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PERSPECTIVE
Being alone is peaceful.

800 TSR Personnel to Assist Poll Duty in Assam, West Bengal

AGARTALA
Around 800 personnel of the Tripura State Rifles (TSR) will be deployed to support election duties in Assam and West Bengal for the upcoming Assembly polls, officials said on Sunday.

Polling for the 294-member West Bengal Assembly will be conducted in two phases - April 23 for 152 seats and April 29 for the remaining 142 - while elections to the 126-member Assam Assembly are scheduled for April 9. Vote counting in both states will be held on May 4.

A senior Tripura Police official said the deployment follows a requisition from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

"Ten companies of TSR will be sent. Initially, they will be stationed in Assam and later moved to West Bengal," the officer said.

The contingent, comprising personnel from the ad hoc battalion, will be led by IPS officer Amarjit Debbarma, Commandant of the 9th Battalion, and Alak Bhattacharya, Commanding Officer of the 8th Battalion. The teams are expected to depart Tripura for Assam between March 23 and 24.

The Tripura State Rifles, raised in the 1980s amid rising insurgency in the state, was modelled on central paramilitary forces. It was formally established under the Tripura State Rifles Act, 1983, with its first battalion coming into existence on March 12, 1984. The force has since expanded to 12 battalions, including nine India Reserve units.

WHO SAID WHAT

Water sustains us and shapes our planet's future. On World Water Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to conserve every drop of water and use it responsibly. Today is also a day to appreciate those who engage in sustainable practices, promote awareness and nurture a culture of conservation. ~ Narendra Modi, PM

INTERNATIONAL WATER DAY

GUWAHATI

With nomination filings concluding across Assam, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday expressed strong confidence in the BJP-led alliance's electoral prospects, predicting a "record-breaking" and "unprecedented" mandate in the upcoming Assembly polls.

Speaking in Nagaon during the nomination filing of AGP working president Keshab Mahanta in Kaliabor, Sarma refrained from specifying seat projections but asserted that the outcome would "surprise everyone."

"This time we will secure record-breaking seats. I don't want to mention numbers, but the electoral results will surprise all. Let us wait till April 9," he said.

Highlighting cohesion within the alliance, Sarma pointed to the coordinated nominations



of Mahanta and AGP president Atul Bora, expressing confidence in a joint victory. "I met Keshab Mahanta in Kaliabor, and it is certain that BJP and AGP together will secure victory for him," he added.

Later in Bokakhat, where

he attended Bora's nomination filing, the Chief Minister made a welfare pitch focused on education. "From now on, parents need not worry about the education of their children. It will be our responsibility to bear all expenses, from school to univer-

sity," he said.

Echoing the alliance's strength, Bora said regional organisations such as Takam Mising Porin Kébang (TMPK) and Mising Mimag Kébang (MMK) were backing the BJP-AGP front. "Under the leadership of the BJP, we are moving forward unitedly," he said.

BJP candidate Ranaj Pegu, preparing to file his nomination from Dhemaji, said he began the day with prayers while seeking public support. "Every election is challenging, and we must form the government again. It is an important responsibility for both the state and the nation," he said.

Highlighting the party's governance record, Pegu claimed Assam has witnessed "45 per cent growth" and said various identity-based movements have been addressed. "The BJP has brought all communities under one roof with a vision for a se-

cure Assam," he added.

He also announced that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit the Dhemaji region on April 1 for a major public event at Gogamukh, covering constituencies including Dhemaji, Jonai, Sisiborgaon, Dhakuakhana, Lakhimpur and Majuli.

Meanwhile, senior BJP leaders have fanned out across the state to support NDA candidates. Sarma said Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal is attending nomination filings in Dibrugarh and Tinsukia, while Minister of State Pabitra Margherita is present in Naharkatia and Titabar.

With top leadership actively campaigning and alliance partners projecting unity, the BJP-led front is set to intensify its outreach with the launch of the second phase of the "Jana Aashirwad Yatra" from Monday evening.

Assam DGP Reviews Security After ULFA-I Strike in Tinsukia



MARGHERITA

Assam Director General of Police Harmeet Singh on Monday visited the Assam Police commando camp at Jagun in Tinsukia district, a day after it came under attack by suspected militants of the proscribed United Liberation Front of Asom-Independent.

Singh inspected the camp at 10 Mile and reviewed the security situation following the late-night assault. He is also scheduled to visit the district headquarters to hold a review meeting with senior police officials.

"We will take action. Whatever legal action that we need to take will be taken," Singh said, urging those

behind the attack to reflect on "who benefits from such attacks."

The strike, carried out on Sunday night, involved the firing of four to five rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) at the camp in a surprise assault, leaving four commandos injured. The ULFA-I later claimed responsibility.

According to the DGP, three personnel sustained splinter injuries and are currently under treatment. "Surgeries will be conducted once the swelling subsides," he said. Another injured commando, who suffered burn injuries in the blast, has been shifted to Gauhati Medical College and Hospital for specialised care. Singh added that he had visited the injured personnel on Sunday to assess their condition.

Following the attack, a bomb disposal team comprising Red Shield Sappers and personnel from the Assam Rifles was deployed to the site. The area was cordoned off, and unexploded ordnance was safely neutralised at a secure location away from civilian zones. In a subsequent statement, ULFA-I claimed it had suspended offensive operations against the Assam Police after the 2021 Assembly elections as a goodwill gesture, but alleged that security forces continued operations against its cadres, including arrests and killings. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma termed the incident "unfortunate" and said a joint operation by the Army and Assam Police is underway to apprehend those involved. Security has since been tightened across Tinsukia and adjoining areas in the wake of the attack.

Gaurav Gogoi Files Nomination from Jorhat, Calls for 'Clean Politics' in Assam

JORHAT

Assam Pradesh Congress Committee chief Gaurav Gogoi on Monday filed his nomination from the Jorhat Assembly constituency, marking his debut in the state Assembly elections.

Gogoi, who is also the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, began the day with visits to multiple religious institutions across Jorhat as part of a multi-faith outreach before launching a roadshow from Jorhat Stadium.

He visited a gurdwara, Borde Gosani Temple, Macharhat Bor Namghar, Tarajan Mosque and a church on Jail Road, interacting with members of different communities at each stop.

The roadshow witnessed a large turnout of supporters and culminated at the District Commissioner's office after nearly three hours, where he submitted his nomination papers.

"The people of Assam want a transparent government, and on behalf of the people, we are carrying forward a cleanliness drive," Gogoi said.

Framing the election as a turning point, he added, "This time, the people of Assam have a historic opportunity to cleanse politics. The political discourse in the state has declined in recent years, and that has become a subject of discussion beyond Assam."

He said the party was campaigning for a "clean and new greater Assam" and expressed confidence that voters would make an informed choice.

Gogoi also extended his wishes to Congress candidates across the district, including Pran Kurmi from Titabar and Pallavi Saikia Gogoi from Teok, along with nominees from allied parties.

Dima Hasao BJP Faces Mass Resignations After Nandita Garlosa's Exit



HAFLONG

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Assam's Dima Hasao district has been hit by a wave of resignations, with at least 30 party leaders stepping down amid growing internal discontent following the exit of Cabinet Minister Nandita Garlosa.

According to resignation letters dated March 23, the leaders-ranging from former district presidents and members of the autonomous council to office-bearers of various front organisations-have relinquished both their posts and primary membership of the party with immediate effect.

The resignations span multiple constituencies, including Haflong, Mahur, Langting and Dautuhaja, pointing to a broader organisational crisis within the hill district unit. Sources indicated that the

move was driven by dissatisfaction among local leaders over alleged neglect, lack of recognition, and discontent with recent political decisions taken by the party leadership.

The recent departure of Garlosa is believed to have further intensified tensions, triggering a chain reaction among grassroots and mid-level functionaries.

While the leaders who resigned have not formally declared their next course of action, indications suggest that some may shift allegiance to the Indian National Congress, which has been attempting to expand its footprint in the district. The BJP has not issued an official statement on the development so far, though party insiders acknowledged that the resignations reflect simmering unrest within the district unit.

Agri-Youth Parliament 2026 Concludes at CAU Imphal, Focuses on Futuristic Agriculture for Northeast

BISWADEEP GUPTA

IMPHAL: The Agri-Youth Parliament 2026 concluded on a high note at the College of Agriculture, Iroisemba under Central Agricultural University (CAU), Imphal, bringing together policymakers, academicians, innovators, and youth leaders to deliberate on the future of agriculture in Northeast India.

Addressing the valedictory function, Vice Chancellor of CAU Imphal, Dr. Anupam Mishra, highlighted the significance of the event themed "Futuristic Agriculture for Northeast Bharat: Sustainability, Innovations and Opportunities." He termed the North East Region (NER) as

the "Final Frontier" of Indian agriculture due to its diverse agro-climatic zones and immense potential to emerge as a global organic hub.

The Vice Chancellor noted that while the NER accounts for nearly 8 percent of India's geographical area, it holds disproportionate potential in high-value horticulture, aromatic plants, and spices. However, he pointed out key challenges such as "Farm to Market" logistics and the urgent need for climate-resilient agricultural practices, emphasizing the critical role of youth innovators in addressing these gaps.

Established in 1993, CAU Imphal has played a pioneer-

ing role in transforming the rural economy of the North East through education, research, and extension programmes across the seven states of the region.

The three-day event witnessed participation from across the country, with around 700 student participants presenting startups and business plans. The programme included 370 registered delegates, 09 investors, 12 successful entrepreneurs, and 06 internationally acclaimed experts. A total of 150 oral and poster presentations were made by student delegates, alongside 32 stalls showcasing innovative technology-based solutions in agriculture and allied sciences. Among these, 05 stalls

featured entrepreneurs supported by CAU Imphal, 03 stalls represented student-led Experiential Learning Programmes, and 04 live demonstrations were conducted by local artisans from Manipur. Two major initiatives were also announced during the programme. These included the release of the Action Plan for Agricultural Issues emerging from the Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan (VKSA) 2025 for the North East Hill Region, aimed at addressing grassroots challenges faced by farmers and scientists. Additionally, a Development Strategy for the Aspirational District of Tamenglong, Manipur was launched to ensure inclusive growth and

self-reliance. The Vice Chancellor acknowledged the collaboration with Agrivision in successfully organizing the event, which focused on empowering youth to lead the vision of a prosperous agricultural future, aligned with the goal of Viksit Bharat by 2047 envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The valedictory function was graced by Chief Minister of Manipur, Yumnam Khemchand Singh, along with several distinguished dignitaries including Dr. Prabha Shankar Shukla, Kamal Nayan, Vikram Singh Farshwan, Dr. Amit Goswami, Dr. Pramod Kumar Pandey, Prof. Indira Sarangthem, and Dr. Jeti Konsam.

GUWAHATI/JAIPUR

In a significant counter-espionage operation, Rajasthan Police have arrested a civilian employee of the Indian Air Force (IAF) posted at the Chabua Air Force Station in Assam for allegedly passing sensitive defence information to handlers in Pakistan. The accused, identified as Sumit Kumar (36), was employed as a Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS) at the strategically important air base in Dibrugarh district. Officials said he is suspected of sharing classified information with Pakistani intelligence operatives through social media platforms in return for financial gains. According to investigators, the case has its origins in January this year when Rajasthan Intelligence arrested one Jhabararam in Jaipur. His interrogation reportedly led to the discovery of a wider espionage network, eventually linking Kumar, who was allegedly in sustained contact with foreign handlers.

Additional Director General of Police (Intelligence) Prafulla Kumar said the accused misused his posi-

tion to access and transmit confidential information. "He exploited his role within the Air Force Station to gather and pass on sensitive inputs related to defence installations," officials said.

Acting on specific intelligence inputs, Rajasthan Police, in coordination with Air Force Intelligence units in New Delhi, carried out a joint operation to apprehend Kumar from Chabua. He was subsequently taken to the Central Interrogation Centre in Jaipur, where multiple intelligence agencies are currently questioning him. Preliminary findings suggest that Kumar had been in contact with Pakistani intelligence operatives since 2023. During this period, he allegedly shared critical information not only about the Chabua Air Force Station but also other key military facilities, including the Nal Air Force Station in Bikaner. The data reportedly included details on fighter aircraft deployment, missile systems, and sensitive information concerning personnel.



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MIDDLE EAST WAR- SHOCKWAVES ACROSS GLOBAL ECONOMY

The Middle East has long been a geopolitical crossroads where energy resources, global trade routes, and strategic rivalries intersect. When conflict erupts in this region, its consequences rarely remain local. The ongoing war has once again demonstrated how rapidly geopolitical instability can spread through the arteries of the global economy. Energy markets are particularly vulnerable. The Middle East accounts for roughly one-third of global crude oil production and remains the primary supplier for many energy-importing economies. Critical maritime routes including the Strait of Hormuz and the Red Sea shipping corridor serve as lifelines for international commerce. Any disruption to these passages can produce immediate price volatility and threaten the stability of supply chains across continents. Even limited military escalation can trigger global economic reactions. Oil markets tend to respond instantly to geopolitical risk, and investors often react by moving capital toward safer assets. Such shifts can raise borrowing costs for emerging economies while increasing inflationary pressure worldwide. But the economic consequences of the current war extend far beyond energy prices. The conflict has already disrupted transportation routes, damaged infrastructure, and forced businesses across the region to suspend operations. Tourism—an important sector for several Middle Eastern economies—has declined sharply due to security concerns. In an era defined by economic interdependence, war in one region reverberates globally. Supply chains stretch across continents, financial markets operate continuously, and investment flows react instantly to geopolitical developments. As a result, even distant economies are feeling the impact of instability in the Middle East. This reality underscores a fundamental truth of the twenty-first century: geopolitical stability is no longer merely a regional concern. It is a prerequisite for global economic sustainability. At the centre of the war lies a profound humanitarian and economic crisis. Entire communities have been uprooted, and vast portions of urban infrastructure have been reduced to rubble. The destruction of housing, hospitals, schools, and industrial facilities has crippled local economies and left millions struggling to survive. Economic activity in war-affected territories has nearly collapsed. Factories have stopped production, small businesses have been destroyed, and agricultural supply systems have been disrupted. With infrastructure damaged and transportation networks compromised, even basic commerce has become extremely difficult. The labour market has been particularly devastated. Large numbers of workers have lost employment due to the destruction of workplaces and the breakdown of economic institutions. Unemployment levels have surged dramatically, leaving many households dependent on international humanitarian assistance. Israel's economy, though resilient and technologically advanced, has also experienced strain. Military mobilization, emergency spending, and security measures have imposed heavy fiscal costs. Wartime spending has required reallocating resources from development programs toward defence and security operations. Meanwhile, neighbouring countries have been drawn into the economic fallout. Tourism revenues in countries such as Jordan and Egypt have declined as travellers avoid the region. Refugee movements have placed additional pressure on public services and government budgets. Thus, the economic devastation of war is multidimensional. It encompasses not only the destruction of infrastructure but also the erosion of institutions, markets, and livelihoods. The global economy has become increasingly reliant on complex supply chains that connect producers, manufacturers, and consumers across continents. When conflict disrupts key transport routes or production centres, the ripple effects can reach far beyond the region where the war occurs. Shipping disruptions in the Red Sea region have already forced several companies to reroute vessels around the Cape of Good Hope, significantly increasing transit times and transportation costs. Insurance premiums for ships operating near conflict zones have also risen sharply. These disruptions have serious implications for global commerce. Higher transportation costs eventually translate into higher prices for goods ranging from electronics to agricultural commodities. For developing economies already facing inflationary pressure, such increases can strain household budgets and slow economic growth. Manufacturing sectors that rely on imported intermediate goods are particularly vulnerable. Delays in components can halt production lines thousands of kilometres away from the conflict zone. This interconnectedness means that war-induced disruptions can affect industries in Asia, Europe, and the Americas. Financial markets respond to such uncertainty as well. Geopolitical tensions often cause fluctuations in stock markets and currency exchange rates. Investors typically seek stability during periods of conflict, which can reduce capital flows to emerging markets. In short, modern warfare does not only destroy cities—it destabilizes economic networks that span the entire globe. The global diplomacy faces challenge in ending the ongoing middle east conflict. Ending the ongoing war needs extraordinary diplomatic channels and ceaseless efforts. History shows that prolonged conflicts rarely end through military victory alone. Sustainable peace typically emerges from negotiations supported by international mediation and political compromise. An immediate ceasefire would represent the first and most critical step. Such an agreement must be accompanied by credible monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance and prevent renewed escalation. International organizations could play an important role in supervising these arrangements. Diplomatic engagement among major global powers is also essential. Countries with strategic interests in the region—including the United States, European nations, Russia, and China—must coordinate their efforts rather than pursue competing diplomatic initiatives. Confidence-building measures could further reduce tensions. These might include humanitarian corridors, prisoner exchanges, and agreements to restore essential services such as electricity and water supply. Ultimately, however, long-term peace will depend on addressing the underlying political disputes that have fuelled decades of conflict. Without confronting these fundamental issues, ceasefire agreements may only offer temporary relief.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“If you are looking for a friend who is faultless, you will be friendless.” - Rumi.

“WAR OF ATTRITION, RISE OF CHINA: A CONFLICT REDEFINING GLOBAL POWER”



COL ASHWANI KUMAR, MID, VSM (RETD.)

“History teaches us that great powers rarely fall on the battlefield - they erode in the long shadow of prolonged wars.”

The ongoing Iran - US - Israel conflict is no longer merely a regional confrontation, it is evolving into a defining moment in global geopolitics. What began as a calculated military strike has transformed into a war of endurance one that is quietly redrawing the map of power, influence, and strategic control across the world.

At first glance, the conflict appears to revolve around three actors, Iran, the United States, and Israel. Yet, beneath the surface, a far more consequential shift is underway. While missiles strike and alliances are tested in the Middle East, other global powers most notably China and Russia are observing, adapting, and positioning themselves for long-term advantage.

This is no longer just a war. It is a test of endurance, strategy, and global relevance.

A War Without Quick Victory.

Modern warfare has moved beyond decisive battles and swift conclusions. The Iran conflict exemplifies this transformation. Iran, fully aware of its conventional limitations, is not seeking outright victory against a militarily superior United States. Instead, its objective is far more pragmatic to survive, to resist, and to impose sustained costs on its adversaries.

Through a mix of missile strikes, drone warfare, cyber capabilities, and proxy networks, Iran has effectively expanded the battlefield without engaging in direct large scale confrontation. This strategy allows it to stretch the conflict over time, increasing both economic and political pressure on its opponents.

However, endurance comes at a price. Iran's economy, already strained by sanctions, faces further stress from war related disruptions. Infrastructure damage, declining revenues, and internal pressures may gradually limit its ability to sustain high-intensity operations.

The likely trajectory, therefore, is not collapse but controlled persistence, a prolonged, low-intensity conflict that continues for years without decisive resolution.

The United States: Power Under Pressure.

The United States remains the world's foremost military power. Its technological superiority, global reach, and alliance network provide unmatched operational capability. Yet, the real challenge before Washington is not one of strength, but of strategy.

Every extended engagement carries costs financial, political, and psychological. The experience of past conflicts has shown that even overwhelming military superiority does not guarantee strategic success. The absence of a clearly defined end-state risks turning tactical victories into long-term liabilities.

If this war continues without a decisive outcome, the United States may face a familiar dilemma, winning battles while struggling to conclude the war. Such a scenario does not diminish its power outright, but it gradually erodes its global image as a decisive and unchallenged superpower.

China: The Silent Gainer.

While the world's attention remains fixed on the Middle East, China is emerging as the most significant indirect benefi-

ciary of this conflict.

Beijing's approach is deliberate and restrained. By avoiding direct involvement, it escapes the immediate costs of war while leveraging its consequences. As the United States diverts resources and attention toward the Middle East, China gains strategic space in the Indo-Pacific region.

Moreover, global uncertainty enhances China's economic relevance. Disruptions in energy supplies and trade routes increase dependence on stable manufacturing and supply chains, areas where China holds considerable influence.

China's rise in this context is not dramatic or confrontational. It is gradual, calculated, and structural. This war may not make China the sole superpower overnight, but it significantly strengthens its position in an emerging multipolar world.

Russia: The Strategic Opportunist.

Russia's role in this conflict is subtle but important. Unlike China, which focuses on long-term economic and geopolitical positioning, Russia operates with a sharper strategic edge.

For Moscow, the conflict presents multiple opportunities: Diversion of Western attention away from Eastern Europe

Rising global energy prices, strengthening its economic position

Reinforcement of strategic partnerships, particularly with countries opposed to Western dominance

Russia has consistently demonstrated its ability to operate effectively in environments of instability. By maintaining a careful balance supporting anti-Western narratives while avoiding direct escalation, it ensures that the conflict indirectly serves its interests.

In essence, Russia thrives in geopolitical turbulence, and this war provides exactly that.

How Long Can Iran Sustain the War?.

The sustainability of Iran's war effort depends on the level of intensity,

Short to Medium Term (1-3 Years):

Iran can maintain active engagement through asymmetric tactics, missile capabilities, and proxy networks. These methods are cost effective and difficult to neutralise completely.

Long Term (Beyond 3 Years):

Economic constraints, internal pressures, and military attrition may begin to limit Iran's operational capacity. High-intensity conflict at this stage becomes increasingly unsustainable.

Enduring Conflict Scenario:

Even under pressure, Iran can continue a low-level, disruptive conflict for an extended period, ensuring that instability persists and costs remain high for its adversaries.

Thus, while Iran may not win in a conventional sense, it can prevent a decisive defeat turning the war into a prolonged strategic stalemate.

India: A Balancing Power in the Making.

India's role in this conflict is uniquely positioned and potentially significant. Unlike the major powers directly or indirectly involved, India maintains relationships across multiple sides engaging with the United States, Israel, and Iran simultaneously.

India's priorities are clear:

Energy security, given its dependence on Middle Eastern oil

Protection of trade routes, particularly in the Gulf region

Strategic stability, to avoid regional escalation

Rather than taking a confrontational stance, India is likely to adopt a balanced and pragmatic approach:

Advocating for de-escalation

Engaging diplomatically with all sides

Exploring opportunities for mediation

In the longer term, India's ability to maintain neutrality while safeguarding its interests could enhance its reputation as a responsible and stabilising global power.

While it may not play a direct military role, India's diplomatic and economic influence could prove increasingly important if the conflict prolongs.

The Real Outcome: A Shift in Global Power.

This war is unlikely to produce a clear victor in traditional military terms. Instead, it is accelerating a broader transformation:

Iran endures, but weakens

The United States remains dominant, but stretched

Israel secures tactical successes, yet remains vulnerable

China rises steadily, without direct confrontation

Russia leverages instability to its advantage

India emerges as a potential balancing force

Conclusion: Power Beyond the Battlefield

The Iran - US - Israel conflict underscores a fundamental truth of modern geopolitics: power is no longer defined solely by military dominance. It is defined by resilience, adaptability, and the ability to shape outcomes without direct engagement.

In this evolving landscape, the greatest gains may not belong to those who fight the war but to those who understand it, outlast it, and position themselves beyond it.

If the conflict continues along its current trajectory, it will not just reshape the Middle East. It will accelerate the transition toward a multipolar world, where influence is distributed, contested, and constantly renegotiated.

And in that emerging order, the rise of China—supported by the strategic manoeuvring of Russia and the balancing role of India may well define the next chapter of global history.

Author's Note.

The author is a Military Historian and Defence Expert, with extensive experience in analysing modern warfare, strategic

affairs, and geopolitical conflicts. His work draws upon years of study, field exposure, and archival research on military doctrines, global power shifts, and conflict dynamics. The views expressed are personal and based on independent assessment of evolving international developments.

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

In Thiruvananthapuram stands the Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple, where architecture meets astronomy.

On equinoxes, the setting sun aligns precisely with the temple's structure, appearing through a sequence of windows in timed intervals, an event often described as "Suryasmaranam."

Built centuries ago, but it reflects a sophisticated understanding of solar movement, geometry and orientation.

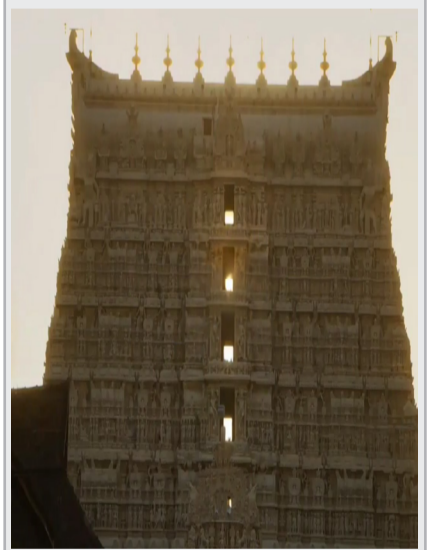
Comforting that science and spirituality weren't separate pursuits. They coexisted, and often reinforced each other.

I'm putting this firmly on my own urgent bucket list: to be there on one of the two equinox days. I missed the spring equinox just this past friday. But I have two chances every year.

Calendar marked.

#SundayWanderer

~ Anand Mahindra, Chairman, Mahindra Group



NDA Shows Unity in Guwahati with Joint Roadshow as Four Candidates File Nominations

GUWAHATI

In a show of strength and coordination, candidates of the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) from four Guwahati constituencies held a joint roadshow on Monday before filing their nomination papers, signalling unity amid recent internal dissent within the BJP's state unit.

The rally featured BJP nominees Pradyut Bordoloi (Dispur), Dipu Ranjan Sharma (New Guwahati) and Vijay Gupta (Central Guwahati), along with Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) candidate Tapan Das (Dimoria).

Supporters from both parties gathered early at Khanapara field, with large crowds turning



up despite overcast weather. The candidates rode together in an open vehicle, moving in a procession through the city towards the District Commissioner's office, as party workers lined the route waving flags and raising slogans.

As per election guidelines, the candidates were to complete the final stretch on foot, accompanied by a limited number of supporters.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma briefly joined the gathering at Khanapara, describing the polls as a "festival of democracy" and expressing confidence in a strong electoral outcome.

"It's a great atmosphere, and we're set to win by record mar-

gins. People will be surprised by the number of seats the BJP secures. I won't put a figure on it yet, but the results will speak for themselves," he said.

Sarma later left for Kaliabor to accompany senior AGP leaders Atul Bora and Keshab Mahanta during their nomination filings. Ahead of submitting his nomination from the 35 No. New Guwahati constituency, Sharma said the turnout reflected public support for the government's performance. "The party's ideology has resonated with voters, and it is evident in the scale of support," he said.

The joint mobilisation comes against the backdrop of internal discontent within the BJP, particularly in the Dispur constitu-

ency, following the announcement of candidates. The party's decision to field a recently inducted former Congress MP had triggered protests among sections of local leadership.

Sitting BJP MLA Atul Bora, who was denied a ticket, had initially hinted at contesting as an Independent or supporting a rival candidate. However, party leaders later intervened, persuading him to align with the party.

Meanwhile, senior BJP leader Jayanta Das has resigned from the party and is likely to contest as an Independent from Dispur.

Polling for the 126-member Assam Assembly is scheduled for April 9, with counting of votes set for May 4.

Security stepped up at Kuki-Zo Council chief's residence after mob breach attempt

IMPHAL

Security has been intensified outside the residence of Kuki-Zo Council (KZC) chairman Henlianthang Thanglet after a group of locals, largely comprising youths, allegedly attempted to storm his house on Monday. Officials said security personnel, including the Army, were swiftly deployed to the area and managed to disperse the crowd before the situation could escalate. No injuries were reported in the incident.

The development comes a day after Yumnam Khemchand Singh held a key meeting with leaders of the Kuki-Zo Council in Guwahati. The meeting, which lasted nearly one hour and 45 minutes, marked the first formal engagement between the state government and the council since ethnic violence broke out in the state in 2023. According to an official statement, the interaction was described as an initial step towards rebuilding dialogue after nearly three years of strained relations between the Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities. Issues raised by the council formed the core of the discussions.

The Kuki-Zo Council delegation flagged concerns over tensions involving Kuki and Tangkhul groups and called for measures to ease the situation. It also stressed the need for justice for those affected by the violence, maintaining that accountability remains crucial to any lasting peace process. The delegation further urged the continuation of the buffer zone until a political resolution is achieved. It also referred to the ongoing Suspension of Operations (SoO) talks, calling for an expedited process to help restore stability in the region. Responding to the concerns, the Chief Minister outlined steps taken by the government to maintain law and order and acknowledged the council's willingness to engage in dialogue.

No agreements were reached during the meeting, with officials indicating that discussions remain at a preliminary stage.

Assam minister Nandita Gorlosa switches from BJP to Congress ahead of Assembly polls



GUWAHATI

In a significant political development ahead of the Assembly elections, Assam cabinet minister and Haflong MLA Nandita Gorlosa joined the Indian National Congress, dealing a setback to the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party. Gorlosa was formally inducted into the Congress in the presence of party leaders, including Haflong candidate Nirmal Langthasa, who is also the APCC General Secretary. The switch comes after the BJP denied Gorlosa a ticket for the upcoming polls, opting instead to field Rupali Langthasa from the Haflong constituency. Her exclusion from the party's candidate list had

triggered considerable speculation, given her position in the state cabinet. Party sources indicated that Gorlosa may replace Nirmal Langthasa as the Congress candidate from Haflong, although no formal announcement has been made so far. The ruling party had earlier confirmed that several sitting legislators were dropped this election cycle as part of a strategy to introduce new faces, a move publicly articulated by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. The Congress described Gorlosa's induction as a major boost to its prospects in the Haflong seat and a sign of growing support ahead of the elections.

Gaurav Gogoi accuses BJP of 'politicising welfare', promises unconditional access to schemes in Assam

GUWAHATI

Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president Gaurav Gogoi on Sunday launched a sharp attack on the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, accusing the state government of linking welfare benefits to political allegiance and vowing to end such practices if voted to power.

Addressing party workers and the public, Gogoi alleged that the government led by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has institutionalised a system where access to welfare schemes is increasingly conditional, a move he described as "undemocratic and coercive."

"We are witnessing how the BJP government is attempting to dominate and control people, particularly women. Welfare schemes existed long before the BJP came to power, but never were citizens compelled to align with any political ideology or party to access them," Gogoi said. Referring to state initiatives



such as the Mamoni, Majoni and Baideo schemes, along with provisions for ASHA and Anganwadi workers, the Congress leader maintained that welfare

programmes were traditionally implemented without political conditions. He called for a collective push to dismantle what he termed a "politics of fear and in-

timidation."

Invoking remarks by Assamese singer Zubeen Garg, Gogoi said there was a need to restore dignity and confidence among the people. "We want the people of Assam to live with pride and without fear," he said.

He further alleged that the current administration has introduced a culture where beneficiaries are expected to demonstrate political loyalty to receive government support. "There is no requirement to join any party to access welfare. Under a Congress-led alliance, eligibility-not political affiliation-will determine access to schemes. No one will be compelled to follow or participate in programmes like Mann Ki Baat to receive benefits," he added.

Expressing confidence ahead of the upcoming Assembly elections, Gogoi said the opposition alliance was the "largest and strongest" in Assam's political history and positioned to mount a serious challenge to the BJP's rule in the state.

Garo Hills Groups Protest in Delhi Over Alleged Land Grabs, Seek Safeguards for Indigenous Rights



NEW DELHI/GUWAHATI

Several organisations from Meghalaya's Garo Hills staged

a protest at Jantar Mantar on Sunday, raising concerns over alleged land encroachment and threats to indigenous rights in the

region. The demonstration was led by the Nangriming A'chik Dol (NAD), which highlighted what it described as increasing intimidation and disturbances affecting indigenous communities in Meghalaya.

Protesters alleged that unauthorised settlers have occupied tribal land and natural resources in parts of Garo Hills, leading to heightened tensions and undermining constitutional protections provided under the Sixth Schedule.

In a statement, NAD claimed that certain recent incidents in the region were part of deliberate attempts to destabilise local communities. The organisation also criticised authorities for failing to curb illegal settlements and alleged that human rights defenders supporting indigenous groups have faced targeting and temporary detention.

The group put forward a series of demands, including a comprehensive and independent inquiry into alleged illegal settlements and the eviction of unauthorised occupants from tribal areas in accordance with regulations of the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council (GHADC). It also called for stricter monitoring along border areas.

Among other demands, the organisation sought a probe by the National Investigation Agency into the killing of Dilseong M. Sangma and urged authorities to ensure proper investigation into recent incidents reported in the Chibimang area.

The protesters further demanded compensation for the victim's family and called on both state and central governments to safeguard the land, cultural heritage, and legal rights of the A'chik community.

Assam Polls: Akhil Gogoi Projects Confidence in Sivasagar, Says Candidate Talks Ongoing



SIVASAGAR

As political activity intensifies ahead of the Assam Assembly elections, Rajar Dal leader Akhil Gogoi on Sunday said discussions over candidate selection are still underway, while expressing confidence about retaining the Sivasagar seat.

Gogoi said his party is engaged in "technical discussions" with Angkita Dutta of the BJP and Shrinkhal Chaliha, though a final decision has yet to be reached. "Once the discussions and paperwork are completed, we will announce the candidates," he told reporters.

Positioning himself strongly in the Sivasagar contest, Gogoi drew a sharp contrast between his public image and that of his rivals. Targeting opponent Kushal Duwari, he alleged the latter's association with a criminal case, while asserting his own identity as one of the most vocal legislators in the state.

"For the past five years, I have stood firmly with the people of Sivasagar. They will not support either Kushal Duwari or former Anguri MLA Pradiip Hazarika," Gogoi said, expressing confidence in his re-election.

Highlighting his performance, the

Rajar Dal leader said he has delivered multiple development projects and welfare initiatives in the constituency. "The people are aware of the work done over the past five years, and they will ensure my victory," he headed.

On alliance dynamics, Gogoi noted that under the seat-sharing arrangement with the Indian National Congress, his party has been allotted 13 seats. He said several senior leaders could not be accommodated, and extended an apology to figures such as Dhairya Konwar and Babul Sonowal for not being fielded from winnable constituencies.

The political situation in the Sivasagar Assembly constituency remains fluid, with multiple changes in the name of the NDA-backed candidate, even after nomination papers were filed by Pradiip Hazarika.

Meanwhile, Gogoi has stepped up campaign efforts. A large joining programme of Rajar Dal was held at a Namghar in Sivasagar town, where several supporters joined the party in his presence. He administered the oath to new members and highlighted his government work over the past five years.

Assam Minister alleges disrespect to Zubeen Garg at Congress office; calls it 'assault on sentiments'

GUWAHATI

Assam Minister Pijush Hazarika on Sunday alleged that Congress workers committed a "heinous act" by disrespecting singer Zubeen Garg at a Congress office in Bijnai.

In a post on X, Hazarika claimed that the incident took place at the Indian National Congress's Assam unit office in Bijnai, where, he said, party workers disrespected the artist. He termed the act "an assault on the sentiments of Assam."

"Today in INC Assam Bijnai Office, Congress workers committed this heinous act of disrespecting Beloved Zubeen. This is an assault on sentiments of Assam," Hazarika said in his post.

The minister further alleged that the Congress had used the singer's name during the election season and accused the party of duplicity. "This comes after Cong milked his name in the entire election season. Now their duplicity stands exposed," he added.

The post included a video purportedly showing an individual vandalising a poster of the singer inside a room.

Quest!

LiFi (short for 'Light Fidelity') uses light instead of radio frequencies and is 100 times faster than WiFi.



Zubeen Garg passed away in Singapore on September 19, 2025. The singer was "severely intoxicated" and had drowned in the waters off Lazarus Island after declining a life jacket, a Coroner's court was told, according to a report by Lydia Lam in Channel NewsAsia (CNA).

The iconic singer, 52, was at a yacht party on September 19, 2025, and initially wore a life jacket but removed it and later declined to put on a second one offered to

him, the chief investigating officer told the court in the opening of the inquiry, according to the news report.

At the time of the incident, he was "heavily intoxicated", and several witnesses saw him attempting to swim back to the yacht before he went limp and began floating face-down in the water, the report said.

Assam will witness the polling for all 126 Assembly constituencies in a single

phase on April 9, while the counting of votes is scheduled for May 4, the Election Commission of India announced.

Earlier in the day, Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) President Gaurav Gogoi characterised the upcoming state elections as a showdown between "the Congress led by Tarun Gogoi and the Congress led by Himanta Biswa Sarma", alleging that the current BJP government is merely a faction of the former grand old party led by Chief Minister Sarma.

While interacting with the media during his campaign in Majuli in support of Indian National Congress candidate Indranil Pegu, he said, "What stands before us is a Congress led by Himanta Biswa Sarma, merely carrying the BJP tag. The leaders who did wrong during Tarun Gogoi's tenure are now in the BJP. This election will be a fight between the Congress led by Tarun Gogoi and the Congress led by Himanta Biswa Sarma." The APCC President further claimed, "There is no BJP in Assam now. What exists is a Congress under Himanta Biswa Sarma with a BJP label. Under his leadership, some former Congress leaders have gathered at Vajpayee Bhawan, striving hard to contest elections for their own and their families' interests. On the other hand, we represent a Congress inspired by the ideals of Tarun Gogoi."

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90 FDC drug samples, including Paracetamol and multivitamins, found unapproved; regulator asks states to take action



NEW DELHI

The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has launched a nationwide crackdown on unapproved Fixed Dose Combination (FDCs). The drug regulator has requested to examine the 90 FDCs in the generic name, whether approval is granted by the state or UT drug controllers, according to a letter.

These drugs include Multi vitamins, folic acids, syrups, Paracetamol, Clotrimazole and Betamethasone Cream, Diclofenac Potassium and Dicyclanole Hydrochloride Tablets, etc.

According to the letter, "The SUGAM lab testing data for the year 2025, a large number of drug samples (FDCs) are detected as unapproved and fall under the category of 'New Drug'. No new drug shall be manufactured for sale unless

it is approved by the Licensing Authority 'as defined in Rule 3 of New Drugs and Clinical Trial Rules, 2019, Further, as per Rule 80 of New Drugs and Clinical Trial Rules 2019, a person who intends to manufacture new drug in the form of API or Pharmaceuticals formulation, as the case may be, for sale or distribution, shall make an application for grant of permission to the Central Licensing Authority in Form CT-21 along with a fee as specified in Sixth Schedule."

"The presence of unapproved drugs in the supply chain is a matter of serious concern, posing potential risks to public health and safety. It also indicates non-compliance with the provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, and rules made thereunder," the letter read.

"Accordingly, please initiate appropriate

investigation and regulatory action against the concerned manufacturers, marketers, and other stakeholders, as deemed fit. Kindly ensure strict monitoring and enforcement to prevent manufacture, sale, and distribution of such unapproved drugs," the letter states, on appropriate action against the sale and distribution of unapproved drugs.

Considering the matter in public interest drug regulator has mentioned it as a serious concern, "In case the manufacturer has submitted the New Drug permission, which is mandatory as per Rule 83 of NDCT Rules, 2019, before grant of manufacturing licence, please provide a copy of the same. You are further requested to submit an action taken report (ATR) to this office at the earliest. This matter may be accorded top priority in the interest of public health."

Sensex, Nifty decline 2 per cent each as West Asia tensions escalate; investors lose Rs 8 lakh crore within minutes

MUMBAI

India's equity market fell sharply again on Monday as tensions in West Asia showed no signs of de-escalation. In early morning deals, the BSE Sensex nosedived more than 1,550 points, or over 2%, to 72,977, while the NSE Nifty50 plunged nearly 500 points, or over 2%, to 22,634.

Investors lost a staggering Rs 8 lakh crore within minutes, as the overall market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms dropped to Rs 421 lakh crore from Rs 429 lakh crore on Friday.

The fresh fall is attributed to geopolitical tensions worsening over the weekend, as US President Donald Trump issued a stark ultimatum warning of strikes on Iran's power grid unless Tehran restores access to the Strait of Hormuz. Iran retaliated with threats to target critical infrastructure across West Asia if the US attacks its power plants.

The conflict, now in its fourth week, has disrupted shipments via the Strait of Hormuz—a crucial chokepoint that handles about 20% of global oil supply, 40% of India's oil imports, and one-third of the global liquefied natural gas trade. This disruption has led to a sharp surge in crude oil and gas prices, with Brent crude trading between \$110 and \$115 per barrel.

Higher oil prices are likely to translate into increased inflation in the coming months, putting pressure on currency stability and corporate margins, thereby impacting overall equity market sentiment. The decline in the Indian market also mirrored global trends, with Japan's Nikkei 225, China's Shanghai Composite, and South Korea's Kospi falling between 2% and 6% on Monday.



Meanwhile, the rupee plummeted 18 paise to a record low of 93.8925 against the US dollar in early trade on Monday, amid concerns that oil prices may rise further. Relentless selling by foreign institutional investors (FIIs) has continued to add pressure on both the currency and the equity market.

According to NSDL data, total FII net selling through exchanges so far in March stood at a massive Rs 90,152 crore. FIIs have been net sellers on all trading days this month.

VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Investments, said that with the war in West Asia entering its fourth week, there is no clarity

on when it will end.

"Unfortunately, the conflict is escalating, with President Trump giving an ultimatum to Iran to open the Strait of Hormuz within 48 hours. The Iranian president's response that 'the Strait of Hormuz is open to all except those who violate our soil' has prevented panic in the oil market. However, uncertainty remains high, and markets will be closely watching the outcome," he added.

He further stated that the global risk-off sentiment has impacted all asset classes, including stocks, bonds, and precious metals like gold and silver. In fact, the decline in safe-haven gold has been sharper than in equities. MCX gold opened 3% lower at Rs

1,40,158 per 10 grams on Monday and fell to a low of Rs 1,36,403. "There is little that investors can do during a crisis characterised by such high uncertainty. If history is any guide, investors should avoid panic and remain calm," the analyst said.

Tensions in West Asia first escalated after US and Israeli forces targeted key Iranian sites on February 28. Iran responded swiftly with a barrage of ballistic missiles aimed at Israeli cities and key Middle Eastern hubs such as Dubai, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain. As of now, both sides, the US-Israel coalition and Iran, continue to launch missiles and drones at each other.

INTERNATIONAL

Planet trapped record heat in 2025: United Nations



GENEVA

The amount of heat trapped by the Earth reached record levels in 2025, with the consequences of such warming feared to last for thousands of years, the UN warned Monday.

The 11 hottest years ever recorded were all between 2015 and 2025, the United Nations' WMO weather and climate agency confirmed in its flagship State of the Global Climate annual report.

Last year was the second or third hottest year on record, at about 1.43 Celsius above the 1850-1900 average, the World Meteorological Organization said.

"The global climate is in a state of emergency. Planet Earth is being pushed beyond its limits. Every key climate indicator is flashing red," said UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

"Humanity has just endured the 11 hottest years on record. When history repeats itself 11 times, it is no longer a coincidence. It is a call to act."

For the first time, the WMO climate report includes the planet's energy imbalance: the rate at which energy enters and leaves the Earth system.

Under a stable climate, incoming energy from the Sun is about the same as the amount of outgoing energy, the Geneva-based agency said.

However the increase in concentrations of heat-trapping greenhouse gases — carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide — "to their highest level in at least 800,000 years" has "upset this equilibrium", the WMO said.

"The Earth's energy imbalance has increased since its observational record began in 1960, particularly in the past 20 years. It reached a new high in 2025."

WMO chief Celeste Saulo said scientific advances had improved understanding of the energy imbalance and its implications for the climate.

"Human activities are increasingly disrupting the natural equilibrium and we will live with these consequences for hundreds and thousands of years," she said.

More than 91 percent of the excess heat is stored in the ocean.

"Ocean heat content reached a new record high in 2025 and its rate of warming more than doubled from 1960-2005 to 2005-2025," the WMO said.

Ocean warming has far-reaching consequences, such as degradation of marine ecosystems, biodiversity loss and reduction of the ocean carbon sink, the agency said.

"It fuels tropical and subtropical storms and exacerbates ongoing sea-

ice loss in the polar regions."

The Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets have both lost considerable mass, and the annual average extent of Arctic sea ice in 2025 was the lowest or second-lowest ever recorded in the satellite era.

Last year, the global mean sea level was around 11 centimetres higher than when satellite altimetry records began in 1993.

Ocean warming and sea level rise are projected to continue for centuries. WMO scientific officer John Kennedy said global weather is still under the influence of La Nina, a naturally occurring climate phenomenon that cools surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean. It brings changes in winds, pressure and rainfall patterns.

Conditions oscillate between La Nina and its warming opposite El Nino, with neutral conditions in between.

The warmest year on record, 2024, was around 1.55C above the 1850-1900 average, and started in a strong El Nino.

Forecasts indicate neutral conditions by the middle of 2026 with a possible El Nino developing before the end of the year, said Kennedy.

If so, "then we're likely to see maybe elevated temperatures again in 2027", he told a press conference.

The World Meteorological Organization's deputy chief, Ko Barrett, said the outlook was a "dire picture".

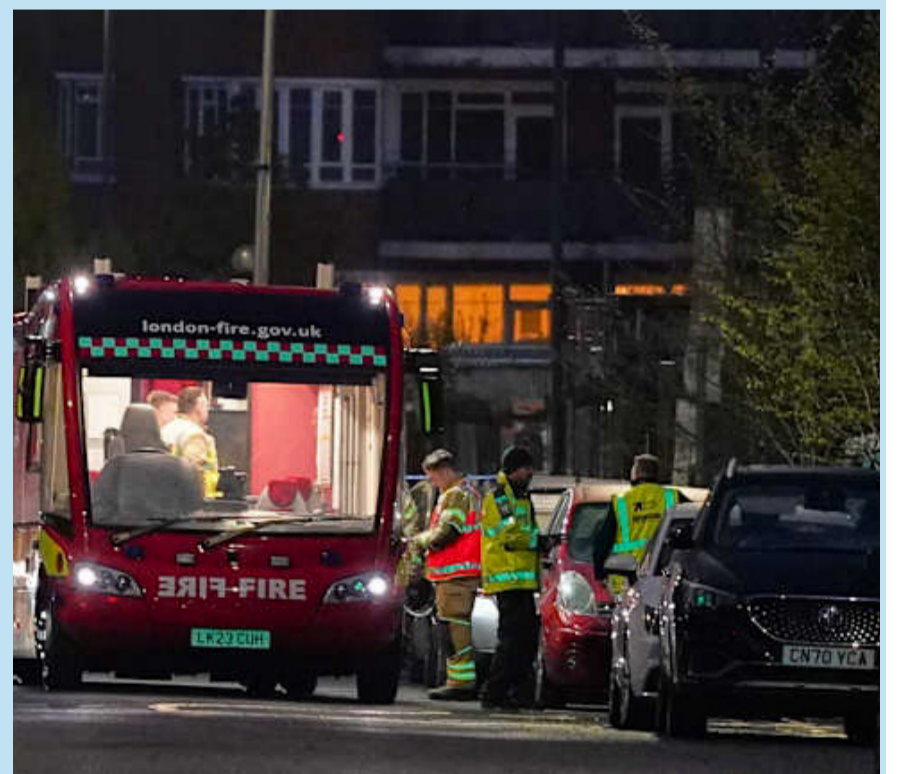
She said the WMO provided the evidence it sees, hoping that the information "will encourage people to take action". But there was "no denying" that "these indicators are not moving in a direction that provides for a lot of hope", she said.

With war gripping the Middle East and fuel prices soaring, Guterres said the world should heed the alarm call.

"In this age of war, climate stress is also exposing another truth: our addiction to fossil fuels is destabilising both the climate and global security," he said.

"Today's report should come with a warning label: climate chaos is accelerating and delay is deadly," he said.

Vehicles belonging to Jewish ambulance service set on fire in London



LONDON

British police are investigating an apparent arson attack on four vehicles belonging to a Jewish ambulance service in London early Monday morning.

The police said the incident is being treated as an antisemitic hate crime.

Officers were called to Golders Green, a London neighborhood with a large Jewish population, after receiving reports of a fire.

Four ambulances belonging to Hatzola Northwest, a volunteer organization that provides emergency medical response, were damaged, according to the London fire brigade.

Multiple cylinders on the vehicles exploded, causing windows to break in an adjacent block of flats, it said in a statement, adding that no injuries have been reported and the fire has been brought under control.

The cause of the fire is being investigated, authorities said.



"We know this incident will cause a great deal of community concern and officers remain on scene to carry out urgent enquiries," Police Superintendent Sarah Jackson said.

She added that no arrests have been made yet, and police were carrying out additional patrols in the area.

Police said reports of explosions were linked to gas canisters on the ambulances. Nearby homes were evacuated as a precautionary measure.

The number of antisemitic incidents reported

across the U.K. has soared since the start of the Israel-Hamas War in late 2023, according to the Community Security Trust, which works to protect the Jewish community. The group recorded 3,700 in 2025, up from 1,662 in 2022.

In October 2025, an attacker drove his car into people gathered outside a Manchester synagogue to celebrate the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur and stabbed one person to death. Another person died during the attack after being inadvertently shot by police.

From Struggles to Recognition: The Inspiring Journey of Senior Journalist Brown Nongmaithem

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SANJOO THANGJAM

In a moment of pride not only for Manipur but for the entire North East, senior journalist Brown Nongmaithem has been conferred the prestigious "The Pillars of Hindustani Society" award for the year 2025-2026. The honour was presented during the joint anniversary celebrations of the Trans Asian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Indo Mongolian Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the iconic Royal Mumbai Yacht Club near the Gateway of India.

The felicitation was held on February 24, 2026, at the Ball Room of Royal Mumbai Yacht Club, near Hotel Taj Palace, opposite Gateway of India, Mumbai. Although the organisers have not widely publicized the details of the felicitation, the award was conferred during their landmark anniversary celebrations, where 33 individuals from across the world were honoured under 33 distinct categories for their contributions to society.

Among them, Brown Nongmaithem was recognised for his fairness, balance and consistent reporting from conflict affected Manipur. For a journalist who has spent over 25 years navigating one of the most complex regions in the country, this recognition is not just an award but a validation of a lifelong commitment to truthful and responsible journalism.

A Journey Marked by Struggle and Resolve

Born in Shillong and partly educated in Ahmedabad at Amrut Firdus High School, Brown's early life was shaped by the disciplined environment of an Army family. His father, the late Nongmaithem Iboyaima Singh, popularly known as NI Singh, was not only an Army officer but also a filmmaker who once produced an English feature film titled "Storm."

Like many parents of his generation, he initially disapproved of journalism as a profession, considering it uncertain and financially unstable. He discouraged his son from pursuing it. However, time and experience altered that perception. When Brown began writing and even covered his father's creative work in newspapers, he slowly came to recognise the influence and reach of journalism. In a quiet but powerful moment of acceptance, he acknowledged his son's work and expressed pride, a turning point that remained deeply personal and motivating for Brown.

Finding a Footing in Journalism

After completing his education, including a degree in journalism from Indira Gandhi National Open University, Brown began writing for a small monthly magazine, Anouba Yawol. What started as a modest engagement soon turned into a serious pursuit when he joined the Imphal Free Press.

For over five years, he worked there, learning the fundamentals of reporting and newsroom discipline. However, an abrupt and difficult exit from the organisation left him disheartened and uncertain about his future.

Don't ever stop being a good genuine person

At this critical juncture, support from



fellow journalists proved invaluable. Among them was Ningthemcha Bobichand, who encouraged him to continue writing and helped him reconnect with opportunities. Around the same time, senior journalist Sobhupati Samom of The Assam Tribune extended an opportunity to contribute to The News File. These interventions ensured that Brown remained within the profession during one of its most uncertain phases.

A Career of Constant Reinvention

What followed was a journey marked by constant movement across newsrooms. From Erandam Weekly to The News File, and later to The Sunday Indian, Brown steadily built his reputation. At The Sunday Indian, his stories were published in fourteen Indian languages, significantly expanding his reach and visibility.

Yet, the instability of the media industry continued to affect his career. Financial downsizing led to his exit from The Sunday Indian. Subsequent associations with Manaba, Huiyen Lampao and Matamgi Yakairol reflected both his persistence and the fragile nature of regional journalism, where publications often struggle to sustain themselves.

At one point, disillusionment nearly pushed him away from journalism altogether. He briefly considered moving into business, but the instinct to report and tell stories proved stronger than the temptation to leave.

The Turning Point

The defining moment in his career came when he reconnected with colleagues from his earlier days and was offered an opportunity to join New Observer Post. Under the leadership of Onkareshwar Pandey, he found not just employment but a renewed sense of purpose.

Working with New Observer Post and Indian Observer Post, Brown gradually rebuilt his professional identity. His reporting began to gain recognition beyond Manipur, particularly for its balanced perspective in a region often portrayed through extremes. His ability to present facts without bias and to highlight human stories within conflict distinguished his work.

Recognition That Came as a Surprise

The award itself came unexpectedly. A phone call from Mumbai informed him that he had been selected for "The Pillars of Hindustani Society." Like many seasoned journalists, he approached the news with caution, verifying its authenticity before accepting the

invitation.

The ceremony brought together dignitaries including Mariano Agustin Caucino and Justice Shreehari Daawara. The selection process was led by Dr. Sanjay Bhideo, Founder and Convenor of TACCI, who emphasised that the awards are based purely on merit and recognise genuine contributions without expectation of favour.

A Personal Note

The author had the opportunity to work with Brown Nongmaithem at the Imphal Free Press in the late 2000s and later under him at Indian Observer Post as a Special Correspondent. Due to unavoidable circumstances, the association could not continue, but the experience offered valuable insights into his commitment, discipline and belief in fair journalism.

Conclusion

The journey of Brown Nongmaithem is not a story of uninterrupted success but one of endurance. It reflects the reality of journalism in regions like Manipur, where uncertainty is constant and recognition is rare.

His recent honour stands as a reminder that integrity and perseverance do not go unnoticed forever. More importantly, it highlights the role of journalists who continue to work quietly, often without recognition, to bring truth and balance to public discourse.

In recognising Brown Nongmaithem, one also acknowledges the larger spirit of journalism that survives against odds, sustained by individuals who believe in its purpose.

The author is a journalist based in Imphal, Manipur.

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