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## PERSPECTIVE

We fear rejection, want attention, crave affection, and dream of perfection.

### Bangladeshi National Reportedly Killed in BSF Firing Along Tripura Border



#### AGARTALA

A Bangladeshi national was reportedly killed after Border Security Force (BSF) personnel opened fire on a group of alleged smugglers near the India-Bangladesh border in Tripura's Unakoti district early Sunday, officials said. The incident was reported around 4 am near Border Pillar No. 1847, close to Gate No. 47 in Ward No. 3 of Magruli Gram Panchayat. Unakoti Superintendent of Police Rishab said a group of people allegedly crossed the international border and entered Indian territory before stopping ahead of the border fence. According to the police, the group allegedly confronted BSF personnel who were on patrol duty and attempted to assault them with an iron dao and a cricket bat.

"BSF personnel first used other methods to deter them and ultimately resorted to firing as per established procedure, following which the group fled towards the Bangladesh side," Rishab said. A subsequent search of the area led BSF personnel to discover the body of a Bangladeshi national, along with articles suspected to have been used during the confrontation, the SP said. Local sources identified the deceased as around 30-year-old Tara Mia, a resident of Dastekhi in Bangladesh. However, police have not yet officially confirmed his identity. Preliminary reports also suggested that the group may have been involved in the alleged smuggling of Burmese cigarettes across the international border. Authorities have not yet independently confirmed the alleged smuggling activity. A police team reached the location after receiving information about the incident, and further legal proceedings are underway. The incident has heightened security along the Magruli border area, with authorities examining the circumstances surrounding the alleged cross-border intrusion, the confrontation with BSF personnel and the subsequent death.

### WHO SAID WHAT



Always  
#Cheer4Bharat.  
~ Narendra  
Modi, PM

# PM Modi Praises Lovlina Borgohain for Raising Objection to Distorted India Map in Glasgow

**NEW DELHI**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has praised Assam boxer Lovlina Borgohain for raising an objection after noticing a distorted depiction of India's map at a restaurant in Glasgow, saying her gesture would be remembered for a long time.

Modi made the remarks during an interaction with India's Commonwealth Games medallists at his residence on Sunday. A video of the interaction was released by the Prime Minister's Office on Monday.

During the informal interaction, Modi turned to Borgohain and jokingly asked about her reported altercation with restaurant staff.

"Kya hua wo restaurant waale se jhagda kar rahi thi?" Modi asked.

Borgohain, who won a silver medal in the women's 75kg boxing category at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games, explained that the Indian athletes had visited the restaurant to celebrate their success when she noticed an inaccurate depiction of India.

"It was a happy occasion, sir. We were celebrating and I didn't like to see the distorted flag. I politely told them and they have made the changes also," Borgohain said.

The restaurant subsequently corrected the disputed depiction.

Modi calls gesture 'not ordinary'

Praising the boxer, Modi said her decision to raise the issue even while celebrating her sporting success reflected her awareness of the significance of the country's map.

"To be able to recognise the significance of that map at a time when you were celebrating and the Games were over, I can tell you truthfully, that video was not ordinary. It will be remembered by people for a very long time," Modi said.

The incident had attracted attention after Borgohain noticed that the Northeast was missing from a map of India displayed at the Glasgow restaurant.

The Assam-born boxer raised the matter with the restaurant staff while celebrating with fellow Indian athletes after the Common-



wealth Games campaign. The establishment later agreed to rectify the depiction.

Borgohain's silver medal in Glasgow marked her first Commonwealth Games medal. She entered



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# Manipur Violence: SC Seeks Dedicated Courts to Fast-Track CBI, NIA Trials

**NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court to consider setting up exclusive courts to deal with cases arising from the 2023 ethnic violence in Manipur that are being investigated by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana made the request while reviewing the progress of investigations and trials linked to the violence.

The court said the large number of witnesses involved in the cases warranted consideration of a dedicated judicial mechanism to ensure that proceedings move forward without being delayed by unrelated matters. "Having regard to the total number of witnesses proposed to be examined, we request the Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court to consider the feasibility of allowing the CBI/NIA court to exclusively deal with Manipur-related cases. Other cases be transferred to some other court," the bench said.

The Supreme Court also suggested the possibility of establishing two separate exclusive courts - one to handle cases investigated by the CBI and another for those investigated by the NIA.

The Registrar General of the Gauhati High Court has been directed to submit a status report on the feasibility of the proposed arrangement before the next hearing.

The bench noted that Special Judges are already handling CBI and NIA cases but said it needed clarity on whether these courts were exclusively dealing with cases related to the Manipur violence or were also burdened with other matters.

The court further directed the authorities to compile details of cases in which chargesheets have been filed, including case numbers and the status of proceedings. The information is intended to ensure that victims, their families and their legal counsel have access to relevant case records and

proceedings.

CBI files 22 chargesheets in 31 cases

During the hearing, Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati informed the bench that the CBI had been entrusted with 31 cases arising from the Manipur violence.

Final reports have been filed in 27 cases, including 22 chargesheets and five closure reports, while four cases remain under investigation.

Of the 22 cases in which the CBI has filed chargesheets, courts have taken cognisance in 20, while cognisance is pending in two cases.

Only one of the chargesheeted cases is triable by a magistrate, while the remaining cases are to be tried by Sessions courts. All the CBI cases have been transferred to Gauhati, Bhati told the court.

NIA chargesheets 15 of 30 cases

The NIA, which was entrusted with 30 cases connected with the violence, has filed chargesheets in 15 cases, while investigations are continuing in the remaining 15.

Charges have already been framed

in seven of the 15 chargesheeted cases.

Of these 15 NIA cases, two are pending before a court in Delhi, five before courts in Gauhati and eight in Manipur. The court also considered concerns raised by senior advocate Vrinda Grover over victims and their families not having adequate access to status reports and chargesheets.

The bench directed the authorities to compile and place the relevant case particulars on record so that affected families and their legal representatives can access information concerning the proceedings.

Court stresses uninterrupted investigations

The Supreme Court also took note of security-related issues highlighted in a status report, including incidents involving Assam Rifles personnel, damage to public infrastructure, road blockades and protests linked to demands concerning the National Register of Citizens (NRC). The bench said the sensitive law-and-order situation should not obstruct ongoing investigations by the CBI and NIA.

It directed the Manipur government and central security agencies to provide the necessary support and coordination to ensure that the two agencies can continue their investigations without interruption. The court also stressed the need to maintain adequate security, including ensuring the safety of students, amid continuing law-and-order concerns.

The ethnic violence in Manipur erupted on May 3, 2023, following a Tribal Solidarity March in the hill districts against a demand for Scheduled Tribe status for the majority Meitei community.

The prolonged conflict has claimed more than 200 lives, injured several hundred people and displaced thousands since the violence began.

The Supreme Court's proposed dedicated-court mechanism is aimed at enabling the large number of CBI and NIA cases arising from the violence to proceed in a more focused manner while ensuring that victims and their families have better access to the judicial process.

## SC Seeks Centre, Assam Government Responses on Pending NRC Procedures

**NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court on Monday sought responses from the Centre and the Assam government on a batch of petitions concerning pending procedures related to the National Register of Citizens (NRC), including the issuance of identity cards to people whose names were included in the final NRC published in August 2019.

A bench of Justice P.S. Narasimha and Justice Alok Aradhya was hearing petitions filed by organisations including the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, the All Assam Minority Students' Union (AAMSU) and the Assam Sankhyalaghu Sangram Parishad.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the Jamiat, told the court that notices had already been issued in the matter but responses from the Centre and the Assam government were still awaited. He also sought permission to file a rejoinder after receiving the response from the Registrar General of India.

During the hearing, the bench was informed about a separate petition filed by former NRC Coordinator Hitesh Dev Sarma.

Senior advocate Manish Goswami, appearing for Sarma, submitted that his petition raised issues contrary to those in the existing batch of cases and requested that the matters be heard together.

Sarma's petition has sought fresh verification and re-certification of the NRC, alleging in-

accuracies in the final list published in 2019.

After hearing Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, the Supreme Court directed that Sarma's petition be tagged with the pending cases. The bench said all the matters would be heard together after the Centre and the Assam government file their responses.

The petitioners have argued that several mandatory procedures remain incomplete despite the publication of the final NRC nearly seven years ago.

One of the key issues raised before the court is the alleged non-issuance of national identity cards to more than 3.11 crore people whose names were included in the final NRC.

The petitioners have also raised concerns over the failure to issue rejection slips to around 19 lakh people excluded from the final register. They contend that the absence of these slips has delayed the process of challenging exclusions through appeals.

According to the petitioners, these pending procedures have effectively left the NRC exercise incomplete and raised questions concerning due process, fairness and constitutional rights.

The Supreme Court is expected to take up the connected matters after receiving the responses from the Centre and the Assam government, potentially bringing renewed judicial scrutiny to the implementation and procedural status of the Assam NRC.

### Hailakandi's Hamida Noor Laskar Wins Gold at International Taekwondo Championship in Thailand

**HAILAKANDI**

Young taekwondo athlete Hamida Noor Laskar has brought pride to Hailakandi and the Barak Valley by winning a gold medal at an International Taekwondo Championship held in Thailand.

A resident of Ward 2 in North Narainpur, Hamida emerged victorious in the international competition, marking a significant milestone in her sporting career and placing her hometown on the international sporting map.

Her achievement has been widely celebrated by family members, relatives and sports enthusiasts in Hailakandi, with residents congratulating the young athlete on her impressive performance.

Hamida's journey from local competitions to the international stage has been marked by hard work, discipline and determination. Competing at an international level in taekwondo requires not only physical strength and technical skill but also mental resilience and the ability to perform under intense competitive pressure.

Her gold medal is being seen as a reward for her sustained training and dedication to the sport, as well as the support provided by her family and well-wishers. The achievement has also generated enthusiasm among aspiring sports persons across Hailakandi and the wider Barak Valley. For young athletes from areas where access to advanced training facilities and major competitions can be limited, Hamida's success serves as an example of how talent can reach the international stage through determination and sustained effort.

Her victory has highlighted the sporting potential of Hailakandi and surrounding areas and renewed attention on the need to identify and nurture young talent. Access to professional coaching, modern training facilities, financial assistance and regular exposure to competitive events can play a crucial role in helping athletes from the region progress to higher levels.



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NETAS, REELS  
AND THE RACE  
TO WIN GEN Z

There was a time when Indian politicians competed for voters with rallies, manifestos, slogans and carefully choreographed public meetings. Today, they are increasingly competing for something far more elusive: attention. And nowhere is that contest more visible than on the smartphone screen. Gen Z has become the new political catchword. Everyone seems to be talking about it - families, businesses, advertisers, universities, social-media platforms and, increasingly, politicians. Admired by some, misunderstood by many and watched carefully by almost everyone, this generation has emerged as one of the most coveted demographic groups in India's political landscape.

The reason is simple. The next generation of voters is already here, and the elections that will determine India's political direction over the coming decade are not very far away. With Assembly elections in politically crucial states such as Uttar Pradesh and Punjab due in 2027, followed by the 2029 Lok Sabha election, political parties have little choice but to understand how young Indians think, communicate and consume information. The response is already visible.

The traditional Indian neta - kurta-pyjama, serious expression, folded hands and a microphone - is gradually being joined by a new political avatar: jeans, chinos, jackets, sneakers, smartphones and, above all, a camera facing the politician.

The transformation is not merely sartorial. It represents an attempt to make politics appear less distant and more familiar to a generation that has grown up with influencers rather than political gatekeepers.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's recent outreach to students and young audiences is a prominent example. His interactions under the "Chhatron Ki Goonj" campaign have sought to create a direct connect with students, while his public appearance has also acquired a distinctly more contemporary flavour.

The conventional political wardrobe has increasingly given way to T-shirts, shirts, denims, chinos and sneakers. There is nothing inherently wrong with a politician changing his clothes. Politics, after all, has never been immune to fashion. But there is a larger question here: does dressing like a college student make a politician understand college students any better? A change of clothes may make a politician look relatable. It cannot automatically make him relatable. Rahul Gandhi's decision to embrace Instagram's "Ask Me Anything" format is another indication of the changing political grammar. By offering glimpses of his personal life - including his pet dog Noorie - he has moved beyond the traditional boundaries of political communication. The underlying lesson is one that social-media influencers understood long ago: audiences often respond more strongly to personality than to polished speeches.

Sometimes, apparently, a dog can generate more engagement than a policy document. The same digital transformation can be seen elsewhere in politics. Former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and the political ecosystem around the Aam Aadmi Party have long experimented with direct, informal and social-media-driven communication. The emergence of the so-called Cockroach Janta Party from viral Internet culture is another example of how the boundary between political messaging and Internet culture is becoming increasingly blurred. Whether such experiments translate into durable electoral influence remains a separate question. But the phenomenon itself is significant. Political organisations are beginning to recognise that young voters do not necessarily encounter politics through newspapers, television debates or party rallies. Increasingly, they encounter it while scrolling through their phones.

The selfie camera is becoming the new political microphone. Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, too, has recognised the importance of this shift as he seeks to regain political momentum in Uttar Pradesh. The party's efforts to engage influencers and its emphasis on understanding the language of reels reflect a broader realisation: political communication today requires more than the ability to deliver a long speech from a stage.

It requires the ability to survive the attention economy. The old political training manual might once have begun with: learn how to address a rally.

The new one may well begin with: learn how to make a reel. But beneath the humour lies a serious demographic and political transformation. Gen Z, broadly defined as those born between 1997 and 2012, has grown up in a fundamentally different environment from previous generations. Their relationship with information, authority and communication is unlike that of their predecessors.

The generation born in the post-war years, often identified as the Baby Boomers, grew up in an India of restrictions, limited entertainment choices and close parental supervision. Going to a cinema could itself invite questions at home. Privacy was limited and authority was rarely questioned openly. Generation X, broadly those born between 1965 and 1980, experienced a gradual opening of society and the arrival of new technologies. Television entered homes, economic and social aspirations expanded, and the world slowly became more connected.

The Millennials, or Generation Y, witnessed perhaps the most dramatic technological transition. They remember a world before smartphones but also became the first generation to embrace the Internet, email, mobile phones and social networking as everyday tools.

Gen Z inherited the finished product. For them, the smartphone is not simply a device. It is a classroom, entertainment centre, social space, news source, marketplace and political window.

That changes the nature of political communication. A politician once had to reach the voter through a public meeting, newspaper advertisement or television interview. Today, the politician can appear directly inside the voter's personal space - often without invitation.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

If things get better with age, then you're approaching magnificent.

- Nicole Beale

ASEAN TREATY:  
WHAT IT MEANS FOR  
THE NEW MEMBERS



The completion of the accession process of Poland, Sweden, Romania and Lithuania to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) at a ceremony held in Manila on July 24, marking the 50th anniversary of the signing of the treaty, which is regarded as a cornerstone of the security architecture of Southeast Asia, sends a message that goes well beyond a mere formal procedure.

The new members have adopted ASEAN's rules and institutional language relatively late. Yet they are doing so at a time when the Indo-Pacific is no longer a distant region for Europe but is becoming increasingly important to its economic and political security. The key question, therefore, is whether the accession of these countries will remain merely symbolic or signal the beginning of a more sustained and coherent European presence in the region.

Although the move may appear procedural, it can also be viewed as an indication of a country seeking to strengthen its position as a middle power. Poland offers a useful example. With limited diplomatic resources, Warsaw remains heavily focused on its eastern border and the ongoing war there. For Poland, joining the TAC is a relatively low-cost but diplomatically significant gesture. The treaty is political in nature and has no direct economic or financial implications. Its importance lies primarily in prestige, institutional affiliation and symbolism.

The TAC was first signed on February 24, 1976, in Bali by ASEAN's five founding members - Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. It was the organisation's first legally binding treaty and became an institutional foundation for ASEAN. It formally established the principles of the so-called "ASEAN Way", including non-interference in one another's internal affairs, consensus-based diplomacy and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

One of the most important changes in the role of the TAC has been its gradual opening to the outside world. The treaty was amended three times, in 1987, 1998 and 2010, to allow countries from outside the region and, subsequently, regional organisations to accede to it. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr, speaking at this year's ceremony, recalled that Manila was the venue where the protocol was signed that opened the way for countries beyond the original ASEAN members to join the treaty.

For countries outside Southeast Asia, joining the TAC is not merely a matter of signing another diplomatic document. It is a way of telling ASEAN that they accept its principles and are willing to engage with the region in its own diplomatic language.

Accession to the TAC signals acceptance of ASEAN centrality and its code of conduct. That code is based on non-interference, consensus and the peaceful settlement of disputes. There is also a highly practical dimension. Membership of the TAC is one of three conditions for participation in the East Asia Summit. The other two are dialogue-partner status and substantial economic relations with ASE-

AN. In this sense, the treaty also serves as a gateway to some of the region's most important multilateral platforms.

The new members are joining a grouping that already includes major powers such as China, the United States, Russia, India and Japan. For Poland, it is particularly significant that several European countries are already part of the treaty. The European Union itself acceded to the TAC as an organisation in 2012, while France had joined earlier. The way was opened for the European Union after the third protocol, which allowed regional groupings to accede to the treaty, came into force.

Poland is the latest EU member to join the TAC, doing so alongside Sweden, Romania and Lithuania. These are predominantly Central and Northern European countries whose security concerns are, in many respects, similar.

The importance of the TAC becomes easier to understand if one remembers that Poland is not beginning its relations with Southeast Asia from scratch. Its historical engagement with the region has been uneven, but it is real. During the Cold War, Warsaw's presence was concentrated mainly in Indochina. From 1954 onwards, Poland, together with Canada and India, participated in the International Control Commissions established to supervise the Geneva Agreements in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

It was a limited but clearly defined presence - diplomatic, institutional and symbolic.

Membership of the TAC alone, however, will not strengthen Poland's or the other new members' position in Southeast Asia. But if accession is built upon existing bilateral relationships, or those with strong potential for future development,

it can provide their regional engagement with a framework and a common foundation.

Beyond Vietnam and the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore could also become important channels for putting the treaty membership into practical use. Indonesia, besides being potentially the largest economy in the region, carries considerable political influence as an ASEAN founding member. Malaysia offers opportunities for industrial and trade cooperation, while Singapore is an important financial, logistical and technological hub.

These relationships indicate where TAC membership can acquire practical significance - economic diplomacy, technology, logistics, energy and cooperation across a range of sectors.

Europe's Expanding Indo-Pacific Engagement

The accession process should not be viewed as an isolated development. It is part of Europe's broader shift towards the Indo-Pacific. With each passing year, the Indo-Pacific is becoming more important not merely as a strategic concept but as an economic necessity.

In 2020, the European Union and ASEAN elevated their relationship to the level of a strategic partnership. ASEAN is now the European Union's third-largest non-European trading partner after China and the United States. Trade in goods between the two sides is worth around €75 billion.

The region's importance, however, extends far beyond trade. ASEAN functions as a mechanism capable of maintaining a degree of balance despite differences among its members and partners. It has more than 20 dialogue mechanisms involving all the major powers. ASEAN

has often been more successful at maintaining equilibrium among them than at promoting a single common policy.

For Europe, stability in the region is directly linked to economic security because a substantial share of global trade passes through the region's maritime routes. Around one-quarter of global maritime trade passes through the Strait of Malacca alone.

Further initiatives confirm this changing European approach. In September 2025, the European Union and Indonesia concluded negotiations on a comprehensive

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

Govt is ready to discuss on the issue of students protest and Home Minister Shri @AmitShah

Ji is prepared to reply in details. I urge the opposition parties to allow the discussion to take place without any disturbance in the House. ~ Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs



sive economic partnership agreement, opening the way for access to a market of around 280 million consumers.

In Southeast Asia, the European Union is primarily present as an economic power. Its political and military influence, however, remains limited. This creates a structural imbalance in its influence compared with Washington and Beijing.

The conclusion, therefore, is that European countries should not merely seek to demonstrate their "presence in Asia". Instead, they should develop distinctive roles in selected areas. These could range from maritime and cyber security to logistics, energy transition and critical technologies.

In other words, Europe needs to move beyond declaratory presence towards a selective, sector-specific and strategically focused role in the Indo-Pacific.

The significance of the TAC is not limited to the new members. For ASEAN too, the accession of an external country - particularly one that is a member of the European Union or NATO - confirms that the "ASEAN Way" is capable of attracting partners beyond the region.

At a time when the consensus-based ASEAN system is being tested by US-China rivalry and disputes in the South China Sea, the expansion of the treaty's membership further strengthens its legitimacy as a framework for regional conduct and dialogue.



# Assam Begins Statewide Flood Damage Survey, Affected Families May Get Over Rs 3.5 Lakh

GUWAHATI

The Assam government launched a statewide door-to-door survey of flood-affected households to assess damage and determine compensation and rehabilitation assistance for families hit by the ongoing floods. The survey, which will continue until August 30, is aimed at documenting losses to houses, livestock, agricultural assets and other belongings. Depending on the extent of damage and the categories of losses recorded, eligible families could receive assistance ranging from around Rs 1.78 lakh to more than Rs 3.5 lakh. Under the compensation framework, households whose houses have been completely destroyed will



receive Rs 1.2 lakh under the 'fully damaged' category. The same amount will be provided for houses classified as 'severely damaged' where essential belong-

ings and important documents have also suffered extensive damage. Additional assistance will be available for losses involving livestock and other assets. The compen-

sation framework provides Rs 37,500 for each cattle loss, Rs 5,000 for damaged handlooms and Rs 4,000 each for the loss of goats, sheep or pigs. Compensation will also be provided for the loss of up to 100 ducks or chickens, officials said. As part of the survey exercise, Minister Keshab Mahanta visited flood-affected villages in Amguri in Sivasagar district and inspected the door-to-door assessment process. He also interacted with affected residents to understand the extent of the losses. "We are visiting every household to ensure that the assessment is carried out properly. Once the survey is completed, the government will provide assistance for rehabilitation so that affected families can rebuild

their homes and restore their livelihoods," Mahanta said. Minister Bimal Bora said the exercise was intended to ensure that all eligible families received the maximum assistance permissible under government rules. "The rehabilitation assessment has started today following the Chief Minister's directions to conduct a thorough evaluation of losses. Officials have been instructed to ensure that every affected family receives the assistance they are entitled to under government rules," Bora said. According to Bora, the cumulative assistance available to a flood-affected household could amount to around Rs 1.78 lakh even under the minimum eligible combination of components. Families suffering ex-

tensive losses across multiple categories could receive more than Rs 3.5 lakh. The government has directed officials conducting the survey to record household-level losses comprehensively so that eligible beneficiaries can be identified and compensation processed. The assessment will continue across the state until August 30. The government has also appealed to flood-affected residents to cooperate with survey teams and provide accurate details of damaged property, livestock and other losses. The survey is expected to form the basis for the state government's rehabilitation and compensation measures for families affected by the current flood season.

## Literary Competitions Foster Confidence, Critical Thinking: Nagaland Governor

DIMAPUR

Nagaland Governor Nand Kishore Yadav emphasised the role of literary competitions in building confidence, critical thinking and effective communication among young people. Addressing the 32nd Spero Meliora Literary Competitive Programme at the Kohima Village Multipurpose Building as the special guest, Yadav said young people must develop the ability to think independently, express their ideas clearly and adapt to a rapidly changing world. He commended the organisers, teachers, parents and volunteers for their efforts to nurture the talent and character of students. Yadav congratulated the Kohima Village Students' Union and the Dolphin Club for successfully organising the 32nd edition of the annual programme. Explaining the significance of the event's motto, "Spero Meliora", meaning "I hope for better things", the Governor said it reflected the aspirations of students striving for excellence. He said hope provides the inspiration to achieve goals, while perseverance and strong character are essential for long-term success. Speaking on the theme of the programme, Yadav said it encourages young people to overcome hesitation, take initiative and move forward with confidence.

Quoting Swami Vivekananda, he urged the students to "arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached", while encouraging them to make the most of available opportunities, embrace challenges and pursue excellence. The Governor also urged participants to remain curious, develop a habit of reading widely and pursue their aspirations with confidence, integrity and humility. He said true success should not be measured solely by personal achievements but also by the positive impact individuals make on the lives of others. The annual Spero Meliora literary programme has been promoting and nurturing literary talent among students for more than three decades, providing them with a platform to develop their creative expression and communication skills.

## Assam Minister Kaushik Rai Reviews Civic Projects, PDS and Paddy Procurement in Dibrugarh

DIBRUGARH

Assam Housing and Urban Affairs, Food, Public Distribution and Consumer Affairs, and Cooperation Minister Kaushik Rai reviewed key development projects and public service initiatives during a district tour of Dibrugarh on Saturday. Rai inspected ongoing infrastructure projects, sanitation and waste-management facilities, the Public Distribution System (PDS) and preparations for paddy procurement for the 2026-27 Kharif season. During the visit, the minister inspected the ongoing drain construction at Chaulkhowa and the Town Hall project being implemented under the Department of Housing and Urban Affairs. He directed officials to ensure timely completion while maintaining construction quality. The drainage project from Banipur Convoy Road to the Sesa River is expected to help address artificial flooding and improve drainage management in Dibrugarh city. Rai also reviewed municipal sanitation and waste-management facilities, including the Materials Recovery

Facility (MRF) and the Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant (FSTP). At both facilities, he examined waste-processing, material-recovery and scientific sludge-treatment mechanisms. He directed officials to improve operational efficiency, maintain hygiene standards and ensure compliance with environmental norms. The minister later visited a Fair Price Shop at Lahowal to assess the functioning of the PDS. He checked the quality and availability of foodgrains and essential commodities, besides inspecting the digital weighing system. Rai instructed fair-price shop operators to ensure beneficiaries receive their entitled ration at affordable prices and without unnecessary inconvenience. He also visited the Kheremia Gaon Panchayat Cooperative Society's godown and reviewed the availability of essential foodgrain stocks. Officials and cooperative members were directed to ensure adequate arrangements for the distribution of subsidised pulses and sugar from August 10, alongside the ongoing 'Anna Sewa Din' initiative.

## Manipur CM Khemchand Singh Calls for Unity, Urges Communities to Put State First

IMPHAL

Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh on Sunday appealed to people across communities to work together for peace, development and the protection of the state's territorial integrity. Addressing a gathering during a 'Har Ghar Tiranga' Yatra in Imphal, Khemchand said Manipur's unity and territorial integrity had historically been protected through the collective efforts of its diverse communities. "Meiteis should not think only for Meiteis, Nagas should not think only for Nagas, Kukis should not think only for Kukis. We all should think for Manipur," the Chief Minister said. He also urged the Meitei community to assume the role of a "big brother" and contribute to efforts aimed at keeping the state united. Khemchand made the remarks while participating in



the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' Yatra organised by the Imphal Central District BJP and hosted by the Singjamei Mandal BJP. Highlighting Manipur's history of inclusive governance, the Chief Minister recalled that the state was among the first in Southeast Asia to conduct Assembly elections in 1947-48 under its own Constitution. He also pointed out that Ma-

nipur's first Speaker was a Paite tribal leader from Churachandpur district, citing it as an example of the state's tradition of inclusive political participation. Referring to his visit to Kangpokpi on Saturday, Khemchand said he received a warm welcome from local residents and did not see any indication that people there intended to launch a blockade of the National Highways. He also recalled his recent visit to Jiribam, where people from different communities came together on a common platform to promote peace. The Chief Minister alleged that some individuals were attempting to create divisions among communities and undermine efforts to restore normalcy. Referring to the recent blast at Tronglaobi village in Bishnupur district that killed two children, Khemchand said the incident showed that some elements continued to oppose the return of peace to the state. He appealed to people to rise above community identities and

work together as Indians towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a 'Viksit Bharat' and a 'Viksit Manipur'. BJP Manipur in-charge Ajeet Gopchade said the state was moving towards peace and development under Khemchand's leadership. He also praised the participation of women in the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' Yatra, noting that they braved the rain to make the programme a success. BJP state president A. Sharda Devi said the BJP-led government was making sustained efforts to restore peace in Manipur. She highlighted the Chief Minister's visits to hill districts as part of efforts to rebuild confidence and facilitate the return of normalcy. Sharda Devi said the opposition could continue to criticise the government, but maintained that the BJP remained committed to taking Manipur towards peace, development and prosperity.

## BJP Reaches Out to Tipra Motha, IPFT for Joint Contest in Tripura Village Committee Polls

AGARTALA

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is set to resume talks with the Tipra Motha Party (TMP) and the Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT) to explore a possible electoral understanding for the upcoming Village Committee elections under the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC). The move follows directions from the BJP's central leadership, which has asked the Tripura unit to work towards a broader electoral arrangement ahead of the crucial local body elections. Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha left for New Delhi on Sunday and is expected to meet TMP leaders, including party supremo Pradyot Bikram Manikya Debbarma, in the presence of senior BJP leaders. The meeting is likely to take place on

Sunday night or Monday. "We will hold discussions with the TMP leaders in the presence of our central leadership regarding the upcoming Village Committee elections. At this stage, I cannot disclose the details of the discussions or any proposed electoral arrangement," Saha told reporters before leaving for Delhi. Elections to 587 Village Committees under the TTAADC are scheduled to be held later this year along with polls to more than 20 urban local bodies. The Village Committees function as rural local bodies within the areas administered by the autonomous council, making the elections politically significant for all major parties seeking to consolidate their support in Tripura's tribal areas. The BJP's renewed outreach to the TMP assumes significance in view of the party's performance in

the 2021 TTAADC elections. The TMP had swept the previous elections, winning 24 of the 28 elected seats. The BJP secured only four seats after the BJP, TMP and IPFT contested separately following their failure to reach a seat-sharing arrangement. The TMP has since remained in control of the 30-member TTAADC, which administers nearly 70 per cent of Tripura's geographical area and is considered one of the state's most important constitutional institutions after the Legislative Assembly. The BJP's latest initiative also follows a series of strategy meetings held in New Delhi on August 6 to review preparations for the forthcoming Village Committee and urban local body elections. According to party leaders, the central leadership asked the Tripura unit to strengthen its organisation-

al machinery while exploring the possibility of an electoral alliance with its tribal partners. The meetings were attended by BJP national president Nitin Nabin, National General Secretary (Organisation) B.L. Santhosh, Northeast coordinator Sambit Patra, Tripura observer Rajdeep Roy, Chief Minister Manik Saha, state BJP president Abhishek Debroy, senior ministers, legislators and members of the party's core committee. The proposed BJP outreach to the TMP and IPFT could reshape the electoral equations in Tripura's tribal belt, where the TMP continues to exercise considerable political influence. However, the contours of any possible alliance, including seat-sharing arrangements and the extent of cooperation among the parties, are yet to be finalised.

## Centre, Manipur Government and Kuki-Zo Groups Sign Revised Suspension of Operations Pact



IMPHAL

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the Manipur government and two major Kuki-Zo insurgent group platforms have signed a renewed and revised Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement in New Delhi, introducing stricter operational norms and changes to designated camps. The revised agreement retains the territorial integrity of Manipur and provides for political dialogue within the framework of the Constitution of India, officials said. The tripartite agreement was signed by representatives of the Centre, the Manipur government, the Kuki National Organisation (KNO) and the United People's Front (UPF). The revised ground rules and terms came into force immediately after the signing and will remain valid for one year. Under the new arrangements, seven designated camps will be relocated away from sensitive and conflict-prone

areas. The total number of active designated camps will also be reduced as part of the consolidation process. The revised norms further require cadres to deposit their weapons with the nearest Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) or Border Security Force (BSF) camps. Officials estimate that the KNO and UPF currently operate around 14 designated camps, primarily in the hill districts of Churachandpur and Kangpokpi. The camps collectively house around 2,200 armed cadres. The changes come against the backdrop of prolonged ethnic conflict in Manipur and continued efforts by the Centre and various stakeholders to strengthen the existing ceasefire framework and advance political dialogue. The original tripartite SoO agreement was signed in 2008 between the Centre, the Manipur government and 25 Kuki-Zo insurgent groups operating under the KNO and UPF. Of the 25 groups, 17 were affiliated with the KNO and eight with the UPF. The agreement has subsequently been extended at regular intervals. The latest revision seeks to tighten compliance with the SoO framework while creating conditions for further political negotiations within the constitutional framework.

## Tiranga Bike Rally held in Cachar to mark 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign and 80th Independence Day celebrations

SILCHAR

As part of the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign and celebrations marking the 80th Independence Day, the District Administration, Cachar, in collaboration with the Cachar Police and the District Transport Department, organised a Tiranga Bike Rally in Silchar on Sunday morning. The rally commenced from the Office of the District Commissioner, Cachar with enthusiastic participation from government officials and citizens. Carrying the Tricolour, the participants proceeded from the DC's Office towards Rangirkhari and the Netaji Statue, traversing different major streets and prominent locations of Silchar before returning to the DC's Office, where the rally concluded. The rally witnessed enthusiastic participation from officials as well as members of the public, reflecting the patriotic spirit and growing public involvement in the celebrations leading up to Independence Day. The sight of the Tricolour being carried through the major streets of the city added a vibrant patriotic atmosphere to the morning. The initiative was organised with the objective of encouraging greater public participation in the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign and fostering a collective spirit of pride and respect for the National Flag as the district prepares to celebrate



the 80th Independence Day on August 15. As part of the celebrations, the District Administration has also drawn up a series of programmes involving educational institutions, government departments, community organisations and civil society groups across the district. From August 10 to 14, Art, Essay and Debate Competitions will be organised across Government and private schools and other educational institutions, in coordination with the Education Department, NCC and NSS. The final rounds of these competitions will be held at Gandhi Bhawan on August 14. Cleanliness drives will also be conducted from August 10 to 14 at government offices, schools, markets and other public places as part of the Independence Day observances. The initiative seeks to promote cleanliness and civic responsi-

bility while involving students, officials and members of the wider community in the celebrations. On August 12, a Tiranga Rally and a collective singing of 'Vande Mataram' will be organised at Gandhi Bagh Park with participation from the District Administration, Police, NCC, Nehru Yuva Kendra (NYK), NSS, Assam State Rural Livelihoods Mission (ASRLM), National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM), civil society organisations, District Sports Office (DSO) and other departments. The celebrations will also extend to the block level. From August 12 to 13, Prabhat Ferries and rallies will be organised by ASRLM and the Development Blocks. Tiranga stalls, sales activities, rallies and participation of Self-Help Groups will form part of these programmes, with the involvement of ASRLM, Development

Blocks, Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad, and District Social Welfare authorities. On August 13, 'Vande Mataram' will be sung at schools, Anganwadi Centres, Gaon Panchayat offices, Block and Circle offices and other government establishments across the district. The programme will be coordinated by the Education Department, Social Welfare Department, Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad, Circle Officers and other concerned offices. The series of programmes is aimed at ensuring wider public participation in the Independence Day celebrations and taking the spirit of the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign to schools, government institutions, markets, public spaces and communities across Cachar. Among those who participated in the Tiranga Bike Rally were Senior Superintendent of Police, Cachar, Sanjib Kumar Saikia, APS, Additional District Commissioner, Cachar, Devid Kumar Borah, ACS, Additional Superintendent of Police (Crime), Cachar, Rajat Kumar Paul, IPS, Assistant Commissioner, Bhaskar Choudhury, ACS, District Transport Officer, Cachar and District Cultural Development Officer, Cachar, Snehangshu Shekhar Roy among others. The District Administration, Cachar has appealed to citizens, educational institutions, government offices, community organisations and other stakeholders to participate actively in the programmes and observe the National Flag with due dignity and respect throughout the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign. This is stated in a press release issued by the Regional office of Information & Public Relations Barak valley Zone Silchar Assam.

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# Three JPSC members resign amid CID probe into alleged exam irregularities



RANCHI

Amid the ongoing controversy over alleged irregularities in Jharkhand Public Service Commission (JPSC) examinations, the three serving members of the commission—Dr Ajita Bhattacharya, Dr Anima Hansda and Dr Jamal Ahmed—have resigned from their posts.

Sources informed that the three members have sent their resignation letters to the Governor.

The resignations come amid growing scrutiny of the JPSC over alleged irregularities in the conduct of competitive examinations and the appointment of agencies to handle the examination process.

The development assumes significance as the Jharkhand CID, which is probing alleged irregularities in JPSC recruitment examinations, had recently summoned the three serving members for questioning.

According to sources, the three JPSC members were asked to appear before the investigating agency on August 10, 12 and 14, respectively.

The CID is reportedly seeking to ascertain the role of the commission members in various decisions related to the conduct of examinations, including the selection of agencies entrusted with examination-related work.

A key issue being examined by the investigating agency is the empanelment and selection of TSR Data Processing Private Limited (TDPL), a Lucknow-based company that conducted examinations for the JPSC. Notably, TDPL was reportedly blacklisted by the Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission (JSSC) in May 2025 over alleged irregularities. The CID is now examining the circumstances under which the company was subsequently selected to conduct JPSC examinations.

A protester receives medical attention during an indefinite hunger strike as part of a protest against the Jharkhand government over alleged irregularities in the 14th JPSC examination, JSSC-CGL and other recruitment tests, demanding a CBI probe and reforms in the recruitment agencies, in Ranchi, Jharkhand, Saturday, Aug. 8, 2026.

The agency is also probing the monitoring and administrative functioning of the commission, along with issues related to examination data security and the handling of examination-related information.

The CID investigation has already led to the arrest of 19 people in connection with the alleged recruitment irregularities. Those arrested include several employees of TDPL, including its director Ramveer Singh, marketing manager Abhay Tiwari, accountant Rakshak Singh and technical programmers Usman and Ebad.

On the JPSC side, Deputy Controller of Examinations Shweta Kumari Gupta, staff member Sonu Kumar and computer operator Dharmendra Kumar have also been arrested and questioned by the investigating agency.

The CID has also arrested four candidates allegedly involved in examination fraud and three alleged middlemen.

Former JPSC Chairman L Khiangte has already been questioned several times by the CID as part of the investigation. The agency had also conducted searches at his residence and office, following which he resigned from his post.

The alleged irregularities in JPSC and JSSC have triggered widespread protests by students and job aspirants across Jharkhand. Protesters have demanded cancellation and review of examinations, including the Preliminary Test of the 14th JPSC Civil Services Examination. They have also demanded a review of examinations conducted through external agencies, including TDPL, and reforms in the recruitment process.

# Technical fault behind Air India Phuket-Delhi incident, pilots’ effort saved lives: ALPA India chief



NEW DELHI

A major technical fault on the Air India plane flying from Delhi to Phuket on August 4 was responsible for the incident that injured 17 people on board, it is reliably learnt. Quick action by the two pilots may have saved the 145 lives on board AI 2379, it has now emerged.

While weather conditions were initially blamed for the incident, the revelation suggests that a technical

problem with the aircraft had endangered the lives of the 137 passengers and eight crew members on board. Air India’s change in its official account of the incident between its afternoon and late-evening statements, with the word ‘turbulence’ dropped from the latter, also points to this.

Speaking to TNIE, Captain Sam Thomas, the president of the Airline Pilot Association of India, said, “The A320 plane was entering Jharsuguda

in Odisha around 10.30 pm when the Pilot-in-Command realised the aircraft had a triple hydraulic systems failure. These systems take care of flight controls and general functioning of the plane. As soon as the Flight Captain realised it had been a complete hydraulic failure, he immediately asked the co-pilot to take the nose down. This took the aircraft down by 300 metres. The dip in altitude creates a negative G and that only caused the passengers to

be thrown around inside the aircraft. This quick action by the cockpit crew is responsible for saving countless lives on board.”

Explaining the technical aspects, Thomas, who is in touch with pilots on a daily basis, said, “An Airbus A320 has three hydraulic reservoirs located in the belly of the aircraft and they are termed Yellow, Green and Blue. Pipes and steel tubes running from them connect them with the systems in the control surfaces of the plane.”

Failure of all three systems is a rare occurrence, he said. “In such situations, the cockpit crew sometimes take the plane down by even upto 800 feet to stabilise it. It is remarkable that they stabilised the plane by bringing down the altitude just by 300 feet,” he explained. One of the pilots in the cockpit also found himself floating, he added. Asked whether the pilot could have asked passengers to put on their seat belts before doing so, Thomas said, “He had to take decisions in split seconds. The protocol is always ‘Aviate, navigate and communicate’.”

The pilot had a choice of landing in Lucknow or New Delhi. He opted to land in Delhi as he felt it would have better medical facilities and he could reach in ten minutes time.

“The pilot managed to reach Delhi within seven minutes,” Thomas said.

The data from the Cockpit Voice Recorder, when decoded, will clarify the exact parameters of the aircraft, he added. Notably, Air India in an official statement in the afternoon of the incident attributed it to “brief in-flight turbulence resulting in momentary change in altitude.” However, the official statement released by evening changed the version to “sudden loss of altitude during cruise”, dropping the word ‘turbulence’. When pressed about the change in language, Air India sources asked TNIE to stick to the updated version.

The aviation regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, in its statement earlier in the day said “suspected transient technical fault” caused the sudden loss of altitude by approximately 300 feet.

# INTERNATIONAL

## Trump may settle Iran conflict without nuclear deal if Hormuz reopens

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump appears to be seeking a way out of the military confrontation with Iran as the conflict becomes increasingly difficult to resolve, according to a report by The Wall Street Journal.

The report suggests that the US administration may be prepared to set aside the nuclear issue and declare victory if Tehran fully reopens the Strait of Hormuz, a vital shipping route through which a significant share of the world’s energy supplies passes.

According to WSJ, Trump has spent weeks preparing the groundwork for such an outcome and has privately told senior aides that he could withdraw without securing a formal nuclear agreement with Tehran.

But finding a face-saving resolution has become increasingly difficult after Iran presented a sweeping set of demands for restoring transit through the waterway. Tehran is seeking billions of dollars in payments, an end to the US naval blockade, the complete withdrawal of American forces from the region and other major concessions.

The demands have narrowed Washington’s diplomatic options and raised concerns that Tehran may be preparing for a prolonged confrontation rather than a swift settlement.

Iran’s ability to disrupt traffic through the narrow maritime corridor using missile and drone capabilities has given Tehran significant leverage, slowing global commercial shipping and contributing to volatility in international energy markets.

Although Trump has repeatedly asserted in recent weeks that the strait was fully open, those declarations have proved premature.

Tehran shut the strategic waterway following the outbreak of hostilities in February, saying American warships and allied vessels must not be allowed to transit, while also attempting to levy tolls on commercial shipping.

Notably, US officials have reiterated that Washington firmly rejects both the Iranian shipping restrictions and any attempts to impose tolls.

However, diplomatic prospects



dimmed further over the weekend after the UAE said Iran had launched a missile strike against one of its vessels.

At the same time, Mohammad Bagher Zolghadr, secretary of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council, outlined an extensive set of conditions for reopening the waterway.

According to Iran’s state news agency IRNA, Zolghadr said the US would have to permanently end the war, lift its naval blockade, withdraw American military forces, remove all sanctions, release Iran’s frozen financial assets and pay war reparations.

He also demanded an end to US threats and insults, as well as a complete halt to military action against Iran’s allied militias across the region.

The pressure on Washington to find a resolution is also being driven by domestic political considerations ahead of the US midterm elections.

With petrol prices remaining significantly higher than before the war, the administration has been looking for a way to demonstrate to voters that the military campaign has achieved its objectives.

Addressing reporters in recent days, Trump said he had been prepared to launch the biggest military attack since World War II, but that US allies had persuaded him not to do so.

He also claimed that a deal with Iran

was “imminent”, although no formal agreement has materialised.

On Friday, Trump appeared to suggest that victory had already been achieved regardless of a nuclear deal, sharing a social media post linking to an article titled “Donald Trump Won the Iran War”.

Vice President JD Vance indicated that Washington would continue applying pressure on Tehran to secure long-term structural changes in bilateral relations.

“And if not, that’s fine, too, we’re just going to keep on applying the pressure we can apply, and getting as much oil and gas out of the Middle East so that Americans can enjoy lower gas and energy prices,” he said.

“We’re in the middle of the game,” Vance added.

The nuclear dispute has remained central to US-Iran tensions since April, when the White House warned that Tehran would never be permitted to obtain a nuclear weapon.

While Washington initially sought to incorporate nuclear commitments into a broader bilateral agreement, complex negotiations prompted the White House to shift its focus towards securing the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz.

According to The Wall Street Journal, Trump privately told senior aides in recent weeks that Iran may be

unable to restart its nuclear programme during his presidency, following the US destruction of three major Iranian nuclear facilities in May 2025.

The US president argued during internal meetings that American intelligence assets would quickly detect any attempt by Tehran to rebuild those sites or secretly develop a nuclear weapon. He maintained that the threat of renewed US military strikes would serve as a lasting deterrent.

Trump has similarly played down concerns over Iran’s underground enriched material.

“We’ve already got the nuclear material, because it’s so far underground,” Trump said during a July summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. “Nobody’s going to be able to get it except us.”

That calculation could allow Washington to move away from demanding a formal nuclear agreement if maritime transit through the strait is fully restored and the nuclear threat remains contained.

Financial demands, however, remain a major obstacle to any potential settlement.

Tehran continues to insist on billions of dollars in war damages and the unfreezing of its overseas financial assets. While Trump previously said his administration would not allow American taxpayers’ money to be handed to Iran, US officials cited by The Wall Street Journal said an agreement may be impossible unless Washington agrees to unfreeze some Iranian assets, potentially under specified conditions.

Another point of contention is the possible granting of sanctions waivers that would allow Iran to resume international oil sales.

Washington had previously granted such waivers as part of an interim truce, which later collapsed after Iranian attacks on shipping in the Strait of Hormuz prompted the full restoration of US energy sanctions.

The issue therefore remains closely linked to whether the administration can craft an agreement that declares an end to hostilities without creating further political complications at home.

# Pakistan says new defence pact with Saudi and Turkey is ‘purely defensive’ and open to others



ISLAMABAD

Pakistan’s foreign minister said Sunday a new defence agreement his country signed with Saudi Arabia and Turkey was not directed against any country and remained open to other nations in the region.

The landmark Mecca Joint Defence Agreement was signed on Friday by the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif as the three countries seek to deepen security cooperation amid heightened tensions between the United States and Iran.

Pakistan’s Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said Sunday the agreement was “purely defensive in nature” and that other countries could join if they were willing to uphold its principles and resolve differences through peaceful means, adding the deal reflected a shared desire to strengthen strategic security cooperation.

His post on X came a day

after Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan similarly said the agreement was not aimed at Iran or any other country.

The agreement stipulates “that any armed attack against any one of the three states shall be regarded as an attack against them all,” according to statements released by the three sides. Dar said in his post the stipulation was consistent with the right of individual and collective self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter. Pakistan, he said, would continue working with countries across the region toward lasting peace and stability. “The Makkah Accord does not abrogate or replace any existing bilateral or multilateral agreements between these countries, or with other countries or organizations,” he wrote. His comments followed overnight public celebrations of the agreement. Landmarks in Pakistan’s capital, Islamabad and Saudi cities were illuminated in the colors of the Saudi, Turkish and Pakistani flags.

The three countries bring

significant but differing capabilities to the arrangement. Pakistan has extensive military experience and is the Muslim world’s only nuclear-armed country; Saudi Arabia brings substantial economic resources and regional influence; and NATO member Turkey has a large military and an increasingly sophisticated domestic defense industry. In Islamabad, defense analysts cautioned against viewing the agreement as the equivalent of NATO, despite its collective-defense provision. Abdullah Khan, an Islamabad-based defense analyst, said that although the agreement was signed during a period of heightened regional tensions, it should not be interpreted as being directed against Iran or another country. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have maintained close military ties for decades and signed a separate mutual-defense agreement in September 2025. Pakistan and Turkey also have expanded military and defense-industrial cooperation in recent years.

# Nagaland University study identifies economic value of 47 non-timber forest products across Nagaland, Meghalaya

The study found that Non-Timber Forest Products support the food security and livelihoods of forest-dependent tribal communities, with surplus produce generating additional household income

MEDZIPHEMA, NAGALAND

A Nagaland University study has identified 47 Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) across villages in Nagaland and Meghalaya, highlighting the important role of Non-Timber Forest Products in supporting tribal livelihoods, local economies and biodiversity conservation.

The study calls for sustainable utilisation and management of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) through ecological assessments and structured harvesting guidelines to ensure these valuable forest resources remain available for future generations. Researchers also highlight the potential of NTFPs to create employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for marginalized communities in remote forest areas, providing an additional source of income beyond traditional agriculture.

A video byte of Prof. Sanjoy Das, Nagaland University, explaining this research can be viewed and downloaded from the following link - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RUxO1zg5qMWrhUPR2U-WOz52es0M27c32/view>

Conducted across 20 villages covering 250 households, the study identified 47 plant- and animal-based NTFPs and assessed their collection, utilisation and economic value. The findings show that forest-dependent tribal communities rely on these resources for household consumption as food, beverages, medicines and other value-added products, while surplus produce is sold in local markets, making NTFPs an important source of livelihood and supplementary household income.

The findings were published in Indian Journal of Ecology (<https://indianjournals.com/article/ije1-52-2-005?utm>), a peer-reviewed journal that publishes original research on ecology, environmental science, biodiversity conservation, natural resource management, and ecosystem sustainability.

The Paper was co-authored by Mr. Limasunep Ozukum, Prof. Sanjoy Das, Prof. Amod Sharma, Prof. R. Na khro, Prof. N.K. Patra, Prof. Manoj Dutta and M. Jangyukala from School of Agricultural Sciences, Nagaland University, Medziphema Campus.

Highlighting the importance of research on topics of relevance to local communities, Prof. Jagadish Kumar Patnaik, Vice-Chancellor, Nagaland University, said, "I am delighted that Nagaland University continues to contribute meaningful research addressing the socio-economic and ecological priorities of the North Eastern Region. The identification of the economic value of 47 Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) across Nagaland and Meghalaya is a significant step towards recognizing the immense potential of our forest resources in strengthening rural livelihoods and ensuring food security. I congratulate the research team for this commendable achievement and hope that their findings will contribute to informed policy decisions and the sustainable utilization of our rich natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations."

A key finding of the study was the scientific identification and classification of 47 Non-Timber Forest Products, most of which are used for nourishment followed by therapeutic purposes.



**Silent and "Listen" are spelled with the same letters.**

Elaborating on the study, Prof. Sanjoy Das, Department of Agricultural Economics,



Nagaland University, said, "Despite India's rich biodiversity, the economic value of many Non-Timber Forest Products remains inadequately recognised.

Through this study, we identified commonly available NTFPs in selected areas of Nagaland and Meghalaya, documented their collection and utilisation patterns, and assessed their economic value, highlighting their importance for rural livelihoods and the need for their sustainable utilisation and management."

The researchers also documented the plant parts that were commonly used, their seasonal availability, the frequency of collection, the average time spent on collection trips and the distance travelled by villagers. Bamboo shoot was the highest return earning NTFPs in Meghalaya while wild black pepper was the most common and highest return earning NTFPs in Nagaland.

North East India is home to more than 33% of India's total flora and supports over 100 indigenous communities that rely on forest products for sustenance and income. Non-Timber Forest Products play an important role in supporting the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities, yet their economic value remains inadequately recognised. Although India is home to about 3,000 NTFP species, only 126 have developed marketability, highlighting the need for their scientific identification and economic valuation.

The findings highlight that the value of NTFPs extends beyond market returns to include ecological services, subsistence needs and cultural significance, underscoring their importance to tribal communities.



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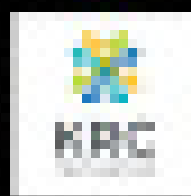


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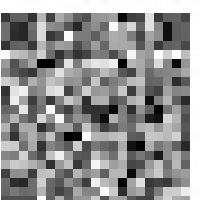


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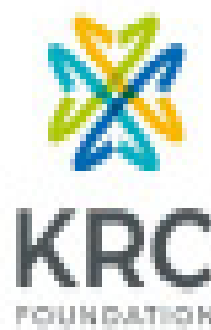
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# Presents



OPEN TO ALL FOR  
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## Writing Star Contest

**MAY-NOV 2026**

DIGITAL PARTICIPATION CERTIFICATE  
THE SELECTED ARTICLE WILL BE PUBLISHED ON  
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"I can shake off everything as I write;  
my sorrows disappear, my courage is  
reborn."  
- Anne Frank

### TOPICS

- INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT OF NER (ROADS, RAILS, AVIATION, HYDROPOWER & SECURITY)
- PROMOTING TOURISM, MSME, AGRO & HORTICULTURE, ACT EAST DIPLOMACY
- DISASTER MANAGEMENT, ADVENTURE SPORTS & CLIMATE CHANGE
- ART & CULTURE, THEATRE, CINEMA, MEDIA & ENTERTAINMENT
- SE FOR SUCCESS- PROMOTING EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, EMPLOYABILITY, ENTREPRENEURSHIP & EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Open to Students from Class VI to Senior Citizens, divided into 5 categories+topics

Each entry will receive a digital participation certificate

There is NO fee for participation

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5 categories: A- Class- VI, VII, VIII | B- Class- IX, X, XI, XII | C-College & PG Students | D- Working Class & Homemaker | E- Retired & Senior Citizen (60+)

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