

Barak Festival
NE INDIA ADVENTURE SPORTS,
ART & CULTURE PROMOTION



Barak Valley, Assam | JAN-MAR 2025
www.krctimes.com
Phone: 8721838313

KRC TIMES

STAY ENRICHED

North East Integration Rally
Peace | Progress | Prosperity
2026

Registrations
OPEN



WhatsApp only | +91 935 083 0085
www.northeastintegrationrally.in

VOLUME:1, ISSUE 735 | SILCHAR THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026. EAST AND NE INDIA EDITION | e-mail: krctimes@gmail.com , www.krctimes.com

Get all the latest and updated news of today in the evening. For subscribing to this e-paper contact at -8721838313

SUBSCRIBE
₹300 / year



WhatsApp payment details : 8721838313
info@krctimes.com

PERSPECTIVE
Your past will only control you if you allow it to.

NFR Adds 20 New Train Services in 2025-26, Boosting Northeast Connectivity

GUWAHATI
The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has rolled out 20 pairs of new train services during the 2025-26 financial year, significantly expanding rail connectivity within the Northeast and linking the region more closely with major cities across the country.

The Maligaon-headquartered zone said the expansion includes a mix of premium, semi-premium, and conventional services aimed at improving accessibility, passenger comfort, and overall travel efficiency. "This significant expansion reflects our continued commitment to enhancing connectivity and passenger experience across the region," NFR Chief Public Relations Officer Kapinjal Kishore Sharma said. A key highlight of the rollout is the introduction of advanced train services, including the Vande Bharat Sleeper Express operating between Kamakhya and Howrah, offering a modern, high-speed overnight travel option with upgraded amenities.

In addition, seven pairs of Amrit Bharat Express trains have been introduced to provide affordable long-distance travel, connecting destinations such as Nagercoil, Tiruchirappalli, Gomti Nagar, Rohtak, Bengaluru, Panvel, and Charlapalli.

Strengthening connectivity further, a new Rajdhani Express service linking Sairang with Delhi has been launched, marking a major boost for Mizoram's access to the national capital. Long-distance routes such as the Sairang-Kolkata-Sairang Express have also been added.

At the regional level, several new services including Sairang-Guwahati, Silchar-Sairang, NJP-Guwahati, and Agartala-Narangi routes have been introduced to enhance intra-regional connectivity.

WHO SAID WHAT



Hills, streams, and stories that touch your soul – Ziro is calling. ~ Pema Khandu, CM Arunachal Pradesh

ULFA-I Strike Near Jagun Puts Tinsukia on High Alert Ahead of Assam Polls

TINSUKIA

A recent attack by United Liberation Front of Asom (Independent) has heightened security concerns in Tinsukia district, with authorities ramping up vigilance ahead of the April 9 Assembly elections.

The March 22 strike targeted the 4th Assam Police Commando Battalion camp at Jagun, where suspected militants fired multiple rocket-propelled grenades during what the outfit described as "Operation Bujoni." The attack triggered a 20-30 minute gunfight, leaving four commandos injured-three with serious splinter wounds and one with burn injuries.

Following the assault, the attackers reportedly fled towards the Arunachal Pradesh border. The insurgent group later claimed responsibility, describing the attack as retaliation for recent security operations and alleged drone strikes on its camps.



The incident has underscored longstanding security vulnerabilities in Upper Assam, particularly in border regions where difficult terrain and proximity to international boundaries complicate surveillance. Jagun's location-close to Arunachal Pradesh and within reach of routes leading to Myanmar's Sagaing region has

historically made it a sensitive zone for insurgent movement. In response, security forces have placed the district on high alert. Joint operations involving the Assam Police, Central Reserve Police Force, Assam Rifles, and Arunachal Pradesh Police are currently underway to track down those responsible and secure vulnerable pockets.

Senior officials said coordinated efforts are being intensified to ensure a safe environment for polling. The district police emphasised inter-agency synergy, highlighting ongoing collaboration between central armed police forces and state units. Harmeet Singh visited the attack site and met the injured

NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has conducted a comprehensive review of election preparedness in Assam, stressing the need for a safe, neutral and transparent voting process ahead of the April 9 Assembly polls.

The Commission on March 25 convened a detailed briefing and hands-on training session involving District Election Officers (DEOs), senior police officials, and key administrative personnel responsible for managing the electoral process.

During the meeting, officials were directed to ensure that voters can exercise their franchise freely, without fear, coercion, or undue influence. The ECI reiterated its focus on maintaining a level playing field and fostering confidence among electors.

Preparations were reviewed across a wide range of areas, including security deployment, movement and placement of personnel, transport logistics, handling of Electronic



Voting Machines (EVMs), and the readiness of polling teams. Authorities were also instructed to ensure that all polling stations are equipped with assured minimum facilities for voters.

To strengthen transparency and

accountability, Presiding Officers have been directed to adhere strictly to established procedures, including providing polling agents with signed copies of Form 17C - the official record of votes cast - at the close of polling.

In addition, officials have been asked to update voter turnout figures on the ECINET platform at regular intervals throughout the polling process, as well as after voting concludes.

In a bid to boost voter participa-

tion, the Commission has instructed local election authorities to distribute voter information slips well in advance, along with voter awareness material for households. Specially designed slips will also be made available for visually impaired voters to ensure inclusive participation.

The ECI further directed that applications for campaign-related permissions submitted through the Suvidha system be processed within 24 hours on a "first come, first served" basis, while maintaining complete impartiality.

Given Assam's challenging terrain, particularly in riverine and remote areas, officials have been advised to remain prepared for emergencies and ensure adequate safety arrangements at vulnerable polling locations. Polling for all 126 Assembly constituencies will be held in a single phase on April 9, with counting of votes scheduled for May 4. The Commission reiterated its commitment to conducting free, fair, and peaceful elections across the state.

Fuel Panic Grips Guwahati as Rumours Trigger Surge in Demand; Govt Denies Shortage



GUWAHATI

Panic buying driven by rumours of a fuel shortage has led to a sharp spike in sales across Guwahati, with authorities maintaining that supplies remain adequate and urging residents not to rush to petrol pumps.

Reports from several parts of the city and other areas of Assam indicate that fuel outlets have witnessed an unusual surge in demand since early morning, with sales rising by nearly 30 per cent in some locations. The sudden rush has resulted in temporary stock strain at certain depots, fuelling concerns among consumers.

Officials, however, have dismissed fears of an actual shortage. Sources in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas said that while global developments, including tensions in West Asia, may have had a marginal impact, fuel availability remains under control.

"There is no shortage of fuel at present. The Ministry is closely monitoring the situation," a senior official said, adding that instances of panic buying may have worsened the situation.

There were also indications that some private players could be contributing to an artificial sense of scarcity.

On the ground, the impact of the rush was visible. At a fuel station on Rajgarh Road, dispensers briefly ran dry, with a 'No Petrol' notice displayed. Staff attributed the situation to an unexpected surge in demand, with many consumers opting to fill their tanks amid uncertainty. Employees at fuel depots reported that while demand had spiked sharply, replenishment supplies were still awaited. "If tankers do not arrive on schedule, existing stock could run out quickly due to the sudden increase in sales," a depot worker said.

Operators at some outlets also pointed to recent logistical changes, including reduced fuel allocations and earlier loading deadlines, as factors contributing to supply tightness at the retail level. However, they clarified that this did not necessarily indicate a systemic shortage.

The district administration has begun assessing the situation. The Office of the Deputy Commissioner in Kamrup (Metro) is compiling a detailed report on stock levels across depots to determine the actual supply position.

Chief Secretary Ravi Kota reiterated that there is no cause for concern. "We have checked with petrol pumps across the city, and all have confirmed adequate availability of petrol and diesel," he said.

Authorities have appealed to the public to avoid panic buying and rely on official information, warning that unnecessary hoarding could disrupt normal supply chains and create avoidable shortages.

Foreign National Detained in Silchar; Probe Points to Possible Cross-Border Route via Mizoram

OUR CORRESPONDENT

SILCHAR: A Nigerian national, allegedly without valid travel documents, was detained in Silchar on March 25 along with four others, including a local couple, a woman from Mizoram, and an auto driver.

Police sources said the foreign national may have entered India through the Myanmar border via Mizoram. However, officials added that the investigation is still ongoing and no final conclusion has been reached yet.

The detention comes at a time when similar incidents have raised concern in Mizoram. In recent weeks, a Slovak national was picked up near the border, while on March 13, seven foreign nationals were arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) for alleged illegal entry and suspected links with armed groups. Authorities have not established any direct connection between these cases so far. Security agencies are now closely watching cross-border movement in the region. With National Highway 54 passing through Silchar and linking Mizoram to the rest of the country, officials believe Cachar district could be emerging as a sensitive transit corridor. Further investigation is underway to determine the route, intent, and any possible network behind the movement.

Fresh Firing Along Churachandpur-Bishnupur Border Sparks Joint Security Operation in Manipur



IMPHAL

Fresh firing along the inter-district boundary of Churachandpur district and Bishnupur district triggered panic among residents and prompted a joint security operation late Wednesday night, officials said.

Unidentified armed men reportedly opened fire in the Phouljyang/Gothol area, near the foothills along the border, with rounds directed towards an Indian Army post at Phougakchao Awang Leikai. The incident occurred at around 11:40 pm on March 25, according to a police bulletin.

Security forces, including personnel from the Indian Army and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), swiftly retaliated, leading to an exchange of fire that lasted approximately 30 minutes.

Officials said the firing created fear in nearby localities, with multiple rounds heard in the surrounding areas. "We are trying to

locate the source of the firing and identify the intended target," an official said, adding that the situation is being closely monitored.

Preliminary inputs indicated that suspected armed Kuki militants may have been involved in the attack, though authorities said verification is ongoing.

In response, a coordinated search operation was launched in the early hours of March 26 by a combined team of the Army, CRPF, Manipur Police, and the Indian Reserve Battalion (IRB). Security forces are currently combing the area of the incident and adjoining hill regions to track down those responsible.

Officials reiterated that operations will continue in the surrounding hills to prevent any further escalation.

Authorities have also urged residents to remain calm and refrain from spreading unverified information, as security forces intensify surveillance in the sensitive border zone.

Family Urges Restraint Amid Political References to Zubeen Garg's Legacy

GUWAHATI

Amid increasing references to late Assamese cultural icon Zubeen Garg in the ongoing political discourse, a member of his family has called for restraint, urging individuals and groups to refrain from politicising his legacy. Speaking to reporters, Zubeen's uncle Manoj Borthakur said the singer devoted his life to the people of Assam but did not always receive the support or recognition he deserved during his lifetime. "Zubeen gave his entire life to the people of Assam, but a section of people neither supported him nor stood by him. They observed him from a distance and, at times, even hurt him," Borthakur said.

He expressed concern over attempts to invoke the singer's name in the current election narrative, warning against giving his legacy a political colour. "During elections, some people are trying to use Zubeen's name and give it an anti-government twist. They should not assume that the people of Assam are unaware or easily influenced. The present generation is intelligent and can see through such attempts," he said.

Borthakur urged those involved to maintain neutrality and avoid linking the late artist's legacy to political agendas.

"Zubeen belonged to the people, not to any political ideology. Such matters should be kept away from politics," he added.

He also alleged that some individuals have sought to benefit from the singer's legacy after his passing through publications and related works, despite not supporting him during his lifetime.

"After his death, some people published books and collections and gained economically. But when he was alive, he did not receive the recognition or respect he truly deserved from them," Borthakur said. He noted that the singer never sought validation from such quarters, emphasising that his connection with the people remained central to his life and work. "If they had supported him earlier, he would have received the recognition he deserved. But Zubeen never yearned for that kind of approval. He always belonged to the people and will continue to live in their hearts," he added.



VOLUME:1, ISSUE 734

TARGETING INNOCENTS IN CONFLICT



Pakistan claimed it has run out of patience and declared 'open war' on Afghanistan on 27th Feb, claiming it was retaliating to the Taliban targeting its posts along the Durand Line. Pak called it Operation Ghazab Lil Haq (Operation Righteous Fury), in near similarity with Trump's Epic Fury in Iran. Pak, aware that its military is far more powerful and that Afghanistan lacks air defence and an air force, hit multiple locations in Afghanistan employing air strikes. In one such strike, it destroyed the Omid drug rehabilitation facility in Kabul killing over 400 innocent civilians.

As expected, Pakistan refused to acknowledge the strike, instead claiming that the hospital was blown up by the Taliban, whereas it had hit an ammunition dump. The Pakistan statement read that it, 'precisely targeted military installations and terrorist support infrastructure.' However, videos emerging from Afghanistan as also eye witness reports quoted by global media were different. Even UN representatives were aghast by the attack and demanded accountability. The fact is that no aggressor ever admits to having erred in its actions, unless pressured.

This is not the first time Pakistan has hit civilian targets in Afghanistan. Just a few days ago it killed six civilians in Kabul in an airstrike while earlier on 21-22 Feb, 13 innocents were killed. Most of Pakistan's strikes have been supposedly against military bases, though in reality they are civilian locations resulting in killing of innocents. Pakistan refuses to investigate nor admit its mistakes, believing its actions as justified.

The targeting of the Omid drug rehabilitation centre is near similar to the targeting of the Shajarah Tayyebah elementary school, an all-girls school in Minab, Iran, at the commencement of the conflict, by the US. Over 160 were killed, most being children. The school was hit by a Tomahawk missile and was located close to a military base. Trump tried to ward off the blame by accusing Iran of being behind the incident, despite Tehran not possessing any Tomahawk missiles. Subsequently, the Pentagon ordered an investigation into the incident. Knowing the US and its history of investigations, nothing will emerge. The dead will be ignored and the incident is already vanishing from global scrutiny.

Current wars, including Russia-Ukraine, Iran and Afghanistan-Pak are beginning to move towards civilian targets, assuming that there would be no criticism nor action against the perpetrators. Russian strikes into Ukraine as also the reverse are leading to more civilian casualties than military. In the Iranian conflict, both the US and Israel claim they are only hitting military bases but collateral damage results in far more civilian deaths. Similarly, Iranian retaliation in Middle East nations and Israel, though aimed at military or US diplomatic infrastructure, is causing civilian casualties.

Gaza was another area where civilian deaths, including children, far exceeded those of members of Hamas. Levels of destruction have been such that rebuilding would take immense funds and time, even if it does happen. Few nations demanded accountability from Israel and even approached the International Criminal Court which issued multiple arrest warrants, with no results.

Shortage of food, water and medical supplies added to miseries of the Gazan populace and many were pushed close to starvation. A near similar scenario of destruction is emerging in Lebanon. In all these conflicts, the attacker will not be involved in the reconstruction.

On the contrary, when India targeted Pakistan's terrorist camps in the initial phase of Operation Sindoor, it ensured no collateral damage, despite some camps being located adjacent to religious institutions and civilian houses. Even in the subsequent assault when Pak air, radar and missile bases were targeted civilian casualties were avoided. On the other hand, Pakistan's missiles and drones were aimed at residential colonies rather than military targets. India played by the rules, ensuring civilian casualties were avoided, while most tend to ignore them. The US has always believed that 'might is right' and it can act as it desires. It did the same in earlier conflicts, whether Afghanistan, Iraq or even as far back as Vietnam. Same has been the case with Israel which believes collateral damage is justifiable against terrorist strikes. Pakistan, which criticizes Israel for its actions in Gaza is now repeating the same in Afghanistan. Akin to the US and Israel it denies responsibility and refuses to even investigate. What emerges is that if the national leadership is irresponsible and refuses to lay down firm guidelines, the armed forces too would act in a similar manner. On the contrary, if checks by the leadership are imposed and directions issued, subsequent operations are carefully planned. For the Pakistan army, used to suppressing its populace, there is no distinction between innocents and enemy combatants. While India criticized Pakistan's actions in Afghanistan by terming the attack as 'cowardly, barbaric and reckless', there was largely silence from the rest of the world including Middle East Muslim nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. On the contrary, most western and Middle East nations criticized Israel's attack on a Gaza hospital which resulted in civilian casualties, despite Israel providing proof of Hamas tunnels being below the hospital. Pakistan and the US's actions constitute war crimes. As per Geneva conventions, civilians, hospitals, and residential areas are not legitimate targets despite being possible military objectives. The US has ordered an investigation, while Pakistan refuses to even do so. India must take the lead and approach the International Criminal Court seeking arrest warrants for the failed marshal and Pakistan's top military leadership. Simply criticizing the strikes will not be enough. Unless global pressure is applied, Pakistan would continue targeting civilians in Afghanistan with impunity.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"There are two types of people in the world: those who prefer to be sad among others, and those who prefer to be sad alone." - Nicole Krauss

IRAN WAR FOR U.S. AND ISRAEL IS A TEST LAB FOR AI WARFARE



MARC VANDEPITTE

War is increasingly being fought less by humans and more by algorithms. In Iran, we see how artificial intelligence is driving the pace of destruction to an unprecedented speed, bringing with it a host of profound moral problems.

New wars are rarely purely military; they also serve as testing zones for technology. The current conflict in Iran is serving as a tragic testing ground for frontier technologies. In this war, we are witnessing a technological shift that, until recently, was unthinkable.

In just four days, the Pentagon succeeded in striking more than 2,000 targets. According to Pete Hegseth, the US Secretary of Defence, the current operation against Iran has already been twice as deadly as the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and seven times as powerful as the 12-day war against Iran in June 2025.

This enormous acceleration is the direct result of integrating advanced AI systems into military operations. Within the US military, software forms a kind of digital brain during operations. The so-called Maven system analyses real-time data from the battlefield and supports the entire kill chain: from identifying a target to assessing damage following a strike.

The system combines various AI models to interpret information and provide recommendations. Generative AI - similar to the technology civilians use for office work or education - helps commanders understand complex data and make decisions.

With this system, a new qualitative step is being taken. The technology has evolved from simple data summarisation to complex reasoning. This allows armies to operate on a scale that was previously physically impossible for human planners. The result is a pace of military operations never seen before.

It is noteworthy that the Maven system was designed by the software company Palantir, which was founded by the far-right billionaire Peter Thiel. This tech oligarch is a significant financial backer of President Trump and Vice-President JD Vance.

A crucial problem in this lightning-fast warfare is the role of the human factor. Although soldiers officially still make the final decisions, it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to oversee the logic of the machine. An algorithm performs millions of calculations per second that a human cannot possibly verify.

Experts warn that this puts soldiers in a position where they blindly trust the recommendations of the computer. It is psychologically and practically almost impossible to reject a rapidly generated target when the justification is hidden inside an impenetrable black box. Human control thus becomes a mere administrative formality.

Moreover, the next step threatens to become even more radical. Some military planners want weapons systems that operate completely auto-

mously without direct human control, known as Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS).

The consequences of this digital tunnel vision have become painfully visible in Iran. The devastating attack on a primary school for girls in Minab raises pressing questions about data verification. Although the investigation is ongoing, this tragedy illustrates the life-threatening risk of targets selected by algorithms without proper human screening.

In addition to technical risks, there is a fundamental moral objection to outsourcing decisions about life and death. Should a machine be given the power to decide who dies? The debate about LAWS is gaining urgency as the US and China invest heavily in technology that can kill without human intervention.

Supporters claim that AI can reduce human error and thus prevent civilian casualties. However, the situation in Iran contradicts this. With tens of thousands of buildings damaged, including thousands of homes, the precision of AI seems to be used primarily to destroy more in less time, rather than to act with greater care.

Even tech companies are - at times - applying the brakes. Anthropic (the company behind the chatbot Claude) recently refused to hand over full control of its AI models to the Pentagon for classified use. This led to a conflict in which Washington excluded the company's technology from the military supply chain.

The lack of reliability in current AI models makes their deployment on the battlefield even riskier. These systems are based on statistical probabilities and are sensitive to "hallucinations" (flagrant errors). A system that invents incorrect information in a chatbot is annoying, but in a weapons system, the consequences are catastrophic.

It is, therefore, high time for an international moratorium on the use of fully autonomous weapons. The UN working group that has been debating this for years must finally produce binding conclusions. Just as there is a global ban on chemical and biological weapons, we need clear limits for artificial intelligence in wartime.

The United States and China, as technological superpowers, bear an enormous responsibility. They must reach agreements to limit the spread of this technology and to safeguard human accountability.

The international community must demand that the kill chain remains transparent and that a human can always be held responsible for every bullet or rocket fired.

Without strict regulation, we risk a future in which swarms of cheap drones autonomously hunt people - a scenario straight out of a dystopian film. Every new war accelerates the development and deployment of AI on the battlefield. Without international agreements, we face a world in which machines increasingly determine who lives and who dies.

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

The war in the Middle East is out of control. It is time to stop climbing the escalation ladder - and return to diplomacy & full respect of international law. I have just appointed Jean Arnault as my Personal Envoy to lead @UN efforts on the conflict & its consequences. ~ Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General, United Nations



EC Hikes Poll Duty Pay Ahead of Assembly Elections in Five States

GUWAHATI

The Election Commission of India has significantly increased remuneration for polling personnel, presiding officers, counting staff, and micro-observers ahead of the upcoming Assembly elections in West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Assam, Kerala, and Puducherry.

The revised compensation structure is aimed at better compensating officials for long working hours and the demanding nature of election duties.

Under the new rates: "Presiding officers will re-



ceive Rs. 500 per day (up from Rs. 350), totaling Rs.2,000 for the assignment.

"Polling officers will get Rs.400 per day (up from Rs.250), amounting to Rs.1,600.

"Counting assistants will be paid Rs.450 per day (up from Rs.250), totaling Rs.1,350.

"Fourth-class staff at polling stations will receive ₹350 per day (up from Rs.200), totaling Rs.1,400.

"Micro-observers will get Rs.2,000 as a one-time payment, double the previous Rs.1,000.

Support staff across video surveillance, monitoring units,

accounting control rooms, and call centres are also covered. Personnel working in call centres or control rooms will now receive a one-time allowance of Rs.1,000.

For higher-level officials: "Class I and II officers will receive Rs. 2,000, up from Rs.1,200.

"Certain Class I staff will see their remuneration doubled from ₹1,000 to Rs.2,000.

"Deputy District Election Officers will now be entitled to at least one month's basic pay as honorarium. Security personnel have also been included: "Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) gazetted officers will

receive Rs.4,000 for duties up to 15 days (earlier Rs.2,500), and Rs. 2,000 per week for longer deployments." Inspectors and equivalent ranks will get Rs.3,000 for up to 15 days and Rs. 1,500 per week thereafter.

Additionally, the tiffin allowance for polling staff, police, mobile teams, and home guards has been sharply increased from Rs. 150 to Rs.500 per day.

Officials said the move reflects the Commission's recognition of the crucial role played by election personnel in ensuring free, fair, and efficient conduct of polls.

LPG Shortage Disrupts Meghalaya Tourism, Hotels Scale Down Services

SHILLONG

A shortage of commercial LPG has begun to impact the tourism sector in Meghalaya, forcing hotels and restaurants to curtail services and reduce menu offerings amid disrupted fuel supplies.

Hospitality stakeholders said available LPG stocks are being prioritised for essential services such as hospitals and hostels, leaving tourism establishments struggling to access adequate cooking fuel.

In key tourist hubs like Shillong and Sohra, hotel and resort owners said they are increasingly relying on alternative cooking methods, including firewood, charcoal, and induction-based systems.

"To all our guests, we are switching to slower cooking methods using firewood and charcoal. Kindly bear with longer wait times and limited menu options," a resort owner in Sohra said in a social media post. Industry representatives said the shortage has disrupted routine kitchen operations, with many establishments unable to offer full menus due to fuel constraints. PS Sahdev, president of the Hotel Federation of Shillong, said there has been no visible supply of commercial LPG for nearly two weeks.

"Most hotels and restaurants are now operating on induction cooktops, while tandoor and chulha-based methods are being used as alternatives," he said.

However, he noted that many establishments are unable to fully shift to electric cooking due to erratic power supply and limited sanctioned electrical load.

"Menu items have been reduced, and if the situation persists, we may be forced to impose a gas surcharge as operational costs have increased significantly," Sahdev added.

The federation also claimed that directives to ensure at least 20 per cent LPG allocation to the hospitality sector are not being effectively implemented at the ground level.

Nikshay Mitra - PM's TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan; NEEPCO, NHM & Rotary Club Agartala successfully implemented project

BISWADEEP GUPTA

AGARTALA: As a part of the CSR schemes of NEEPCO (a wholly owned subsidiary of NTPC), the Agartala Gas-Based Power Station (AgGBPS), NEEPCO carried out another round of food basket distribution to TB Patients across the Mohanpur Subdivision today.

The above programme under Nikshay Mitra - PM's TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan was carried out in collaboration with National Health Mission (NHM) and the Rotary Club of Agartala, who are committed to sustained humanitarian initiatives. In today's drive, a total of 200 food baskets were distributed across five locations, benefiting families in need and reinforcing the commitment of the organising bodies toward social welfare and community support. As a responsible corporate entity, NEEPCO has been committed to continuously enhancing value creation in society by promoting sustainable development and contributing to the field of health,



GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday said the Singapore court's verdict in the death of Assamese cultural icon Zubeen Garg reinforces the findings of the state's investigation, asserting that there is "no contradiction" between the two.

The ruling by a Singapore coroner's court concluded that Garg's death was the result of an accidental drowning, with no evidence of foul play. The verdict, delivered by State Coroner Adam Nakhoda, also aligned with findings of the Police Coast Guard, which had ruled out criminal involvement.

Reacting during a campaign event in Nagaon, Sarma said the conclusions drawn in Singapore broadly match those outlined in the Assam Police chargesheet.

"There is no difference between the Singapore judgement and our chargesheet. The Assam government had stated that Zubeen had

education, infrastructure development and other community needs. The above CSR activity is one such initiative from NEEPCO.

It is to be noted that an MoU was signed between NEEPCO and the National Health Mission, Tripura, to distribute 1200 food baskets to patients in six months on 24th October 2025, which was inaugurated by the Governor of Tripura.

Significantly, the implementing agency for this noble work was assigned to Rotary Club Agartala, which had completed the project by distributing the final 200 food baskets today, thereby completing 1200 such baskets in the last six months.

Dimapur DC Sets Up Panel to Monitor LPG Supply, Crack Down on Hoarding

DIMAPUR

The district administration in Dimapur has constituted a committee to oversee the supply and distribution of LPG and other petroleum products, aiming to curb hoarding, black marketing, and overpricing.

In an official order, Deputy Commissioner Tinojongshi Chang said the district-level panel has been tasked with ensuring strict enforcement of regulations and preventing malpractices in the distribution system.

The Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) will serve as the convener of the committee. Other members include officials such as the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), District Civil Supplies Officer, Assistant Controller of Legal Metrology, Extra Assistant Commissioner (Sadar), along with



representatives from oil marketing companies including Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL).

Authorities said the committee, along with enforcement teams, will conduct coordinated inspections to check illegal storage, hoarding, black marketing, and overpricing

of LPG. Strict action will be taken against violators under provisions of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, and the LPG (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, among other applicable laws.

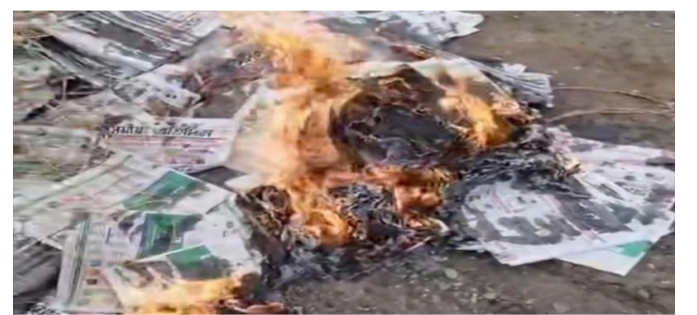
The DC has also issued a separate circular regulating the distribution of commercial LPG cylinders in

the district, in line with directives from the Food and Civil Supplies Department.

Under the revised system, priority allocation will be given to essential sectors such as hospitals, educational institutions, hotels, restaurants, bakeries, dairies, and transport-related establishments.

Officials said distribution will be carried out strictly through requisitions submitted to the DC's office. Monthly allocations for individual consumers will be based on their average consumption over the previous three months, as recorded by oil marketing companies. Distributors have been directed to maintain date-wise records of supply and submit daily distribution reports to the DC office. In case of delays, supplies will be made on a first-come, first-served basis to ensure transparency and equitable distribution.

Newspaper Burning in Sivasagar Sparks Outrage, Seen as 'Attack on Press Freedom'



GUWAHATI

The alleged burning of newspaper bundles of Asomiya Pratidin in Assam's Sivasagar on Wednesday has triggered widespread condemnation, with journalist bodies, political parties, and civil society groups terming it an attack on press freedom and democratic values.

According to reports, two individuals—Partha Pratim Bora and Pinku Dutta—allegedly set fire to bundles of the newspaper in broad daylight. The accused are also reported to have assaulted a worker of the Rajjor Dal, escalating tensions in the constituency amid the ongoing election campaign.

Allegations have also surfaced linking the accused to supporters of BJP candidate Kushal Dowari, raising concerns over the misuse of poll campaigning as a cover for intimidation. However, no official confirmation of these links has been made.

The incident has drawn sharp reactions across the political spectrum, with several organisations describing it as an attack on the "fourth

pillar of democracy." Media bodies warned that such acts undermine democratic institutions and threaten the independence of the press.

The Rajjor Dal and other groups condemned the incident, demanding immediate action against those responsible and asserting that violence and intimidation have no place in electoral politics. Reacting to the development, Lurinjyoti Gogoi, president of the Asom Jatiya Parishad (AJP), termed the act "deeply alarming" and warned that targeting media outlets due to political hostility sets a dangerous precedent.

He called on the Election Commission of India to take the matter seriously and ensure that those involved are identified and punished.

Utpal Sarma, president of the All Assam Students' Union (AASU), also criticised the incident, describing it as indicative of a disturbing erosion of democratic values. He said stopping a vehicle and burning large quantities of newspapers pointed to an attempt to suppress the media, and demanded a prompt and impartial investigation.

Public Hearing Held for 1,605-MW Subansiri Upper Project Amid Local Concerns

ITANAGAR

A key public hearing on the proposed 1,605-MW Subansiri Upper Hydroelectric Project was held in Daporijo, drawing participation from local residents, stakeholders, and representatives of affected families.

The project, to be executed by NHPC Limited, was discussed at the Singhik Hall in Upper Subansiri district, with officials outlining its scope, environmental considerations, and anticipated impact.

The hearing was organised by the Arunachal Pradesh Pollution Control Board, with scientist Jumli Kato presenting the objectives and key aspects of the project. Officials detailed environmental safeguards and the framework for implementation during the consultation.

Presiding over the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Tasso Gambo assured that the administration would address concerns raised by affected families and ensure fair compensation in line with legal provisions.

He emphasised that no family would be left behind, stating that grievances, rehabilitation, and compensation would be handled under the provisions of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act. He also called for coop-



eration between the public, government agencies, and executing authorities to ensure balanced development.

State minister Nyato Dukam reiterated the government's commitment to safeguarding the interests of local communities, assuring that benefits linked to the project would reach all affected families.

Meanwhile, Daporijo MLA Taniya Soki clarified that local residents are not opposed to hydropower projects but are seeking fair benefits, including job reservations, development opportunities, and revisions to existing agreements.

He also flagged concerns over what he described as misleading narratives on social media portraying locals as anti-dam, asserting that such claims do not reflect ground realities.

Representatives from affected villages

on both sides of the proposed project site actively participated in the hearing, raising concerns over compensation, livelihood security, and long-term safeguards.

The consultation saw the presence of elected representatives, community leaders, and officials, marking a significant step in the project's public engagement process.

Blast Near Congress Leader's Imphal Residence Triggers Forensic Probe, Security Tightened

Imphal, March 25: A late-night explosion near the residence of senior Congress leader Toijam Lokendro Singh in Imphal East district has sparked a joint investigation by police and forensic teams, with authorities confirming that no injuries or casualties were reported.

Investigators on Wednesday conducted a detailed examination of the site, collect-

ing samples and assessing damage to the gate and surrounding boundary wall. Officials said the exact nature of the explosive device and the circumstances leading to the blast remain unclear.

The explosion occurred near the gate of Singh's residence at Kongpal Ningthoubung Leikai under the Khurai Assembly constituency. Authorities estimate the blast took place between late Tuesday night and shortly after midnight, causing panic among residents in the locality.

Security forces have since cordoned off the area and intensified surveillance, while efforts are underway to identify those responsible. No group has claimed responsibility for the incident so far.

Reacting to the development, Congress Legislature Party leader K. Meghachandra Singh termed the incident a serious security lapse, noting that it occurred in what is considered a high-security zone.

"I strongly condemn the explosion at the residence of our Congress leader. This shocking incident in a civilian area raises serious questions about the law and order situation in Imphal," he said in a statement.

He also called for immediate action against those involved and urged the government to ensure adequate security for both public representatives and civilians.

The incident has triggered political reactions across the state, with opposition leaders demanding swift investigation and enhanced security measures in sensitive areas of the capital.

Quest!

Singing when tensed helps you avoid anxiety and depression.

5E
SUCCESS

KRC
PLACEMENTS

Registration
FREE

A division of
KRC Foundation
Connecting the unconnected

For more information schedule an online appointment

Register @

APPLY NOW

Send your resume for a free profiling session at e-mail: seforsuccess@gmail.com

From Electoral Victory to Political Vacuum: Is Assam Drifting Toward a One-Party Era?



Assam's political landscape is undergoing a quiet but consequential transformation-one that extends beyond routine electoral dominance and begins to raise deeper institutional questions. The recent wave of defections from the Congress to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), combined with visible organisational fatigue within opposition ranks, points to a structural shift. The issue is no longer simply about which party wins elections. It is about whether the state is inching toward a political environment where meaningful contestation itself is eroding.

For years, the BJP's rise in Assam has been attributed to a combination of strategic governance, narrative-building, and electoral precision. That phase now appears to be evolving into something more entrenched. What is taking shape is not just political dominance, but the gradual thinning out of alternatives.

At the centre of this transition is the steady stream of high-profile defections. When leaders like Bhupen Kumar Borah and Pradyut Bordoloi exit the Congress fold, it is not merely a case of individual political repositioning. These figures were integral to the party's organisational machinery and electoral outreach. Their departure reflects a deeper crisis-one that signals diminishing faith in the Congress's ability to remain politically relevant in Assam.

Such exits rarely occur in isolation. Politics operates on momentum, and momentum, once tilted, tends to gather force. As the perception of the BJP's invincibility strengthens, the incentive for opposition leaders to stay and rebuild weakens. Instead, many begin to reassess their prospects in a system where access to power increasingly determines political viability.

This creates a feedback loop. The stronger the ruling party appears, the weaker the opposition becomes. And the weaker the opposition grows, the more inevitable the ruling party's dominance begins to seem.

Within the Congress, this moment was supposed to represent renewal. The elevation of Gaurav Gogoi as president of the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee was framed as a generational shift-an opportunity to revive the party's grassroots base and restore internal coherence. Instead, the period has been marked by heightened instability and visible fragmentation.

It would be reductive to attribute the Congress's decline solely to current leadership. The party's erosion in Assam has been gradual, spanning more than a decade. Organisational decay, leadership disputes, and shifting voter alignments have all played a role. Yet, leadership is ultimately judged by its ability to arrest decline and chart a new course. On that front, the results so far have been underwhelming.

Perhaps more damaging than the defections themselves is the atmosphere of distrust that now surrounds the party. Persistent whispers within political circles about tacit understandings between sections of Congress leadership and the BJP-whether substantiated or not-have further eroded credibility. In politics, perception often carries as much weight as reality. An opposition that appears uncertain of its own coherence struggles to present itself as a credible alternative.

While the opposition grapples with internal challenges, the BJP under Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has moved with strategic clarity. Its approach has extended beyond electoral victories to encompass narrative dominance and organisational expansion. By systematically incorporating leaders from rival parties, the BJP has not only weakened its opponents but also broadened its own social and political base.

This strategy has created a powerful gravitational pull. For many politicians, particularly those operating without strong organisational backing, remaining in the opposition now carries increasing risk. Aligning with the ruling ecosystem, directly or indirectly, offers access to resources, visibility, and political security.

This trend is especially nuanced among minority politicians. In several constituencies, a direct association with the BJP may still pose electoral challenges. As a result, alternative pathways have emerged. Parties like the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP), an ally within the BJP-led coalition, provide a channel through which leaders can align with the ruling establishment while maintaining a degree of separation. This pragmatic recalibration reflects not just individual choices, but the expanding reach of the BJP's political architecture.

entrants, ideological loyalists, and pragmatic defectors. These groups do not always share identical priorities or political instincts. In the absence of a strong external challenger, the arena of political competition may gradually shift inward. Questions of candidate selection, resource allocation, and policy direction could increasingly become matters of intra-party negotiation. Factional alignments and leadership networks-particularly those perceived to be close to the Chief Minister-may play a more decisive role in shaping outcomes.

In effect, the BJP risks becoming both the dominant governing force and the primary site of political contestation in Assam.

This is not an inherently stable arrangement. History suggests that dominant parties often face internal contradictions as



Inside the Assam Legislative Assembly, the opposition continues to exist in formal terms, led by figures such as Debabrata Saikia. Yet, the question is no longer about presence, but effectiveness. A numerically diminished and internally divided opposition finds it difficult to mount sustained scrutiny or shape legislative debate in any meaningful way.

This raises a larger concern about the nature of democratic competition in the state. Elections may continue to be held regularly, and multiple parties may remain on the ballot. But if the balance of power becomes overwhelmingly skewed, the essence of competition begins to weaken.

Assam, in this sense, appears to be approaching the contours of a dominant-party system-one in which political plurality exists in form but is limited in function. Such systems are not unprecedented in India's political history. They have, at various points, emerged at both national and state levels. However, they carry inherent risks.

A weakened opposition narrows the space for policy debate. It reduces the intensity of public scrutiny and shifts accountability inward, placing the burden of checks and balances within the ruling party itself. Over time, this can lead to a concentration of power that is difficult to challenge through conventional electoral means.

Yet, the story does not end with the opposition's decline. In fact, a paradox begins to emerge.

As the BJP continues to consolidate its position, it is also becoming more internally diverse. The influx of leaders from different political backgrounds is reshaping the party's internal dynamics. There are now multiple layers within the organisation-long-standing cadre members, recent

they expand. Managing competing ambitions and expectations becomes progressively more complex. What appears as consolidation in the short term can, over time, generate friction beneath the surface.

For now, however, these potential tensions remain secondary to the immediate reality: the steady weakening of the opposition.

The implications of this trend extend beyond party politics. Democracies rely not only on the strength of governing institutions but also on the presence of credible alternatives. Opposition parties play a crucial role in articulating dissent, representing diverse interests, and ensuring accountability.

In Assam, that role appears increasingly fragile.

The Congress and other opposition forces are not without options. There remains a narrow window for recovery-one that would require more than cosmetic changes. Rebuilding organisational structures, reconnecting with grassroots networks, and presenting a coherent political narrative are essential steps. Equally important is the restoration of internal trust and clarity of purpose.

Whether such a revival is possible remains uncertain. Political momentum, once lost, is difficult to regain. Yet, the alternative-a political system where outcomes appear preordained-poses its own challenges.

If current trajectories persist, Assam may soon find itself in a phase where electoral competition continues in form but diminishes in substance. The rituals of democracy will remain intact: campaigns will be held, votes will be cast, and results will be declared.

But the underlying question will linger.

When one party becomes the default destination for political ambition, and the opposition struggles to retain both leadership and credibility, the nature of democracy itself begins to shift. What emerges is not the absence of politics, but its reconfiguration-away from open contestation and toward consolidation.

And in that transformation lies the real story of Assam's evolving political order.

SPACE FOR YOU ONLY

Rs. 150/- per day

PLACEMENT

Fresher, job seekers can register with KRC Placements. Send resume to - 5eforsuccess@gmail.com To source candidates, organisation can contact KRC Placements at info@krccfoundation.org For Details Visit: https://bit.ly/krccplacements Apply here: https://bit.ly/KRCPlacementForm

VOLUNTEERS REGISTERS @ NEIR 2026

We are looking for volunteers across NE & West Bengal Interested candidates (College students, youths) can register at https://northeastintegrationrally.in/Volunteer_Registration.aspx, send an email: neintegrationrally@gmail.com

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Business establishments, educational institutions, individual service providers etc. can enlist themselves or advertise their products or services at the most reasonable cost in InfoCom Diary. Send your details to InfoCom Solutions at: info.com.krcc@gmail.com Submit Here: https://bit.ly/InfoComDiaryForm

STUDENTS' INTERNSHIP

Students can apply for a three-months internship with KRC Foundation. During the internship the student can get an opportunity to work on a live project. On successful completion the student is awarded a certificate. Apply to 5E for Success: 5eforsuccess@gmail.com For Details Visit: https://bit.ly/krccstudentinternship or www.krccfoundation.org/products-services/training-development-5e-for-success/internship

NE INDIA WRITING STAR CONTEST

Participate in NE India Writing Star Contest and get your writings published. Eligibility: From Class VI onwards. Each participant receives a digital participation certificate. Send articles at: info@krccfoundation.org For Details Visit: https://bit.ly/NEIndiaWritingStarContest www.krccfoundation.org/campaigns-csr/ne-india-writing-star-contest

CONNECT@ KRC TIMES




KRC TIMES

To engage with KRC TIMES, please use the following e-mails and WhatsApp Nos: For News: krctimes@gmail.com /WP: 8721838313 For Advertisement: info@krccfoundation.org /WP: 9330830083 For Subscription: krctimes@gmail.com /WP: 8721838313 Editor: biswadeep.gupta@krccfoundation.org /WP: 8721838313




Being a perfectionist can result in stress and depression.



At Brain Vision Classes, We Provide What You Don't get in your Study Books...

[Know More](#)



Career building tools developed by:
www.krccfoundation.org
https://bit.ly/KRCBrainVision

info@krccfoundation.org
+91-8721838313