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## PERSPECTIVE

**Common sense is not so common.**

**Tripura gets Rs. 451 crore boost as DoNER approves 21 new tourism projects**

### AGARTALA

Tripura's tourism sector has received a major boost with the Union Ministry for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) approving 21 tourism projects worth ₹451 crore, marking one of the largest funding infusions for the state in recent years.

Chief Minister Manik Saha said the projects would significantly strengthen tourism infrastructure and open up new avenues for sustainable growth and employment. Of the total outlay, ₹267.5 crore will be provided by DoNER, while the remaining funds will come from the state government, the Union Ministry of Tourism and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) initiatives.

"These projects mark another major milestone in strengthening Tripura's tourism infrastructure," Saha said, adding that the initiatives are expected to enhance tourist facilities, improve connectivity and promote the state's cultural and natural heritage.

The approval followed the presentation of the Matbari Tourist Circuit Project before Union DoNER Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia. Sharing the development on social media, the Chief Minister described the sanction as "another major milestone" for Tripura's tourism development.

Saha thanked the Union government and the state Tourism Department for their support, stating that "under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Tripura is witnessing transformative growth and holistic development."

Officials said the projects are designed to improve visitor experiences, create sustainable tourism infrastructure and generate local employment, further strengthening Tripura's presence on the national and international tourism map.

### WHO SAID WHAT



**The future is going to be AMAZING with AI and robots enabling sustainable ABUNDANCE for all! ~ Elon Musk, American entrepreneur**

# Gaurav Gogoi Accuses Assam CM of Tarnishing Zubeen Garg's Legacy

### GUWAHATI

Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi launched a blistering attack on Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, alleging that the chargesheet filed in the investigation of singer Zubeen Garg's death amounts to "character assassination" rather than a pursuit of justice.

In a strongly-worded statement, Gogoi claimed the chief minister's "sole purpose" was to damage Garg's public image. "Zubeen da was Assam's Kanchanjunga. We must not let Himanta Biswa Sarma harm Zubeen da's legacy," he wrote, suggesting that authorities might go to extreme lengths, including "blackmailing the family and supporters of late Zubeen Garg," to further this objective.

The remarks come amid renewed controversy surrounding the case, after the special investigation team (SIT) lodged a complaint against Independent MLA Akhil Gogoi for allegedly circulating "unverified" documents on social media that purportedly formed part of the chargesheet. A senior official called such circulation "illegal,"



warning it could "mislead the public and create confusion."

The Sivasagar MLA allegedly shared documents detailing the charges against seven individuals implicated in Garg's death. However, lawyers note that certified copies have yet to be released to the public, though the accused and their relatives have received them. SIT investigating officer Rosie Kalita filed the complaint with the Crime

Branch, which is now examining the matter before deciding on further action. Akhil Gogoi, who is reportedly severely ill, confirmed he would travel to Guwahati to face the case.

The nine-member SIT, led by Special DGP Munna Prasad Gupta, submitted the chargesheet to the Kamrup (Metro) Chief Judicial Magistrate on December 12. Key charges include:

"Murder: Garg's secretary

### GUWAHATI

Following the establishment of three new Army bases in West Bengal, Bihar, and Assam to secure the strategic Siliguri Corridor, popularly known as the 'Chicken's Neck', Indian defence authorities are considering a fourth base in Mizoram, government sources told.

Eastern Command General Officer Commanding (GOC) Lieutenant General R C Tiwari is scheduled to visit Thuampui near Aizawl on December 19 to survey potential sites for the new station. The move forms part of the Army's broader strategy to strengthen defensive positions around the sensitive corridor and respond to potential threats from across the Bangladesh border.

Lt Gen Tiwari will be accompanied by 3rd Corps GOC Lt Gen Abhijit S Pendharkar and 17th Mountain Strike Corps GOC Lt Gen Yash Ahlawat. During the visit, senior Assam Rifles and Border Security Force (BSF) officers will brief the delegation on operational requirements, followed by inspec-



tions of two key outposts-Parva in Lawngtlai district and Silsuri in Mamit district-along the India-Bangladesh border.

Parva holds strategic significance due to its proximity to both the India-Myanmar and India-Bangladesh borders, while Silsuri is a major settlement in the West Phaileng block of Mamit district. The Army plans to station a battalion from the Dimapur-based 3rd

Corps at the new location, acting as a first line of defence against potential incursions by state and non-state actors.

The move comes amid broader initiatives by the BSF to modernise border infrastructure in Mizoram. According to Ministry of Home Affairs sources, over the next five years, 45 defensive structures-including bunkers, ring embankments, blast-proof shelters,



and underground armouries-will be constructed across three battalion command areas in Silchar and Mizoram.

"These critical infrastructures have been prioritised based on operational sensitivity, threat perception, and vulnerability assessments," the sources said. Existing BOPs (Border Outposts) along the Mizoram sector of the India-Bangladesh border, numbering 85, are being transformed into composite, future-ready operational hubs.

To date, 40 such structures have

been completed in Lunglei and Lawngtlai districts, while work on 19 more has been sanctioned. Plans indicate that 26 BOPs will eventually feature all four key structures over the next five years.

The initiative complements earlier efforts to ring-fence the Siliguri Corridor, with bases already operational in Chopra (North Dinajpur, West Bengal), Kishanganj (Bihar), and Bamuni (Assam), creating a defensive arc protecting one of India's most critical strategic choke-points.

## No foul play suspected so far in Zubeen Garg death: Singapore Police



### GUWAHATI/SINGAPORE

Singapore Police have said they do not suspect any foul play in the death of Indian singer Zubeen Garg, even as investigations continue under the country's Coroners Act.

In a statement issued on December 18, the Singapore Police Force (SPF) said preliminary findings have not indicated criminal involvement in Garg's death. "Based on our investigations so far, the SPF does not suspect foul play in the death of Garg," the statement said.

Garg had died on September 19 while swimming in the sea in Singapore, a day before he was scheduled to perform at the 4th Northeast India Festival at the Suntec Singapore Convention and Exhibition Centre. The circumstances surrounding his death had triggered

questions and speculation both in Singapore and India.

The SPF said the case remains under investigation in accordance with the Coroners Act 2010. Once investigations are completed, the findings will be submitted to the State Coroner. A Coroner's Inquiry, described as a fact-finding process to determine the cause and circumstances of death, is scheduled for January and February 2026. The conclusions of the inquiry will be made public after it concludes.

Emphasising the need for restraint, Singapore police said they are committed to a "thorough and professional investigation" and urged the public not to speculate. "We seek the patience and understanding of the parties involved. Meanwhile, we urge the public not to speculate and spread unverified information," the statement added.

The update from Singapore comes amid parallel developments in India, where a Special Investigation Team (SIT) has filed a chargesheet accusing four individuals of murder in connection with Garg's death.

Those named include the singer's secretary, Siddhartha Sharma, and festival organiser Shyamkanu Mahanta. Garg, a prominent figure in Indian music, had travelled to Singapore for the festival performance scheduled on September 20. The differing legal processes and findings in the two countries have drawn public attention, with Singapore authorities maintaining that their investigation is ongoing and that final conclusions will be determined through the coroner's inquiry.

### GUWAHATI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two-day visit to Assam from December 20 will be "significant, symbolic and substantial" for the state, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Wednesday after reviewing preparations at the state BJP headquarters in Guwahati.

Sarma said the Prime Minister's visit should not be viewed through an electoral lens, even though Assembly elections are due early next year. "We do not want to link the Prime Minister's visit to election politics as he has been elected to run the nation. But his programmes in the state are very significant and symbolic," he told reporters.

Modi will arrive in Guwahati on Saturday afternoon and begin his engagements by unveiling an 80-foot statue of former chief minister Gopinath Bordoloi. Bordoloi, a Congress leader, was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna during the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government. The Prime Minister will also inaugurate the new ₹4,000-crore terminal of the Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport and address a public gathering outside the terminal complex.

A roadshow to the BJP headquarters at Bashishta will follow, where Modi will interact with party workers. "This is the first time that a Prime Minister will visit a BJP office in the state, and

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## TRUMP AND INDIA

The recent tele-conversation between PM Modi and US President Donald Trump came while Trump was contemplating increasing tariffs on India for supposedly 'dumping' Indian rice in US markets, pushing down prices of local varieties. The topics discussed between them included bilateral trade and cooperation in energy, security and defence. The conversation happened while the US negotiation team was in India for continuing trade talks.

In a round table discussion at the White House last week while unveiling a USD 12 Billion bailout package for US farmers, Trump mentioned, 'Give me the countries (exporting rice to the US)? India, who else?' Simultaneously, US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer mentioned at a Congress hearing that they have received 'the best ever' trade deal from India.

India's rice exports to the US comprises largely of Basmati rice. In terms of quantity, it was about 2.35 lakh quintals in 2024, just 5% of India's global exports. India exports largely to the Middle East. Indian rice faces 25% tariffs in the US. Any additional tariffs will impact trade discussions.

Pakistan, on the other hand, exports 80,000 tons of Basmati to the US, which it hopes to increase to 1 Lakh tons this year exploiting higher tariffs on India. Pak has 19% tariffs. Trump specifically chose to name India, ignoring others. While India holds 26% of the US Basmati market, Pakistan holds 9%, the balance being shared by other SE Asian nations.

The US recently released National Security Strategy (NSS) terms China as a peer with whom rebalancing of economic ties is essential, a difference from the past where it was an adversary. China remains India's major adversary. The reason why the US avoids sanctioning China for procuring Russian oil is its blackmail on exports of rare earths.

However, the NSS stuck to its position on Taiwan by stating, 'Deterring a conflict over Taiwan, ideally by preserving military overmatch, is a priority. We will also maintain our longstanding declaratory policy on Taiwan, meaning that the United States does not support any unilateral change to the status quo in the Taiwan Strait.'

India was mentioned as an ally as also a member of the QUAD (comprising of Australia, Japan, India and the US). The NSS mentioned, 'We must continue to improve commercial (and other) relations with India to encourage New Delhi to contribute to Indo-Pacific security, including through continued cooperation with the Quad.' The NSS considers the Indo-Pacific as the 'next century's key economic and geopolitical battleground.'

The Indian MEA spokesperson mentioned in his weekly briefing, 'It (NSS) underscores the importance the US attaches to India as a key partner. We have a multifaceted relationship with the US. Both countries enjoy comprehensive global strategic partnership, and continue to work to further strengthen these ties.'

The current consideration of India is subdued as compared to earlier NSSs. The Biden era Oct 2022 NSS mentioned, 'As India is the world's largest democracy and a Major Defence Partner, the US and India will work together, bilaterally and multilaterally, to support our shared vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific.'

Even Trump's 2017 NSS was different. It stated, 'We welcome India's emergence as a leading global power and stronger strategic and defence partner.' It added, 'We will expand our defence and security cooperation with India, a Major Defence Partner of the US, and support India's growing relationships throughout the region.'

India presently faces the brunt of Trump's tariffs at 50%. While Trump defends it by stating that Indian oil procurement from Russia funds its war machinery (ignoring other nations doing the same), however, the reality is that India is amongst few which have refused to play to Trump's exalted ego. New Delhi also refused to endorse Trump's claim of having stopped the Indo-Pak conflict of May this year, opening doors for him to claim the Nobel Peace Prize.

Another reason for economic and diplomatic pressure on India is to compel it to link a favourable trade deal catering to demands of the US farmer community. Both nations have their red lines. As the commerce minister Piyush Goyal stated, 'Wherever we get a good deal, a fair deal, an equitable deal, India will be ready to put signature on paper.'

The message conveyed through the latest NSS is that relations are being looked through the economic prism rather than security as in earlier years. The current US administration, in the NSS, insists that their allies and partners (in Europe and Asia) enhance their military spending, to align with US demands.

India does not fall into any category as it remains a non-ally. However, Delhi is enhancing its military capabilities as a counter to China, aware that it would fight alone. As long as the US does not consider China as an adversary, there will not be any major emphasis on expanding Indo-US ties as also the role of the QUAD.

Another factor is that Indo-US ties are dependent on Pak-US relations. Till the current US administration came to power, Pakistan was largely ignored, including in Trump's first tenure, while Indo-US ties flourished. The ongoing Trump administration is enhancing ties with Pakistan, largely to benefit the family crypto business, thereby impacting its economic and diplomatic relations with India. Indo-US military and security ties remain robust.

For a nation to be considered a close ally there has to be an understanding of one another's concerns. The US ignoring India's is sending the message that either India adhere to its demands, or would be compelled to do so by coercion. Further, it always claims to be balancing its ties with both, India and Pakistan. The recent release of USD 686 Million for Pak F 16s is an example.

India has displayed that it too has options. The visit of President Putin to India, high on optics but low on agreements, did send a message that India will maintain its strategic autonomy. While no major defence agreements were announced, many would be on the cards, each one being handled independently, with passage of time, to avoid worsening of ties with the US.

Presently India-US relations are not what they should be, thanks to Trump's policies. India has thus far displayed maturity, not adopting counter tariffs as also avoiding a meeting of leaders, while Trump continues to target India. Will they bounce back is to be seen.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

A mind is like a parachute. It doesn't work if it is not open.

- Frank Zappa

# CRASHING INDIAN RUPEE



PROF. VIRENDER KOUNDAL

The Indian rupee has entered a phase of sustained weakness, triggering concern across financial markets, policy circles, and the business community. On 15 December 2025, the rupee slipped to around ₹90.6 per US dollar, marking its lowest level in the last eleven months. This sharp depreciation is not a stand-alone event; rather, it reflects a convergence of global uncertainties and domestic structural pressures. A fall of over 5 per cent in such a short span signals deeper stress in India's external sector and capital flows, raising critical questions about macroeconomic stability, inflation, and growth prospects.

One of the primary triggers behind the rupee's recent slide is mounting uncertainty surrounding business negotiations and tariff policies in the United States. Renewed ambiguity over trade arrangements, coupled with the possibility of higher tariffs, has unsettled global markets. For emerging economies like India, such uncertainty translates into heightened risk perception. The US dollar traditionally strengthens during periods of global uncertainty as investors seek safe-haven assets. This "flight to safety" has pushed up demand for dollars, exerting downward pressure on emerging market currencies, including the rupee. For India, which is deeply integrated into global trade and capital markets, the spillover effects are particularly pronounced. Moreover, unpredictable US trade policy has implications for India's export outlook. If tariffs rise or market access becomes more restrictive, India's export earnings could face pressure, further weakening the rupee by reducing dollar inflows.

A second, and arguably more immediate, factor behind the rupee's decline is the large-scale withdrawal of Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) from Indian equity and debt markets. Over recent months, FIIs have been consistently offloading Indian assets, driven by higher interest rates in advanced economies, stronger dollar returns, and concerns over global growth. When FIIs exit, they convert rupee-denominated assets into dollars, increasing the demand for foreign currency and putting direct pressure on the exchange rate. The current episode of capital outflows has amplified the rupee's fall, as domestic markets struggle to absorb the sudden reversal of foreign capital. This trend also reflects a broader reallocation of global portfolios. With attractive yields available in the US and other developed markets, India's relative appeal has weakened in the short term. While India's long-term fundamentals remain strong, currency markets respond swiftly to capital flow dynamics, often overshooting underlying economic realities.

The trade deficit forms the third

critical pillar explaining the rupee's weakness. India's imports have been rising steadily, outpacing export growth. Higher imports mean increased demand for dollars to pay foreign suppliers, which naturally exerts pressure on the rupee. Energy imports, particularly crude oil, remain a major contributor. Despite diversification efforts, India continues to rely heavily on imported oil. Any increase in global oil prices directly widens the trade deficit and raises dollar demand. Additionally, imports of electronics, machinery, and intermediate goods have grown alongside domestic consumption and industrial activity. The depreciation of the rupee, ironically, can further worsen the import bill in the short run by making imports more expensive. This creates a vicious cycle: higher imports increase dollar demand, weakening the rupee, which then inflates the rupee value of imports even more.

A weaker rupee has direct inflationary consequences. Costlier imports raise input prices for industries, which are often passed on to consumers. Fuel, fertilizers, edible oils, and electronic goods are particularly sensitive to currency movements. Persistent rupee depreciation can therefore complicate inflation management at a time when price stability is already a challenge. For businesses, exchange rate volatility increases uncertainty in planning and pricing. Import-dependent sectors face margin pressure, while exporters may benefit in the short term due to higher rupee earnings per dollar. However, if global demand weakens simultaneously, even exporters may not fully gain from a depreciated currency. From a macroeconomic perspective, prolonged rupee weakness can strain corporate balance sheets with unhedged foreign currency borrowings, increasing repayment burdens and financial stress.

The responsibility of managing currency volatility largely falls on the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The central bank has traditionally adopted a calibrated approach intervening in the foreign exchange market to curb excessive volatility rather than targeting a specific exchange rate. India's foreign exchange reserves provide a crucial buffer, enabling the RBI to smooth sharp fluctuations. However, sustained intervention can deplete reserves and must be balanced against long-term external sustainability. The RBI also uses interest rate policy and liquidity management to influence capital flows indirectly. In the current scenario, the challenge for policymakers is to strike a balance between defending the rupee and supporting economic growth. Aggressive tightening could stabilize the currency but may slow domestic investment and consumption.

The rupee's fall has broader implications for India's growth trajec-

tory. While a competitive exchange rate can boost exports over time, the benefits materialize only if global demand remains robust. In an environment of global uncertainty and protectionist tendencies, export-led gains may be limited. On the fiscal front, a weaker rupee raises the cost of servicing external debt and subsidies linked to imported commodities. This can strain government finances, particularly if depreciation persists. At the same time, India's ambition to attract long-term foreign investment hinges on macroeconomic stability. Sharp currency movements can deter investors, even if structural reforms and growth prospects remain favourable. Stabilizing the rupee requires a multi-pronged strategy. In the short term, managing volatility through prudent intervention and clear policy communication is essential to prevent panic in markets. Ensuring adequate dollar liquidity and discouraging speculative attacks should remain priorities. In the medium to long term, addressing structural issues is critical. Reducing dependence on imports especially energy through renewable expansion and domestic production can help narrow the trade deficit. Boosting export competitiveness via infrastructure development, technology adoption, and stable trade policies will strengthen dollar inflows. Equally important is restoring investor confidence. Predictable policy frameworks, fiscal discipline, and sustained reforms can attract stable long-term capital, reducing reliance on volatile portfolio flows.

The current depreciation of the Indian rupee to ₹90.6 per US dollar, its lowest level in eleven months, reflects a complex interplay of glob-

al uncertainty, FII outflows, and a widening trade deficit. While external factors such as US trade and tariff uncertainty are beyond India's control, domestic policy choices can mitigate their impact. A weaker rupee is both a warning signal and an opportunity highlighting vulnerabilities while underscoring the need for deeper structural reforms. How India navigates this phase will determine not only the rupee's future path but also the broader stability and resilience of the economy in an increasingly uncertain global landscape.

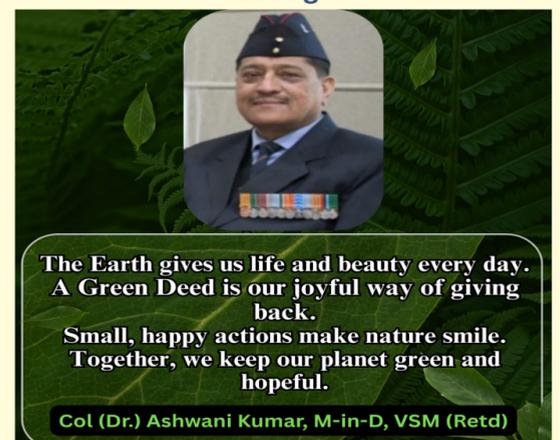
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**What our farmers waited for decades, we delivered with resolve. No more delays, no more denial. A single Farmer ID now opens doors to multiple benefits, faster services and assured support. Digital empowerment has reached the fields and this journey will only move forward.**

~ Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma



### Message



Col. (Dr.) Ashwani Kumar, M-in-D, VSM (Retd)

NEIR 2026

# Assam govt hands appointment letters to 43 urban engineers, taking total jobs to over 1.42 lakh

## GUWAHATI

Emphasising the need to strengthen urban governance amid rapid urbanisation, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday handed over appointment letters to 43 Urban Technical Officers under the Housing and Urban Affairs Department.

The appointment ceremony was held at Lok Sewa Bhawan in Guwahati. With these recruitments, the total number of jobs provided by the present Assam government has reached 1,42,029, reinforcing its focus on transparent and merit-based appointments.

Of the newly recruited officers, 16 are Mechanical Engineers, 11 Electrical Engineers, eight Public Health Engineers, six Environmental Engineers and two Civil Engineers.

Addressing the gathering, Sarma recalled a time when urban local bodies in Assam faced an acute shortage of techni-

cal manpower. "Earlier, entire urban administrations were being managed with only one or two junior-level engineers," he said, noting that such constraints had limited effective urban management.

Highlighting Assam's transition from a predominantly rural state to one with a growing urban footprint, the Chief Minister said the state earlier had only one municipal corporation, which has now increased to three, along with several newly declared urban areas. This expansion, he said, has brought complex challenges related to solid waste management, drainage, housing, fire safety and water supply. Referring to the state's terrain, he added that towns located in hilly areas face additional challenges such as water scarcity and artificial flooding.

Sarma said financial management in urban bodies has also become more demanding. While municipal administrations earlier depended largely on



government grants, the Centre now emphasises financial self-reliance. "Streamlining property tax and related matters has therefore become a major responsibility," he said.

He highlighted reforms such as GIS-based property mapping, digital self-assessment and transparent accounting, which have led to an increase of over 30

per cent in municipal revenues. Measures like QR code-based payments, SMS alerts and tax collection through self-help groups have further improved transparency.

"A fully digital administrative system has also been established at the Directorate level," Sarma said, adding that efforts are underway to deliver citizen services

through a Unified Municipal Portal. He also referred to the UPYOG double-entry accrual accounting system, which has strengthened financial transparency across urban local bodies.

Recent steps to reinforce urban administration include the provincialisation of services of 664 municipal employees and the appointment of 96 Executive Officers, 100 Financial Management Officers and 96 Urban Technical Officers (Civil).

Urging the newly appointed engineers to view themselves as partners in local governance, Sarma reminded them that urban local bodies constitute the third tier of governance under the Constitution and are accountable to both the state government and the municipalities. Officers, he said, should work in a manner that municipal bodies regard them "as assets rather than burdens".

Stressing the importance of public trust, the Chief Minister noted that cit-

izens often approach municipal bodies before the state administration to seek redressal of grievances. He cautioned against misuse of authority, recalling how the implementation of building by-laws in Guwahati over decades had damaged the city's natural drainage system. Officers, he said, must interpret rules in the public interest, as both lapses and good work are quickly noticed. Encouraging the officers to maintain transparency throughout their careers, Sarma acknowledged that working in urban local bodies can be challenging but said transforming cities into better and more liveable spaces would bring lasting professional satisfaction.

Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Jayanta Mallabarua, Guwahati Mayor Mrigen Sarania, Dibrugarh Mayor Saikat Patra, Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority Chairman Narayan Deka and other dignitaries were present at the programme.

## Manipur security forces destroy 119 acres of poppy cultivation in Ukhrul

### IMPHAL

Manipur security forces destroyed 119 acres of illegal poppy cultivation during a major operation in Ukhrul district on December 18, as part of an intensified crackdown on narcotics production in the state's hill areas.

The operation was carried out in LM Block, Yaolen Chepu and the Lamlai Chingphei area, where security teams cleared extensive poppy fields. Officials said 24 huts found at the plantation sites were also burnt, noting that the structures were likely used by cultivators and workers involved in the illegal activity.

The December 18 action followed a coordinated drive a day earlier, when Manipur security forces, in collaboration with the Ukhrul district Forest Department, destroyed large tracts of poppy fields in the same areas. On December 17, officials said around 140 acres of poppy plantations were identified and eliminated, and 16 makeshift huts were set on fire during the clearance operation.

Officials said the back-to-back operations underline the state's sustained efforts to curb illegal drug cultivation and dismantle networks linked to the narcotics trade in Manipur's hill districts.



## Special trains to run between Guwahati and Aizawl during Christmas: Mizoram MP



### GUWAHATI

The Railways will operate two special trains between Guwahati and Aizawl during the Christmas season to cater to the surge in passenger demand, Mizoram's Rajya Sabha MP K Vanlalvena said on Friday.

The MP said he had requested Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw to arrange special services on the Guwahati-Aizawl (Sairang) route in view of the heavy festive rush. The request was accepted and approval was granted for running two special trains, he

added.

According to Vanlalvena, the 14-coach special trains will run from Guwahati to Aizawl on December 22 and 24. The return services from Aizawl to Guwahati are scheduled for December 23 and 25, respectively.

He said the additional trains will benefit passengers travelling home for Christmas and the New Year. The arrangement is also expected to help residents of Mizoram and Manipur living in Delhi and other metropolitan cities who were unable to secure direct train tickets to Aizawl, enabling them to travel via Guwahati on the special services.

The MP further noted that Mizoram has emerged as an important transit route for Kuki-Zo people from Manipur, many of whom are travelling to other parts of the country or returning to their villages after ethnic violence led them to avoid the Imphal route.

## SIT moves Crime Branch against MLA Akhil Gogoi over 'unverified' chargesheet documents

### GUWAHATI

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the death of singer Zubeen Garg has approached the Assam Police Crime Branch seeking action against Independent MLA Akhil Gogoi for allegedly circulating "unverified" chargesheet documents related to the case on social media.

A senior police official said the circulation of such material was "illegal" and could "mislead the public and create confusion". Gogoi, the MLA from Sivasagar, is accused of sharing documents online while claiming they were part of the chargesheet filed against seven accused in the case.

The nine-member SIT, headed by Special Director General of Police Munna Prasad Gupta, submitted the chargesheet before the Kamrup (Metro) Chief Judicial Magistrate on December 12. However, certified cop-



ies of the chargesheet have not yet been released by the court.

A lawyer familiar with the case said the chargesheet has so far been made available only to the accused and their family members, although applications seeking certified copies have been filed.

"SIT's investigating officer Rosie Kalita has filed a complaint against Akhil Gogoi for registration of an FIR with the Crime Branch. The complaint is

currently under examination, and a decision will be taken accordingly," the police official said.

Responding on social media, Gogoi said, "I have come to know that the government has filed a case against me for making the charge sheet public. I am severely ill, but I will go to Guwahati to face the case."

Earlier, the SIT chief had said the chargesheet names Garg's secretary Siddhartha Sharma, festival organiser Shyamkanu Mahanta, and band members Shekhar Jyoti Goswami and Amritprava Mahanta on charges of murder. Mahanta was the chief organiser of the North East India Festival in Singapore, which Garg had attended. The singer died under mysterious circumstances while swimming in the sea there on September 19.

Garg's cousin Sandipan Garg, a suspended Assam Police officer, has been charged with

culpable homicide not amounting to murder. The singer's two personal security officers, Nandeswar Bora and Prabin Baishya, have been booked for criminal conspiracy and criminal breach of trust, allegedly for misappropriating funds or property entrusted to them.

In addition to murder, Shyamkanu Mahanta has been charged with criminal conspiracy, extortion, cheating and destruction of evidence. Garg's secretary Siddhartha Sharma faces charges of murder, criminal conspiracy and criminal breach of trust. Shekhar Jyoti Goswami has also been charged with criminal breach of trust, while Amritprava Mahanta has been charged with destruction of evidence.

All the accused have been arrested and are currently in judicial custody. Five are lodged at Baksa prison, while Goswami and Amritprava Mahanta are being held at Haflong jail.

## Script choice is constitutional right for Tripura tribals: Pradyot

### AGARTALA

Tipra Motha Party founder Pradyot Kishore Manikya Debbarma on Wednesday said the choice of script for a language is a constitutional right and cannot be imposed on the tribal people of Tripura by any authority.

Speaking while leading a Homchang (Masha) Rally at Santirbazar in South Tripura, Debbarma reiterated his party's demand for the adoption of the Roman script for Kokborok, describing the issue as central to tribal identity and the future of coming generations.

"Tiprasa have the right to decide their own script. No one can tell us what to choose or accept. It is our constitutional right to determine



the script for our language," he said. He added that people from outside the tribal community, "especially non-tribals", had no right to dictate which script should be used in examinations.

Debbarma said the ongoing protests across the state were not motivated by political considerations. "When it comes to language, this is bigger than politics. It concerns

our identity, future, culture and history," he said. "We want to use our own script, and this should be our right."

Rejecting debates over the suitability of different scripts, the Tipra Motha chief said no individual or institution had the authority to decide which script was "good" or "bad" for Kokborok.

"Across the state, we are holding the Homchang Rally demanding only the Roman script," he said.

Debbarma also criticised the Bharatiya Janata Party, accusing its tribal leadership of creating confusion ahead of the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council elections scheduled for next year. While the BJP had financial resources and organisational strength, he claimed it lacked genuine grassroots

support among tribal voters.

"Everyone knows that even the BJP's tribal wing has no real support in the tribal areas. It is like 'elephant teeth' - visible but ineffective," he said, asserting that tribal sentiment remained firmly with Tipra Motha.

Warning against political interference in matters of language and identity, Debbarma drew a comparison by saying there would be strong objections if Bengali were proposed to be written in the Urdu script. "We don't want anyone else's suggestions in choosing the script for our language," he added.

Concluding his remarks, Debbarma said he was not driven by money or political appeasement. "I am here to fight for the rights of my people. I am speaking for the tribal people of the state," he said.

## "If AIUDF is BJP's B team, then the Congress is BJP's A-plus team": Ajmal

### GUWAHATI

All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) chief Badruddin Ajmal on Thursday launched a sharp attack on both the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), accusing the two national parties of political opportunism and asserting that unseating the BJP would be the AIUDF's primary objective in the next Assam Assembly elections.

Responding to allegations that the AIUDF functions as the BJP's "B team", Ajmal turned the charge against the Congress. "If AIUDF is called the BJP's B team, then the Congress is the BJP's A-plus team," he said, alleging that several senior Congress leaders accept money from Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. Ajmal claimed he had evidence to substantiate the allegation.

He further accused the Congress of neglecting Upper Assam, saying the party has failed to build a strong organisational base in the region. Predicting a poor electoral showing, Ajmal said the Congress would not be able to win more than 20 seats in the upcoming Assembly polls.

Outlining AIUDF's electoral strategy,

### Quest!

A report by the World Health Organisation says that worldwide, alcohol kills 1 person every 10 seconds.



Ajmal said the party would contest in 35 constituencies and would avoid entering races merely to split votes. "We will contest only where we have a realistic chance of winning," he said.

Taking a swipe at political critics, Ajmal questioned attempts to marginalise him. "If I am labelled as zero, then what are Akhil Gogoi and Lurinjyoti Gogoi?" he asked. He also claimed that out of 17 political parties

in Assam, at least 15 have no meaningful grassroots presence.

Ajmal said the AIUDF would soon clarify whether its principal political rival in the coming elections would be the Congress or the BJP. He added that he has multiple reasons for opposing the BJP, which he said he has already articulated publicly.

Questioning the repeated political use of the term "Miya", Ajmal asked whether it

was a genuine issue or a deliberate attempt to polarise voters.

On his own electoral plans, Ajmal said he does not intend to contest the forthcoming elections personally but added that he would reconsider if asked to do so by the party leadership.

Criticising the Chief Minister, Ajmal strongly objected to remarks allegedly made about Muslims, saying that while the Chief Minister comments on the personal lives of Muslims, no one questions the Chief Minister himself. He went on to liken Sarma to authoritarian figures such as Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, describing him as a tyrant and alleging that Assam has never seen a more oppressive Chief Minister.

Reiterating his criticism of the Congress, Ajmal said the party must show seriousness by strengthening its organisational work in Upper Assam. He added that if Congress leader Rahul Gandhi could clearly assure that the Congress would form the government and effectively address minority issues, he would be willing to dissolve the AIUDF.

Ajmal also accused the Congress of holding secret meetings with politically insignificant parties at a city hotel, alleging backroom manoeuvring without a public mandate. He reaffirmed the AIUDF's opposition to vote manipulation and the National Register of Citizens (NRC), describing these as central to the party's political position.

## Meghalaya Congress stages protest in Shillong after court dismisses ED case against Gandhis

### SHILLONG

The Meghalaya Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) on December 17 staged a protest meeting at Congress Bhavan in Shillong, condemning what party leaders described as the misuse of central investigative agencies to target political opponents. The protest came a day after a special court in Delhi rejected the Enforcement Directorate's prosecution complaint against Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi in the National Herald money laundering case. Citing the court's decision, the MPCC reiterated its charge that investigative agencies are being deployed for politically motivated prosecutions under the present government. Addressing party workers, Congress leaders accused the BJP of following a pattern of announcing raids, selectively leaking allegations and conducting media trials without producing substantive evidence. They pointed to the Rouse Avenue Court's refusal to take cognisance of the ED's complaint as vindication of their stand. According to the MPCC, the court observed that the complaint lacked a valid predicate offence, a mandatory legal requirement for invoking the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). Party leaders said this finding exposed fundamental flaws in the manner in which the ED has been used under the cur-

rent dispensation. Congress leaders maintained that Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi have committed no wrongdoing, asserting there was no personal enrichment, diversion of public funds or criminal gain. They argued that the prosecution's failure to meet basic legal thresholds reinforced their claim that the case was driven by political intent rather than legal merit. The protest also highlighted broader concerns over what the MPCC termed the erosion of institutional neutrality through the "weaponisation" of central agencies for partisan purposes. Party representatives reaffirmed their commitment to democratic values, constitutional principles and the rule of law. Referring to the court order of December 16, MPCC leaders described it as a significant setback for the Enforcement Directorate. The Rouse Avenue Court declined to examine the allegations on merit, observing that the prosecution itself was unsustainable, and rejected attempts to rely on a private complaint or subsequent procedural developments in the absence of a legally registered offence. Concluding the protest, Congress leaders said that while the party would continue to face challenges with transparency and resolve, its focus remained on issues affecting ordinary citizens, including unemployment, rising prices, agrarian distress and the weakening of democratic institutions.

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## Cash-for-query: Delhi HC sets aside Lokpal order against TMC MP Mahua Moitra



NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday set aside an order of the Lokpal granting sanction to the CBI to file a chargesheet against Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra in the alleged cash-for-query scam.

A bench of justices Anil Kshetarpal and Harish Vaidyanathan Shankar, while pronouncing the order in Moitra's plea, said "The order is set aside."

We have requested the Lokpal to accord consideration for grant of sanction under Section 20 of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas

Act in accordance with the relevant provisions within one month".

The cash-for-query scam pertains to the allegation that Moitra had asked questions in the House in exchange for cash and gifts from a businessman.

Moitra's counsel had contended that there was clear infirmity in the procedure adopted by the Lokpal.

He had referred to Section 20(7) of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act saying it demands that comments of public servants be obtained before granting sanction.

The plea was opposed by the CBI, which had argued

that Moitra has no right to produce documents in the Lokpal's proceedings and she is only entitled to give comments and not even an oral hearing.

Moitra has also sought to restrain the CBI from taking any steps in furtherance of the sanction order, including but not limited to filing any chargesheet during the pendency of the present proceedings.

The CBI in July submitted its report to the Lokpal in connection with the alleged cash-for-query scam case involving Moitra and businessman Darshan Hiranandani.

The agency had registered an FIR on March 21, 2024, against the two under provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act on a reference from the Lokpal.

It was alleged that Moitra indulged in corrupt practices, including, but not limited to, taking bribes and other undue advantages from Hiranandani for "compromising her parliamentary privileges and causing national security threats by sharing her Lok Sabha login credentials."

The agency has submitted its findings in the case to the Lokpal, which will decide the further course of action in the case, according to officials.

## Rahul Gandhi slams VB-G RAM G Bill as 'anti-village', says Modi Govt destroyed 20 years of MGNREGA



NEW DELHI

Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Friday accused the Modi government of dismantling two decades of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in a single day, calling the newly passed VB-G RAM G legislation "anti-village" and "anti-state".

In a post on X, Gandhi said the Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Bill was not a revamp of MGNREGA but a fundamental dilution of its core

principles. "Last night, the Modi government demolished twenty years of MGNREGA in one day," he said.

"It demolishes the rights-based, demand-driven guarantee and turns it into a rationed scheme which is controlled from Delhi. It is anti-state and anti-village by design."

The Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha also said that MGNREGA gave the rural worker bargaining power.

"With real options, exploitation and distress migration fell, wages increased, working conditions improved, all while building and

reviving rural infrastructure. That leverage is precisely what this government wants to break," Gandhi alleged. He said by capping work and creating more ways to deny it, the VB-G RAM G Bill weakens the one instrument the rural poor had.

"We saw what MGNREGA meant during Covid. When the economy shut down and livelihoods collapsed, it kept crores from falling into hunger and debt," Gandhi claimed.

"It helped women the most year after year, with women contributing more than half the person-days," the Congress leader said.

"When you ration a jobs pro-

gramme, it is women, Dalits, Adivasis, landless workers and the poorest OBC communities who get pushed out first," he said.

He also criticised the manner in which the Bill was passed, alleging it was pushed through Parliament without adequate scrutiny. Gandhi said the opposition's demand to refer the Bill to a standing committee was rejected, despite its far-reaching impact on rural livelihoods.

"A law that rewires the rural social contract should not be rushed through without expert consultation and public hearings," he said.

Accusing Prime Minister Narendra Modi of centralising power, Gandhi alleged that the government's objective was to weaken labour and dilute the bargaining power of rural India, particularly among Dalits, OBCs and Adivasis, while projecting the move as reform.

Calling MGNREGA one of the world's most successful poverty alleviation and empowerment programmes, Gandhi said the Congress would oppose the new law.

"We will stand with workers, panchayats and states to defeat this move and ensure the law is withdrawn," he said.

Parliament on Thursday night passed the VB-G RAM G Bill, which replaces the 20-year-old MGNREGA and promises 125 days of rural wage employment annually.

The Bill was cleared by the Lok Sabha and later passed by the Rajya Sabha through a voice vote amid strong protests by opposition parties, who objected to the removal of Mahatma Gandhi's name from the scheme and alleged that the Centre was shifting a greater financial burden onto states.

## INTERNATIONAL

### Bangladesh erupts as protesters torch top dailies, target Indian mission after 2024 uprising activist dies

DHAKA

Violence erupted in Bangladesh's capital early on Friday after Sharif Osman Hadi, a key figure in last year's pro-democracy uprising, died in a hospital in Singapore following an assassination attempt.

Thousands of protesters poured onto the streets of Dhaka after news of the 32-year-old activist's death, demanding the arrest of his killers. Several buildings, including offices housing the country's two leading newspapers, were set on fire, trapping journalists and staff inside, authorities said.

Hadi, a senior leader of the student protest group Inqilab Mancha, was shot by masked assailants on December 12 as he was leaving a mosque in Dhaka. After initial treatment in Bangladesh, he was airlifted to Singapore in critical condition, where he died on Thursday.

Multiple cases of arson were reported across the capital as news of his death spread, a spokesperson for the Fire Brigade and Civil Defence said.

Protesters also hurled bricks and stones at the residence of the Assistant Indian High Commissioner in Chattogram at around 1:30 am, but caused no damage. Police dispersed the crowd using tear gas and baton charges and detained 12 protesters, while senior officials later assured the diplomat of security.

Fires broke out at buildings housing the English-language Daily Star and the Bengali-language Prothom Alo, the country's largest newspapers.

The papers have previously faced protests from groups accusing them of being aligned with India, where former prime minister Sheikh Hasina has been living in self-imposed exile since being ousted in last year's uprising.

Firefighters brought the blaze at the Daily Star building under control at around 1:40 am (local time), officials said, though dozens of employees were still inside at the time. Staff were later evacuated.



Zyma Islam, a Daily Star reporter, said she was trapped inside the burning building. "I can't breathe anymore. There's too much smoke. I am inside. You are killing me," she wrote on Facebook.

"We took refuge at the rear of the building and could hear them chanting slogans," Daily Star reporter Ahmed Deepto said.

Elsewhere, the residence of Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury Nowfel, a former education minister in the ousted Awami League government, was vandalised and set on fire overnight by protesters demanding justice for Osman Hadi, local media reported.

In the northwestern city of Rajshahi, a leading cultural institution in Dhaka an Awami League office, calling for the arrest of those responsible for the killing of Inqilab Mancha founder.

Protesters also attacked Chhayanaut, a leading cultural institution in Dhaka devoted to Bengali culture, while elsewhere crowds blocked a key highway out of the capital.

Witnesses said demonstrators gathered at Shahbagh Square near Dhaka

University, chanting slogans including "Allahu Akbar", with similar protests reported in other parts of the country.

In a separate incident, a Hindu man was beaten to death in Bhaluka in Mymensingh district over alleged blasphemy, police said.

Earlier Friday, Singapore's foreign ministry confirmed Hadi's death. "Despite the best efforts of the doctors... Mr Hadi succumbed to his injuries," it said in a statement, adding that it was assisting Bangladesh authorities with repatriating his body.

Bangladesh's interim government, headed by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus, confirmed the death shortly afterwards. "His demise is an irreparable loss for the nation," Yunus said in a televised address.

"The country's march toward democracy cannot be halted through fear, terror, or bloodshed."

The government announced spe-

cial prayers at mosques on Friday and declared a half-day of mourning on Saturday. Authorities said Hadi's body was expected to arrive in Dhaka later on Friday.

Hadi was an outspoken critic of both Hasina and India. He had planned to run as an independent candidate in the next national elections, scheduled for February 2026, in a major Dhaka constituency.

Police have launched a manhunt for Hadi's attackers, releasing photographs of two suspects and offering a reward of five million taka (about \$42,000) for information leading to their arrest.

Yunus, the 85-year-old Nobel Peace Prize winner leading the interim administration until elections, has described the shooting as a premeditated attack carried out by a powerful network seeking to derail the vote.

Authorities have said they believe the shooter may have fled to India, comments that triggered a diplomatic row. New Delhi summoned Bangladesh's envoy this week to protest the remarks, while Dhaka also called in India's ambassador seeking clarification.

Bangladesh, a Muslim-majority nation of about 170 million people, will elect 300 lawmakers directly, with another 50 chosen from a women's list. The last elections, held in January 2024, handed Hasina's Awami League a fourth consecutive term, but were widely dismissed by opposition parties as a sham.

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), led by former prime minister Khaleda Zia, is widely expected to perform strongly in the upcoming vote. Zia is currently in intensive care in Dhaka, while her son and political heir, Tarique Rahman, is due to return from exile in Britain on December 25 after 17 years.

Human rights groups including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have recently raised concerns over rights violations in Bangladesh, which has a long history of political violence.

### EU agrees 90 billion euro loan for Ukraine, but without Russian assets



BRUSSELS

EU leaders struck a deal Friday to provide Ukraine a 90-billion-euro loan to plug its looming budget shortfalls - but failed to agree on using frozen Russian assets to come up with the funds.

The agreement -- which came after more than a day of talks at a summit in Brussels -- offers Kyiv a desperately needed lifeline as US President Donald Trump pushes for a quick deal to end Russia's war.

"We have a deal. Decision to provide 90 billion euros of support to Ukraine for 2026-27 approved," EU chief Antonio Costa wrote on X. "We committed, we delivered."

After scrambling around for a solution, EU leaders settled on coming up with a loan backed by the bloc's common budget.

French President Emmanuel Macron described the deal agreed as a major advance, saying this option "was the most realistic and practical way" to fund Ukraine and its war efforts. He added that the deal included a mechanism to protect three countries, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic from any financial fallout.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz also hailed the decision, which came after EU leaders worked deep into Thursday night to reassure Belgium that they would provide guarantees to protect it from Russian retaliation if it

backed the loan for Ukraine.

"The financial package for Ukraine has been finalized," Merz said in a statement, noting that "Ukraine is granted a zero-interest loan."

"These funds are sufficient to cover the military and budgetary needs of Ukraine for the two years to come," Merz added.

He said the frozen assets will remain blocked until Russia has paid war reparations to Ukraine. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said that would cost over 600 billion euros (\$700 billion).

"If Russia does not pay reparations we will -- in full accordance with international law -- make use of Russian immobilized assets for paying back the loan," Merz said.

The number one option on the table had been to tap some 200 billion euros of Russian central bank assets frozen in the EU to generate a loan for Kyiv.

But that scheme fell by the wayside after Belgium, where the vast bulk of the assets are held, demanded guarantees on sharing liability that proved too much for other countries.

The EU estimates Ukraine needs an extra 135 billion euros (\$159 billion) to stay afloat over the next two years, with the cash crunch set to start in April.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy had told EU leaders at the start of the summit on Thursday that using Russian assets was the

right way to go.

"Russian assets must be used to defend against Russian aggression and rebuild what was destroyed by Russian attacks. It's moral. It's fair. It's legal," Zelenskyy said.

While Kyiv may be left disappointed that the EU did not take the leap to use the Russian assets -- securing financing another way will still be a relief.

Zelenskyy told the leaders that Kyiv needed a decision by the end of the year, and that putting his country on a firmer financial footing could give it more leverage in talks to end the war.

Bubbling close to the surface of the EU's discussion are the US efforts to forge a deal to end the war.

Zelenskyy announced Ukrainian and US delegations would hold new talks on Friday and Saturday in the United States.

He said he wanted Washington to give more details on the guarantees it could offer to protect Ukraine from another invasion.

"What will the United States of America do if Russia comes again with aggression?" he asked. "What will these security guarantees do? How will they work?"

Trump nonetheless kept the pressure on Kyiv, saying again he hopes Ukraine "moves quickly" to agree a deal.

## Art Competition on Climate Change & Green Deeds in Agartala on Dec 21

KRC TIMES NEWS DESK  
AGARTALA

Agartala will host an art competition focused on Climate Change and Green Deeds on December 21, 2025, as part of the larger climate awareness campaign linked to the North East Integration Rally 2026. The event is being organ-

ised by the Tripura Ham Radio Club, a unit of the Disaster Awareness Society, and will take place at Gitamandir, Masterpara, Agartala, from 10 am to 11 am.

The competition aims to engage participants through visual expression while highlighting the urgency of climate action and everyday green practices. Organisers said the initiative is meant to connect creativity with envi-

ronmental responsibility, especially among young participants.

The programme forms part of the Climate Change Awareness Campaign under the North East Integration Rally 2026, which carries the theme of Peace, Progress, and Prosperity across the region.

Interested participants can register for the art competition by sending a WhatsApp message to 7005787388.

Early bird registration for the rally is also open through WhatsApp at +91 93308 30083. More details are available on the official website, [www.northeastintegrationrally.in](http://www.northeastintegrationrally.in).

The organisers said such grassroots events play a key role in building public awareness and community participation around climate change, ahead of the trans regional North East Integration Rally scheduled for 2026.



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Theme : Climate Change & Green Deed

**GITAMANDIR, Masterpara, Agartala**

**Dec 21, 2025**

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# The natural beauty of Northeast India is captivating and a must-see destination for tourists

CHAMPAK SAHA

Northeast India is like a wonder-filled green letter on the map of India - a land of unheard melodies, unseen forms, and endless possibilities. This eight-sister region of eight states - Assam, Arunachal, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, and Sikkim - each stands with its own distinct identity; yet their combined stream is one - the indescribable beauty of nature.

Assam is a very suitable destination for tourists due to its natural beauty, rich culture and historical places. The state has world-class wildlife sanctuaries like Kaziranga and Manas National Parks. The Kamakhya Temple on the Nilachal Hills in the heart of the state's main city, Guwahati, is not only a religious place, but also a symbol of female power; the flow of folklore still comes alive there on the stone. The Kamakhya Temple is considered one of the 51 Shakti Peethas of Sati. The architecture of the Rang Ghar, Talatal Ghar - Ahom civilization is like a shadowy document of history. In addition, there is an endless collection of historical architecture in different parts of the state. Assam is one of the major tea producing states in India and the rolling green scenery of vast tea gardens is very charming. Assam is like the silent flow of the Brahmaputra - deep, calm, wide. Majuli Island is the largest river island in the world. The cool and peaceful expanse of Majuli is like a wonderland. Assam is a very attractive destination for tourists due to its natural beauty, wildlife, historical sites and rich culture.

Arunachal Pradesh is truly the "Land of the Rising Sun" - the first sunrise on Indian soil. Arunachal Pradesh's dense forests, high mountains, picturesque valleys, captivating natural scenery and rich culture - attract tourists immensely. In one part of Arunachal Pradesh, there is the highest mountain peak of the Himalayas 'Kangto' - whose height is 7090 meters above sea level. Other mountain peaks and valleys are also very picturesque. The ancient prayers of Tawang Monastery, the hill houses of Bomdila, the warm water streams of Dirang - all are like a wonderful dialogue of nature and spirituality. In the natural form of this state, people can directly hear the pulse of the Himalayas.

Meghalaya is a very suitable place for tourists. The state is blessed with natural beauty, rich culture and various tourist attractions. Meghalaya has beautiful natural scenery such as the combination of mountains, waterfalls, rivers and clouds fascinates tourists. The clouds in the sky here are constantly moving, so the state is known as the "abode of clouds" i.e. Meghalaya. The unique matriarchal culture and lifestyle of the Khasi, Jaintia, Garo tribes attract tourists a lot. The numerous waterfalls and clear water rivers flowing down the mountain chest increase the natural beauty of this place several times. This state is one of the rainiest regions in the world - so the nature here is always fresh and green. The capital of Meghalaya, Shillong, is a beautiful city, which is also known as the "Scotland of the East". Cherrapunji and Mawsynram in Meghalaya are famous for their extraordinary waterfalls and natural beauty, which attract tourists a lot. In the heart of Meghalaya, there is 'Mawlinong' - a village that has accepted cleanliness as a religion - proving that nature is not only for enjoyment, but also the responsibility of humans to protect it. The 'Living Root Bridge' - one of the few such touching examples of the joint labor of man and nature in the world - is at the center of tourist attraction.

Manipur is called the "Land of Jewels". The blue waters of Loktak Lake, the floating Phumdir Island, and the bleating of Sangai deer in the Keibul Lamjao National Park create another epic. The Lai Haraoba Festival of Manipur is a traditional festival,

which is celebrated to thank God. This festival is famous for its music and dance style. Manipuri dance is not just an art - it is a philosophy. Ima Market is an example of a social system, where women's economic independence comes alive. Each of the tribal and tribal people of Manipur maintains their own traditions and social and cultural customs. "Kangla Fort" is a historical fort - which was the capital of the kings of Manipur. This place is one of the tourist attractions.

Mizoram's diverse terrain, green hills, dense bamboo groves, waterfalls and lakes are quite attractive for tourists. The hospitality, culture, festivals and handicrafts of the Mizos are particularly attractive to tourists. Champai is a very beautiful town in Mizoram - absolutely full of natural beauty. The lively 'Tami' river is a beautiful stream that flows through Mizoram. The Mizo tribes and indigenous people are quite proud of their own traditions and customs. Mizoram's folk dance festival - is famous as a traditional festival, which further enriches the cultural life of the state. Festivals like 'Chapchar Kut' show that the Mizos do not just enjoy singing and dancing; they rediscover history, friendship and compassion for people through festivals. One of the tourist places in Mizoram. The capital is Aizawl. The 'Dampa Tiger Reserve' of this mountainous



frontier state is a prime example of biodiversity. Mizoram, India's first fully literate state, proves that education enlightens not only an individual but a nation. Nagaland's extraordinary natural beauty is a very attractive place for tourists for its diverse culture and traditional festivals. Green hills, deep valleys and gushing streams - have made this state a treasure trove of natural beauty. Jhuko Valley is one of the most popular places in Nagaland. This valley is like a watercolor painted by the hand of God. During the monsoon, this valley turns into a paradise of flowers. The state is home to various tribes - each of whom has its own unique culture and tradition. The Hornbill Festival is held every year from December 1 to December 10. This Hornbill Festival is world famous. The grand cultural events like the Hornbill Festival are also a major attraction for tourists. The festival is a wonderful display of the cultural heritage of the various tribes of Nagaland. Interkey National Park is a haven of biodiversity which is home to various species of animals. Another place in Nagaland is 'Dimapur' - which is a well-known name for its historical, commercial and natural importance.

Tripura's natural beauty, architectural styles, ancient inscriptions, natural water bodies, and high places like Jampui Hills add to its appeal.

The state has several large lakes - Kamla Sagar Lake, Rudra Sagar Lake, and Dumbur Lake. There are also numerous small and large lakes in different parts of the state. These reservoirs are quite attractive. Some notable historical places of Tripura -

Ujjayanta Palace - The historic palace of Tripura. It is currently used as the state museum.

Neermahal: A beautiful palace located in the middle of Rudrasagar Lake.

Tripureshwari Temple - A historic temple dedicated to Goddess Tripureshwari.

This 'Mata Tripura Sundari Temple' is located in Udaipur in the south of the state of Tripura. The Tripureshwari Temple is one of the 51 Shakti Peethas. According to folklore, the right foot of Sati fell here. Here Shakti is worshipped as 'Tripura Sundari' and Bhairava is worshipped as 'Tripuresh'.

The Tripureshwari Temple is famous and unique in India.

Buddha Temple - A historic temple that is one of the places of worship for Buddhist followers. The magical power of one crore deities carved on the Unkoti-Raghuandan hill as important as it is in the eyes of archaeology, it is also incomparable in the eyes of the artist. The state capital, Agartala, is a beautifully landscaped small

city, which is the political and cultural hub of the state. Sikkim - It also holds immense historical importance. From the snow-capped peak of Kanchenjunga in Sikkim to the lush green valleys, peaceful monasteries and picturesque villages, everything fascinates tourists here. The modernity of Gangtok and the tranquility of Pelling, the natural beauty of Lachung and Lachen, the scenic views of Sangu Lake and Gurudongmar Lake are very attractive to tourists. The breathtaking view of Kanchenjunga, the highest mountain peak in India and the third highest in the world, makes Sikkim incomparable. Glacial lakes like Sangu and Gurudongmar Lake are one of the attractions of this state. There are more than two hundred monasteries in Sikkim. Sikkim is a suitable destination for all types of tourists due to its natural beauty, cultural richness and modern tourism infrastructure.

Northeast India is not just a land - it is a living school. Where people learn - beauty never screams; beauty lies in the silent slopes of mountains, the slow flow of rivers, the laughter of festivals, and the simple, sincere lives of people. For those who want to see India with new eyes, who want to understand how nature shapes people, the Northeast is an essential destination, an inevitable experience, an eternal poetry.



## BARAK FESTIVAL

JANUARY 10-12, 2025

### ACTIVITY PROGRAM



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





**11 JAN**  
**Adventure Sports**  
 Trekking & Canoe, Obstacle Navigation, 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 to be discussed by stakeholders. Includes NGOs, and Government officials, industry representatives, local community and government employees. Participation through invitation only. Different rewards 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

## Barak Festival

Adventure Sports, Art & Culture Promotion



REGISTER HERE

Contact: [info@krcfoundation.org](mailto:info@krcfoundation.org)  
 WP: 0721300019

**12 JAN**  
**River-Climate Conclave**  
 Climate Change will influence on Climate Change, pollution and river flooding. The Conclave will focus on the importance, treatment and protection of River Barak. Training & Geography competition and exhibition on River Barak, Climate Change.



**10 JAN**  
**Media Conclave**  
 Media Conclave (Webinars, Seminars, Guest Panel, Talks and Conferences) are part of the 'Barak Festival 2025'. Theme: 'One for All, All for One'. Webinars panel talks, seminars, trainings, master & corporate talks, seminars, panel, speakers, webinars.



**11 JAN**  
**5E For Success Conclave**  
 The 4th 5E For Success Conclave is going to be held on the theme: 'From School to Campus to Corporate'. Schools, Educational Institutions and corporate houses can join the Conclave as sponsors.  
 Quiz and Group Discussion for Barak valley Schools & College Extension, School, Public Speaking (College). In an online event, various students of NE India Schools and Colleges can participate.



**10 JAN**  
**Media Conclave**  
 Media Conclave (Webinars, Seminars, Guest Panel, Talks and Conferences) are part of the 'Barak Festival 2025'. Theme: 'One for All, All for One'. Webinars panel talks, seminars, trainings, master & corporate talks, seminars, panel, speakers, webinars.



**10-12 JAN**  
**Science Studio**  
 Get a glimpse of Science to its new heights. Class VI-XI | Teachers | Seniors, Administrators | Parents. Raw science into real-life experiences of students.



**DEC'24-JAN'25**  
**Photography**  
 Online Photography Contest: River Barak | NE India | Art & Culture of NE | NE Culture. Real-Time Photography Contest of 'Barak Festival 2025'.





Contact: [info@krcfoundation.org](mailto:info@krcfoundation.org)  
 WP: 0721300019

## Barak Festival

Band Night | 10 JAN  
 Musical Night | 11 JAN

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



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



**10-12 JAN**  
**Book Bank**  
 #NoOneLeftBehind Campaign | Book Bank | Donate | Reuse | Recycle

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

**Painting Carnival**  
 Water Colour painting and Draw-Paint Campaign

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

- Outreach Executive
- Event Management
- Programme Coordinator

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