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PERSPECTIVE
Sleep + Music = 2 ways to escape everything.

Tripura Scraps Summer Vacation in State-Run Colleges to Continue Academic Activities

AGARTALA
The Tripura government has cancelled the scheduled 26-day summer vacation for all state-run colleges, including technical and professional institutions, to ensure uninterrupted academic and administrative activities across the state. According to an official notification issued by Higher Education Director Animesh Debbarma, the summer break, which was slated to begin on May 26, has been withdrawn in the interest of students and ongoing academic requirements. The notification stated that institutions functioning under the Higher Education Department will remain open during the period to facilitate admissions for the 2026-27 academic session, conduct even semester examinations and carry out other administrative work. To compensate employees for working during the period originally designated as vacation, the government has announced 26 days of Earned Leave for faculty members and college staff. Officials said the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) and the transition to a semester-based academic structure were among the key reasons behind the move. "With colleges now functioning under the semester system, there is very little scope for extended summer vacations," Debbarma said. Tripura currently has 22 state-run general degree colleges along with several technical and professional institutions operating under the state Higher Education Department.

WHO SAID WHAT

Governments in Tripura, Assam, and West Bengal are committed to stopping infiltration; BSF should work in collaboration with them.
~ Amit Shah, Union Home Minister

Nagaland Tightens ASF Curbs as Districts Restrict Pork Sale and Pig Movement

KOHIMA
The Nagaland government has intensified surveillance and containment measures following outbreaks of African Swine Fever (ASF) in several parts of the state, prompting multiple districts to impose restrictions on the sale, transport and import of pigs and pork products. According to the Directorate of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services, veterinary teams and field staff have been deployed across affected areas to conduct surveillance, collect samples and carry out awareness and bio-security drives aimed at containing the spread of the disease. Authorities in Mon district have temporarily banned the sale of pork and prohibited the import, export and transportation of live pigs until further orders. In Dimapur district, officials declared infected and surveillance zones after ASF-positive cases were detected in pigs at Signal Angami village. Restrictions have been imposed on the movement, slaughter and transportation of pigs and pork products in the affected areas. The administration in Medziphema subdivision under Chumoukedima district has also regulated the slaughter and



sale of pigs, making prior permission mandatory for commercial slaughtering and pork sale activities. Meanwhile, authorities in Mokochung district advised residents to avoid purchasing and consuming pork in ASF-affected areas under Tuli

Centre Plans Smart Border Security Grid Along Bangladesh, Pakistan Frontiers by 2027

NEW DELHI
Amit Shah announced that the Centre will launch a technology-driven "smart border project" along the India-Bangladesh and India-Pakistan borders by 2027 to strengthen surveillance, curb infiltration and enhance national security. Addressing the annual Rustomji Memorial Lecture organised by the Border Security Force in New Delhi, Shah said the Union government plans to establish a "strong security grid" along the nearly 6,000-km border stretches with Bangladesh and Pakistan using advanced monitoring systems. "I want to assure BSF troops that we will launch this smart border project in the 60th year of the force's raising and we will make the Pakistan and Bangladesh borders impenetrable," Shah said. According to the Home Minister, the project will rely heavily on advanced surveillance technologies, including drones, radars and smart



cameras, to improve border management and prevent infiltration. "The smart border will be aided by technology, drones, radars and smart cameras which will help create an impenetrable border," he said. Highlighting the Northeast dimension of border security, Shah said the governments of Assam, Tripura and West Bengal support a strict anti-infiltration policy. "The governments in Tripura, West Bengal and Assam believe that there should be no infiltration from

across Indian borders. The Home Ministry will soon hold a meeting with the chief ministers of these states regarding border security," he said. Shah also urged BSF personnel to remain vigilant against what he described as attempts to alter India's demographic balance through illegal infiltration. "We will find each and every infiltrator in the country and send them outside India," he asserted. The lecture was organised in memory of K F Rustomji, who headed the BSF after the force was established in 1965. The Home Minister further said that the Centre would soon announce a high-powered demography mission that had been proposed earlier. The remarks are expected to carry political significance in Assam and Tripura, where concerns over illegal infiltration and demographic change have remained sensitive political issues for decades.

Surjewala Skips Crime Branch Appearance in Assam Passport Row Probe



GUWAHATI
Senior Congress leader Randeep Singh Surjewala did not appear before the Assam Crime Branch on Saturday despite being summoned in connection with the ongoing investigation into the passport controversy linked to allegations involving Riniki Bhuyan Sharma. The summons was issued as part of the probe into a case registered against Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera over alleged remarks concerning the wife of Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

According to sources, investigators sought Surjewala's appearance after his name reportedly surfaced during the questioning of Khera by the Crime Branch. Officials are examining the circumstances surrounding statements allegedly made in connection with the controversy. The case against Khera was filed on allegations of making false accusations against Riniki Bhuyan Sharma, triggering a political storm in Assam. Officials said the Crime Branch investigation is continuing, and further action may follow based on the findings of the probe.

Manipur CM Appeals for Dialogue, Urges Public to Avoid Bandhs and Blockades

IMPHAL
Y Khemchand Singh appealed to the people of Manipur to avoid bandhs and blockades and instead resolve grievances through dialogue and mutual understanding amid the continuing unrest in the state. The Chief Minister made the appeal while inaugurating a reinforced cement concrete (RCC) bridge over the Nambul River at Akham Makha Leikai in Imphal West district. Addressing a public gathering, Singh said prolonged shutdowns and blockades disproportionately affect economically vulnerable sections of society, particularly daily wage earners. "Enforcing bandhs and blockades out of anger toward the government only leads to hardship, particularly for the daily wage earners," he said. The Chief Minister also referred to his recent visits to Jiribam district, where he said members of different communities, including Kuki, Paite, Hmar and Meitei groups, interacted peacefully at the grassroots level. "I have been to Jiribam twice. First, I visited the district by helicopter and second by road, during which members of Kuki, Paite, Hmar and Meiteis gathered together at the grassroots level and interacted. All are having cordial relations," Singh said. Recalling a recent incident of violence, the Chief Minister mentioned the bomb attack at Tronglaobi in Bishnupur district in April that claimed the lives of two children and triggered widespread grief across the state. "The incident caused disruptions to the economy of the state due to shutdowns and bandhs," he said. Singh urged people to engage in discussions whenever frustrations or disagreements arise, emphasising



that peaceful dialogue is essential for restoring stability and social harmony. "To the people to come forward for talks to reach a mutual understanding whenever there is any frustration or anger towards the government, as bandhs cause hardships, particularly to families of daily wage earners," he appealed. Later, in a social media post, the Chief Minister said the newly inaugurated bridge in the Lamsang Assembly Constituency would strengthen connectivity, improve transportation of goods and people, and contribute to local economic development. He added that the Manipur government remains committed to improving road connectivity and developing quality infrastructure for the welfare and progress of the people of the state.

Fuel Prices Hiked for Third Time in 10 Days; Petrol, Diesel Costlier by Nearly Rs. 5 per Litre

NEW DELHI
Petrol and diesel prices were increased by up to 91 paise per litre on Saturday, marking the third fuel price hike in less than 10 days amid rising global crude oil prices triggered by the ongoing West Asia conflict. The latest revision comes as public sector oil marketing companies continue passing on the impact of elevated international crude prices to consumers in a phased manner. The first hike was announced on May 15, when petrol and diesel prices were raised by Rs.3 per litre—the first major increase in more than four years. Oil companies had then attributed the revision to a sharp rise in global crude prices caused by escalating geopolitical tensions in West Asia and disruptions in international supply chains. A second round of hikes followed on May 19, with fuel prices going up by around 90 paise per litre, triggering criticism from Opposition parties, which accused the Centre of increasing the burden on consumers already facing inflationary pressure. The government, however, maintained that the increases were driven by extraordinary global market conditions and rising import costs. With Saturday's revision, petrol and diesel prices have cumulatively risen by nearly Rs5 per litre since May 15. According to the latest price revision issued by state-owned oil marketing companies, petrol prices in New Delhi increased by 87 paise per litre from Rs98.64 to Rs99.51, while diesel prices rose by 91 paise from Rs91.58 to Rs92.49 per litre. The repeated hikes are expected to further push up transportation costs and retail inflation at a time when prices of essential commodities are already witnessing pressure in several parts of the country.

Centre elevates Manipur DGP Rajiv Singh to top security post in Cabinet Secretariat

NEW DELHI
In a significant move aimed at strengthening India's security architecture, the Centre has appointed Manipur Director General of Police (DGP) Rajiv Singh as Secretary (Security) in the Cabinet Secretariat. Singh, a 1993-batch IPS officer of the Tripura cadre, was cleared for the post by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC). According to a Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) order, Singh will assume charge with immediate effect and will continue in the post until further orders. The post of Secretary (Security) is among the most sensitive in the Union government's security setup, responsible for coordinating high-level security arrangements, overseeing sensitive internal security matters and liaising with elite protection and intelligence agencies. Singh's appointment comes as the Centre focuses on strengthening internal security mechanisms, particularly in border-sensitive regions including the Northeast and the Siliguri Corridor, also known as the "Chicken's Neck". Key priorities include improving border infrastructure, enhancing surveillance, tackling infiltration and improving coordination between central and state agencies. Officials said Singh's operational experience in conflict management, particularly during his tenure as Manipur DGP where ethnic violence broke out in the state on May 3, 2023, was a key factor in his selection. His tenure



coincided with prolonged unrest and complex law-and-order challenges. As Secretary (Security), Singh will oversee key responsibilities including administrative supervision of the Special Protection Group (SPG), coordination of security arrangements for the Prime Minister and his family, and liaison with intelligence and security agencies. The post had been held as an additional charge by Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) chief Parag Jain since November last year. In a related development, the ACC has also approved the inter-cadre transfer of Ladakh DGP Mukesh Singh from the AGMUT cadre to the Manipur cadre for three years. Officials said he is likely to take over as the next DGP of Manipur.

Assam Rolls Out Rs 861 Crore AMRUT 2.0 Push for Urban Infrastructure Upgrade



GUWAHATI
The Assam government has launched an ambitious urban infrastructure expansion programme under the AMRUT 2.0 scheme, with 58 projects worth more than ₹861 crore being implemented across the state to improve water supply, sanitation and civic amenities. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday said the initiative marks a major step towards strengthening urban infrastructure and enhancing the quality of life in towns and cities across Assam. Sharing details on social media platform X, the chief minister said the projects under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0 are focused on upgrading wa-

ter supply systems, improving sewerage networks and restoring water bodies. "A stronger urban Assam is taking shape," Sarma said, highlighting the government's focus on building sustainable and modern civic infrastructure to meet the demands of rapidly growing urban populations. According to the state government, the projects are aimed at ensuring better access to clean drinking water, improving sanitation facilities and creating efficient public utility systems in urban centres. Officials said the AMRUT 2.0 initiative also places emphasis on environmental sustainability through restoration and rejuvenation of water bodies, alongside efforts to create cleaner and more liveable urban spaces. The programme forms part of Assam's broader strategy for planned urban development, with the government prioritising modern infrastructure, improved public services and enhanced civic management across multiple municipalities and towns in the state.



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TRUMP-XI SUMMIT AND ITS IMPACT



The much-awaited summit between the leaders of the world's two most powerful nations has concluded. Trump's team arrived in China under conditions of a strict digital lockdown, with cell phones and lap tops left behind due to fears of state-level surveillance, hacking and data interception. Members of the team used burner phones or devices with limited temporary data. While returning, every single Chinese gift, including lapel pins, souvenirs, burner phones etc were dumped in a dustbin prior to boarding.

This has been the tradition for some time as US fears gifts could be programmed for spying or tracking. This, in itself indicated lack of trust. It also conveys that the US accepts Chinese capabilities in cyber surveillance systems.

Diplomatic clash between the two commenced even before the visit. Trump had imposed sanctions on five Chinese firms procuring Iranian oil. China ordered its companies not to comply with US sanctions. Trump had also threatened additional sanctions in case China supplies weapons to Iran. None of this came up during discussions. In Beijing, Trump called Xi 'a great leader.' On Iran, statements by both sides indicated differing views. Evidently, Trump wanted Beijing's support to end the conflict on favourable terms. The US handout read, 'President Xi made clear China's opposition to the militarisation of the Strait and any effort to charge a toll for its use.' It added, 'Both countries agreed that Iran can never have a nuclear weapon.' China had a different version, which read, 'The conflict has inflicted severe losses on the people in Iran and other regional countries.' It made no reference to charging of tolls, militarization of Hormuz and on Iran developing nuclear weapons. On the contrary, it supported dialogue to 'reach a settlement on the Iranian nuclear issue.' Whom does one believe.

Trump had hoped that the blockade imposed on Hormuz would impact China's oil supplies but it did not happen. China had insulated itself by pipelines from Russia and Central Asian nations and huge reserves. A regime change would have impacted China's hold in the Middle East but that did not happen. Trump returned with no promise of support from China.

On trade, Trump mentioned that China agreed to purchase 200 Boeing aircraft as also 450 engines, instead of the 500 aircraft he had hoped. The Chinese ministry of commerce mentioned, 'The two sides have reached arrangements on China's purchase of aircraft from the US.' There was no confirmation of numbers nor a timeline. Trump claimed China agreed to purchase more farm products, while Beijing was non-committal.

Major discussion was on Taiwan. On this the Chinese handout quoting Xi, mentioned, 'If (Taiwan is) handled well, bilateral relations can maintain overall stability. If handled poorly, the two countries will clash or even fight, pushing the entire China-US relationship into a very dangerous situation.' Trump stated that he just listened. However, he subsequently confirmed that he is holding in abeyance the proposed sale of military hardware to Taiwan, even though it was approved by Congress.

This raised doubts on the US's support to Taiwan, in case invaded. Trump created doubts by mentioning 'China is just 59 miles away, we are 9500.' He added that Taiwan is a 'very good negotiating chip,' with China. He literally threw Taiwan to the wolves. Taiwan responded by insisting that it is 'sovereign and independent.' It subsequently added that it would maintain 'cross-strait status quo,' implying it would not declare independence from China.

Trump's first call after boarding his flight was to the Japanese PM, Sanae Takaichi. The conversation was confidential and claimed to be a debrief of his China visit. In reality, Trump would have advised her to desist from making provocative statements on Taiwan. She had mentioned in the Diet (Japanese parliament) in Nov last year that a Chinese blockade of Taiwan could 'constitute a survival-threatening situation (for Japan).'

The Chinese denounced this as violating the one-China principle. Trump would have cautioned Takaichi to avoid such comments, in deference to Chinese concerns. This subject could have emerged in private conversation between Trump and Xi.

In brief, the US statement focused on trade, fentanyl and Iran, while Beijing emphasised Taiwan, stabilising bilateral ties and Trump's compliments about President Xi Jinping. Xi's statements on declining US power as also the Thucydides Trap indicated that China no longer considers itself inferior but instead a challenger to the US. Its refusal to procure US chips is because of its confidence to develop its own.

While Trump heaped praises on Xi, there is little indication that the same was reciprocated. There was also no mention on rare earth exports indicating that for China, this remains a lever. Xi clarified three stages of US-China ties, 'cooperation, managed competition and predictable peace.' It was upto the US to implement it. A major takeaway was that the two could avoid confrontation.

In such summits, statements and promises mean little, what is discussed between closed doors, matter. China is known to not adhere to its promises. Xi does not appear before the media, statements are issued by the government through its mouthpieces, largely conveying their viewpoint. Trump has a habit of blabbering to the press, sharing his views on social media, how truthful remains questionable. The crux of what was actually discussed behind closed doors may emerge later. The fact that a week after the summit, Pak PM Shehbaz Sharief is scheduled to visit China, appears to indicate that US-China came to an agreement on an end state in the Iran conflict. Shehbaz Sharief, as the messenger would now work towards an agreement. At the end of the day, both sides claimed that they achieved what they set out for, Trump on trade and China on Taiwan.

What does the summit hold for the rest of the world. Trump had earlier mentioned US and China as G2. This is coming true. With Trump backing away from Taiwan, the message is clear. China will be the dominant power in Asia while the US would manage Europe and the Americas. This would concern Japan, South Korea and the Philippines, with whom the US has defence agreements. For India, if it is Taiwan today, it could be Arunachal tomorrow. The US will never stand beside. We have to develop capabilities to handle it on our own.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

We must be our own before we can be another's. - Ralph Waldo Emerson

IMPACT OF WEST ASIA WAR ON INDIA'S ENERGY SUPPLY



VIJAY HASHIA

The ramifications of West Asia war are manifold, impacting Indian households, industries, transport networks, and agricultural supply chains.

Much of India's imported energy passes through the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most vital maritime chokepoints. Around 40-45% of India's crude oil, 80-85% of LPG and 50% LNG imports normally pass through the Strait of Hormuz. The war has disrupted the route and as such India's economy feels the pressure. This has created a serious supply squeeze, especially for domestic cooking gas, petrol and diesel. Though the Indian government has increased domestic refinery output, diverted more hydrocarbon streams into LPG production, and prioritized household consumers over commercial users such as hotels and restaurants, the crisis has exposed how dependent India remains on imported crude oil and fuel supplies, LPG, petrol and diesel.

The second major impact has been the rise in crude oil prices. Even when physical supplies continue, war in West Asia has created uncertainty, insurance costs have risen, freight has become expensive, and global oil prices have soared up. For India, which is one of the world's largest oil importers, this is a serious macroeconomic threat.

Higher crude prices increase the cost of petrol, diesel, aviation fuel, and transport, which in turn raise the prices of food, manufactured goods, and public services. Inflationary pressure then spreads across the economy. In a country where millions are already sensitive to fuel and food prices, such increases are not merely economic, they are social and political.

The impact on crude oil is serious. India has diversified crude sourcing and buys oil from a wider range of suppliers, including Russia, Venezuela and other non-Gulf exporters. Some estimates suggest that a significant portion of India's crude imports can still be routed through alternative channels, which gives the country a partial buffer. That means the Iran conflict has not produced a total oil collapse in India, but it has certainly made energy procurement costlier, riskier, and more diplomatically complex.

The third major impact has been on Indian industry. Energy is not consumed only in homes; it is also a critical input for

manufacturing, logistics, metals, chemicals, automobiles, and small-scale production units. As fuel and gas costs rise, production becomes more expensive. Reports already show supply delays in India's automobile retail and manufacturing ecosystem have been alarming. While industrial belts in Maharashtra have reported significant losses due to shortages of gas and raw materials, Haryana and Telangana reported severe industrial and commercial losses due to LPG shortages and Kerala faced retail petrol rationing. When factories slow down, its effect is: output falls, transport costs rise, and employment becomes more vulnerable. Thus, the Iran conflict is not just an "oil issue," it is a broader industrial disruption.

Agriculture and food security form another area of concern. India's farming sector depends heavily on fertilizers, many of which are linked to global gas and ammonia supply chains. Since the Gulf region plays a key role in fertilizer and feedstock trade, any prolonged disruption in shipping can tighten supply and raise costs. India has already moved to secure additional urea imports in anticipation of shortages. If fertilizer availability becomes unstable during key agricultural cycles, the result could be lower productivity, higher farm costs, and eventually higher food prices. Therefore, the Iran conflict has moved from an energy crisis into an agricultural

and food inflation crisis.

Another important effect is strategic and diplomatic. India has long tried to maintain balanced relations with competing powers in West Asia, including Iran, Israel, the Gulf monarchies, and the United States. The 2026 conflict places India in a delicate position. It must protect its citizens, secure shipping routes, maintain energy imports, and avoid alienating key regional partners. This is especially difficult because India's interests in the region are not ideological; they are deeply practical, involving trade, remittances, energy, and diaspora security. The war therefore, increases the burden on Indian diplomacy and exposes how external conflicts can constrain India's strategic autonomy.

At the same time, the crisis also offers India an important lesson. It reveals that national security today is not limited to borders and armies; it also includes supply chains, shipping lanes, fertilizer stocks, and household energy resilience. India is compelled to accelerate long-term reforms and austerity measures as appealed by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi- reducing fuel consumption, carpooling, use of public transport and adopting to electric vehicles; cutting on non-essential foreign travels and destination weddings in abroad; austerity of consumer behaviour - (gold purchases), adoption to swadeshi products, reducing

chemical fertilizers, austerity in working methods similar to pandemic era (WFH) to save energy and travel costs.

That will not be enough if the war continues and the Strait of Hormuz remains disrupted. In such a situation, there would be further price hikes and greater hardship for consumers and that would be both a danger and a warning.

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

We still don't know enough about the full consequences of climate change.

But we do know this: intense heat waves in India are no longer exceptions. They're becoming a way of life.

These homeowners have responded by changing THEIR way of life.

By changing the way they live, they've created homes that are cooler, more sustainable, and productive enough to grow their own food.

That's the kind of adaptive thinking we'll increasingly need in the years ahead.

Trailblazers. 🏡 🌱

~ Anand Mahindra, Chairman, Mahindra Group



Assam Sees Over 55% Drop in Cyber Crime Cases in 2024: MHA Data

GUWAHATI

Assam recorded a sharp decline in cyber crime cases in 2024, registering a fall of more than 55 per cent compared to the previous year, according to the latest data released by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The state reported 408 cyber crime cases in 2024, down from 909 incidents in 2023, even as cyber crimes across India rose significantly during the same period.

Nationally, a total of 1,01,928 cyber crime cases were registered in 2024, marking an increase of around 18 per cent over the 86,420 cases recorded in 2023.

Police sources attributed Assam's decline in cyber crime to intensified crack-



downs on cyber offenders and increased public awareness campaigns carried

out by law enforcement agencies. The improvement is particularly significant considering that Assam had recorded the fifth-highest number of cyber crime cases among all states and Union Territories in 2021, when 4,846 incidents were reported. The number declined to 1,733 in 2022, placing the state ninth nationally, before dropping further in subsequent years. In 2024, Telangana reported the highest number of cyber crime cases in the country with 27,230 incidents, followed by Karnataka with 21,993, Uttar Pradesh with 11,073, Maharashtra with 9,922 and Bihar with 6,380 cases. During the year under review, 360 individuals were arrested in Assam for alleged involvement in cyber crimes, while 285 persons were charge-sheeted.

Of the total cases registered in the state, 115 were related to computer-based offences, one case involved cyber terrorism, and 253 cases pertained to the publication or transmission of obscene or sexually explicit content in electronic form. Another 37 cases were registered under various provisions of the Information Technology Act, while one case involved fraud.

According to the data, personal revenge emerged as the most common motive behind cyber crimes in Assam, accounting for 121 cases. Fraud-related motives were identified in 55 cases, extortion in 43 cases, and sexual exploitation in 42 incidents. Other motives included anger or emotional triggers, political intentions, reputational damage, business

promotion and piracy.

Women were victims in 196 of the total cyber crime cases registered in Assam during 2024, while children were affected in 20 incidents.

Among other Northeastern states, all except Tripura recorded an increase in cyber crime cases during the year.

Arunachal Pradesh saw cases rise from 24 in 2023 to 78 in 2024, while Mizoram reported 50 cases compared to 31 in the previous year. Meghalaya recorded 97 cases, up from 64, and Nagaland saw cases increase from two to 14. Manipur reported five cases in 2024 compared to three in 2023. Tripura was the only Northeastern state besides Assam to record a decline, with cyber crime cases dropping to 33 in 2024 from 36 the previous year.

Conrad Sangma Launches 150-Crore Urban Development Projects in Tura Ahead of National Games 2027

SHILLONG

Conrad K. Sangma laid the foundation stones for a series of urban development projects worth more than 150 crore in Tura aimed at upgrading the town's infrastructure, tourism facilities and public amenities ahead of the 39th National Games in 2027. The Chief Minister said the projects form part of the Meghalaya government's long-term vision to modernise Tura and transform it into a regional hub for tourism, sports, culture and commerce. Among the major initiatives announced was the redevelopment of Najing Bazar into a modern commercial centre with upgraded market infrastructure, improved parking facilities, hotel spaces and designated areas for local vendors to boost commercial activity and improve urban convenience. Sangma also laid the foundation stone for a 51.21-crore Multi-Level Car Parking and Cinema Complex at Dakopgre. The proposed complex will accommodate nearly 200 vehicles and include three cinema halls, a gaming zone and a food court, making it one of the region's largest integrated parking and entertainment facilities.

Another major component of the initiative involves the refurbishment of the SMELC Complex, which will feature an Art and Culture Promenade, a museum, a children's park, a Chief Minister's Youth Centre and an Active Ageing Centre for senior citizens.

As part of efforts to improve civic services, the Chief Minister launched the Tura Municipal Board Mobile App aimed at enhancing citizen engagement and municipal service delivery. Sanction letters were also distributed to local artists under the CM Artists Engagement Scheme to support cultural activities and promote local talent. The government further announced locality-wise waste management grading systems and plans to strengthen urban safety infrastructure through the installation of LED street lighting and CCTV surveillance systems across Tura.

Nagaland Police Urges Public to Maintain Peace, Avoid Rumours Amid Regional Tensions

KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

NAGALAND: Nagaland Police has appealed to the people of the state to maintain peace, communal harmony, and social responsibility amid concerns over the prevailing law and order situation in a neighbouring state potentially affecting Nagaland.

In a press release issued from Police Headquarters in Kohima on May 22, the police urged citizens not to share or circulate unverified information, rumours, or provocative social media posts that could create panic or disturb inter-community relations in the state. The advisory highlighted the growing threat of artificially generated and misleading online content, cautioning that fake narratives can easily spread in the digital age. Citizens were specifically asked to avoid forwarding content capable

of creating ethnic or communal tensions. Warning against the deliberate spread of fake news and inflammatory material, the police stated that individuals found engaging in such activities would face legal action under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the IT Act, and other applicable laws. The police also requested the public to remain alert and immediately report any suspicious individual or activity attempting to disrupt social harmony and peaceful coexistence in the state to the nearest police station or the Police Headquarters in Kohima.

Stating that Nagaland has so far maintained peace and normalcy despite tensions in neighbouring areas, the police appealed for public cooperation in ensuring the situation remains stable.

Meghalaya Emerges Among India's Fastest-Growing State Economies

GUWAHATI

Meghalaya has emerged as one of India's fastest-growing state economies over the past five years, according to a report released by wealth management firm Client Associates, highlighting a broader shift in economic growth beyond the country's traditional industrial hubs.

The report stated that Meghalaya recorded a five-year nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 15.3 per cent, placing it above the national average and among the stronger-performing states in the country.

Although the state continues to operate from a relatively small economic base, the study noted that its pace of growth remains significant. India's overall nominal GDP growth during the period up to FY25 averaged 14.78 per cent.

The report also observed that Manipur registered more



than 15.04 per cent nominal GDP growth over the same five-year period despite ongoing ethnic unrest and instability in the state.

Economic analysts cited in the study said Meghalaya, once regarded as economically underdeveloped, has seen a sharp rise in capital inflows, with investments reportedly increasing fourfold since 2018.

The report credited part of the state's economic momentum to the expansion of its startup ecosystem under the government's PRIME (Promotion and Incubation of Market-driven Enterprises) initiative, which has support-

ed hundreds of entrepreneurs and contributed to large-scale employment generation.

Growth in the information technology sector was also highlighted, with the Shillong Technology Park now fully operational and attracting interest from major companies, creating new employment opportunities in the state. Tourism and infrastructure development have further contributed to Meghalaya's economic expansion, with the state government aiming to attract 20 lakh tourists annually by 2028.

Among the larger northeastern economies, Assam recorded the highest growth, posting a five-year nominal GDP CAGR of 17.3 per cent, according to the report.

The study attributed Assam's performance to improved connectivity infrastructure, including road and bridge projects backed by central funding, alongside growth in tea production, agro-based industries and an improv-

ing investment climate.

While economically dominant states such as Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat continue to account for nearly 48 per cent of India's GDP, the report noted that smaller and mid-sized states are increasingly growing at a faster pace.

The analysis suggested that nominal GDP trends over the last five years indicate a more balanced pattern of regional development across the country.

Uttar Pradesh also recorded a 15.3 per cent CAGR during the period, a performance the report described as significant given the scale of the state's economy.

The growth in Uttar Pradesh was linked to governance and infrastructure reforms, including the NIVESH MITRA single-window clearance system, digitisation of land records, and investments in logistics and defence manufacturing infrastructure.

IIM Shillong Secures Prestigious AACSB Accreditation, Joins Elite Global B-Schools

SHILLONG

Indian Institute of Management Shillong has received accreditation from AACSB International, one of the world's most prestigious global accrediting bodies for business schools, placing the Meghalaya-based institute among an elite group of internationally recognised management institutions.

The accreditation, widely regarded as the global gold standard in management education, is awarded to less than six per cent of business schools worldwide after a rigorous evaluation process covering academic quality, research standards, curriculum design, faculty excellence, learner outcomes and societal impact.

With the recognition, IIM Shillong joins around 30 AACSB-accredited institutions in India and



becomes one of the select Indian Institutes of Management to earn the distinction.

Institute officials said the accreditation reflects IIM Shillong's continued focus on academic excellence, sustainability-driven management education, innovation, research and international engagement.

The peer-review process assessed the institute across several parameters, including strategic management, faculty quality, research output, student learning outcomes, industry engagement and mechanisms for continuous improvement.

Speaking on the achievement, Naliniprava Tripathy described the accreditation as a collective accomplishment of the entire IIM Shillong community.

She said the institute remains committed to fulfilling AACSB standards and its long-term strategic vision over the next six years while continuing to strengthen its

global academic reputation.

Officials said the accreditation is expected to significantly expand opportunities for international collaborations, academic partnerships, student and faculty exchange programmes, executive education initiatives and global research projects.

Established in 2007, IIM Shillong has emerged as a leading management institution in the Northeast with a strong emphasis on values-based and sustainability-oriented education.

Located in Shillong, the institute focuses on developing globally responsible leaders capable of addressing contemporary business, societal and sustainability challenges.

AACSB formally included IIM Shillong in its official global accreditation announcement released in 2026.

Amrit Bharat Express Trains Draw Strong Passenger Response in Northeast, Earn Over Rs 23 Crore: NFR



GUWAHATI

The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) said the newly introduced Amrit Bharat Express services operating from Assam and West Bengal have witnessed strong passenger demand, carrying more than 1.78 lakh passengers and generating earnings exceeding Rs 23 crore in recent months.

According to NFR Chief Public Relations Officer Kapinjal Kishore Sharma, the trains have received "exceptional appreciation and overwhelming response" from commuters since their introduction in January 2026.

"The impressive occupancy and earnings figures clearly reflect the growing popularity, affordability, comfort and reliability of these services among the travelling public," Sharma said.

At present, seven pairs of Amrit Bharat Express trains

are originating from stations in Assam and West Bengal under the jurisdiction of the Maligaon-headquartered NFR.

The railway official said the services connecting major Northeastern cities such as Guwahati, Dibrugarh, Alipurduar and New Jalpaiguri with other parts of the country have consistently recorded heavy passenger utilisation.

Among the most successful routes, Train No. 15671/15672 operating between Kamakhya and Rohtak achieved occupancy levels of up to 136 per cent.

Similarly, Train No. 15949/15950 connecting Dibrugarh and Gomti Nagar recorded occupancy figures exceeding 140 per cent on several trips, reflecting rising demand for affordable long-distance rail connectivity.

Sharma said the Amrit Bharat Express trains were designed primarily for common passengers and offer improved travel experiences through modern interiors, spacious seating arrangements, better onboard amenities and economical fares.

"The services are not only improving passenger convenience but are also contributing significantly towards regional development, tourism promotion and economic integration by strengthening connectivity between the Northeast and the rest of the country," he added.

Tezpur University Startup Unveils Northeast's First Portable Smartphone Microscope

TEZPUR

Tezpur University's first deep-tech startup, Labdig Innovations and Systems, has developed a portable smartphone-based microscope system named Moboscope™, marking a major technological milestone for Northeast India's research and innovation ecosystem.

The device allows ordinary smartphones to function as powerful microscopes and is designed for use in classrooms, laboratories, hospitals and remote field locations where conventional scientific equipment may not be easily accessible.

According to the developers, Moboscope™ combines optical technology, controlled lighting systems and a custom Android application that enables users to capture, process, store and share microscopic images directly through a smartphone.

The compact and lightweight device has been designed to operate without a constant power supply, making it suitable for field applications in remote and underserved regions.



Officials said the technology aims to make science education more practical and accessible, particularly in institutions with limited laboratory infrastructure.

Beyond education, the device is

also expected to support healthcare, veterinary services and agricultural field screening by enabling frontline workers, researchers and students to examine samples outside conventional laboratory settings.

The launch programme was inaugurated on May 16 by the Pro-Vice Chancellor of Tezpur University in the presence of entrepreneur Hemanta Kumar Lahkar.

The university's academic leadership, including the Registrar-in-charge, Dean of Academic Affairs, IPR Chair Professor, faculty members, researchers, school teachers and students, attended the event.

University officials described the launch of Moboscope™ as an important example of translating academic research into a real-world technology product from the Northeast.

Labdig Innovations and Systems was founded in 2022 by Pabitra Nath from the Department of Physics at Tezpur University and Chayanika Deka Nath as the institution's first deep-tech startup.

Pabitra Nath said the technology originated from research conducted at the Applied Photonics and Nanophotonics Laboratory (APN Lab) of the university and was based on the PhD research work of student Digantha Rabha.

Chayanika Deka Nath highlighted the transition of the project from laboratory research to a market-ready product through engineering design, software integration and product development, while also outlining future AI-assisted applications in agriculture and healthcare.

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HM Amit Shah promises 'Smart Border' plan rollout, vows crackdown against illegal immigrants



NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday announced that the Centre would roll out a nationwide "Smart Border" project within a year to strengthen security along India's frontiers and crack down on illegal infiltration.

Declaring a zero-tolerance policy, the Home Minister said every illegal migrant entering the country would be identified and deported to protect India's demographic balance.

Addressing Border Security Force (BSF) personnel during the force's Investiture Ceremony 2026 at Vigyan Bhawan, Shah described illegal migration as a "planned conspiracy" aimed at creating artificial demographic changes in the country.

He asserted that the government was committed to sealing the borders through technology-driven surveillance and coordinated enforcement.

Under the proposed "Smart Border framework", the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) will establish a robust

security grid across India's nearly 6,000-km international borders.

The project will include the deployment of advanced surveillance systems such as drone radars, high-resolution cameras and other modern monitoring technologies to enhance the capabilities of the BSF. Shah also directed the BSF to widen its intelligence network beyond border outposts by working closely with state police, district administrations and local revenue officials to identify infiltration routes and curb cross-border cattle smuggling.

He said coordination with the governments of West Bengal, Assam and Tripura would play a key role in implementing the security grid, adding that the Centre would soon convene a meeting with the chief ministers of the three states, which have complete cohesion in their policy framework.

Drawing parallels with the Centre's campaign against Left-wing extremism, the Home Minister said merely con-

trolling infiltration was not enough and called for efforts to eliminate the problem "from its roots."

He further announced that a High-Power Demography Mission would soon be launched to support personnel deployed along the borders.

Praising the BSF's role in safeguarding the country, the Home Minister said the force had become a symbol of national security and resilience since its inception in 1965.

He noted that the BSF, which began with 25 battalions, has now grown into a force of around 2.7 lakh personnel and is regarded as the world's largest border-guarding force.

Highlighting the challenges faced by the BSF along a few of the country's toughest frontiers, Shah said the force had consistently defended India's sovereignty with courage and sacrifice.

The ceremony concluded with the Home Minister honouring BSF personnel for exemplary service and supreme sacrifice in the line of duty.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio arrives in Kolkata as part of four-day India tour

KOLKATA

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Saturday arrived in Kolkata as part of his four-day diplomatic visit to India. It is Rubio's first trip to India and also the first time a US secretary of state is visiting the eastern metropolis after 2012.

The crucial visit of the American leader comes just weeks after the BJP assumed power in West Bengal, registering a landslide victory in the Assembly elections.

After arriving in the city, Rubio visited Mother House, the headquarters of Saint Teresa's Missionaries of Charity and spoke to the officials.

The Missionaries of Charity, founded by Mother Teresa in Kolkata, is a Catholic congregation dedicated to serving the poor, sick and destitute across the world.

Accompanied by US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor and other officials, Rubio later visited Nirmala Shishu Bhavan - a children's home run by Missionaries of Charity - during his Kolkata stopover.

"Joined @SecRubio in Kolkata for a visit to the Missionaries of Charity. Moments like these remind us the US-India partnership rests not only on strong policies, but also on shared values and the spirit of selfless service that transcends borders," the US Ambassador to India posted on X.

Earlier in the day, welcoming the American leader to India, Gor wrote in a post on X, "Honored to welcome my friend @SecRubio to India! We have an ambitious agenda ahead, including the Quad Foreign Ministers Meeting, focused on advancing @POTUS' vision for an even stronger U.S.-India



partnership. Looking forward to great conversations and making real progress together!"

Rubio became the first US secretary of state to set foot in Kolkata since Hillary Clinton visited the city in May 2012.

Rubio's India itinerary, scheduled from May 23 to 26 and also encompassing Agra, Jaipur, and New Delhi, is being viewed as diplomatically significant for his scheduled energy talks with India and the meeting with min-

isters from the Quad nations. "Well, we want to sell them as much energy as they'll buy. And obviously, you've seen I think we're at historic levels of US production, and US export."

Rubio told reporters in Miami before he embarked on the trip to Sweden and India.

Responding to a question about India being affected by high energy prices due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, Rubio described India as a

"great partner" and said he was looking forward to meeting with ministers from the Quad nations.

The Quad meeting is planned for May 26, and it is scheduled to be attended by Rubio, Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong and Japanese Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu, with Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar presiding over it.

INTERNATIONAL

US says 'slight progress' in Iran talks amid uncertainty on whether war will resume

TEL AVIV

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Friday there was "slight progress" during talks with Iran amid uncertainty as to whether a deal will be reached or war will resume.

He spoke days after US President Donald Trump said he was holding off on a military strike on Iran because "serious negotiations" were underway. Trump has been threatening for weeks that the ceasefire reached in mid-April could end if Iran does not make a deal, with shifting parameters for striking such an agreement.

Rubio spoke ahead of a meeting of NATO foreign ministers in Helsingborg, Sweden, where the military alliance is expected to discuss what role it could play in helping police the Strait of Hormuz once the war is over.

Rubio said he didn't want to exaggerate the progress, saying there had been "a little bit of movement and that's good." He said the conversations were ongoing. Still, in recent weeks there have been repeated claims of progress, yet a deal has not been reached.

Trump has repeatedly set deadlines for Tehran and then backed off. But he's also previously indicated he would hold off on military action to allow talks to continue — only to turn around and launch strikes. That's what happened at the war's outset, when he ordered strikes in late February shortly after indicating he would let talks play out.

He said he called off attacks this week on Iran at the request of allies in the Middle East, including the leaders of Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, who have been targeted by Iran and its allied militias.

But Trump's decision to give the talks a chance sparked tension this week with Israeli Prime Minister



Benjamin Netanyahu.

An official who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media said Thursday that Trump and Netanyahu had a "dramatic" phone conversation on Tuesday about the status of the Iranian negotiations and that Israel is angry with Trump's efforts to strike a deal with Iran.

Trump later told reporters that Netanyahu will "will do whatever I want him to do."

The comments are some of the first public signs of daylight between the leaders since they launched the war in February.

On Friday, Pakistan said that the interior minister traveled to Tehran twice this week to meet Iranian leaders as part of efforts to ease tensions between Iran and the United States.

At a weekly news briefing in the capital, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said Pakistan's political and military leadership were working to promote peace and that the minister's two visits were a testament to that.

He said Prime Minister Shehbaz

Sharif will travel to Beijing on Saturday at China's invitation, for a four-day visit, adding that Pakistan's peace efforts are expected to be discussed during the trip.

Iran has effectively closed the Strait of Hormuz, a vital waterway for the shipment of oil, gas, fertilizer and other petroleum products. The US is blockading Iranian ports and has redirected 85 commercial vessels from mid-April through Monday, US Central Command said in a social media post.

The US and Israel have said Iran can never have a nuclear weapon. While Iran was said to include some nuclear concessions, Trump has said he wants to remove highly enriched uranium from the country and prevent it from developing nuclear weapons. Iran says its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes.

Two regional officials and a western diplomat told the Associated Press that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates separately launched multiple attacks on Iran and Iranian-backed Shiite militias in Iraq, during the war. An Israeli military officer with knowl-

edge of the situation also confirmed that the UAE proactively struck Iran at least once.

All of them spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the information.

The regional officials said the strikes on Iran targeted military facilities, including missile and drone launchers, mostly belonging to the Revolutionary Guard Corps.

One of those regional officials said the strikes by Saudi Arabia targeted hideouts of Iraqi militias, mainly Kataib Hezbollah, after Riyadh assessed that most of the drone attacks on Saudi Arabia came from neighboring Iraq. He said Saudi Arabia has repeatedly briefed Baghdad about the Iraqi-originated attacks before deciding to strike.

The western diplomat and one of the regional officials said the UAE had pushed for a collective military response from the Gulf Arab countries since the onset of the war.

Asked for comment, the United Arab Emirates referred to a May 16 statement by its Foreign Ministry that "all measures undertaken by the UAE have been within the framework of defensive actions aimed at protecting its sovereignty, civilians, and vital infrastructure, in line with the country's legitimate right to safeguard its national security and maintain its stability." Saudi Arabia did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Iran has also not publicly addressed being targeted by the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

Following claims that attacks on Saudi Arabia and the UAE had been launched from Iraqi territory, the Iraqi prime minister also ordered an investigation. Iraq's government did not respond to requests for comments.

Trump says he is sending 5,000 more troops to Poland, stirring confusion about US presence in Europe



It was not clear whether that meant the brigade would resume its deployment to Poland, if additional troops on top of that rotational deployment could be added, or whether there would still be a drawdown of US troops in Europe but from a different country. The Pentagon referred requests for comment to the White House, which did not immediately respond to messages seeking clarity.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Defense Undersecretary Elbridge Colby both spoke with his Polish counterparts this week. Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk had said Wednesday that he was happy to hear "Washington's declaration that Poland will be treated as it deserves."

As of Tuesday, US Gen. Alexus Grynke, commander of both American and NATO forces in Europe, told reporters in Brussels that "there will be 5,000 troops coming out of Europe."

Trump's announcement came as Secretary of State Marco Rubio was on his way to Sweden to meet with his NATO counterparts, who have been questioning the Trump administration's policies on reduced US troop levels in Europe.

"There seems to be no process to deliberating policies like troop withdrawals and deployments at the top," said Ian Kelly, a retired career diplomat who served as US ambassador to Georgia during the Obama and first Trump administrations and now teaches international relations at Northwestern University in Illinois.

Kelly said Rubio may have a tough time in explaining Trump's wild swings to Europeans who are craving certainty and consistency even if they might disagree.

"These are not well thought out decisions," Kelly said. "These are impulsive decisions based on Trump's whims or what his advisors think are Trump's whims."

WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump said the US will send an additional 5,000 troops to Poland, stirring confusion following weeks of changing statements from Trump and his administration about reducing — not increasing — the American military footprint in Europe.

The Trump administration has said it was reducing levels in Europe by about 5,000 troops, and US officials confirmed about 4,000 service members were no longer deploying to Poland. Trump's social media announcement raises more uncertainty for European allies that have been blindsided by the changes as the administration has complained about NATO members not shouldering enough of the burden of their own defense and failing to do more to support the Iran war.

Based on the successful Election of the current President of Poland, Karol Nawrocki, who I was proud to endorse, and our relationship with him, I am pleased to announce that the United States will be sending an additional 5,000 Troops to Poland," Trump said on Truth Social.

Trump and the Pentagon have said in recent weeks that they were drawing down at least 5,000 troops in Germany after Chancellor Friedrich Merz said the US was being "humiliated" by the Iranian leadership and criticized what he called a lack

of strategy in the war.

Trump then told reporters at the beginning of the month that the US would be "cutting a lot further than 5,000."

As of last week, some 4,000 troops from the Army's 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division were no longer en route to Poland. The Associated Press reported that the canceled deployment was part of an effort to comply with Trump's order to reduce the number of troops in Europe. A deployment to Germany of personnel trained to fire long-range missiles also was halted.

Democratic and Republican lawmakers alike criticized the reductions as sending the wrong signal both to allies and Russian President Vladimir Putin during the 4-year-old war in Ukraine. Republican Rep. Don Bacon of Nebraska said during a congressional hearing that he spoke with Polish officials and they were "blindsided." He called the decision "reprehensible" and said it was "an embarrassment to our country what we just did to Poland."

Chief Pentagon spokesman Sean Parnell said Tuesday that it was "a temporary delay" of the deployment of US forces to Poland, which he called a "model US ally." He said it was a result of the US reducing the number of brigade combat teams assigned to Europe from four to three and indicated the Pentagon still needed to decide which troops to station where.

Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University Signs Six MoUs, Partners with Inclusive Divyangjan Entrepreneur Association to Boost Inclusion and Skill Development

KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI

Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University on Thursday signed six major Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with leading organisations working in the fields of accessibility, industry, creative education, culture and social development during the Global Accessibility Awareness Day Celebration 2026 held at the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre.

The programme was organised under the theme, "Design. Develop. Deliver: Building an Accessible and Inclusive India," and brought together policymakers, industry leaders, accessibility experts, academic institutions and social organisations to discuss inclusive and equitable development.

One of the key highlights of the event was the MoU signed between DSEU and Inclusive Divyangjan Entrepreneur Association (IDEA). The collaboration aims to strengthen accessible education, inclusive skilling, entrepreneurship development, industry engagement and employment opportunities for Divyangjan youth.

Apart from IDEA, DSEU also signed MoUs with NASSCOM, Indian Institute of Creative Skills, Federation of Indian Industry, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts and Rotary Club of Delhiites to strengthen industry-academia collaboration, innovation, cultural engagement and social impact initiatives.

The MoU exchange took place in the presence of Delhi Educa-



tion Minister Ashish Sood, DSEU Vice Chancellor Prof. Ashok Nagawat, Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities S. Govindaraj, IDEA Founder and CEO Mallikarjuna Iytha, DSEU Director PR Dr. Pankaj Lathar and Head of Partnerships Dr. Vikram Bansal, among other dignitaries.

University officials said the partnerships reflect DSEU's continued commitment towards building a future-ready and inclusive ecosystem that ensures equal opportunities in education, entrepreneurship, skilling and employment for all sections of society.

The event also served as a platform for dialogue, collaboration and collective action aimed at creating a more accessible and empowered India.

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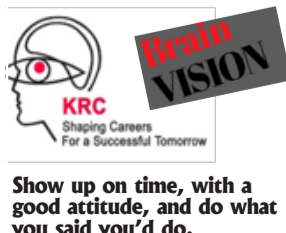
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