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PERSPECTIVE

Don't stress about the future, it hasn't arrived yet.

Four Killed as Truck Carrying Wedding Guests Plunges into Hillside in Manipur's Churachandpur

IMPHAL
At least four people were killed and several others injured after a pick-up truck carrying wedding guests plunged down a hillside in Manipur's Churachandpur district on Monday, officials said.

The accident occurred around noon near Ngaljang village under the Singnat subdivision when a DI pick-up truck, reportedly carrying around 40 passengers, lost control while navigating a steep and sharply inclined hill road. The vehicle is believed to have slipped backwards, failed to regain momentum and rolled down the hillside before plunging into the slope below. The deceased were identified as Thangmanung Khuptong, Hauchin, Chingngaihsiam and Niangzaniang. Police said four occupants died on the spot, while several others sustained injuries of varying degrees.

Local residents and volunteers were the first to reach the accident site and initiated rescue efforts, pulling out the injured before official teams arrived. The injured were later shifted to nearby health facilities, though authorities have not yet confirmed their medical condition.

Police and district administration officials subsequently reached the spot and took over rescue and relief operations. An assessment of the incident is underway, and an investigation is expected to determine the exact cause of the mishap.

The victims were travelling to attend a wedding send-off ceremony in the village, according to preliminary reports.

WHO SAID WHAT



Being able to harness a millionth of the Sun's energy would be > 10,000 times more energy than all of human civilization uses today

~ **Elon Musk, American Entrepreneur**

Assam BJP Stalwart and Former Union Minister Kabindra Purkayastha Dies at 94

GUWAHATI

Kabindra Purkayastha, one of Assam's most respected political figures and a founding leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the Northeast, passed away on Wednesday evening at Silchar Medical College and Hospital. He was 94.

A former Union Minister in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led NDA government, Purkayastha played a pivotal role in laying the organisational foundations of the BJP in Assam and across the Northeast at a time when the party had little presence in the region.

Before entering active politics, Purkayastha worked as a teacher, a background that shaped his lifelong commitment to public service, discipline and simplicity. Over decades, he emerged as a key ideologue and organiser, widely regarded as a guiding force for generations of BJP workers in the Barak Valley and beyond.

Following the news of his demise around 5 pm, party leaders,



workers and admirers gathered at Silchar Medical College to pay their last respects, reflecting the deep respect he commanded across political and social spheres.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma expressed profound grief over Purkayastha's passing, describing him as "an institution in himself" and an inspiration for countless party

workers. In a message posted on X (formerly Twitter), Sarma referred to the veteran leader as a "prolific intellectual" and a "committed karyakarta" who was instrumental in shaping the BJP into a major political force in Assam.

Recalling Purkayastha's journey from grassroots activism in Silchar to the corridors of Parliament, the Chief Minister said

his politics was rooted in values, simplicity and service. "For us karyakartas, he was not just a people's representative but a mentor and elder who showed that politics is about principles and taking care of one another like a family," Sarma wrote.

The Chief Minister added that Purkayastha's legacy should be judged not merely by the offices he held, but by the ideals he lived by. He also noted the veteran leader's consistent advocacy for the development of Assam and the Northeast, as well as his efforts to support displaced Hindu refugees.

Extending his condolences, Sarma expressed solidarity with Purkayastha's son Kanad Purkayastha, his family members, and all those who admired and were influenced by the late leader's life and work.

Kabindra Purkayastha's passing marks the end of an era in Assam's political history, leaving behind a legacy of organisational discipline, ideological clarity and unwavering commitment to public service.

IMPHAL

Manipur Member of Parliament Angomcha Bimol Akoijam launched a sharp attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, accusing the Centre of enabling an "artificial and dangerous internal division" of the state through the security architecture currently in place under President's Rule.

Akoijam said the enforcement of so-called buffer zones in conflict-affected areas has effectively created internal borders within Manipur, raising serious constitutional and democratic concerns. Questioning how an elected Member of Parliament could be denied access to an Indian village, he described the situation as an unprecedented anomaly in the country's democratic framework.

The MP made the remarks



during a visit to Saiton village in Bishnupur district, which was recently hit by improvised ex-

plosive device (IED) blasts that injured two civilians. The explosions reportedly occurred near

an abandoned Meitei residence close to the inter-district boundary, heightening fears over civilian safety in volatile areas.

According to Akoijam, he was stopped by Central security forces at a checkpoint inside the village and prevented from proceeding further due to the presence of a buffer zone that he termed "illegal". Standing at the barricade, the MP said the restriction symbolised a new internal boundary being enforced within the state.

"This is where the border of India begins-India with Kuki. I cannot go to this side because this has become an India-Kuki border," Akoijam said, arguing that the security arrangement had effectively fragmented Indian territory along ethnic lines.

He warned that such measures were not only unconstitutional but also deeply corrosive to national unity. Drawing com-

parisons with other riot-affected regions across the country, Akoijam said there was no precedent for parliamentarians being barred from entering parts of their own constituencies elsewhere in India. "The Manipur situation is exceptional, alarming and deeply troubling," he said, adding that the continued enforcement of buffer zones would erode public trust, undermine federal principles and entrench divisions rather than facilitate reconciliation and peace. Akoijam squarely held the Union government responsible, asserting that the present security regime under President's Rule was failing to restore normalcy and instead institutionalising separation within the state. He cautioned that unless urgently reviewed, such policies could have long-term consequences for Manipur's social fabric and India's constitutional ethos.

BJP Will Win All 28 Seats in TTAADC Polls, Claims Tripura CM Manik Saha

AGARTALA

Tripura Chief Minister Dr Manik Saha on January 6 expressed strong confidence that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would secure all 28 seats in the forthcoming elections to the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC), asserting that the party's support among the tribal population has been steadily expanding.

The Chief Minister made the remarks while addressing a gathering at Chawmanu in Dhalai district, where 2,499 voters from 755 families formally joined the BJP. Welcoming the new entrants, Dr Saha said the development reflected the party's growing influence in the district council areas.

Addressing the gathering, Dr Saha said the BJP was committed to promoting what he described as "healthy politics" in Tripura and accused opposition parties of attempting to create unrest and division. He alleged that certain political forces had, in the past, encouraged extremism and violence to suppress the voice of the people. "By creating tension and violence in this way, one of the largest national parties in the world, the Bharatiya Janata Party, cannot be suppressed," he said.

Taking a swipe at the CPI(M), the Chief Minister accused the Left party of continuing to engage in di-

visive politics by pitting jaati and janajati communities against each other. He also claimed that regional parties in Tripura were steadily losing their political relevance.

"Some try to stop the BJP by organising protests on various demands, while others attempt to disrupt our activities by creating roadblocks or disturbances. But the more they try to hit us, the more we will respond-strictly within the framework of the law. This kind of politics will not continue in Tripura," Dr Saha said. Emphasising the BJP's organisational strength, the Chief Minister said regional parties would not be able to weaken the party through intimidation, tension or violence. "The Bharatiya Janata Party is not only strong across the country but also globally. Today's large-scale joining programme proves how the BJP is gaining strength in the district council areas," he added. Pointing to the turnout at the Chawmanu event, Dr Saha said the enthusiasm of the people was a clear indication of the party's growing acceptance among tribal voters. "The participation we see here today shows that the Bharatiya Janata Party will win all 28 out of 28 seats in the TTAADC elections," he asserted.

The Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council elections are expected to be held later this year.

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma expressed concern over the unfolding situation in neighbouring Bangladesh, warning that the instability there could have repercussions in Assam. He also reiterated that extremist elements have operated in the state in the past and cautioned that some may still be active as sleeper cells.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of an official programme, Sarma said developments across the border were being closely monitored by the state government and security agencies. "Whatever is happening in Bangladesh is a cause of concern for us. Torture on Hindus is increasing day by day. The situation is worrying and we may see its effect in Assam too," he said.

Referring to recent incidents in Bangladesh, the chief minister alleged that violence against the Hindu minority had intensified in recent weeks. He pointed to reports of mob attacks and covert violence, describing the situation as a growing crisis amid shifts in Bangladesh's political landscape. "We have to remain cautious and keep a close watch on developments. At the same time, we must give courage to Bangladesh's Hindu society," Sarma said.

According to Bangladesh's 2022 census, the country has a Hindu population of around



13.13 million, accounting for nearly 7.95 per cent of its total population. On the issue of internal security, Sarma said Assam has faced challenges from extremist activities over the past decade. "Jihadis are there in Assam, and we have been getting proof repeatedly over the last 10 years. Some elements may still be hiding somewhere, possibly as sleeper cells. These are all matters of concern," he said.

The chief minister added that Assam's security environment remains sensitive and

is closely linked to broader regional and geopolitical developments. He said the situation would continue to demand heightened vigilance from security agencies. Sarma's remarks come in the backdrop of a recent crackdown on alleged extremist networks. In December last year, police arrested 11 people in Assam and Tripura for their alleged links to Bangladesh-based fundamentalist groups that were suspected of planning activities to destabilise the Northeast, officials had said at the time.

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Why Conflicts Outlive Their Leaders

Some images travel fast. The reported capture of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and his wife Cilia Flores from inside their palace in the capital city Caracas was no exception. Images like these quickly create the feeling that a long and painful conflict has finally come to an end, signalling success. For those who have lived with fear and uncertainty, they offer hope. For others, they raise a different concern—the fear that instability may follow.

History offers a less comforting reminder. Removing a leader may end one chapter, but it rarely ends the conflict itself. More often, the conflict changes its shape, takes a new direction, or returns later in a different form. The sense of closure is real, but it is often misleading. This is true of most such bloody interventions, stretching across centuries—from imperial conquests to modern drone strikes.

One early example comes from Africa in 1897. British forces stormed Benin City in present-day Nigeria, removed King Oba Ovonramwen, exiled him, and carried away thousands of royal and ritual artworks, later known as the Benin Bronzes. The message was blunt: local power could be destroyed overnight by superior force.

Control was established, but it rested on fear, not acceptance. Removing the ruler did not settle deeper tensions. It simply replaced one order with another imposed from outside.

More than a century earlier in Europe, a similar belief played out in a different setting. In 1809, French troops arrested Pope Pius VII and took him to France. Military power openly overrode centuries-old religious authority. The Catholic Church did not collapse, and the political gains were short-lived. Force humiliated authority, but it did not resolve the deeper struggle.

The Second World War offers a different lesson. In 1943, Italy's own authorities arrested Benito Mussolini under pressure from the Allies. For many, this appeared to mark the end of Fascist rule. Yet the sense of finality did not last. German commandos freed Mussolini, briefly reviving him as a symbol before his final defeat.

His arrest changed the course of the war, but it did not instantly heal Italy or undo years of damage caused by the dictatorship.

By the late 20th century, capturing leaders became closely tied to regime change. In 1989, US forces invaded Panama and arrested Manuel Noriega, once a close US ally. Officially, the action was presented as law enforcement linked to drug trafficking. Many others saw it as regime change by force.

Noriega's rule ended, but questions about sovereignty and precedent remained.

Those questions became sharper after the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The capture of Saddam Hussein was shown worldwide as proof that the war had been won. The dictator was gone, his regime dismantled. Expectations of peace were high.

What followed was very different. Iraq slid into prolonged instability. Sectarian divisions resurfaced. Institutions collapsed. Armed groups filled the vacuum. Removing Saddam ended a regime, but it also removed the rigid-if brutal-structure that had held the country together.

Libya followed a similar path in 2011. Col. Muammar Gaddafi was captured and killed after NATO-backed intervention. His fall was welcomed as the end of decades of authoritarian rule. Instead, Libya fractured along tribal and regional lines. Militias replaced institutions. Rival governments emerged. External powers stepped in through proxies.

Again, removing the leader exposed unresolved tensions rather than solving them.

Some leader removals happen long after the wars end. The arrest of Radovan Karadzic years after the Bosnian conflict showed how accountability can be slow but persistent. Serbian authorities captured him after sustained international pressure.

Justice was served, but society did not automatically heal. Legal closure did not mean emotional or political reconciliation.

In the 21st century, technology changed how leaders are removed. Precision raids and drone strikes replaced large invasions.

The killing of Osama bin Laden in 2011 was widely seen as a decisive moment. It removed a powerful symbol of global terrorism. Yet militant violence did not disappear. It became more scattered and harder to track. Remember, Taliban is back in power in Afghanistan.

This pattern continued with the killing of ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in 2019 and the drone strike that killed Iranian General Qasem Soleimani in 2020. Instead of weakening Iran's influence, it strengthened nationalist sentiment among his supporters. In death, Qasem Soleimani arguably became an even stronger symbol.

It is important to mention that even the most carefully planned military operations can face unexpected challenges.

One such case was Operation Eagle Claw (Iran, 1980). It was a covert attempt to rescue American hostages held inside the US Embassy in Tehran after the 1979 Iranian Revolution.

The plan involved secret desert landings and helicopters operating deep inside hostile territory. Mechanical failures, poor weather, and coordination problems disrupted the mission early on. It was eventually aborted. During the withdrawal, a helicopter collided with a transport aircraft. Eight US servicemen lost their lives, and the hostages remained captive.

The episode is often recalled as a reminder that high-risk missions, even when driven by urgency, carry inherent uncertainties.

Venezuela offers a revealing contrast between reality and perception. Despite years of sanctions, indictments, covert pressure, and failed mercenary attempts, there has been no officially confirmed foreign military capture of a sitting Venezuelan president. Not even Hugo Chávez who as president of Venezuela from 1999 until his death in 2013 launched the "Bolivarian Revolution," a socialist movement that reshaped Venezuelan politics and influenced regional leftist governments.

Images showing President Nicolás Maduro being kidnapped supposedly from his palace and flown abroad has generated intense debate across the world. Many foreign countries and commentators have observed that the US intervention is a flagrant violation of International Law that prohibits sending troops into another country without consent. Only narrow exceptions apply: self-defence against an armed attack, UN Security Council authorisation, or explicit invitation by the host state. In practice, powerful states often stretch these rules, with limited enforcement.

The major Western newspapers—available online—have stressed that long political crises rarely collapse because of a single dramatic moment. Some commentators have pointed to business and strategic interests behind US actions rather than purely democratic motives.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“Mistakes are proof that you're trying” - Ernest Hemingway

How Operation Sindoor Changed Pakistan's Defence Fortunes



B. S. DARA

Wars today are not decided only by guns, missiles, and airstrikes. They are decided by how the world understands what happened, who explains it better, and who appears more useful once the firing stops. This is an uncomfortable but unavoidable truth of modern geopolitics. Perception, timing, and diplomatic positioning now matter as much as battlefield action.

It is important to keep this in mind while reflecting on Operation Sindoor, India's military response following the brutal terror attack in Pahalgam. The operation itself lasted only a few days. Yet its political and diplomatic consequences have travelled far beyond those four nights.

India acted because it had to. A democratic state cannot quietly absorb the killing of its civilians by cross-border terror, and do nothing. That decision requires no justification. Yet, once the dust settled, a troubling pattern emerged: Pakistan appeared to walk away with diplomatic gains. Its international standing appeared to rise, while India struggled to shape the global conversation around what had actually occurred.

This column is not about questioning India's resolve. It is about understanding the unintended geopolitical effects of what followed.

Between 7 and 10 May 2025, India and Pakistan were involved in a limited military confrontation. There were air operations, missile strikes, and heightened alert levels across land, air, and sea. Both sides claimed success. Neither side wanted a full-scale war.

A ceasefire followed quickly. India officially stated that the ceasefire was achieved through direct military communication between the two sides. Pakistan claimed international pressure forced restraint. The United States, particularly President Donald Trump, publicly claimed credit for preventing escalation. India rejected the idea of third-party mediation.

To many ordinary readers, this may appear as diplomatic grandstanding. But in foreign affairs, who shapes the story often matters more than who initiated events. In this contest, Pakistan spoke loudly and repeatedly. India chose restraint. Within weeks of the ceasefire, three developments

stood out clearly.

First, Pakistan elevated its army chief to the rank of Field Marshal, reinforcing once again the central role of its military in national life. Second, the same military chief was invited to Washington and hosted at the White House, a symbolic rehabilitation of Pakistan's generals on the global stage. Third, Pakistan concluded a strategic defence arrangement with Saudi Arabia, projecting itself as a security partner in an unstable Middle East.

These events did not occur in a vacuum. Pakistan has long mastered a particular survival strategy of provoking tension, internationalise the crisis, and then re-emerge as a “necessary” actor. Operation Sindoor, despite India's restraint, allowed Islamabad to dust off this playbook once again.

The Middle East today is tense and unstable. Iran, Israel, the Gulf states, and global powers are constantly reassessing their alliances. In such an environment, countries look for partners that appear militarily capable, politically relevant, and strategically positioned. After Operation Sindoor, Pakistan was seen, rightly or wrongly, as a country that had “stood its ground” against India. That perception increased its value in certain international circles.

Did Pakistan defeat India? No. Did it match India militarily? That is debatable.

From a purely military standpoint, no decisive victory occurred. India demonstrated a powerful reach, intent, and restraint. Pakistan absorbed pressure and avoided escalation. The confrontation ended without a clear battlefield winner. But geopolitics does not function only on victories and defeats. It runs on perception. Pakistan moved quickly to present its version of events to the world. It spoke confidently, consistently, and publicly. India, by contrast, chose restraint and minimal communication. When one side explains and the other remains quiet, neutral observers often assume the speaker has something to show. In today's media-driven global order, narrative control is a strategic asset. This confrontation was largely about air power, not old-style dogfights, but modern warfare involving long-range missiles, electronic systems, radar networks, and satellite intelligence. Such capabilities are built over years,

not days.

Modern international politics rewards those who appear useful. After Operation Sindoor, Pakistan was suddenly framed as a nuclear-armed stabiliser, a military capable of “deterrence,” and a bridge between South Asia and the Middle East.

None of this reflects Pakistan's internal reality, a country struggling with economic collapse, political instability, and extremist violence. Yet appearances matter more than balance sheets. Pakistan did not become stronger overnight. It merely became visible again. Pakistan projected the image of preparation and coordination. India did not publicly explain its air strategy and outcomes in detail. For defence observers abroad, this raised questions about communication and clarity.

Pakistan's confidence did not emerge in isolation. Its military capability today is inseparable from Chinese support, training, technology, and systems integration. China prefers indirect pressure. It has little interest in open war with India. Pakistan serves that role efficiently. Operation Sindoor indirectly reminded the world that any India-Pakistan confrontation now carries a Chinese shadow. That perception alone complicates India's strategic environment and emboldens Pakistan diplomatically.

India entered this confrontation with moral clarity. It responded to terrorism, not provocation. It showed restraint, not recklessness. It avoided civilian targets and escalation. Yet morality does not automatically translate into strategic advantage. India often assumes that the world will “understand” its position. Experience suggests otherwise. Global opinion is shaped less by ethics and more by repetition, visibility, and convenience. Pakistan understands this reality well. India often underestimates it.

India rightly takes pride in being a democracy. But democracy alone does not deter adversaries or impress strategists. Countries are judged by preparedness, technological depth, policy clarity, and diplomatic consistency.

China planned its rise patiently. Pakistan prepared its military quietly while selling instability as relevance. India, despite economic growth, sometimes relies too heavily on political messaging to carry strategic weight.

Strong nations must not confuse slogans with strategy.

Operation Sindoor offers several lessons. It now is evidentiary that limited military actions are no longer symbolic, they are global events watched in real time. That strategic silence has costs. That defence modernisation must focus on integration, technology, and space-based capabilities, not just platforms. That the political leadership of the country must resist turning

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

Deeply pained by the passing away of veteran leader, former Union Minister and an inspiration for us all, Shri Kabintra Purkayastha. A prolific intellectual, a committed karyakarta - he was an institution in himself, someone who laid the foundation of the Bharatiya Janata Party in the region and helped it grow as Assam's preferred political party. From the lanes of Silchar to the corridors of Parliament, from his days as Pracharak to a Union Minister, he consistently kept people and their issues at the forefront as he championed the cause of Assam and North East in various forums. For us karyakartas, he was not only a people's representative but also a mentor, an elder, a reassuring presence who showed that politics is about values, simplicity, service and above all taking care of each other as family members. His legacy though cannot be measured merely by the offices or positions he held, but by how he always espoused Sewa Bhav through his actions. From helping displaced Hindu refugees to assisting Assam's growth aspirations, his life was dedicated to the people and their welfare. The stalwart's passing away leaves a void which can never be filled. I fondly recollect my long association with him and will always cherish the many learnings I got from him over the years. Today, as Assam mourns the demise of the People's leader, on behalf of them, I extend my heartfelt condolences to Shri Kanad Purkayastha and the bereaved family and well wishers. Om Shanti ~ Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, CM Assam



military operations into emotional narratives, because war is not spectacle. Finally, the foreign policy must be rooted in national interest, not image management.

Operation Sindoor was justified. It was necessary. And it demonstrated India's willingness to act. But it also revealed a familiar pattern that Pakistan did not win a war, yet once again extracted diplomatic value from confrontation. It gained relevance without reform, attention without accountability, and partnerships without responsibility. That is Pakistan's enduring skill.

From the periphery, the conclusion is unavoidable that India's foreign policy must evolve from reactive justification to proactive articulation. Pakistan thrives on ambiguity and international indulgence. India's task is not to shout louder, but to speak clearly, and with authority, so that restraint is seen as confidence, and responsibility is not mistaken for weakness.

And As Faiz Ahmed Faiz's poetry would have lamented in such moments, “Bol, ke lab azaad hain tere.”

Akhil Gogoi's Facebook Lives 'Just Entertainment', Shouldn't Be Taken Seriously: Himanta on Voter Roll Claims

GUWAHATI/BOKAKHAT

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday dismissed allegations raised by Rajiv Dal MLA Akhil Gogoi over the ongoing Special Revision (SR) of electoral rolls, remarking that Gogoi's Facebook Live sessions and press briefings were meant more for "entertainment" than serious political discourse.

Addressing a public gathering in Bokakhat while distributing cheques under the Chief Minister's Women Entrepreneurship (Udhyamita) Scheme, Sarma took a sharp swipe at the Sivasagar MLA. "People enjoy his Facebook Live sessions. If you are sad, watch his live. Just like people listen to songs after work to relax, one can listen to Akhil Gogoi's press meets and Facebook Lives at night for refreshment," the Chief Minister

said, drawing laughter from the audience.

The remarks came a day after Akhil Gogoi made explosive allegations accusing the BJP leadership of conspiring to manipulate voter lists ahead of the 2026 Assam Assembly elections. In a Facebook Live interaction on January 5, Gogoi claimed that he had come across a video conference held on January 4 involving Assam BJP president Dilip Saikia, ministers, MLAs and other party functionaries.

According to Gogoi, the meeting was officially convened to discuss preparations for a wall-writing campaign but also allegedly included discussions on electoral rolls. "I was shocked by what I heard. I could not sleep the entire night after listening to that meeting," Gogoi said, claiming that he had heard the discussion "with my



own ears". The Rajiv Dal MLA alleged that Dilip Saikia instructed minister Ashok Singhal to oversee voter list "corrections" in 60 Assembly constituencies with the objective of deleting the names of voters who were unlikely to support the BJP. He further claimed that BJP MLAs, district presidents and mandal-level leaders were asked to submit booth-wise lists of such voters by January 12.

Describing the alleged directions as an attempt to "engineer the Assam voter list according to the BJP's convenience", Gogoi said such actions amounted to a direct attack on democracy and the sanctity of the electoral process. He challenged Chief Minister Sarma to make public the video recording of the January 4 meeting if the allegations were unfounded.

Responding indirectly to the charges, Sarma brushed aside the

claims and cautioned against taking Gogoi's statements seriously. During his address, the Chief Minister also made a light-hearted reference to election-season tensions, saying minor clashes and incidents were not unusual during polls. "If there are no clashes or offices are not vandalised, how will people know that elections have arrived?" he remarked.

In his speech, Sarma also highlighted various government initiatives, including the Udhyamita and Orunodoi schemes, ongoing land encroachment drives, wildlife conservation efforts in Kaziranga, and his government's concerns over reported atrocities against Hindus in Bangladesh.

The exchange added to the intensifying political sparring in Assam as parties step up rhetoric and mobilisation ahead of the high-stakes 2026 Assembly elections.

Under-reporting of Crimes Hampers Policing in Nagaland, Says Dy CM Yanthungo Patton

KOHIMA:

Nagaland Deputy Chief Minister Yanthungo Patton on January 6 flagged the under-reporting of crimes as a major challenge for law enforcement in the state, stressing that effective policing hinges on public cooperation and timely registration of cases. Speaking at the inauguration of the new Superintendent of Police (SP) office building and police barrack in Wokha district, Patton—who also holds the Home and Border Affairs portfolio—urged citizens to report crimes without hesitation. He said prompt complaints are essential to ensure justice, strengthen policing mechanisms and enable better assessment of the law and order situation.

"When cases go unreported, it distorts our understanding of ground realities, hampers planning and weakens the development of police services," the deputy chief minister said.

According to an official release, Patton first inaugurated the police barrack, followed by the SP office building, describing the new infrastructure as a significant boost to policing capacity in Wokha district. He congratulated the district police for completing the projects and said improved facilities would enhance operational efficiency and raise the morale of personnel. Reiterating the state government's commitment to institutional integrity, Patton said police recruitment in Nagaland would continue to be free, fair and strictly merit-based. He also thanked Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio for his support and funding for development initiatives, and expressed gratitude to the land donor for contributing to the project. Nagaland Director General of Police Rupin Sharma, senior police officers and civil society representatives were present at the event. Addressing the gathering, DGP Sharma echoed concerns over under-reporting and underlined the role of district police as first responders.

Tripura Sees 11 Dense Fog Days in December 2025 as Rainfall Deficit Reaches 100%

AGARTALA

Tripura witnessed predominantly dry weather conditions throughout December 2025, marked by persistent fog and a complete absence of normal rainfall, according to a monthly weather report released by the Meteorological Centre, Agartala.

The report said the state experienced dense fog on 11 days during the month, including six days classified as very dense fog. These conditions were most pronounced during late night and early morning hours, significantly reducing visibility across several districts.

Temperature patterns during December remained largely close to seasonal averages. The lowest minimum temperature of the month was recorded at Agartala Airport on December 31 at 11.6 degrees Celsius. The average minimum temperature stood at 13.9 degrees Celsius, around 0.9 degrees above normal. On the higher side, the maximum temperature peaked at 30.4 degrees Celsius on

December 13, while the average mean maximum temperature was 26.3 degrees Celsius, marginally 0.1 degrees below normal.

Rainfall activity across the state was negligible. Very light rainfall was reported only in parts of West Tripura district, while all other districts remained completely dry. The state recorded only trace rainfall against a normal monthly average of 11.6 mm, resulting in a rainfall deficit of 100 per cent for December. Station-wise data showed that Agartala recorded the highest rainfall during the month at just 0.7 mm. The same amount was also the highest 24-hour rainfall, registered on December 30. On a district-wise assessment, West Tripura reported the highest rainfall at 0.2 mm, reflecting a sharp departure of minus 98 per cent from normal levels.

The meteorological report highlights the unusually dry conditions that prevailed across Tripura in December 2025, coupled with recurrent dense fog episodes that dominated the state's winter weather pattern.

GUWAHATI

The Assam unit of the Congress on Monday staged a protest against the Election Commission of India (ECI) and the BJP-led state government, alleging large-scale irregularities in the draft electoral rolls published after the Special Revision of voter lists ahead of the 2026 Assembly elections.

The Guwahati city committee of the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) organised a sit-in demonstration near the Secretariat complex, accusing the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party of manipulating the voter rolls to retain power. Addressing the media, APCC general secretary Pradyut Bhuyan alleged that the discrepancies in the draft rolls were deliberate and politically motivated. He claimed that the Election Commission was acting in favour of the BJP and accused Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma of attempting to secure another term through what he termed "vote theft".



Police barricaded and cordoned off the Manavendra Sharma Complex, which houses a Congress office, to prevent the protest from spilling onto the main road. However, demonstrators later broke through the barricades, raised slogans against the government and the ECI, and briefly occupied the road before returning to the complex and dispersing peacefully.

The protest comes in the wake of the publication of the integrated draft electoral roll on December 30, following the Special Revision exercise. According to official figures, Assam

has recorded a net increase of 1.35 per cent in voters. The draft roll lists a total of 2,52,01,624 electors, up from the final roll published in January 2025. During the revision period between January 6 and December 27 last year, 7,86,841 names were added, while 4,47,196 names were deleted.

Election officials said the revision exercise identified 4,78,992 deceased electors, 5,23,680 electors who had shifted their place of residence, and 53,619 cases of multiple entries. The Election Commission clarified that these names have not yet been struck off and

will only be processed after due procedure during the ongoing claims and objections period. Reacting to the Congress allegations, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma dismissed the protest as premature and unwarranted. He emphasised that the list published is only a draft and that minor discrepancies such as overlapping entries, spelling errors or incorrect addresses are common at this stage. "Preparing an electoral roll for over two crore voters is a mammoth exercise," Sarma said, urging political parties not to cast aspersions on the intent of election officials. The claims and objections period will remain open from December 27 to January 22, with special campaign dates scheduled for January 3-4 and January 10-11. The final electoral roll is slated for publication on February 10, while the Assam Assembly elections are expected to be held in March-April.

Zubeen Garg's Family Seeks Special Prosecutor, Fast-Track Court in Late Music Icon's Murder Case

GUWAHATI

The family of late music icon Zubeen Garg has written to Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, urging the state government to strengthen the legal process to ensure swift, fair and effective justice in the murder case that shook Assam last year. In a detailed letter addressed to the Chief Minister, the family has sought the immediate appointment of a strong Special Public Prosecutor (SPP) team comprising senior and experienced criminal lawyers, along with the constitution of a special court to fast-track the trial. The letter was made public by Garg's wife, Garima Saikia Garg, through social media.

Recalling the events of September 19, 2025, the family described the incident as the "most devastating and unimaginable" moment of their lives, stating that the trauma continues to haunt them months later.

While acknowledging the steps taken by the state so far, the family said the case has now entered a critical judicial phase where the final outcome will depend entirely on the strength and effectiveness of courtroom proceedings.

The family expressed gratitude to the Assam government for constituting a Special Investigation Team (SIT) and for filing the chargesheet within the stipulated timeframe. They noted that the chargesheet clearly establishes the offence of murder and is supported by substantial documentary evidence and witness testimonies, and that trial proceedings have already begun.

However, the family cautioned that justice could still be compromised without a robust prosecutorial mechanism. Referring to earlier public assurances by the Chief Minister, they recalled Sarma's commitment to ensure justice, includ-

ing his announcement earlier this year regarding the appointment of a Special Public Prosecutor team and a proposal to the High Court for setting up a dedicated special court to expedite the trial.

Highlighting the complexity of the case, the family pointed out that the accused have already engaged some of the country's most prominent and experienced criminal defence lawyers. In such a scenario, they argued, it is imperative for the state to match the defence with an equally formidable prosecution. "A balanced and effective legal battle is essential to ensure justice," the letter stated. The family also raised concerns over the scale of the trial, noting that the investigation lists nearly 394 witnesses. Without a special court, they warned, the process of recording evidence alone could take decades, leading to inordinate delays and effectively denying jus-

justice. "We, along with the people of Assam, want Zubeen Garg to receive justice at the earliest," the family said, adding that prolonged delays would severely undermine public faith in the justice delivery system.

Reaffirming their faith in the rule of law, the family said they have fully cooperated with the investigation and will continue to do so. At the same time, they stressed the urgency of ensuring that the legal process moves forward swiftly, transparently and efficiently.

In their letter, the family placed two specific demands before the state government: the immediate appointment of a powerful Special Public Prosecutor team led by a senior advocate of national standing with adequate legal and logistical support, and the constitution of a special court through appropriate legal procedures to ensure a fast-tracked and time-bound trial.

Assam Reclaims 6,200 Bighas from Burhachapori Sanctuary

GUWAHATI/TEZPUR

The Assam government on Tuesday completed a major eviction drive to clear alleged encroachment from approximately 6,200 bighas - nearly 830 hectares - of land inside the Burhachapori Wildlife Sanctuary, officials said. The two-day operation affected around 710 families who were found occupying protected forest land.

The eviction drive, which began on January 5, was carried out across forest areas spanning Sonitpur and Nagaon districts. Sonitpur District Commissioner Ananda Kumar Das said the administration had identified nearly 710 families as illegal occupants within the notified sanctuary limits. "The two-day operation has been completed successfully, and all encroached land has been freed," Das said.

Officials said the drive covered multiple locations under the Tezpur Sadar and Dhekiajuli revenue circles, including Jamuktol, Arimari, Siyalichar, Baghetapu, Galatidubi, Lathimari, Kundulichar, Purba Dubramari and Batulichar. The administration moved to clear these remaining pockets after nearly 40 per cent of the encroached land in the sanctuary



had already been reclaimed during earlier phases.

According to the district administration, the alleged encroachers had constructed permanent and semi-permanent structures and were cultivating crops inside the protected forest area. While several families dismantled their houses and vacated the land voluntarily, others sought more time, citing harsh winter conditions and the need to harvest standing crops. Authorities, however, refused to suspend the operation, reiterating that

illegal occupation of forest land could not be allowed irrespective of seasonal hardships.

Sonitpur Senior Superintendent of Police Barun Purakayastha said the eviction was carried out peacefully and without any untoward incident. "Adequate security arrangements were made to ensure law and order," he said. More than 300 police personnel were deployed during the drive, while heavy machinery, including 36 excavators and 60 tractors, was pressed into service to dismantle structures and clear

the land.

The latest operation comes amid the state government's sustained push to reclaim protected forest areas from encroachment. In February last year, the Assam administration conducted one of its largest eviction drives in and around the Burhachapori Wildlife Sanctuary, clearing nearly 2,099 hectares of land and affecting around 12,800 people. However, tensions resurfaced in July when one person was killed and at least seven others were injured in a clash between alleged encroachers and forest guards after attempts were made to re-enter the cleared areas.

Burhachapori Wildlife Sanctuary, spread across 44.06 square kilometres on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra, lies about 180 km east of Guwahati and roughly 40 km south of Tezpur. It forms a crucial part of the Laokhowa-Burhachapori ecosystem and is a notified buffer zone of the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve.

The sanctuary is known for its rich biodiversity and is home to species such as the one-horned rhinoceros, tiger, leopard, wild buffalo, hog deer, wild pig and elephants. Its wetlands and grasslands also support a diverse range of birdlife, including the critically endangered Bengal florican, black-necked stork, open-billed stork, mallard, teal and whistling duck. The area was designated a reserve forest in 1974 and declared a wildlife sanctuary

Nagaland Police to Recruit 144 Constables in Dimapur, Chümoukedima and Niuland from Jan 7

DIMAPUR

Open recruitment for 144 constable posts in the Nagaland Police, allotted to Dimapur, Chümoukedima and Niuland districts, will be conducted from January 7 to January 13, officials said.

Briefing the media at the Chümoukedima police complex on Tuesday, Dimapur Commissioner of Police Aotula T Imchen said the recruitment process would be carried out in a transparent, fair and strictly merit-based manner.

According to Imchen, a total of 3,377 applications have been received for the 144 posts. To ensure fairness and accountability, a six-member screening committee has been constituted to oversee the entire exercise.

The recruitment process began with document verification on January 5 and 6. This will be followed by physical standard tests, medical fitness examinations and physical fitness efficiency tests scheduled between January 7 and January 13. Imchen clarified that each stage of the process is eliminatory in nature, and candidates must qualify at every level to

progress further.

Emphasising transparency, she said all stages of the recruitment are being conducted under CCTV surveillance, with standardised score sheets used to assess candidates. Representatives from civil society organisations will also be present during the process to further ensure openness and credibility.

Candidates have been instructed to carry their admit cards and valid identity documents on the day of their respective tests. Imchen warned that any form of malpractice or misconduct would result in immediate disqualification.

She added that the department is committed to selecting disciplined, physically fit and capable candidates to serve the people of Nagaland. The results of the recruitment process will be published publicly.

Imchen further said a grievance redressal mechanism has been put in place to address complaints or concerns raised by candidates. The written examination will be conducted after the completion of the physical and medical tests, she added.

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SIR: Lucknow, Ghaziabad top in delisted voters; Bundelkhand districts least hit



LUCKNOW

Lucknow, Ghaziabad, Balrampur and Kanpur Nagar are among the top districts in Uttar Pradesh that have recorded the highest percentage of electors whose forms remained uncollected during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral roll, according to official data.

Districts like Lalitpur, Hamirpur, Mahoba, Jhansi and Chitrakoot in the Bundelkhand region of the state had the least removals from the draft roll.

The draft electoral roll published on Tuesday after the SIR excludes 2.89 crore voters but retains 12.55 crore.

The 2.89 crore voters, or 18.70 per cent, of the 15.44 crore listed earlier could not be included in the draft list due to deaths, permanent migration or multiple registrations, UP Chief Electoral Officer Navdeep Rinwa said.

According to district-wise draft roll data published on January 6, Lucknow topped the list with 30.04 per cent uncollected forms, involving about 12 lakh electors.

The district's electorate declined from 39.94 lakh in October 2025 to 27.94 lakh in the revised draft.

The uncollected category

included 1.28 lakh death-related cases, 4.28 lakh voters marked untraceable or absent, and 5.36 lakh cases of permanent shifting, besides other categories.

Ghaziabad followed with 28.83 per cent uncollected forms, covering about 5.83 lakh electors.

The district's total electorate reduced from 28.38 lakh to 20.20 lakh.

Of the uncollected forms, around 64,000 were linked to deaths, 3.20 lakh to untraceable or absent voters and 3.60 lakh to permanent shifting, it showed.

Balrampur ranked third with 25.98 per cent uncollected forms, amounting to about 4.11 lakh electors.

The electorate in the district declined from 15.83 lakh to 11.18 lakh.

The breakup showed around 63,000 death-related cases, 1.60 lakh untraceable or absent voters and 1.33 lakh cases of permanent shifting.

Kanpur Nagar recorded 25.50 per cent uncollected forms, involving about 9.02 lakh electors, as its electorate dropped from 35.38 lakh to 26.36 lakh.

The figures included about 1.04 lakh deaths, 3.10 lakh untraceable or absent voters and 3.92 lakh cases of permanent shifting.

Prayagraj stood next with

24.64 per cent uncollected forms, translating to about 11.56 lakh electors.

The district's electorate declined from 46.93 lakh to 35.37 lakh.

Of these, around 1.74 lakh cases were linked to deaths, 3.67 lakh to untraceable or absent voters and 4.89 lakh to permanent shifting.

Gautam Buddh Nagar ranked seventh among the eight districts, recording 23.96 per cent uncollected forms, or about 4.47 lakh electors.

The district's total electorate stood at about 18.65 lakh in the revised draft, with uncollected forms including cases related to deaths, migration and duplication.

Agra stood eighth among the districts with 23.25 per cent uncollected forms, involving about 8.37 lakh electors.

The district's electorate declined from 36.00 lakh to 27.63 lakh, with the uncollected category comprising death-related cases, untraceable voters and those found to have permanently shifted, according to the data.

Among other prominent districts of UP, Varanasi had 18.18 per cent of uncollected forms during the SIR, while it was 17.61 per cent in Gorakhpur, 16.35 per cent in Rae Bareilly, 18.60 per cent in Amethi, 18.95 per cent in Etawah, 21.57 per cent in Kannauj, 16.37 per cent in Saharanpur, 16.29 per cent in Muzaffarnagar, 18.60 per cent in Aligarh and 19.19 per cent in Mathura.

Lalitpur was the bottom most in the list with 9.95 per cent of uncollected forms followed by Hamirpur (0.78 per cent), Mahoba (12.42 per cent), Banda (13 per cent), Chitrakoot (13.67 per cent) and Jhansi (13.92 per cent).

Violence during demolition drive near Delhi mosque: Five held, FIR filed as police probe conspiracy angle

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Wednesday registered an FIR and detained five people in connection with the violence that erupted during an anti-encroachment drive near the Syed Faiz Elahi Mosque in Delhi's Ramlila Maidan area, an official said.

At least five police personnel were injured after some people allegedly pelted stones and glass bottles at the force when the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) was carrying out a court-mandated demolition on land adjoining the mosque and a nearby graveyard.

MCD officials were carrying out a demolition drive on land adjoining the Mosque and a nearby graveyard at Turkman Gate, following directions of the Delhi High Court.

The mosque was not damaged during the drive, an MCD official said.

According to a police official, around 20 to 25 people pelted stones at the police, in which five personnel received minor injuries.

Officials said efforts are under way to identify those involved in the stone-pelting incident. Police are also probing whether the violence was spontaneous or a pre-planned attempt to disrupt the demolition drive.

Senior police officers said CCTV footage and video clips circulating on social media are being analysed to identify the miscreants.

Statements of witnesses and detained persons are also being recorded as part of the investigation.

In a statement, police said that tear gas shells were used to disperse the crowd and maintain law and order, after which the situation was brought under control and normalcy restored.

Police have registered an FIR under sections 221/132/121/191(2)/191(3), 223(A)/3(5) of the BNS and 3 PDPP Act-1984.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central) Nidhin Valsan said MCD scheduled the demolition for the intervening night of January 6 and 7, following which police personnel were mobilised and deployed at the site.

Security personnel stand guard near the Syed Faiz Elahi mosque after the demolition of alleged encroachments



from a land adjoining the mosque carried out by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), at Turkman Gate area, in New Delhi, Wednesday, Jan. 7, 2025.

As part of the operation, around 30 bulldozers and 50 dumpers were deployed to clear encroachments and remove debris from the site, it said.

Over 300 MCD workers and officials were engaged in the drive, which continued through the night, MCD officials said.

The demolition resulted in the clearance of a large encroached area, including structures that had been declared illegal by the court.

The police said law and order arrangements remain in place in the area as a precautionary measure.

However, around 100-150 people gathered when MCD machinery, including JCBs, was about to arrive.

He said most people dispersed after being persuaded.

However, some tried to create a ruckus and resorted to stone-pelting,

in which five policemen sustained minor injuries and were given medical treatment.

"We had to use teargas to disperse the crowd," the DCP said.

Debris and belongings lie outside the Syed Faiz Elahi mosque after the demolition of alleged encroachments from a land adjoining the mosque carried out by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), at Turkman Gate area, in New Delhi, Wednesday, Jan. 7, 2025.

Legal action will be initiated after getting medical reports and recording statements, he said, adding that CCTV footage are also being analysed.

A banquet hall and a dispensary near the Faiz-e-Ilahi Mosque, which were declared encroachments by the court, were being demolished during the drive, the officer said.

The police said that MCD, the land-owning agency, had informed the police in advance about the proposed demolition and sought deployment of force for maintaining law and order.

Security personnel stand guard outside the Syed Faiz Elahi mosque after the demolition of alleged encroachments from a land adjoining the mosque carried out by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), at Turkman Gate area, in New Delhi, Wednesday, Jan. 7, 2025.

The DCP said that immediately after receiving the intimation, the police contacted local residents and informed them that the demolition was a legal action, adding that the police took people of the area into confidence and received considerable cooperation from them.

MCD's Deputy Commissioner Vivek Kumar said the demolition drive was carried out in compliance with a High Court order, during which around 36,000 square feet of encroached area was cleared.

The cleared area included one diagnostic centres, a marriage hall and two two-storey boundary walls, Kumar said, adding that the demolition continued through the night.

INTERNATIONAL

US to get 30 to 50 million barrels of oil from Venezuela at market price: Trump

CARACAS

President Donald Trump said Tuesday on his social media site that "Interim Authorities" in Venezuela would be providing 30 million to 50 million barrels of "High Quality" oil to the U.S. at its market price, an announcement that came after officials in Caracas announced that at least 24 Venezuelan security officers were killed in the dead-of-night U.S. military operation to capture Nicolás Maduro and spirit him to the United States to face drug charges.

Trump posted on Truth Social that the oil "will be taken by storage ships, and brought directly to unloading docks in the United States." He said the money would be controlled by him as president but it would be used to benefit the people of Venezuela and the United States.

Separately, the White House is organizing an Oval Office meeting Friday with oil company executives regarding Venezuela, with representatives of Exxon, Chevron and ConocoPhillips expected to attend, according to a person familiar with the matter who requested anonymity to discuss the plans.

Earlier Tuesday, Venezuelan officials announced the death count in the Maduro raid as the country's acting president, Delcy Rodríguez, pushed back on Trump, who earlier this week warned she'd face an outcome worse than Maduro's if she does not "do what's right" and overhaul Venezuela into a country that aligns with U.S. interests. Trump has said his administration will now "run" Venezuela policy and is pressing the country's leaders to open its vast oil reserves to American energy companies.

Rodríguez, delivering an address Tuesday before government agricultural and industrial sector officials, said, "Personally, to those who threaten me: My destiny is not determined by them, but by God."

Venezuela's Attorney General Tarek William Saab said overall "dozens" of officers and civilians were killed in the weekend strike in Caracas and said prosecutors would investigate the deaths in

what he described as a "war crime." He didn't specify if the estimate was specifically referring to Venezuelans.

In addition to the Venezuelan security officials, Cuba's government had previously confirmed that 32 Cuban military and police officers working in Venezuela were killed in the raid. The Cuban government says the personnel killed belonged to the Revolutionary Armed Forces and the Ministry of the Interior, the country's two main security agencies.

Seven U.S. service members were also injured in the raid, according to the Pentagon. Five have already returned to duty, while two are still recovering from their injuries. The injuries included gunshot wounds and shrapnel injuries, according to a U.S. official who was not authorized to comment on the matter publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

A video tribute to the slain Venezuelan security officials posted to the military's Instagram account features faces of the fallen over black-and-white videos of soldiers, American aircraft flying over Caracas and armored vehicles destroyed by the blasts. Meanwhile, the streets of Caracas, deserted for days following Maduro's capture, briefly filled with masses of people waving Venezuelan flags and bouncing to patriotic music at a state-organized display of support for the government.

"Their spilled blood does not cry out for vengeance, but for justice and strength," the military wrote in an Instagram post. "It reaffirms our unwavering oath not to rest until we rescue our legitimate President, completely dismantle the terrorist groups operating from abroad, and ensure that events such as these never again sully our sovereign soil."

President Donald Trump walks off stage after speaking to House Republican lawmakers during their annual policy retreat, Tuesday, Jan. 6, 2026, in Washington.

Trump on Tuesday pushed back against Democratic criticism of this weekend's military operation, noting that his

Democratic predecessor Joe Biden had also called for the arrest of the Venezuelan leader on drug trafficking charges.

Trump in remarks before a House Republican retreat in Washington grumbled that Democrats were not giving him credit for a successful military operation, even though there was bipartisan agreement that Maduro was not the rightful president of Venezuela.

In 2020, Maduro was indicted in the United States, accused in a decades-long narco-terrorism and international cocaine trafficking conspiracy. White House officials have noted that Biden's administration in his final days in office last year raised the award for information leading to Maduro's arrest after he assumed a third term in office despite evidence suggesting that he lost Venezuela's most recent election. The Trump administration doubled the award to \$50 million in August.

"You know, at some point, they should say, 'You know, you did a great job. Thank you. Congratulations.' Wouldn't it be good?" Trump said. "I would say that if they did a good job, their philosophies are so different. But if they did a good job, I'd be happy for the country. They've been after this guy for years and years and years."

With oil trading at roughly \$56 a barrel, the transaction Trump announced late Tuesday could be worth as much as \$2.8 billion. The U.S. goes through an average of roughly 20 million barrels a day of oil and related products, so Venezuela's transfer would be the equivalent of as much as two and a half days of supply, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Despite Venezuela having the world's largest proven crude oil reserves, it only produces on average about one million barrels a day, significantly below the U.S. average daily production of 13.9 million barrels a day during October.

Americans are split about the capture of Maduro — with many still forming opinions — according to a poll conducted by The Washington Post and SSRS using text messages over the weekend. About 4 in 10 approved of the U.S. military being

sent to capture Maduro, while roughly the same share were opposed. About 2 in 10 were unsure.

Nearly half of Americans, 45%, were opposed to the U.S. taking control of Venezuela and choosing a new government for the country. About 9 in 10 Americans said the Venezuelan people should be the ones to decide the future leadership of their country.

Maduro pleaded not guilty to federal drug trafficking charges in a U.S. courtroom on Monday. U.S. forces captured Maduro and his wife early Saturday in a raid on a compound where they were surrounded by Cuban guards.

In the days since Maduro's ouster, Trump and top administration officials have raised anxiety around the globe that the operation could mark the beginning of a more expansionist U.S. foreign policy in the Western Hemisphere. The president in recent days has renewed his calls for an American takeover of the Danish territory of Greenland for the sake of U.S. security interests and threatened military action on Colombia for facilitating the global sale of cocaine, while his top diplomat declared the communist government in Cuba is "in a lot of trouble."

Colombia's Foreign Affairs Minister Rosa Villavicencio said Tuesday she'll meet with the U.S. Embassy's charge d'affaires in Bogotá to present him with a formal complaint over the recent threats issued by the United States.

On Sunday, Trump said he wasn't ruling out an attack on Colombia and described its president, who's been an outspoken critic of the U.S. pressure campaign on Venezuela, as a "sick man who likes making cocaine and selling it to the United States."

Villavicencio said she's hoping to strengthen relations with the United States and improve cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking.

"It is necessary for the Trump administration to know in more detail about all that we are doing in the fight against drug trafficking," she said.

KATHMANDU

Mukesh Awasti was all set leave for Australia to pursue a degree in civil engineering on a sunny day in September, but instead he joined a youth revolt against corruption in Nepal and lost his leg after being shot by security forces.

Lying on a hospital bed at the National Trauma Center in the capital Kathmandu where his leg was amputated, 22-year-old Awasti said he regrets giving up so much for the little that has been achieved after the sacrifices of so many people.

Violent protests in Kathmandu that began Sept. 8 left 76 people dead and more than 2,300 injured before the demonstrations fueled by "Gen Z" activists forced the appointment on Sept. 12 of Nepal's first female prime minister, Sushila Karki, a retired Supreme Court judge who has promised fresh elections in March.

Since then, the interim government and its leader have come under criticism from many of the people who took part in the protests and expected major changes in the Himalayan nation.

"I am regretting my decision to take part in the protest because they have been zero achievement from the new government we brought which has failed us," Awasti said. "There should be end to corruption which has not happened and the people who opened fire on the demonstrations should have been arrested but that has also not happened either."

So far the government's anti-graft agency has filed one significant corruption case that does not include key political figures. The politicians accused of corruption by protesters are preparing to contest upcoming elections and there has been no case filed against leaders who were in power when protesters were injured in September.

is determined to meet that goal.



Dozens of demonstrators, including some who were injured in September, recently have protested against the government they brought to power. These protests outside the prime minister's office has been held in the past few weeks with police forced to break some of them.

"We are back here in the street because the government has failed to live up to their promise. There are so many families of those who lost their lives and many who were injured but what has the government done? Nothing," said Suman Bohara, who walks with crutches on a shattered right foot. "We are here because we are compelled to." Tens of thousands of mostly young demonstrators first gathered in Kathmandu on Sept. 8 to protest widespread corruption, lack of opportunities, employment and poor governance, which was triggered by a ban on social media. They broke through police barricades and attempted to enter parliament, only to be shot by security forces.

A day later, the protests spread across the country. Angry mobs burned down the offices of the prime minister and president, police stations and the homes of top politicians who were forced to flee on army helicopters. The army eventually stepped in to restore control and negotiations ended with Karki's appointment and the key task of conducting parliamentary elections. The government has said it is determined to meet that goal.

Some are beginning to oppose the planned elections in March, saying their protest was not intended only to bring about elections for a new Parliament, while their demands to end corruption and arrest all the corrupt politicians should be fulfilled immediately.

"As the world is looking forward to a smooth change in government through our elections on March 5, I want to assure that we will deliver these elections," Karki said. "Our preparations are almost complete, and the security environment has improved a lot with our security apparatus is assured enough."

Different demands have emerged from separate groups among the young protesters including direct election of prime ministers, scrapping the present constitution and jailing all previous politicians. There is no single leader or group but rather several individuals who have claimed to represent Nepal's voice in the Gen Z movement.

The lack of clarity among the protesters since September has been a key hurdle in Nepal, according to analysts.

"All the confusion right now in Nepal is because of the lack of clarity among the Gen Z groups on what they are demanding and how the government was formed," said Abeer Thapa, principal of Polygon College of Journalism and Mass Communications in Kathmandu.

Some are beginning to oppose the planned elections in March, saying their protest was not intended only to bring about elections for a new Parliament, while their demands to end corruption and arrest all the corrupt politicians should be fulfilled immediately.

NEIR Fest 2026 Celebrates, Innovation, and Regional Unity at CAEPHT, Ranipool



GANGTOK

NEIR Fest 2026 was held on Tuesday at the College of Agricultural Engineering and Post Harvest Technology, Ranipool, under the Central Agricultural University, Sikkim, drawing enthusiastic participation from students, faculty members, and invited guests. The day-long programme was designed to promote cultural exchange, innovation, and a deeper sense of regional integration among young people from the North Eastern states.

The campus witnessed a vibrant atmosphere as students from different parts of the Northeast

came together to share ideas, experiences, and traditions. A series of interactive sessions, cultural presentations, and collaborative activities highlighted the region's diversity while underlining the shared heritage that binds the eight states together. Traditional art forms, music, and creative expressions transformed the academic setting into a lively space of learning beyond textbooks and classrooms.

Faculty members of the institution stressed the importance of such platforms in nurturing confidence, creativity, and mutual respect among students. They observed that NEIR Fest has steadily grown into a meaningful initiative that encourages unity, innovation, and a collective regional identity, especially among the youth.

The programme was attended by Prof. Dr. Sukumal Deb, advisor to the NEIR; Biswadeep Gupta, founder of KRC

Foundations and CEO of the NEIR; noted sports personality and human rights activist Kh. Gajendra Singh; and six members of the Tripura HAM Radio Club. Prof. S.I. Yadav and Dr. Rakesh Raina were also present on the occasion. Prof. Yadav formally welcomed the guests, while the college authorities expressed their happiness and willingness to extend full support to the NEIR initiative.

A special session on disaster management was organised as part of the festival, drawing keen interest from students and faculty alike. The session underlined the importance of preparedness, communication, and community participation, particularly in a region prone to natural disasters.

Interacting with the college authorities and participants, Biswadeep Gupta spoke in detail about the journey of the NEIR, its objectives, and its broader vision. He recalled

that the initiative was inaugurated in Kolkata on January 4 and has since aimed to build bridges across the Northeast through youth engagement, education, and collaborative platforms. He also shared plans for expanding NEIR activities in the coming years.

Students described NEIR Fest 2026 as a valuable opportunity to express themselves, learn from peers across state boundaries, and gain exposure to cultures beyond their own. Many noted that such interactions help break stereotypes and foster lasting friendships and understanding.

The programme concluded with a collective call to continue and strengthen initiatives that blend education with cultural understanding and regional harmony. Certificates were distributed among the participants, marking the successful conclusion of NEIR Fest 2026.

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Winning Relationships by Losing Arguments: A Needonomics Perspective on Maturity

PROF. MADAN MOHAN GOEL

Modern Obsession with “Winning”

In today’s competitive and ego-driven world, winning has become an obsession—winning debates, winning arguments, winning opinions. Unfortunately, this mindset has silently entered our most delicate spaces: relationships. Marriages break, friendships fade, families fracture—not because of irreconcilable differences, but because someone wanted to win an argument at any cost.

Needonomics School of Thought (NST) offers a corrective lens. It asserts a profound yet simple principle:

To win a relationship, one must often be willing to lose an argument.

This is not weakness; it is the highest form of maturity and emotional intelligence.

Argument vs Relationship: A False Choice Created by Ego

An argument is about being right.

A relationship is about being connected.

When a person chooses to prove their point even if it hurts, humiliates, or alienates the other, they may win the argument—but they lose trust, warmth, and emotional safety. Needonomics views such behavior as ego economics, not human economics.

NST reminds us that relation-

ships are not courts of law where verdicts matter more than people.

Needonomics Insight: Needs Are Greater Than Egos

Needonomics distinguishes between needs and greed.

The need in a relationship is harmony, respect, security, and belonging.

The greed is dominance, validation, and intellectual superiority.

Winning an argument at the cost of a relationship is a greedy act driven by ego rather than need. A mature person understands that emotional needs are more valuable than intellectual victories.

Maturity Is the Ability to Pause, Not Prove

A mature individual does not ask:

“How do I defeat the other?”

Instead, they ask:

“How do I protect the bond?”

Needonomics defines maturity as the capacity to:

Stay silent when silence heals

Listen when speaking may hurt

Let go when holding on damages trust

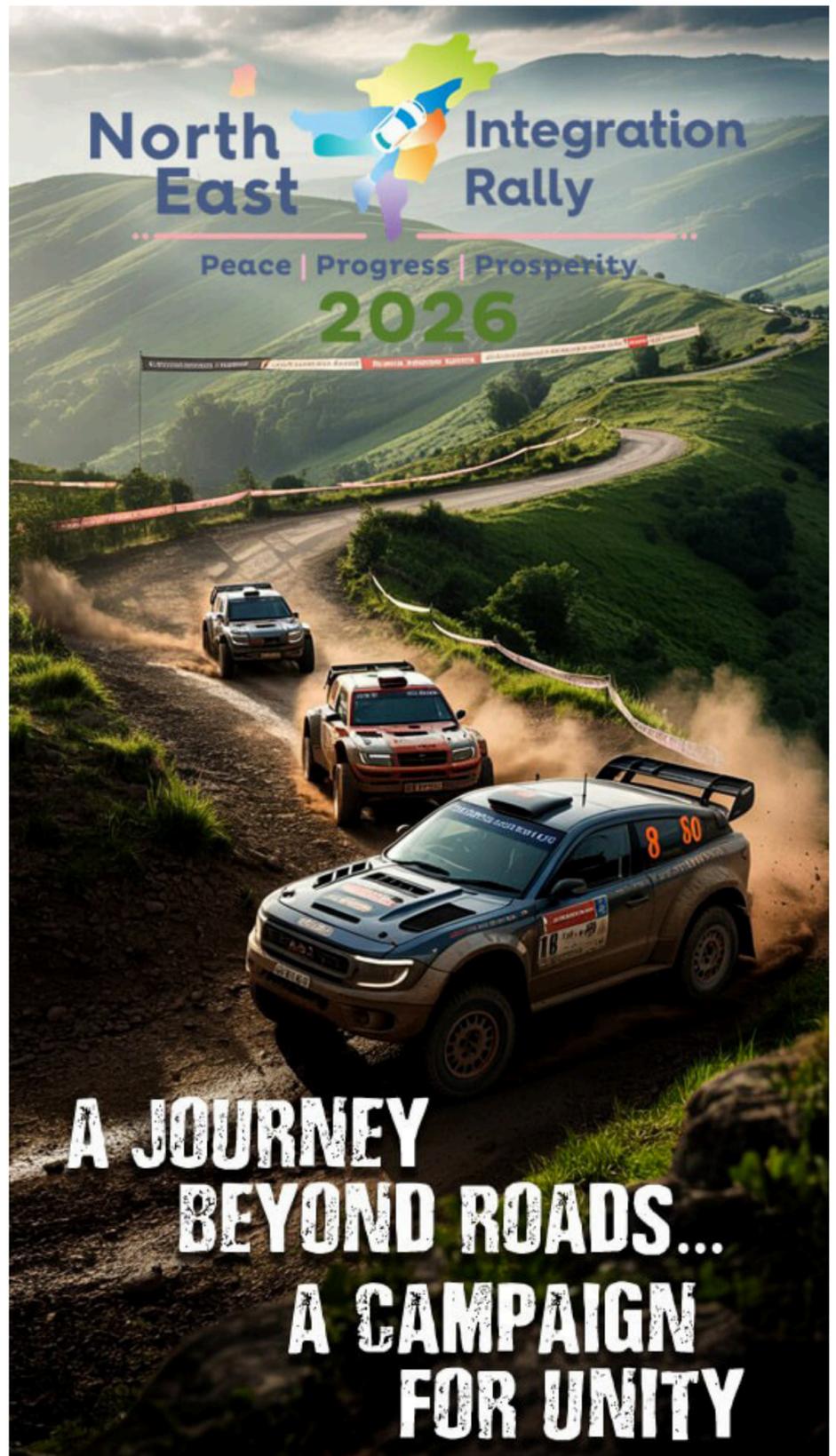
Losing an argument consciously is an investment—in peace, continuity, and emotional capital.

Relationships Are Not Zero-Sum Games

Conventional thinking treats arguments as zero-sum:

If I lose, you win.

Needonomics reframes this:



If the relationship survives, both win.

If the relationship breaks, both lose—regardless of who was right.

Thus, sacrificing an argument for the sake of relationship is not defeat; it is collective gain.

From Reaction to Responsibility

Immaturity reacts.

Maturity responds.

Reacting seeks instant validation. Responding seeks long-term stability. NST encourages individuals to move from emotional impulsiveness to ethical responsibility, where the long-term health of relationships outweighs momentary satisfaction.

Gita-Inspired Wisdom within Needonomics

Indian wisdom has long echoed this truth. Gita, the heart of Krishan emphasizes detachment from ego-driven outcomes. Applying

this to relationships means letting go of the hunger to be right and embracing the duty to be kind.

Needonomics translates this wisdom into modern living:

Choose harmony over heroism. Choose understanding over triumph.

Conclusion:

Needonomics School of Thought firmly believes:

Winning arguments feeds ego
Preserving relationships feeds life.

Those who insist on winning every argument often end up lonely, while those who value relationships over rhetoric build families, friendships, and societies rooted in trust and compassion.

In the economy of life, relationships are assets. And sometimes, the wisest investment is to lose an argument gracefully.



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, Colleges, University Department, Individual & Group Competition.



11 JAN
Adventure Sports
 Trekking & Canoe, Obstacle Navigation, Sport Climbing, Disaster Management Technique, Water Sports.
www.krcfoundation.org



11 JAN
Barak Valley Conclave
 Potential Issues and Challenges of Barak Valley to be discussed by stakeholders.
 Includes: MOU, and 20 general discussion topics for Barak valley. (Workshop, Case Study, Seminar, and presentation) available. Participation through invitation only. 5 different awards are provided.



12 JAN
River-Climate Conclave
 Climate change will accelerate on Global Change, climate and river flooding. The Conclave will focus on the importance, technical and practical of River Barak, Training & Geography, experiential and certification River Barak, Climate Change.



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



10 JAN
Media Conclave
 Media Conclave: Media Experts, Webinars, and the Fund, Talks and Conferences are part of the 'Barak Festival 2025'. Theme: 'One for All, All for One'.
 Webinars: Journalism, Marketing, Design & Corporate HR, Leadership, HR, Analytics, Business.

Barak Festival
 Adventure Sports, Art & Culture Promotion




10 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 & Colleges, Extension, Seminar, Public Speaking (College).
 In an online event, where students of NE India Schools and Colleges can participate.



PAINTING CARNIVAL
NE CULTURAL FEST
E-SPORTS
FILM FESTIVAL | EXHIBITION
 BOOK CLUB | SEMINAR | WORKSHOP

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

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

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



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



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

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

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

Painting Carnival
 Water Colour and Oil and Sawdust Painting Campaign



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