it after some time," Gandhi claimed.

He further accused the ruling BJP of creating a mechanism to institutionalise electoral malpractice. "The main issue is of vote chori and SIR is a system to cover it up and institutionalise," he said. The Congress leader also alleged that the Prime Minister, Union Home Minister, and Chief Election Commissioner were jointly responsible for "attacking democracy and the Constitution."

"We have detailed information. We have shown very little as of now, but the main issue is that there is an attack on democracy and Ambedkar ji's Constitution and directly, PM Modi, Amit Shah, and CEC Gyanesh Kumar are doing it by forming a joint partnership. This is damaging the country, Bharat Mata," Gandhi alleged.

Further, Lok Sabha Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi also interacted with party leaders from the Madhya Pradesh unit at Pachmarhi.

Rahul Gandhi addressed the training camp for district/city presidents under the 'Organisation Creation



Campaign' on Saturday and discussed other important issues.

Congress leader Kantil Bhuria, speaking to reporters, hailed the Congress MPs' 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' in Bihar, stating that it has created awareness among voters in the state.

"The grassroots workers of Congress have to become aware; only then can we foil the BJP's 'vote chori' attempts...By taking out the Voter Adhikar Yatra in Bihar, Rahul Gandhi created an awareness among the voters of Bihar," Bhuria told.

Earlier, Rahul Gandhi attended a training camp in Pachmarhi in Narmadapuram district for the newly appointed district presidents of the Madhya Pradesh Congress.

Under the Sangathan Srijan Campaign, a 10-day training camp for appointed district presidents is underway, and on the seventh day of the camp, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi arrived to attend. The Congress leader would take a 3-hour-long session of the district presidents here and would discuss strengthening the party.

Ahead of LoP's visit, MP Congress president Jitu Patwari told ANI, "As part of Sangathan Srijan campaign, new district presidents were appointed in the state and new innovations are taking place in strengthening the party. The

party is organising training camps for leaders at the block, district, and state levels. Currently, a 10-day training of district presidents is underway, and Rahul Gandhi is arriving to attend a day of training camp in Pachmarhi. He will also spend the night here. The LoP is arriving on the seventh day of the training camp."

The Congress chief also highlighted that they would gather with the intent of bringing about historic change to fight against the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) ideology.

"There are about 25 sessions in a 10-day training camp, and Rahul Gandhi would take one session of around 3 hours. Rahul Gandhi will have a night stay, and there will be other engagements as well, which will be described later," he added.

When asked about the BJP targeting the LoP that amid Bihar election, he is visiting Madhya Pradesh, Patwari said that the LoP was directly coming from Bihar election and would fly back to Bihar only. He is arriving to take only one session because there is a Bihar election, otherwise he would have spent two to three days here.

Meanwhile, on Wednesday, in a press conference, Rahul Gandhi alleged "large-scale voter fraud" in the 2024 Haryana assembly elections.

He referred to the list of voters issued by the Election Commission ahead of the Haryana assembly polls and alleged that there were nearly 25 lakh fake votes in the state. He stated that a corrupt voter list undermines democracy.

"Now, we have proof that the voter list in India is a lie. If the voter list is a lie, there is no democracy," Gandhi said during his 'H Files' press conference.

He further urged India's Gen Z and youth to safeguard the country's democratic process while addressing allegations of large-scale voter fraud in Haryana.

Gandhi highlighted that the youth have the power to restore democracy through truth and non-violence.

He also claimed a plan was set in motion to turn a predicted Congress victory into defeat in the Haryana polls.

"I want the young people of India, Gen Z, to understand this clearly. Because this is about your future. Your future is being destroyed. So it's important that you listen and you watch. I'm questioning the Election Commission and the democratic process in India. So I'm doing it with 100 per cent proof. We are pretty sure that a plan was put in motion to convert Congress's landslide victory (in Haryana) into a loss," he said.

INTERNATIONAL

'If war breaks out we have right to defend ourselves': Afghanistan as peace talks fall flat again



KANDAHAR

As the final round of peace talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan in Istanbul fell flat, the Taliban government on Saturday said it has a right to defend itself in case of a war.

Afghan government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said Saturday that Pakistan's "unreasonable demands" derailed the talks, which ended in Istanbul late Friday after two days of meetings mediated by Turkey and Qatar.

"The meeting ended and the talks are at a standstill for now," Mujahid told reporters in the southern city of Kandahar.

"We do not want insecurity in the region, and entering into war is not

our first choice. But if war breaks out, we have the right to defend ourselves."

He reiterated that Afghanistan would not allow its soil to be used against any other country and would not tolerate actions threatening its sovereignty or security.

Peace talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan have collapsed without agreement, with both sides trading blame for the failure of negotiations aimed at easing border tensions and maintaining a fragile ceasefire.

Pakistani Defence Minister Khawaja Asif confirmed to Geo News that the talks had ended without progress and that the Pakistani delegation was returning home.

"The talks are over," he said.

"There is no plan for any future meetings. The ceasefire will remain as long as it is not violated from the Afghan side." The failed talks come amid rising tension along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, where clashes in recent weeks have left dozens of soldiers and civilians dead. The violence followed October 9 explosions in Kabul, which the Taliban government blamed on Pakistani drone strikes.

Fighting subsided after Qatar brokered a ceasefire on October 19, but the truce remains fragile. Afghan officials said four civilians were killed and five others wounded in new cross-border clashes on Thursday, even as the Istanbul negotiations continued.

Asif accused the Afghan side of

refusing to sign a written agreement, insisting instead on verbal assurances. "There is no plan or hope for a fourth round of talks," he said. "Talks have entered an indefinite pause."

Islamabad accuses Kabul of harboring the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a militant group responsible for a surge in attacks inside Pakistan since 2021. The Taliban government denies the charge, saying it does not permit any group to use Afghan territory against another country.

Mujahid rejected Pakistan's allegations, saying the TTP predated the Taliban's 2021 return to power and that Afghanistan could not be held responsible for its actions.

Earlier this month, Pakistan's military said it carried out airstrikes on TTP hideouts inside Afghanistan, killing dozens of insurgents. Afghan officials disputed the claim, saying civilians were among the dead, and said Afghan forces retaliated by shelling Pakistani military posts, killing 58 soldiers. Pakistan acknowledged losing 23 troops in the fighting.

Pakistan has kept its border crossings with Afghanistan closed since October 12, disrupting trade and stranding thousands of people on both sides. The main Torkham crossing was partially reopened last week to allow stranded Afghans to return home, but hundreds of trucks carrying goods remain backed up along the frontier. The border restrictions coincide with Pakistan's nationwide campaign to deport undocumented foreigners, most of them Afghans. Authorities say more than one million Afghan nationals have been sent back since 2023. Pakistan has also faced a surge in militant attacks, many claimed by the TTP, which is designated as a terrorist organization by both the United Nations and the United States.

Rodrigo Paz sworn in as Bolivia's new president, ending 20 years of one-party rule



LA PAZ

Conservative politician Rodrigo Paz was sworn in as Bolivia's new president on Saturday, ushering in a new era for the Andean nation after nearly 20 years of one-party rule.

Paz took the oath of office before lawmakers and foreign leaders, raising his right hand before a Bible and a cross.

"God, country, and family, I do swear," he said before receiving the presidential sash and medals.

The inauguration of Paz, 58, has generated anticipation among Bolivians weary of the severe fuel shortages and high food prices that have come to characterise the country's worst economic crisis in 40 years. To widespread surprise, he beat out his far more prominent right-wing opponent, former President Jorge "Tuto" Quiroga, in Bolivia's presidential runoff last month.

Paz inherits an economy in shambles after 20 years of rule by the Movement Toward Socialism party, founded by charismatic former President

Evo Morales. The party had its heyday during the commodities boom of the early 2000s, but natural gas exports have sputtered and its statist economic model of generous subsidies and a fixed exchange rate has collapsed.

With U.S. dollars scarce and chronic fuel shortages, a majority of voters chose Paz to lift them out of the economic crisis. He pitched major reforms but at a more gradual pace than Quiroga, who advocated an International Monetary Fund bailout and fiscal shock program.

"The country we inherited is devastated...morally and materially indebted, with endless lines for fuel and empty markets," Paz said in his first speech as president. "Bolivia is rejoining the world, never again isolated. Never again will the country be held hostage by an ideology; ideology doesn't put food on the table."

The presidents of Argentina, Javier Milei; Chile, Gabriel Boric; Ecuador, Daniel Noboa; Uruguay, Yamandú Orsi; and Paraguay, Santiago Peña attended the inauguration

in Bolivia's capital, La Paz.

After his Oct. 20 victory, Paz distanced himself from the ALBA bloc — of which Bolivia is part along with Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela — and moved closer to the United States, from which his country had grown apart after the expulsion of the U.S. ambassador in 2008, during Morales's administration.

Paz also engaged with international financial institutions regarding a potential economic assistance program. In addition, the new president reached an initial agreement with the Andean Development Corporation for a \$3.1 billion loan to boost economic recovery over the next few years.

"After two decades of left-wing government, he can count on the goodwill of foreign investors and the international community," said Michael Shifter of the Inter-American Dialogue, a Washington-based international think tank. "His task will not be easy. If he acts too slowly or his policies stagnate and fail to pull Bolivia out of its economic crisis, Paz risks losing political capital."

Paz also announced after the election that his government will cooperate with all international organizations on security matters, including the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, which Morales expelled from Bolivia at the end of 2008.

Paz will now have to work on building a solid alliance with political blocs as his Christian Democratic Party controls only 39% of the 166 seats of the Legislative Assembly.

"We haven't been handed a throne, but a task," Paz said. "This is the time for true democracy and respect for the law; no one is above the law. We will overcome that disgraceful and shameful past."

From Tea Gardens to Tech Parks: Assam's Leap into India's Silicon Future

When the Union Cabinet approved Tata Electronics' ₹27,000-crore Semiconductor Assembly and Testing Unit at Jagiroad in Morigaon, Assam, it wasn't merely a new industrial investment - it was a historic pivot. For a state long known for its tea estates, oil fields, and cultural richness, this project signalled a new identity in the making: Assam as the eastern gateway of India's digital revolution.

This ambitious facility - the first of its kind in Eastern India - marks not just the spread of semiconductor manufacturing beyond traditional industrial states but a decisive step in India's broader effort to decentralise technological growth. It embodies the spirit of the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM), launched in 2021 with a budget of ₹76,000 crore, which aims to reduce India's staggering 90% dependence on imported chips and strengthen its foothold in a global semiconductor market projected to reach USD 1 trillion by 2030.

For Assam, the Jagiroad project is not just about machines and microchips - it's about rewriting an economic destiny.

A New Dawn on the Brahmaputra
Until recently, Assam's industrial story was tied to its natural resources - tea, oil, and natural gas. But these traditional industries, while foundational, offered limited upward mobility in a rapidly digitising economy. The semiconductor unit changes that narrative dramatically. It brings the hum of precision manufacturing to a region where the Brahmaputra once dictated the rhythms of life.

The Tata Electronics facility, designed to produce up to 48 million chips per day, represents the cutting edge of India's attempt to build a resilient semiconductor ecosystem. Backed by both the Centre and the state government, it positions Assam as a key node in the country's ambition to achieve technological self-reliance.

With an expected 10,000 direct and 15,000 indirect jobs, the project is poised to transform the employment landscape in central Assam. Skill development partnerships with IIT Guwahati, Assam Skill University, and Tata STRIVE are already underway, ensuring a trained local workforce to support advanced manufacturing processes. Additionally, downstream investments in logistics, housing, and services are projected to inject another ₹5,000 crore into the regional economy - turning Morigaon into a vibrant industrial corridor.

For a generation of Assamese youth, this isn't just a factory - it's a future.

Politics Meets Progress

However, progress seldom comes without controversy. Even before the foundation stone settled into the soil, a remark by Karnataka's IT Minister, Priyank Kharge, ignited a political storm. He questioned whether Assam had the "ecosystem" required for semiconductor manufacturing.

The comment drew swift backlash. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma labelled it "an insult to the youth of Assam," arguing that such remarks reflected a patronising attitude towards the Northeast. Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi attempted to temper the dispute, clarifying that Kharge's words were misinterpreted. But by then, the debate had moved into the realm of symbolism - of who gets to define where India's future is built.

Kharge's criticism, while rooted in concerns about ecosystem readiness, missed a crucial point: ecosystems aren't pre-existing; they're created. Every major semiconductor hub - from Hsinchu in Taiwan to Silicon Hills in Texas - began as an act of belief. Infrastructure and expertise followed investment, not the other way around.

Assam's inclusion in India's semiconductor narrative, therefore, isn't misplaced optimism; it's an act of faith in equitable development. As Sarma aptly noted, "The very purpose of this project is to create the ecosystem that others claim is missing."

Why Assam Makes Strategic Sense

Far from being a sentimental choice, Assam's selection as the site for this project is grounded in strategic and logistical logic. Jagiroad lies close to Guwahati - the Northeast's commercial hub - and is connected by National Highway 27, major rail lines, and Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport. Its proximity to major urban centres ensures accessibility for both materials and manpower.

The Assam Power Generation Corporation has committed 120 MW of uninterrupted power to the facility, while a 25 million-litre-per-day water supply project is being developed from the Kopili River to meet the plant's stringent requirements. Combined with the fiscal incentives under the North East Industrial Development Scheme (NEIDS 2017), including a 100% income tax exemption for ten years, the region offers a rare combination of affordability and sustainability.

From a national perspective, the Jagiroad unit fits neatly into India's strategic agenda. Its output will serve key growth industries



- automotive, electric vehicles, 5G telecommunications, and consumer electronics - all vital to India's industrial self-reliance. With semiconductor imports costing the country roughly ₹1.5 lakh crore annually, even a partial substitution of domestic production would represent significant economic and geopolitical leverage.

The Broader Canvas: Connectivity and the Act East Policy

Assam's growing role in India's industrial and trade strategies is amplified by its position within the Act East Policy framework. The state serves as India's natural bridge to Southeast Asia, connecting through the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and other cross-border infrastructure initiatives.

A semiconductor hub in Assam could therefore catalyse not just domestic growth but regional integration, strengthening India's economic presence in the Indo-Pacific. This industrial diversification also complements the Centre's ongoing efforts to expand road, rail, and digital connectivity in the Northeast - ensuring that the region's economic potential finally matches its strategic significance.

Shifting Mindsets: From Margins to the Mainstream

Beyond the numbers and infrastructure, the real significance of the Tata project lies in its ability to change perceptions - both within and outside Assam. For decades, the state has struggled to escape national narratives dominated by insurgency, floods, and underdevelopment. Now, it finds itself being discussed in the context of technology, innovation, and skilled employment. That shift is profound.

It signals that Assam, long viewed as a peripheral state, is stepping into the centre of India's digital discourse. The change isn't just economic; it's psychological. It's about replacing narratives of scarcity with those of possibility.

The symbolic transformation cannot be overstated. The state that once powered India's tea trade and oil wells now aims to power its microchip production - from the green plantations of Jorhat to the silicon labs of Morigaon. The Brahmaputra Valley, once associated with natural abundance, now carries the pulse of digital ambition.

Building an Ecosystem, Not Just a Factory

Critics are right about one thing - Assam doesn't yet have a complete semiconductor ecosystem. But then, neither did most global hubs at the beginning. What it does have is government resolve, academic partnerships, and corporate commitment - the three pillars needed to construct one.

The state government's proactive steps - fast-tracking land acquisition, providing infrastructure guarantees, and aligning technical institutions with industry requirements - reflect a clarity of purpose rarely seen in industrial policy. More importantly, it demonstrates a belief that technology-driven growth shouldn't remain the privilege of western and southern India alone.

This model of distributed development - where smaller states build sector-specific competencies - could become India's new industrial template. If Assam succeeds, it may inspire similar high-tech investments across the Northeast, bringing balance to the nation's economic geography.

Economic and Emotional Reclamation
Perhaps the most underappreciated aspect of the semiconductor project is its emotional resonance. For a state that has

that their state is capable of leading, not just following.

The Challenges Ahead

That said, success will require sustained effort. Semiconductor manufacturing demands not just investment but ecosystem resilience - stable power, clean water, skilled labour, and constant innovation. India's previous attempts at establishing similar facilities have often been stalled by bureaucratic red tape, policy inconsistency, or infrastructure gaps.

Assam will have to ensure that enthusiasm translates into execution. Long-term success will depend on reliable infrastructure, research collaboration, and continued government support. Most critically, it will require nurturing a culture of innovation - where young Assamese engineers, researchers, and entrepreneurs see Jagiroad not as an endpoint but a beginning.

A New Industrial Geography for India
The Jagiroad semiconductor plant is more than a regional milestone - it is an experiment in rewriting India's industrial geography. It challenges the concentration of high-tech manufacturing in select states and extends the promise of innovation to the country's peripheries.

If successful, Assam's model could redefine what "Make in India" truly means - not just manufacturing within national borders, but manufacturing with inclusion, balance, and belief.

As the world's digital economy grows hungrier for chips, and global supply chains seek alternatives beyond East Asia, India's diversification into the Northeast is both economically prudent and geopolitically strategic. In that sense, Assam's entry into the semiconductor ecosystem represents not just progress for one state but preparedness for an entire nation.

Every revolution begins somewhere. For India's silicon dream, that somewhere may well be Jagiroad - a small town by the Brahmaputra now set to host one of the most advanced semiconductor units in the country.

Assam's journey into the digital age won't be immediate or easy, but it has already begun with conviction. The noise of scepticism will fade; what will remain is the hum of progress - quiet, steady, and transformative.

Between the mist-covered hills and the mighty river, the seeds of a new industrial era are taking root. If nurtured with vision and persistence, the Brahmaputra Valley may soon reflect not only the sunlight glinting off its waters but also the shimmer of silicon - the pulse of a future built in India's east.

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