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PERSPECTIVE
Once you start loving someone, it's hard to stop.

Gauhati High Court to Hear Siddhartha Sharma's Bail Plea on June 4

GUWAHATI
The Gauhati High Court is set to hear the bail application of Siddhartha Sharma, one of the principal accused in the alleged death case involving Assam's celebrated singer Zubeen Garg, on June 4. According to sources, the matter has been listed before the bench of Justice Parthivjyoti Saikia. Sharma moved the High Court after a fast-track court rejected his earlier bail plea, citing the gravity of the allegations and the ongoing nature of the investigation. He is among the key accused in the case, which has drawn widespread attention across Assam. The hearing comes days after the Gauhati High Court rejected the bail application of Shyamkanu Mahanta, another prime accused in the case. Mahanta's plea had also been turned down earlier by a fast-track court. Following the High Court's decision on Mahanta's bail petition, Special Public Prosecutor Ziaul Kamar had indicated that the proceedings were gradually moving toward the trial stage. Speaking on May 29, Kamar said the next hearing in the matter was scheduled for June 8, when witnesses are expected to be examined before the court.

"The next date fixed in the matter is June 8, when witnesses are expected to be called for examination. This is only one stage of the proceedings. The more significant phase is the trial itself, during which the court will hear witnesses, evaluate the evidence placed on record and thereafter arrive at a final decision," he had stated.

WHO SAID WHAT

Let us #PrayTogether that sports may be an instrument of peace, encounter, and dialogue among cultures and nations, in order to promote the values of respect, solidarity, and personal growth. ~ His Holiness Pope Leo XIV

In times of war and extreme polarisation

Centre, Manipur Government Draft Plan to Position State as Global Polo Destination

IMPHAL
Union Minister for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Jyotiraditya M. Scindia and Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand discussed a comprehensive strategy to establish Manipur as a globally recognised hub for polo, highlighting the state's historic role as the birthplace of the modern sport.

The discussions focused on developing a roadmap that would position polo as Manipur's Unique Selling Proposition (USP), while leveraging its rich cultural heritage to drive tourism, sports development and economic opportunities.

In a statement issued after the meeting, Scindia underscored Manipur's unique connection to the sport and its potential to emerge as an international polo destination.

"As the birthplace of polo, Manipur holds immense potential to emerge as a global hub for the sport," the Union Minister said.

The proposed roadmap seeks to



strengthen the state's identity as the original home of polo and use that legacy to attract domestic and international tourists, sporting

events and investment in related sectors.

Polo, locally known as Sagol Kangjei, originated in Manipur centuries before evolving into the modern game played across the world. The traditional sport remains deeply embedded in the cultural fabric of the state and continues to be played in several regions.

Officials believe that promoting polo as a flagship attraction could significantly enhance Manipur's tourism profile while preserving an important aspect of its cultural heritage. The initiative is also expected to create opportunities for local players, horse breeders, tourism operators and small businesses linked to the sporting ecosystem.

The discussions come amid broader efforts by both the Centre and the state government to identify sectors where Manipur enjoys distinct historical, cultural and geographical advantages that can be harnessed for long-term economic development.

Stakeholders involved in the

proposed initiative envision a multi-pronged strategy that includes strengthening sports infrastructure, promoting traditional Sagol Kangjei, fostering international collaborations, organising high-profile tournaments and integrating polo into tourism promotion campaigns.

Officials said the initiative could help generate employment, increase visitor footfall and enhance global awareness of Manipur's contribution to the history of polo.

Both Scindia and Khemchand expressed confidence that a coordinated approach involving government agencies, sporting bodies and tourism stakeholders could transform Manipur into a premier international destination for polo while safeguarding one of the state's most treasured cultural traditions.

The proposed roadmap is expected to form part of wider efforts to showcase the Northeast's unique heritage and sporting excellence as drivers of sustainable growth and regional development.

Tripura Partners With Ramakrishna Mission to Establish Northeast's First Language School



AGARTALA
The Tripura government signed an agreement with the Ramakrishna Mission to establish the Northeast's first School of Languages along with a Centre for Human Excellence, an initiative aimed at enhancing skills, employability and personality development among youth.

Announcing the development, Manik Saha described the project as a significant milestone in the state's efforts to strengthen education and human resource development.

He said the initiative recognises the Ramakrishna Mission's longstanding contribution to education, value-based learning and social development in Tripura and across the country.

Calling it a "visionary step", the Chief Minister said the institution would equip young people with the knowledge, skills and values required to succeed in an increasingly competitive and globalised environment.

The proposed School of Languages

will offer instruction in Hindi, Sanskrit and Bengali, along with foreign languages such as German, French and Spanish. The accompanying Centre for Human Excellence will house computer training facilities, language laboratories, smart classrooms and a meditation hall. Saha noted that the project comes at a time when many young people are seeking better educational and employment opportunities. He expressed confidence that the institution would help students acquire specialised skills and improve their prospects for jobs both in India and overseas. The school is expected to begin operations with an initial intake of 100 students at the Ramakrishna Mission campus on Gangail Road in Agartala. A permanent campus will subsequently be developed on Mission-owned land in Dhaleswar, with the capacity to train up to 1,000 students annually.

"The youth will benefit from getting educated here and securing employment in the country and abroad," Saha said. The agreement-signing ceremony was attended by Ramakrishna Mission Principal Subhakarmananda Maharaj, Industries and Commerce Minister Santana Chakma, Industries and Commerce Secretary Kiran Gite, OSD to the Chief Minister Paramananda Sarkar Banerjee, Skill Development Director Pradeep K. and other senior officials.

The project is expected to strengthen language education and vocational training infrastructure in Tripura while creating new pathways for higher education, skill development and employment for the region's youth.

Around 40,000 CBSE Class 12 Students Seek Marks Verification Amid OSM Controversy

GUWAHATI
Guwahati
Nearly 40,000 students have registered for the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Class 12 answer-script verification and re-evaluation process, the board said on Wednesday amid continuing concerns over its On-Screen Marking (OSM) system.

According to CBSE, candidates have been able to complete the application process smoothly so far, with no major disruptions reported on the verification portal.

The board clarified that students can make payments through multiple gateways operated by State Bank of India, Canara Bank, Bank of Baroda and Indian Bank. Candidates are not required to hold accounts with these banks and may use UPI, net banking, debit cards or credit cards to complete transactions.

CBSE also advised students and parents to rely exclusively on official communications issued by the board for updates related to the verification and re-evaluation process.

The online portal, which became operational on June 2, allows students to report discrepancies in scanned copies of their answer scripts and apply for re-evaluation if they are dissatisfied with their marks. The facility will remain open until midnight on June 6, after which no further applications will be accepted.

The launch of the portal came after a delay, as CBSE had earlier indicated that the process would commence by May 29.

The verification exercise is taking place against the backdrop of a growing controversy surrounding the OSM system. Several students have alleged that scanned answer sheets uploaded by the board did not match their handwriting, prompting concerns about possible mismatches

Congress Alleges Arunachal Govt Hindering CBI Probe Into Contract Awards

NEW DELHI
The Congress accused the BJP-led government in Arunachal Pradesh of attempting to impede a Supreme Court-monitored Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into alleged irregularities in the award of public works contracts linked to the family of Chief Minister Pema Khandu. Addressing a press conference in New Delhi, Congress general secretary in charge of communications Jairam Ramesh alleged that the state government was disregarding principles of transparency and accountability despite directions issued by the Supreme Court.

"The BJP has clearly decided to brazen it out in Arunachal Pradesh, even though the Supreme Court has ordered a CBI investigation and the decision of the chief minister is under scrutiny," Ramesh said. The controversy relates to allegations that public works contracts were awarded to firms allegedly owned by or associated with members of the chief minister's family. A preliminary inquiry into the matter was ordered by the CBI following directions from the apex court.

Ramesh claimed that efforts were being made to slow the progress of the investigation and asserted that all files and records connected to the case should be made available to the investigating agency without obstruction.

He also questioned why Khandu continues in office while allegations against him are under investigation and argued that the matter warranted greater accountability from the state government.

According to the Congress leader, a report submitted by the CBI to the Supreme Court in April 2026 referred to allegations that contracts worth approximately Rs 1,270 crore were awarded to firms linked to members of the chief minister's family between January 2015 and December 2025.

Describing the situation as a "gross travesty" of the Supreme Court's order, Ramesh called for an independent and impartial investigation into the allegations. He further said the case raised wider concerns about public procurement practices and possible conflicts of interest within the state administration.

The Congress leader maintained that the Supreme Court had considered the allegations serious enough to require an independent investigation rather than an inquiry influenced by political or administrative considerations.

There was no immediate response from the BJP or the Arunachal Pradesh government to the allegations made by the Congress.

The Supreme Court-directed investigation into the alleged contract award irregularities remains ongoing, with the CBI continuing its examination of the case. Further developments are expected as the probe progresses.

Nagaland Advances Plans for Kiwifruit Centre of Excellence in Pfutsero



DIMAPUR
The Nagaland government has moved a step closer to establishing a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for kiwifruit cultivation at Pfutsero in Phek district, following a high-level meeting with an 11-member delegation comprising experts from New Zealand and officials from New Delhi.

The meeting, chaired by Naga-

land's Minister for Water Resources Development and Horticulture, Salhou-tuouo Kruse, was held in Kohima on May 31 and focused on key components of the proposed project, including the installation of a modern weather monitoring system at the CoE site.

Officials said the weather station, the first such facility to be established

under the state's Horticulture Department, will provide real-time data on weather conditions, soil health and water availability. The information is expected to support precision farming practices and help improve kiwifruit productivity across Nagaland.

As part of the initiative, scientists from the Bioeconomy Science Institute (BSI) will undertake preliminary surveys for the proposed centre and engage with kiwifruit growers in different parts of the state. The exercise will assess existing cultivation practices and identify measures to enhance yield, fruit quality and overall farm

efficiency.

During the discussions, Kruse thanked the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and the New Zealand delegation for their support in advancing the project. She also proposed farmer exchange programmes that would enable growers from Nagaland to visit New Zealand and receive practical training in advanced kiwifruit cultivation and orchard management techniques.

The meeting was attended by Nagaland Commissioner and Secretary for Horticulture Akumla Chuba, along with senior departmental officials.

The visiting delegation included six technical experts and scientists from BSI, representatives of the New Zealand Embassy, and an official from the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

The proposed Centre of Excellence is expected to play a key role in strengthening Nagaland's horticulture sector by introducing modern technologies, research-based farming practices and international expertise to support the state's growing kiwifruit industry.

Assam, Centre Review IIM Guwahati Campus Plan, Focus on Education Reforms

NEW DELHI
Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday held discussions with Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on the development of the proposed permanent campus of Indian Institute of Management Guwahati, while also reviewing key educational initiatives in the state.

The meeting, held at the Union Minister's official residence in New Delhi, focused on finalising plans for the institute's permanent campus, a project viewed as a key component of Assam's ambition to emerge as a major education hub in eastern India.

Sharing details of the meeting, Sarma said the state government is actively pursuing the establishment of premier educational institutions and strengthening academic infrastructure.

"Assam will become East India's next education hub and we are trying to get the best possible institutions here. Today I had a very good meeting with Hon'ble Minister Shri Dharmendra Pradhan Ji on finalising the contours of the IIM-Guwahati campus. Grateful for his relentless support towards strengthening education infrastructure in Assam," the Chief Minister said in a social media post.

Pradhan described the proposed permanent campus as a futuristic institution that is expected to emerge as a major centre for academic excellence, innovation and research in the Northeast.

According to the Union Minister, the institute will play a significant role in talent development, knowledge creation and leadership building across the region.

IIM Guwahati is expected to become the second Indian Institute of Management in the Northeast after Indian Institute of Management Shillong. The institute is currently operating from a temporary campus at Bongora in Kamrup district and is being mentored by Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad.

Earlier, the Assam government had announced that the permanent campus would be developed at Marabhita near Palasbari in Kamrup district, while academic activities would continue from the transit campus until construction is completed.



VOLUME:1, ISSUE 790

RISE TO PRICE RISE CHALLENGE

Presently, the prices of all essential items of daily life are taking upward trends making the common man (and women) feel hit harshly. The arguments that the trend is world-wide due to the various factors-external and internal-can hardly convince any affected families who are faced with sky-rocketing cost of everyday use items like LPG, petrol, vegetables, medicines and so on coupled with malady of scarcity, adulteration, over-charging. The burden is growing heavier day by day.

The recent upsurge has been due to external conflicts resulting in escalation of energy crisis impacting the overall prices in almost in all countries across the globe. India too is facing the hardship on the price-front confronted with mounting shortages and fault lines on the Price Control Orders and its effective enforcements.

Jammu and Kashmir has its own peculiar problems and so its strategy to tackle this challenging situation has to be suitably tailored to obtain the optimal results by maintaining the supply-line as also control prices of all commodities, especially the basic necessities of life for the common people.

The Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah must act swiftly and sternly for ensuring supply as well as holding the price-line and at the same time guarding against profiteering by action against adulteration, especially of all essential items of daily utility. To provide much-needed relief to the consumers in Jammu and Kashmir, the UT Administration must stand up to meet the challenging situation which hitting hard the common masses, especially during the festive season and all other times.

This matter brooks no delay as the people are being hit hard by spiralling prices. The inflation, which is a major factor in swing in prices, must be effectively contained through strong fiscal, administrative, price control steps and effective management of supply-demand position. One of the steps is by stream-lining the distribution system and constant on-spot checking of markets by the concern authorities.

The plea that the price-rise is a 'global phenomenon' and in a developing economy prices do get pushed up but it hardly convince or satisfy the poor /disadvantaged sections or even the common citizens. Sky-rocketing cost of living, due to price-hike coupled with un-controlled free-play by hoarders or profiteers and black-marketers is a matter of concern. Another serious problem is 'prevalent adulteration' which had to be handled with "iron hands" to safeguard the health standard of the masses.

Admittedly, the Government has to initiate some concrete steps to stabilise the prices of the essential commodities but still much more is needed to ensure adequate and quality supply of basic needs by strict regulations and tight controls on all essentials of daily use to "ease un-bearable burdens" on the consumers across Jammu and Kashmir.

In a fast growing economy, while price rise of daily use have to be periodically regulated/controlled, at the same time, purchasing power of common consumers has to be raised, especially of the low or fixed income groups. Jammu and Kashmir has to mainly depend on importing of almost all goods from the country coupled with transport and other overhead charges give push to prices in the far-flung hilly or border areas.

Regarding the prices of essential commodities like food grains, edible oils, pulses and other goods, the prices of vegetables, fruits have to be kept under strict control. The sudden sky-rocketing of few items of daily use create panic in the market by black-marketers which has to be suitably and sternly dealt with to keep the prices at reasonable rates. One way is constant vigil on the price-front and action against adulteration and another step to enforce price control through frequent administrative steps. The price-list of each item should be prominently displayed by the shopkeepers/dealers, as provided in the law.

It seems that Government has to take a serious view of rising prices and the situation constantly reviewed at the highest level. While some concrete anti-inflationary measures still require to be taken; there is need for suitable mechanism for constantly monitoring the supply-demand position and ensuring availability of all essentials of life at reasonably affordable prices. It is proposed that a high-level and powerful monitoring committee of economists, public men, businessmen, consumers, stakeholders as also from legal and media should be constituted soon and put into action to keep a vigilant eye on the price front.

There is also urgent need to act strongly against those indulging in profiteering and hoarding of essential commodities by the unscrupulous traders out to exploit the situation. The urgency on this account must be realised and a vigorous drive launched to ease the situation on the price front.

The Central Government in co-ordination with J&K UT Administration must address this challenging task of keeping in check the prices of all commodities, particularly the items of daily use by the common citizens. The prices of fuel, LPG cylinders and other essential items must be pulled down to give relief to the common citizens. The Chief Minister will have to take all possible concrete measures to effectively check the price-level so that common man does not suffer any longer!

The opposition parties have not only to raise this important issue both in the Parliament and Assembly of prices, defective economic policies and other public problems but also work for tangible solutions through mutual co-operation and joint efforts by ruling - opposition parties in public interest.

It needs to be emphasised that farm, factory and other production should be doubled by reformation and transformation through a suitable re-orientation to its financial and economic policies as also adoption of innovation and new technology. While the Government must deal with iron hands with hoarders and black marketers, the public distribution system has to be further streamlined for supply of essential commodities regularly at reasonable rates.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

If we value the pursuit of knowledge, we must be free to follow wherever that search may lead us. - Adlai Stevenson

INDIA'S ONE-WAY 'MARKET FORCES



HARSHA KAKAR

Negotiations with Iran have been proceeding well and differences are being narrowed down after rounds of exchange of ceasefire terms, being managed by Pakistan and Qatar. Trump announced on his Truth Social media platform, 'Negotiations with the Islamic Republic of Iran are proceeding nicely! It will only be a Great Deal for all or, no Deal at all.' Simultaneously, he asked his negotiators, Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, not to rush into the deal, as he had other plans.

The reason for slowing negotiations, especially while the world waits with bated breath for oil and gas prices to reduce to pre-war levels, was to give a fresh impetus to his Abraham Accords, orchestrated by him during his first term in Sept 2020. The accords in 2020 normalized ties between Israel, UAE and Bahrain. Subsequently, it included Sudan and Morocco. Kazakhstan joined in 2025. Trump believes that expansion of Abraham Accords would signal lasting peace in the region, restore growth and benefit all. It would also cement his Nobel Peace Prize. Trump mentioned that he told leaders of the Middle East and Pakistan, 'That after all the work done by the United States to try and pull this very complex puzzle together, it should be mandatory that all of these countries, at a minimum, simultaneously, sign onto the Abraham Accords.' The countries he referred to were Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt, and Jordan. Egypt and Jordan already have a peace treaty with Israel as Turkey and Israel recognize each other, though relations in recent years have been strained. Their joining the accords may not be of major benefit as those who have refused to recognize Israel.

The hint was towards three countries, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Pakistan. He did leave a door partially open by adding, 'It may be possible that one or two have a reason for not doing so, and

that will be accepted, but most should be ready, willing, and able to make this settlement with Iran a far more historic event than it would, otherwise, be.' Trump is aware that in case Riyadh inks the accords, Pakistan and Qatar would follow suit. Hence, he added, 'should start with the immediate signing by Saudi Arabia and Qatar, and everybody else should follow suit.' To further enhance pressure on Pakistan and Qatar, the two main negotiators, Trump mentioned that if countries do not sign, they should not be involved in any deal with Iran as 'it shows bad intention.' Was it linked to Pakistan's so-called defence minister Khawaja Asif's cancelled tweet wherein he termed it as 'a curse for humanity' and a 'cancerous state,' is unknown. This demand by Trump threw Middle East nations into a tizzy. Resumption of conflict was the last they desired as their oil infrastructure would face backlash as Iran has, during the ceasefire period, recreated its drone and missile capabilities, while US missiles for their defence are unavailable. Accepting it would result in their own people, as also the balance of the non-Arabic Muslim world, accusing them of surrendering to Israel.

Both, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have linked normalization of ties with Israel on the creation of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, a demand Israel rejects. An option is to procrastinate signing the accords till elections in Israel conclude in Oct 2026, as it is very likely that Netanyahu may not return to power.

This may not fit into Trump's schedule as US mid-term elections would be too close for comfort, due in Nov. Delaying a peace deal till then would impact his control over the senate. In case the accords are inked between major Islamic nations and the only Islamic superpower, Pakistan, it would give his party a boost.

Further, such a move would isolate Iran as also enhance Israel's security. While Riyadh

may still be able to delay inking the agreement on one pretext or the other and Qatar too can delay the same, as it hosts the US's largest bases in the region, diplomatic pressure would mount on Pakistan. Thus far, Pakistan has avoided making any diplomatic statement on the subject. In Trump's phone call to all Middle East nations and Pakistan, it was failed marshal Asim Munir who represented Pakistan. He maintained silence. Vague comments on Pakistan's refusal by Khawaja Asif, mean nothing.

Trump has been calling Asim Munir his favourite field marshal and praised the nation's peace-making efforts. Pakistan has been desperate to get into Washington's good books after years of neglect. It cannot push back against the gains it has made by refusing Trump's request, no matter what its policy has been since 1948. Pakistan also signed onto the Gaza peace Plan, promising to deploy troops in Gaza and be involved in its reconstruction. It is a different matter that the plan is currently shelved.

Islamabad and Rawalpindi will have to find a solution, after all they have been terming India and Israel as their eternal enemies and swearing their eradication. Occasionally growing tired of accusing only India for being behind their troubles, Pakistan's DG ISPR adds spice in the blame game by including Israel's MOS-SAD. Now this very organization will have to build narratives to justify why they should follow Trump like an obedient puppy and ink the accords.

The problem for the Pak military regime, ruling the country, is the internal backlash. Whenever inputs of even clandestine meetings between Pak and Israel emerge there is anger within the country. The PTI could even push for violence within adding to concerns in case Israel is recognized. It is also possible that Saudi Arabia, to ensure the sanctity of the ruling regime could push Pak to join the accords thereby satisfying Trump's ego. Pakistan,

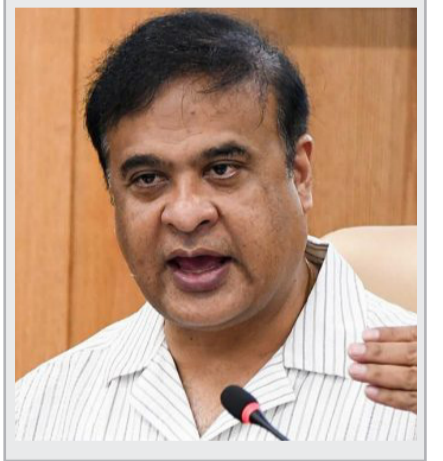
dependent on aid from multiple sources would find it difficult to refuse. Any decision of inking the accord could also anger China as the move would indicate Pakistan falling into the US camp. This would insult China as it would flow soon after the visit of PM Sharif and Asim Munir to China, where Xi Jinping promised to continue supporting Pakistan's development. Pakistan is in a catch 22 situation. If it refuses, it angers the US and carefully built relations could crumble. If it accepts, it could face internal wrath and Chinese displeasure. How it handles it is to be seen.

The author is Major General (Retd)

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

When the Govt of India ranks Assam among the Top 3 states for growth in school internet connectivity, it reflects a larger transformation. Electricity, computers, girls' toilets, internet access- every key indicator has improved over a decade of NDA governance.

And we are just getting started. ~ Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, CM, Assam



Mission Senehori Launched to Transform Assam's Muga Silk into Global Luxury Brand

GUWAHATI

In a major push to strengthen Assam's traditional silk industry and position Muga silk in premium international markets, the Centre and the Assam government on Tuesday launched Mission Senehori, a comprehensive Rs 411-crore programme aimed at transforming the entire Muga silk value chain.

The mission was unveiled in the presence of Union Minister for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Jyotiraditya M. Scindia and Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

Designed as a multi-stakeholder initiative, Mission Senehori is expected to directly benefit more than 8,000 households while strengthening livelihoods across the broader Muga ecosystem that supports nearly 2.6 lakh rearers and weavers in Assam.

A key objective of the programme is to substantially enhance the earnings of Muga rearers. While farmgate prices currently average around Rs 25,000 per kilogram, the mission aims to increase returns to more than Rs 50,000 per kilogram through improved processing, branding, quality control and market access.

Officials said the initiative will also address long-standing challenges such as post-production losses, adulteration and misuse of the Geographical Indication (GI) tag associated with Assam's world-renowned golden silk.

To protect authenticity and strengthen consumer confidence, the mission will introduce digital traceability systems and QR-enabled GI authentication, allowing buyers to verify the origin and genuineness of Muga products.

Describing the initiative as an unprecedented collaborative effort, Scindia

said Mission Senehori brings together eleven stakeholders, including central ministries, research institutions, private investors and producer groups.

"This is not a conventional government project. It is a pan-India collaborative effort where every stakeholder in the value chain has come together to build a sustainable future for Muga silk," he said.

The Rs 411-crore project draws funding from multiple sources, including the Ministry of DoNER, the Government of Assam, the Ministry of Textiles, the Ministry of Cooperation, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), the Ministry of Environment, North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation, APEDA, DRDO, private sector investors and contributions from rearer and weaver households.

Over the next three years, the mission

will focus on six major interventions aimed at strengthening production, processing, innovation and marketing.

These include the establishment of five modern Muga reeling units in key production clusters, operationalisation of a Muga spun silk mill in Dhemaji capable of processing 25-30 metric tonnes of silk waste annually, creation of four Common Facility Centres and the setting up of four Muga education and training centres.

The programme will also establish a Design and Innovation Lab in Sualkuchi, often referred to as Assam's textile hub, and develop a Silk Tourism Park at Dhakuakhana to promote cultural tourism linked to the silk industry.

Another major target of the mission is to increase annual Muga silk exports from approximately 500 kilograms to 2,000 kilograms while encouraging ap-

parel manufacturing through self-help group-led enterprises.

Union Minister of State for Textiles Pabitra Margherita said the initiative aligns with the Ministry of Textiles' vision of taking Indian silk from "farmer to fabric, fashion and foreign markets."

"Mission Senehori will empower every stakeholder from rearers and weavers to entrepreneurs and exporters," he said, noting that India's silk production has risen significantly over the past decade.

Chief Minister Sarma described the launch as a landmark moment for Assam's traditional textile sector.

"Muga silk occupies a place of pride in Assam's social, cultural and economic identity. Through this mission, our rearers and weavers will gain access to global markets, new technologies, contemporary designs and better income opportu-

nities," he said.

He added that the programme would help preserve a centuries-old tradition while creating new avenues for employment and entrepreneurship in rural Assam.

Scindia also stressed the importance of innovation and product diversification to ensure Muga silk remains attractive to contemporary consumers worldwide.

"Muga enjoys immense recognition beyond India. We must move beyond traditional offerings and create a diversified product catalogue while preserving the authenticity of the fabric," he said.

To achieve this objective, the proposed Muga Design Innovation Lab will collaborate with leading institutions such as the National Institute of Design (NID) and the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), along with prominent designer brands.

Assam CM meets new NITI Aayog Vice Chairman, seeks stronger reform partnership

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday congratulated Dr Ashok Lahiri on his recent appointment as the Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog and expressed the state's commitment to strengthening its partnership with the national policy think tank.

Sharing details of his meeting with Dr Lahiri in the national capital, Sarma said the newly appointed Vice Chairman brings with him extensive experience in public policy and finance, highlighting the expertise he is expected to bring to NITI Aayog's policymaking and reform agenda.

The Chief Minister noted that the Assam Government is keen to deepen its engagement with NITI Aayog in implementing reforms and developmental policies.

"The Assam Govt aims to deepen its partnership with NITI Aayog in implementing reforms and policies that will improve the Ease of Living of our people," Sarma said in a post on X after the meeting.

The interaction comes as Assam continues to pursue governance reforms, infrastructure development and welfare initiatives with support from central institutions.

Officials believe closer collaboration with NITI Aayog will help accelerate policy implementation and enhance outcomes across key sectors.

Dr Lahiri, a distinguished economist and public policy expert, has held several important positions in government and academia.

His appointment as Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog is expected to bolster the institution's role in shaping India's development priorities and supporting states in achieving sustainable and inclusive growth.

JTCM Withdraws Zeliangrong Shutdown, Warns of Renewed Agitation Over Missing Civilians

IMPHAL

The Joint Tribes' Council Manipur (JTCM) on Tuesday withdrew the emergency shutdown enforced across the Zeliangrong region, while warning that fresh protests could be launched if six Naga civilians allegedly abducted on May 13 are not returned safely.

In a statement, the tribal body announced that the region-wide shutdown was lifted with effect from 5 pm, bringing an end to the agitation that had disrupted normal life in parts of the region.

The council thanked residents of the Zeliangrong community for their support during the protest, describing their participation as a demonstration of solidarity and discipline in the campaign for justice.

JTCM said the collective response from the public had strengthened its demand for the safe return of the six missing civilians and reaf-

firmed its commitment to pursuing the issue.

While suspending the shutdown, the organisation stressed that its movement was not over and urged people to remain alert as developments unfold.

"The struggle does not end here," the council said, adding that justice would be achieved only when the six civilians return home safely.

The council warned that it could reimpose the shutdown or launch other forms of agitation if the six men are not released and returned immediately.

JTCM has been demanding the safe release of the six civilians, whom it claims were abducted on May 13. The organisation alleged that the incident involved individuals from Leilon Veiphei Kuki village acting in collusion with a Kuki militant group engaged in narcotics-related activities.

Arunachal Pradesh Signs JJM 2.0 Pact to Strengthen Water Security and Rural Supply Systems

ITANAGAR

Arunachal Pradesh has taken a major step toward enhancing drinking water infrastructure and long-term water security with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under the second phase of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM 2.0) between the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti and the state government.

Chief Minister Pema Khandu participated in the MoU signing programme alongside Public Health Engineering and Water Supply Minister Natung Taki. The agreement was signed in the presence of Union Jal Shakti Minister C. R. Patil and Minister of State for Jal Shakti V. Soman-

na. Describing the development as a significant milestone, Khandu said the new phase of the mission would help address water scarcity challenges, strengthen service delivery mechanisms and ensure sustainable access to safe drinking water across the state.

"The signing of JJM 2.0 is a major step towards strengthening and sustaining drinking water services across the State. It will help address water scarcity, improve service delivery systems and further the Prime Minister's vision of a Viksit Bharat with safe and reliable tap water for every home," the Chief Minister said.

Despite being endowed with abundant rivers, streams and high rainfall, Arunachal Pradesh continues to face challenges in providing reliable drinking water services due to its rugged terrain, dispersed settlements and difficult geographical conditions. Many remote villages experience seasonal shortages, while maintaining water supply infrastructure in mountainous regions often requires significant technical and financial resources.

Officials said JJM 2.0 seeks to address these challenges by focusing not only on the creation of new infrastructure but also on ensuring the long-term sustain-

ability and functionality of existing water supply systems.

The programme is expected to strengthen operation and maintenance frameworks, improve water quality monitoring and enhance institutional capacity to ensure uninterrupted drinking water services in rural areas.

A key feature of the mission's second phase is its emphasis on source sustainability, water conservation and community participation. Experts believe these components are particularly relevant for Arunachal Pradesh, where changing climatic conditions, population growth and increasing demand are placing additional pressure on water resources.

State officials noted that the initiative will support the development of resilient water supply systems capable of serving remote and geographically challenging areas while minimising service disruptions.

The programme also aligns with the national goal of provid-

ing Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs) to every rural household. Since the launch of the Jal Jeevan Mission, substantial progress has been made in expanding tap water coverage across India, and JJM 2.0 aims to consolidate those gains by prioritising sustainability and service quality.

For Arunachal Pradesh, improved access to safe drinking water is expected to yield significant public health benefits, particularly in rural communities. Experts point out that reliable water supply can help reduce water-borne diseases, improve sanitation standards and ease the burden on women and children who often travel long distances to collect water.

The state government expressed confidence that continued collaboration with the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti would accelerate efforts to strengthen water infrastructure and ensure long-term water availability for future generations.

Nagaland Deploys Over 6,000 Personnel for Census 2027 Exercise

DIMAPUR

Nagaland has intensified preparations for Census 2027, with more than 6,000 government officials set to be deployed across the state for the nationwide population enumeration exercise.

The census will be conducted in two phases, beginning with house-listing operations and followed by a comprehensive population count in early 2027.

According to officials, the first phase will commence with house-listing activities, during which residents will have the option of using an online self-enumeration facility between June 16 and June 30. The self-enumeration process

is expected to streamline data collection and encourage greater public participation.

Following the online exercise, authorities will undertake verification of the submitted information and carry out physical household enumeration to ensure accuracy and completeness of records.

The second phase of the census is scheduled for February 2027 and will focus on population enumeration. During this stage, enumerators will collect demographic and socio-economic information from households across the state.

The Directorate of Census Operations, Nagaland, has appealed to citizens to cooperate fully with census officials and actively participate in the

exercise, describing public involvement as crucial to the successful implementation of the national programme.

As part of its preparatory efforts, the state has completed the training of field trainers covering all 17 districts. A total of 130 trainers participated in a three-day residential programme conducted in four batches.

These trainers will now oversee the next stage of capacity building by imparting training to census supervisors and enumerators throughout June 2026. The training programme will cover 157 administrative units, including sub-divisions, municipalities and towns across Nagaland.

Officials said the train-

ing sessions were organised between May 20 and May 29 under the supervision of deputy commissioners in Dimapur, Mokokchung, Kohima and Phek districts.

The Directorate noted that the programme achieved 100 per cent attendance, reflecting the state's commitment to ensuring a smooth and efficient census operation.

With the training phase completed and large-scale deployment plans in place, Nagaland is preparing for one of its most extensive administrative exercises, aimed at generating updated demographic data that will guide policy planning, resource allocation and developmental initiatives in the coming years.

Conrad Sangma Engages Diverse Stakeholders in Day-Long Consultations Across Meghalaya

SHILLONG

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma on Tuesday held an extensive series of consultations with representatives of religious institutions, employee associations, industry groups, cultural organisations and civil society bodies, underscoring the state government's emphasis on participatory governance and stakeholder engagement.

The meetings covered a wide range of issues, including welfare, employment, education, infrastructure, industrial development, youth empowerment, labour concerns and community welfare, reflecting the government's effort to incorporate grassroots perspectives into policy-making and development planning.

Among the delegations that met the Chief Minister were representatives of the Synod Sepngi and Mawphlang Presbytery, Holy Eucharist Church, The Lou Majaw Foundation, renowned woodcraft artist Gilford Pde, the Meghalaya ASHA Workers Union, the All Meghalaya Grade IV Government Employees Association, the Meghalaya Editors and Electronic Media Association (MEESA), DIET teacher trainees and the Bosco Integrated Development Society.



Participants raised issues relating to church and community activities, cultural preservation, promotion of traditional arts and crafts, infrastructure requirements, sports development, service-related concerns, honorariums, pending stipends and the implementation of community projects.

Discussions with cultural stakeholders focused on preserving Meghalaya's rich artistic and cultural heritage while creating economic opportunities through creative industries and cultural tourism. Representatives advocated greater institutional support for artisans, cultural organisations and local initiatives that contribute to the state's identity and economy.

Employee associations highlighted concerns regarding service conditions, welfare measures and administrative matters affecting government personnel and frontline workers. The Meghalaya ASHA Workers Union raised issues related to honorariums and welfare benefits,

while teacher trainees discussed educational opportunities and pending stipend payments.

In a separate round of meetings, Sangma interacted with representatives of the Meghalaya Poultry Farmers and Welfare Association, the All Khasi Hills A-chik Federation, the Khasi Jaintia Government Contractors and Suppliers Association, the Jaintia Hills Cement Manufacturers Association, the Hynniewtrep Youth Development Council and the Hynniewtrep Border Dispute Redressal Forum.

These discussions centred on employment generation, industrial expansion, contractor-related concerns, labour welfare, recruitment processes, youth development and economic growth.

Industry representatives highlighted challenges faced by local businesses and manufacturers, while also exploring opportunities to expand investment and create jobs. The consultations come as Meghalaya seeks to diversify its economy and encourage greater private-sector participation to address employment needs and support sustainable growth.

The Meghalaya Poultry Farmers and Welfare Association also discussed issues affecting the poultry and livestock sectors, which are increasingly viewed as important avenues for improving rural livelihoods and strengthening food security.

Border-related concerns featured prominently during interactions with

the Hynniewtrep Border Dispute Redressal Forum, whose representatives raised issues affecting villages located in border areas. Such matters continue to be significant for local communities and remain a key component of the state's governance agenda.

Observers noted that the day-long consultations reflected the government's approach of maintaining regular dialogue with a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including religious institutions, employee bodies, cultural organisations, community groups and industry associations.

Addressing the delegations, Sangma assured participants that the concerns and suggestions presented during the meetings would receive due consideration from the government.

He reiterated that effective governance requires sustained engagement with citizens and stakeholders and emphasized the administration's commitment to addressing challenges through consultation, collaboration and consensus-building.

"The issues raised will be examined, and dialogue with citizens will continue," the Chief Minister said.

The consultations form part of Meghalaya's broader strategy to ensure that policy decisions and developmental initiatives are informed by grassroots concerns while advancing the state's long-term objectives of economic growth, social welfare and inclusive development.

Quest!

Athazagoraphobia is the fear of being forgotten or ignored.

Centre, RBI refute report of USD 12 billion gold sale



NEW DELHI

The government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Tuesday dismissed as "fake" a media report claiming that the central bank had sold gold worth about USD 12 billion from the country's foreign exchange reserves, asserting that India's gold holdings remain largely unchanged.

In a post on X, the government's fact-checking unit, PIB Fact Check, said a Bloomberg report suggesting that the RBI may have sold gold worth approximately USD 12 billion was incorrect.

Citing RBI data, the fact-

check unit said the share of gold in India's foreign exchange reserves rose from 13.92% at the end of September 2025 to 16.70% as of March 31, 2026, and further to 16.85% as of May 22, 2026.

RBI data show that the central bank's gold holdings stood at 879.58 tonnes as of May 2, 2026, compared with 880.34 tonnes on March 20, indicating no material change in the quantity of gold held. However, the value of these holdings declined from about USD 120 billion on May 8 to USD 114.8 billion on May 22, reflecting movements in international gold prices.

The PIB Fact Check unit

also noted that the RBI regularly discloses its physical gold stock in its monthly bulletin and that the latest available data show no significant change in the quantity of gold held by the central bank.

Bloomberg had reported that the RBI might have sold gold worth USD 12 billion during the fortnight ended May 22.

The clarification comes amid speculation over movements in India's foreign exchange reserves and gold holdings. The government advised the public to rely on RBI disclosures for authentic information regarding the country's reserve assets.

Great Nicobar project threatens unique biodiversity, driven largely by commercial interests: Jairam Ramesh

NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Wednesday wrote to Union Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav, alleging that the Great Nicobar Island Project, in its current form, is "overwhelmingly a commercial enterprise" and poses a serious threat to the island's unique biodiversity.

Responding to Yadav's letter of May 27, which itself replied to an earlier communication from him, Ramesh said his letter dated May 10 had merely sought compliance with environmental laws and a comprehensive assessment of the project's ecological impacts. He noted that the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report submitted in March 2022 had described itself as a rapid reconnaissance study.

"I am glad that you have acknowledged that the environmental clearance was not based on comprehensive EIA studies covering three seasons and that primary data were collected over only a single seasonal cycle," the former environment minister wrote.

However, Ramesh argued that even the studies cited by Yadav were not based on data collected over a complete seasonal cycle. According to him, the reports themselves state that baseline surveys were conducted over only a few weeks.

He also rejected the ministry's reliance on historical datasets maintained by institutions under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, arguing that secondary data cannot substitute for project-specific primary data collected at the site and in the affected areas.

Referring to National Green Tribunal (NGT) judgments cited by Yadav, Ramesh said the ruling of April 3, 2023 had explicitly recorded "unanswered deficiencies" in the environmental clearance and had called for a comprehensive EIA while remanding the clearance for re-examination.

He further pointed to an ISRO Space Applications Centre report cited during NGT proceedings, which identified erosion along sections of the eastern flank of Galathea Bay.

"You will recall that under the



Island Coastal Zone Regulation, 2019, ports are prohibited in areas experiencing high erosion, while comprehensive EIA studies are required even in low- and medium-erosion zones. Given ISRO's findings, would it not be prudent to undertake detailed EIA studies over three seasons to account for seasonal variations?" he asked.

Ramesh maintained that the NGT's judgment of February 16, 2026 did not make any finding on the adequacy of data collection or environmental studies, contrary to the interpretation presented by the government.

Calling the review process flawed, he alleged that the agencies responsible for preparing the environmental studies had effectively been allowed to assess their own work.

"It is extraordinary, and even unprecedented, that those who prepared the EIA report and related studies, and those who commissioned them, have ended up reviewing their own work and declaring it satisfactory. This is a perversion of due process," he said.

The Congress leader also argued that both the NGT judgment and the government's response had overlooked a 2009 Office Memorandum mandating comprehensive environmental impact assessments, including physical and mathematical modelling and ground verification, for all port projects in the Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands.

Similarly, he said they had ignored provisions in the EIA guidance manual for ports and harbours, which require physical, chemical and biological data to be collected over two to three seasons to assess seasonal impacts.

While Yadav had highlighted safeguards imposed to protect biodiversity, Ramesh contended that such conditions were irrelevant if the underlying environmental studies themselves were inadequate.

He also renewed his demand for the release of a High-Powered Committee report that was submitted to the NGT in a sealed cover in October 2025.

"Records relating to the project's

clearance are already in the public domain. The township master plan and the airport's detailed project report are also publicly available. I fail to understand why the re-examination of the clearance process should remain confidential," he said.

Ramesh further claimed that the government's defence of the project had shifted from environmental considerations to strategic arguments.

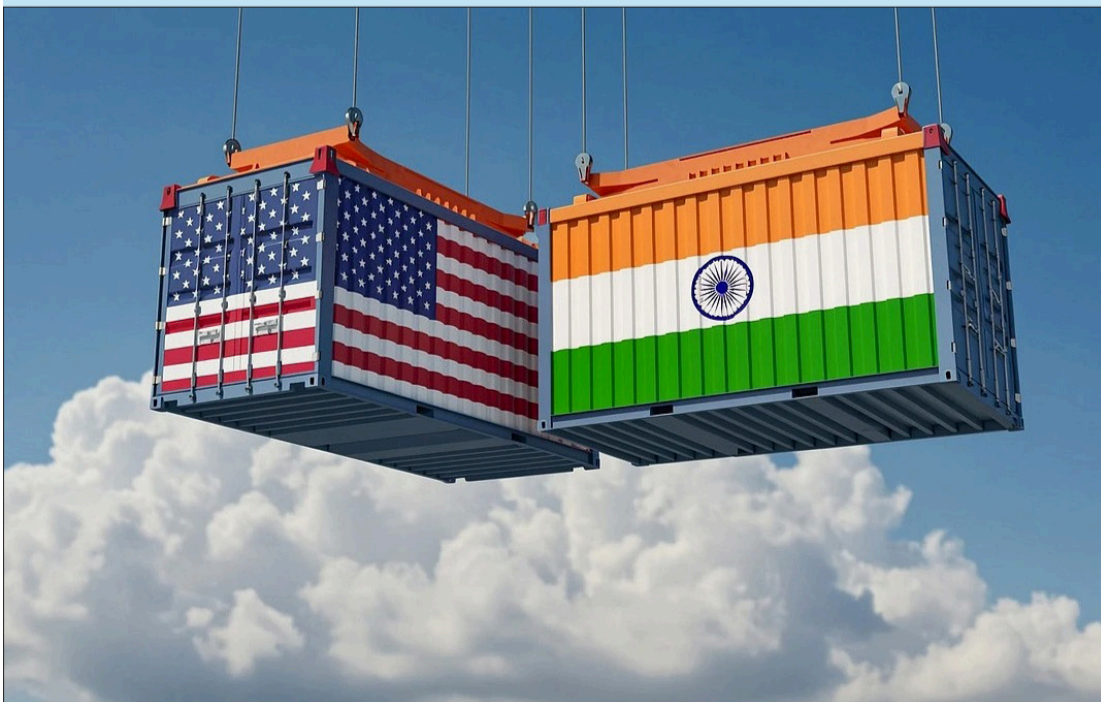
He said he had separately written to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, suggesting that India's strategic objectives could be better served by expanding facilities such as INS Baaz at Campbell Bay and strengthening other assets of the Andaman and Nicobar Command.

"The project, as presently conceived, is overwhelmingly a commercial enterprise," he said.

Ramesh and Yadav have exchanged several letters on the issue, with the Congress leader repeatedly arguing that the proposed project could cause significant ecological damage to the island ecosystem.

INTERNATIONAL

US proposes 12.5% additional duties on India, 53 other countries over forced labour import violations



WASHINGTON

The US Trade Representative (USTR) has proposed additional import duties of 12.5 per cent on 54 countries, including India, over their alleged failure to prohibit goods made with forced labour from entering their markets.

The proposal comes after investigations into 60 countries for not imposing or effectively enforcing restrictions on imports linked to forced labour, accord-

ing to the USTR.

"The failure of our most important trading partners to address the importation of goods made with forced labour is unacceptable.

This creates a dynamic where American workers are forced to compete globally on an unlevel playing field," US Trade Representative Ambassador Jamieson Greer said in a statement.

"We will no longer tolerate this disparity," he said.

India has contested the allegations under the forced labour clause and urged the US to discontinue the investigations, maintaining that the issue should be resolved through ongoing bilateral trade discussions.

The USTR said 54 economies, including India, China, Japan, Brazil, Australia, the UK and Saudi Arabia, have failed to introduce and effectively implement prohibitions on imports produced with forced labour.

Meanwhile, Canada, Ecuador, the European Union, Indonesia, Mexico and Pakistan were found to have existing prohibitions but inadequate enforcement mechanisms.

Greer said some trading partners had initiated measures to restrict forced labour-linked imports through mechanisms such as the USMCA and Agreements on Reciprocal Trade, but added that stronger action was needed.

"each of our trading partners must do more to ensure that trade does not perversely encourage and entrench forced labour globally".

Under the proposal, countries that already enforce forced labour import bans, have committed to such measures under reciprocal trade agreements, or maintain partial safeguards against such imports would face an additional 10 per cent duty.

"For all other economies, the US Trade Representative proposes 12.5 per cent as the rate of additional duty," the statement said.

The proposed 12.5 per cent additional tariff would apply to the 54 countries identified in the investigation.

Separately, the USTR has proposed a textile mechanism that would permit a specified volume of apparel and textile imports from select countries to enter the US at lower tariff rates.

The USTR has invited interested parties to submit requests to appear at hearings, along with testimony summaries, by June 22, while written comments can be submitted until July 6.

"USTR will hold hearings about the proposed actions in these investigations on July 7," the statement said.

North Korea slams US remarks comparing South to 'dagger'



SEOUL

North Korea slammed on Wednesday remarks by the top American military official in South Korea comparing his host nation to "the dagger in the heart of Asia", saying it reflected Washington's strategy to contain China.

General Xavier Brunson made the comments in an interview as speculation builds that Washington may seek to expand the US Forces Korea (USFK) role in coun-

ter Korea to help guard against the nuclear-armed North.

The state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) published commentary by analyst Kim Myong Chol who said Brunson's remarks showed the US as "the chieftain of harassing peace and the world's worst war empire".

The comments reflected how Washington intended to use South Korea "as an important geopolitical instrument to realise its regional strategy aimed at containing China," said

China has for decades been Pyongyang's main trading partner and a key source of diplomatic and economic backing.

Seoul's presidential office said at the weekend that it was aware of Brunson's remarks and has been "maintaining communication at various levels regarding all relevant issues".

Local media outlets including News1 and JTBC reported that Seoul has raised concerns with the United States.

USFK commander Brunson said in the interview, "When (the Chinese) look out from the east coast of China, what they see is there's Korea, the dagger in the heart of Asia." Brunson also compared Japan to a "shield that's sort of a backstop" against China's regional ambitions, according to a transcript posted by the Strategic Studies Institute of the US Army War College.

Beijing's embassy in Seoul last week condemned the remarks as having "truly crossed the line" and "rife with hostility and aggression toward China", asking whether they were authorised by Washington.



tering China's regional influence.

About 28,500 US troops are stationed in South

Kim, who is based in Japan and considered an unofficial overseas spokesman for North Korea.

IIT Guwahati develops strategic devices for Energy Conversion and Neuromorphic Memory with Hybrid Perovskites-a new Semiconductor Material



GUWAHATI

A research team at the Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati has developed a new technology on perovskite semiconductor material, known for its potential applications in solar cells and resistive-switching (memristor/R-RAM) devices.

Perovskites are a class of materials with a distinctive crystal structure that enables strong light absorption and efficient charge separation for high-performance solar cells, while their defect-tolerant electronic properties and ion migration behaviour make them highly promising for memristor devices.

Perovskite solar cells comprise multiple functional layers, where photogenerated charge carriers are extracted through selective transport layers to generate electricity.

However, losses at interfaces arising from surface defects, chemical redox reactions and energy-level mismatches lead to charge trapping and recombination.

These challenges are further intensified under environmental stress, such as moisture, heat and oxygen, resulting in degradation and reduced operational stability, thereby limiting the practical use of perovskites in real-world scenarios.

However, the resistive switching behaviour of perovskite memristors is often affected by uncontrolled ion migration, defect-assisted conduction, and interfacial instabilities, leading to variability in switching parameters.

These issues result in poor switching uniformity, limited endurance, retention degradation, and an incomplete understanding of the underlying switching mechanism, thereby hindering the development of reliable perovskite-based memory devices for future neuromorphic computing and next-generation non-volatile memory applications.

To address these limitations, Prof. Parameswar K. Iyer, Professor, Department of Chemistry and Centre for Nanotechnology, along with his research team, developed a molecular interface engineering method using two specially designed bright donor-acceptor organic molecules. These strategic organic

compounds are deposited as 10-15 nm ultrathin layers (a hundred thousand times thinner than a human hair) between the charge-transport layer and the perovskite layer as part of the device engineering tactic.

These organic molecules control how electrical charges behave at the interface and reduce defects, resulting in the easy and smooth flow of charges created by sunlight across the interface.

This approach enabled solar cells to achieve an efficiency of 25.73%, corresponding to the conversion of nearly one-quarter of incident sunlight into electricity, which is highly competitive among state-of-the-art devices of this class.

The research team also found that the interfacial engineering approach retained approximately 90% of its initial performance after prolonged storage under ambient conditions and about 75% under continuous thermal and light stress, highlighting the robustness of the developed materials.

Beyond solar cells, the team demonstrated that the same (FA-based) perovskite material can be integrated into memristor devices using a thin 220-nm-active layer, showcasing its multifunctional potential. These devices exhibit stable low-power switching, multistate memory performance, and reliable endurance, making them promising candidates for next-generation memory and crossbar arrays for neuromorphic computing.

The study also provides important insights into the switching mechanism governed by defect states and ion migration.

Furthermore, the multistate memory behaviour highlights its potential for neuromorphic computing and artificial intelligence hardware. The stochastic formation of conductive filaments also enables true random number generation, offering promising opportunities for secure computing, cryptographic systems, and next-generation intelligent electronic technologies.

Speaking about the real-world usage of the developed materials, Prof. Parameswar K. Iyer, Professor, Department of Chemistry, IIT Guwahati, said, "This work demonstrates the potential of perovskite-based semiconductor technologies for next-generation solar cells and memory devices.

The synthesised novel organic molecules enable improved interfacial engineering for highly efficient and stable solar energy conversion, while the same material platform

exhibits reliable resistive switching for advanced memory and neuromorphic computing applications. Such advances could accelerate the large-scale commercialisation of integrated optoelectronic systems combin-

ing energy harvesting, information storage, and intelligent computing within a single technological framework."

In addition to the development of low-cost and efficient solar cells and memory devices, these improved perovskite systems can also support energy-efficient computing approaches, such as neuromorphic systems, which emulate how the brain processes information using networks that mimic neurons and synapses.

Their thin-film nature is also well-suited for flexible electronics and integrated devices that combine energy generation and data storage.

The findings of this research have led to multiple patent filings for perovskite solar cell technology, memory devices and the publication of two separate high-impact research articles recently in the prestigious international journal 'Advanced Functional Materials' (Wiley) co-authored by Prof. Iyer along with his research team, including Ramkrishna Das Adhikari, Himangshu Baishya, Mizanur Alam, Manab Kalita, Mayur Jagdishbhai Patel, Deepak Yadav, Diganta Bhattacharyya, Priyam Ghosh, in collaboration with Swastik Laha, and Dr. Kalishankar Bhattacharyya from IIT Guwahati.

This work is funded by the Department of Science and Technology, New Delhi, Integrated Clean Energy Material Acceleration Platform on Materials (IC-MAP) (DST/TMD/IC-MAP/2K20/03).

As the next step, the research team has made progress and achieved beyond 26% solar cell efficiency and further aims to improve the developed materials' performance in large area real-world conditions over longer periods.

The team is also working with an industry partner on developing methods to scale up its fabrication for larger areas and flexible devices for commercial applications.

As research in advanced materials continues to progress, this advancement by the IIT Guwahati research group bridges a major gap between functional materials development at the laboratory, theoretical insights and real-world implementation in space technologies for powering satellites and space missions by enabling lightweight flexible energy conversion devices, stability against cosmic radiation in extraterrestrial conditions.

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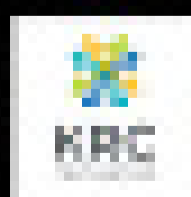


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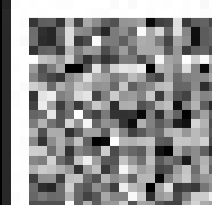


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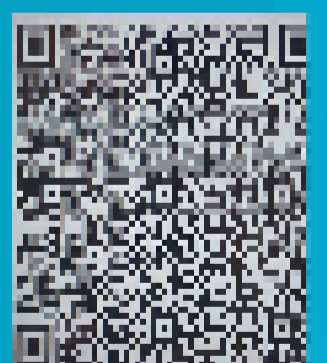
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