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PERSPECTIVE

Sometimes the eyes can say more than the mouth.

BSF personnel shoots self at duty post in Tripura

AGARTALA

A BSF personnel allegedly died by suicide after firing from his service weapon at a duty post of Tebaria Border Out Post (BOP) under 42nd Battalion BSF on Thursday morning in Tripura's West District. Sources from Intelligence told India Today that according to preliminary information, the incident occurred at around 5:45 am on October 1, at the duty post near Gate No. 52. The deceased has been identified as Nagendra Kumar a resident of Dosod in Rajasthan.

"The incident falls under the jurisdiction of Airport Police Station while the place of occurrence is reportedly under Lefunga Police Station jurisdiction", said the source.

The official further said that the circumstances leading to the incident are not yet clear.

Police and BSF authorities have initiated an investigation to ascertain the circumstances surrounding the death. Further details are awaited.

WHO SAID WHAT



Captain Smit Machchhar has shown the world the highest form of courage. Without fearing for his own life, he fought valiantly and prevented another 9/11 like attack from happening. 140 crore Indians salute Captain Smit and are praying for his well-being. ~ Narendra Modi, PM, India

VOLUME:1, ISSUE 887 | SILCHAR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 01, 2026. EAST AND NE INDIA EDITION | e-mail: krctimes@gmail.com ,www.krctimes.com

Assam CMO orders strict curbs on CM convoy, priority for ambulances

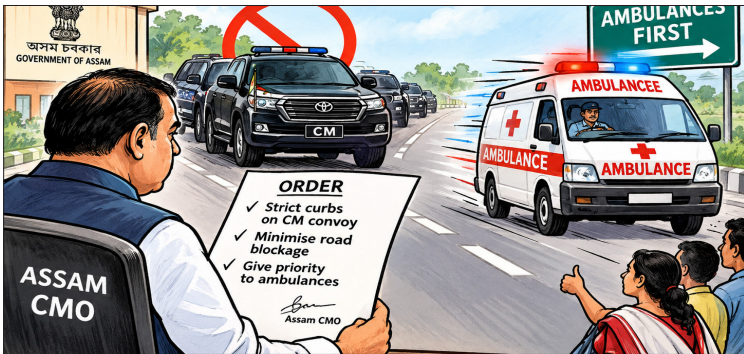
Assam CM says Silchar ambulance was held for 30 seconds, denies link to patient's death

SILCHAR

The Assam Chief Minister's Office (CMO) has reiterated strict instructions to district administrations and police to ensure that the Chief Minister's convoy does not obstruct ambulances, fire tenders or other emergency vehicles.

The directions, issued on September 30 and reiterated on October 1, came a day after an ambulance carrying a patient was stopped in Silchar to allow Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's convoy to pass. Four police personnel were subsequently suspended for alleged negligence of duty, while Sarma apologised to the patient and the family and termed the incident "unacceptable".

According to the CMO order, district commissioners and senior superintendents of police have already been instructed to ensure that VIP convoy arrangements do



not interfere with emergency services.

"It is once again emphasised that under no circumstances should the movement of ambulances or other emergency vehicles be impeded on account of VIP carcade arrangements," the order stated.

The CMO directed officials to ensure that emergency vehicles

receive unhindered passage during VIP movements. If necessary, the Chief Minister's convoy should be stopped to allow such vehicles to pass immediately.

"Emergency vehicles, particularly ambulances, fire tenders and police response units, must be given unhindered passage at all times, irrespective of convoy movement,"

the order said.The instructions also seek to minimise disruption to normal traffic and reduce inconvenience to the public during the Chief Minister's movement. Officials responsible for traffic and security arrangements have been asked to personally monitor compliance and ensure accountability for any lapse.

The CMO has also ordered that the Chief Minister's convoy be restricted to the minimum number of vehicles required for security and essential operational purposes.

Ministers, MLAs, government officials and other dignitaries attending the same programmes as the Chief Minister have been directed not to join or travel alongside his convoy. Their vehicles must either reach the destination beforehand or proceed separately after the Chief Minister's convoy has passed.The directions have been issued as standing instructions

and circulated among subordinate officials for strict compliance. The order warned that any deviation would be viewed seriously.

In a social media post, the CMO said the instructions had been reiterated following the Chief Minister's directions after the Silchar incident. It also said the convoy had been "curtailed to a minimum compliant with security needs".

The Silchar incident has thus prompted a renewed emphasis by the Assam government on balancing VIP security arrangements with uninterrupted movement of emergency services and routine traffic. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on October 1 said an ambulance carrying a critically ill patient in Silchar was stopped for no more than 30 seconds to allow his convoy to pass, and maintained that the brief halt was unrelated to the patient's subsequent death.

Himanta seeks Silchar clean sweep, promises Rs 1 crore for every ward



SILCHAR

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma stepped up the BJP's campaign for the Silchar Municipal Corporation elections, seeking a clean sweep for the BJP-led NDA while promising Rs 1 crore in development funding for every ward if BJP candidates are elected.

Addressing a large BJP election meeting at the Police Parade Ground in Silchar, Sarma appealed to voters to support the party's candidates contesting all 42 wards of the municipal corporation.The meeting was attended by BJP workers, supporters and residents from different parts of the city and was also addressed by state ministers, MLAs and other party leaders.

Sarma said the BJP had already won two SMC seats uncontested and urged voters to back the NDA candidates in the remaining 40 wards."BJP would have anyway won 30-35 seats. But I urge your support in ensuring that it is a clean sweep for us," he said. The chief minister also announced that Rs 1 crore would be allocated for development in each ward if BJP candidates are elected. He said the state government would also provide separate funds to the Silchar Municipal Corporation to enable it to undertake minor development works independently.

Sarma outlined a broader development agenda for Silchar and Barak Val-

ley, with connectivity forming a major part of his pitch.

He said road, rail and air connectivity to the region was being strengthened and would help accelerate the transformation of southern Assam.

Among the projects highlighted by him were a proposed super-express corridor connecting Silchar to Siliguri via Guwahati, a new railway line bypassing Dima Hasao to ensure uninterrupted train connectivity, and a proposed greenfield airport at Doloo.

"Once connectivity is improved, automatic transformation will happen," Sarma said.

On civic infrastructure, he promised better roads, a drinking water project, CCTV cameras and measures to control crime in the corporation area.

The chief minister also targeted the Congress during his address and cited the BJP-led government's development initiatives in Silchar.

Referring to the April Assembly elections, Sarma said the BJP-led NDA had retained power in Assam with 102 of the state's 126 seats. He said the government would work during its five-year term with the stated objective of winning all 126 Assembly seats in the 2031 elections.Sarma also addressed allegations concerning candidates' documents, saying legal action would be taken if any candidate was found to have submitted a fake certificate. He said the person concerned could face imprisonment if found guilty.He further said he would return to Silchar during the upcoming Durga Puja festivities."We will fulfil all our promises, and I can assure you of development and good governance," Sarma said.Polling for the Silchar Municipal Corporation elections will be held on October 3 from 7.30 am to 4 pm, while counting of votes is scheduled for October 6.

ED searches 16 locations in Assam, Bengal over alleged areca nut smuggling network

GUWAHATI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on October 1 conducted searches at 16 locations in Assam and West Bengal as part of a money laundering investigation into an alleged syndicate involved in smuggling foreign-origin areca nuts into India through the Myanmar border.

The searches were carried out by the agency's Guwahati zonal office, officials said.

According to the ED, the alleged network brought consignments of Indonesian and Thai areca nuts into Mizoram through the India-Myanmar international border and used local residents as front proprietors of companies to route transactions worth hundreds of crores of rupees.

Investigators suspect that the consignments were subsequently transported to gutka and pan masala manufacturers in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Maharashtra using allegedly forged Goods and Services Tax (GST) and transport documents.

The agency is also examining the financial transactions associated with the alleged smuggling network and the movement of funds generated through the trade.

Officials said investigators have identified an alleged Siliguri-based network that collected monthly payments from truckers. In return, the network allegedly provided tokens intended to facilitate the movement of vehicles from Assam through West Bengal and Bihar without checks.

The ED is examining the alleged payment mechanism, the companies used to route the transactions and the financial trail linked to the movement of the foreign-origin areca nuts.

The agency's action is part of a wider probe into suspected money laundering arising from the alleged cross-border smuggling operation.

Manipur minister urges civil society groups to let artists work without fear

IMPHAL

Manipur Art and Culture Minister Khurajam Loken Singh has urged civil society organisations and other stakeholders not to threaten or intimidate artists, particularly amid the difficult circumstances prevailing in the state.

The minister was speaking at the inauguration of Thakhsaisida Manipuri Theatre (Fortnightly Theatre Shows), organised by the Department of Art and Culture as part of Seva Sankalp Utsav 2026 at Mahara-ja Chandrakirti Auditorium in Imphal East on September 30.

Describing culture as the "face of Manipur to the world", Loken Singh stressed the need to preserve and promote the state's cultural heritage.

He said artists who have devoted their lives to theatre and other art forms should be recognised for their contribution to Manipur's cultural identity.

The minister said the Art and Culture Department was also working to create greater awareness among younger generations about the contributions of prominent artists.

"Culture exists because society exists," he said, emphasising that cultural activities require discipline, commitment and dedication.

According to the minister, artists can bring joy to people while also contributing to peace and harmony among different communities.

Referring to the challenges facing the state, Loken Singh

acknowledged that changing social attitudes was not easy. He appealed to civil society organisations and other stakeholders to allow artists to continue their work without fear or intimidation.

Sabitri Heisnam seeks greater support for theatre

Eminent theatre personality and Padma Shri awardee Sabitri Heisnam recalled her experiences as a theatre actor and the difficulties she encountered during her career.

Describing theatre as an integral part of Manipur's cultural identity, she urged the Department of Art and Culture to extend greater support to artists and theatre groups.

She also called for the repair and restoration of damaged theatre halls across the state, including Langmeidong Dramatic Union, Chorus, Rupmahal and Kalakshetra.

Restoring the venues, she said, would help artists resume regular practice and continue promoting Manipuri theatre.

The inaugural programme featured a performance of Narasingh (Awa Ngamba) by the People's Arts and Dramatic Association, Imphal East. The play was written by late Lairenmayum Ibungohal Singh.

Director of Art and Culture Keithellakpam Dinamani Singh, filmmaker and composer Aribam Shyam Sharma, chairman of the Thakhsaisida Manipuri Theatre committee Mongjam Joy and several other artists attended the programme.

27 king cobras from Mizoram shed new light on Northern King Cobra population

AIZAWL

A new study by researchers from Mizoram has provided the first detailed morphological characterisation of the Northern King Cobra population in the state, strengthening earlier genetic evidence that places Mizoram's king cobras within the Indo-Chinese lineage of Ophiophagus hannah.

The study, led by Prof Hmar Tlawmte Lahremtsanga of the Department of Zoology at Mizoram University, has been published in Proceedings of the Zoological Society by Springer.

Researchers examined 27 adult king cobras - 15 males and 12 females - combining detailed physical measurements with mitochondrial DNA analysis to establish the population's systematic placement.

The specimens included 14 preserved snakes and 13 live individuals examined during herpetological surveys conducted between 2007 and 2023.

Studying the species is challenging because the king cobra is a highly pro-



tected animal in India, listed under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, while the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) classifies it as vulnerable.

For the genetic analysis, researchers examined three mitochondrial markers - 16S rRNA, cytochrome c oxidase subunit 1 (cox1) and cytochrome b (cytb). Phylogenetic analysis placed the Mizoram samples within the Indo-Chinese lineage, alongside populations from Northeast India and other parts of the region.The findings provide morphological support to earlier genetic studies that had classified Mizoram's king cobras under O. hannah. Until now, researchers said, detailed morphological data on the state's population had been limited.

The study comes amid a major revision in the scientific understanding of king cobra diversity. Researchers now recognise four distinct evolutionary lineages or species that were previously grouped under a single widespread species: the Indo-Chinese O. hannah,

Western Ghats O. kaalinga, Indo-Malayan O. bungarus and Luzon Island O. salvatana.The Mizoram specimens also showed clear differences between males and females.

Females recorded higher average numbers of ventral scales, while males had higher average values for subcaudal scales, undivided subcaudals and tail length, along with several head measurements.These included head length, head width, head depth, nostril diameter, internarial distance, frontal width and parietal width.The researchers said the differences in head size and shape warrant further investigation, including whether they could be linked to sex-specific selection or competition between males. However, they stressed that this remains a hypothesis for future research rather than a conclusion established by the study.The study also updates several previously recorded morphological ranges. Male specimens had between 236 and 261 ventral scales, compared with 240 to 258 in females. Male tail lengths ranged from 300 to 630 mm, while female tail lengths

ranged from 308 to 430 mm.

The researchers cautioned that some of the updated ranges were based on unusual measurements from two live rescued snakes that were released after examination and could not subsequently be re-checked.

They said the variations could be linked to habitat adaptation, developmental conditions or sampling differences.According to the researchers, the combined morphological and genetic data provide an important baseline for future studies on the evolution, systematics and conservation of king cobras in Mizoram.The study also underlines the conservation challenges facing the species. King cobras are often killed after encounters with people, while habitat destruction, retaliatory killings and the loss of nesting sites remain threats to populations in the region.

The researchers said recognising distinct evolutionary lineages could also have implications for conservation planning, with strategies potentially needing to account for the specific ecological pressures faced by different populations.



VOLUME:1, ISSUE 887

Respect
Age, Restore
Dignity

Longer lives are among the great achievements of modern society. But living longer is meaningful only when those additional years are accompanied by health, security, dignity and a sense of belonging. The real measure of a society is not simply how long its people live, but how it treats them when age makes them more dependent on others.

October 1, observed as the International Day of Older Persons, offers an opportunity to confront an uncomfortable reality: while societies frequently celebrate the wisdom and contribution of senior citizens, many older people continue to experience neglect, isolation, age-based discrimination and inadequate care.

The United Nations designated October 1 as the International Day of Older Persons in 1990, with the first observance held in 1991. The occasion was intended to draw attention to the rights, welfare and challenges of ageing populations. The UN Principles for Older Persons, adopted in 1991, placed emphasis on five fundamental areas - independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment and dignity. These principles remain relevant because ageing is not merely a demographic issue; it is a question of human rights and social responsibility.

The theme for 2026, "The Age of Longevity: Rethinking Systems for Longer Lives", carries a particularly important message. Longer life expectancy requires societies to rethink healthcare, social protection, long-term care, employment, lifelong learning and the physical and social environments in which older people live.

India, too, is experiencing a significant demographic transition. As the number of older citizens grows, the traditional assumption that families alone can shoulder the entire responsibility of elderly care is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain. Migration, urbanisation, smaller families and changing lifestyles have altered the social structures that once provided older people with an automatic support system.

Government schemes and legislative measures have an important role to play, but their effectiveness depends on implementation. Welfare programmes mean little to an elderly person if access to them involves complicated procedures, repeated visits to government offices or an indifferent official response. Public institutions dealing with senior citizens must therefore become genuinely elderly-friendly.

This requires more than paperwork. Officials and frontline workers need sensitisation so that older citizens are treated with patience, respect and empathy. Public services, healthcare facilities, transport systems and grievance mechanisms should be designed with the limitations that can accompany old age in mind. But the responsibility does not rest with government alone.

Families and younger generations must also recognise that elderly people are not burdens to be managed but individuals with rights, emotions, experience and dignity. Their knowledge may not always fit neatly into the fast-changing world of technology and social media, but their understanding of relationships, hardship, conflict and resilience remains invaluable.

There is also a need to bridge the growing generational distance. Schools and colleges can play a meaningful role by organising interactions between students and senior citizens. Such programmes can help younger people understand the realities of ageing while allowing older citizens to share experiences and knowledge. Intergenerational engagement should not be treated as charity; it is an exchange that benefits both sides.

Civil society and voluntary organisations can supplement government efforts. Senior citizens' associations, community groups and NGOs can provide companionship, recreational activities, legal assistance and support in accessing public services. Equally important is creating spaces where older people can remain socially active rather than being pushed into isolation. The question before society is therefore not whether we can keep people alive for longer. It is whether we are prepared to ensure that those additional years are lived with dignity. An elderly person should not have to demand respect. It should be the natural expression of a society that understands its own future. Every generation eventually grows old. The way today's society treats its elders will, in time, become the way tomorrow's society treats us. Respect for the elderly is not merely a moral obligation. It is a measure of our civilisation. On International Day of Older Persons, the message should therefore go beyond ceremonies and speeches: elders deserve to be heard, included, cared for and respected - not neglected when they become less economically productive or physically independent.

A society that values longevity must also value the people who have lived those years.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The secret of happiness is: Find something more important than you are and dedicate your life to it." - Daniel Dennett

A CLARION CALL FOR
REPEAL OF APFRA 1978



DR YUMRI TAIPODIA

In every society, there comes a moment when laws must be re-examined—not out of rebellion, but out of responsibility. A moment when people pause and ask whether the legal frameworks that once seemed necessary still serve justice, freedom, and human dignity. For Arunachal Pradesh, that moment has arrived in relation to the Arunachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act, 1978 (APFRA).

This is not merely a legal discussion. It is a question of conscience. It is a question about the kind of society we aspire to be—one rooted in trust and freedom, or one guided by suspicion and control. The time has come to engage in a serious, thoughtful, and compassionate re-consideration of APFRA 1978.

Understanding the Origins of APFRA

To fairly evaluate APFRA, we must first understand the circumstances in which it was created. The late 1970s were a period of transition and uncertainty in Arunachal Pradesh. There were genuine concerns about preserving indigenous cultures, traditions, and social harmony. The arrival and spread of different religious influences were viewed by some as a potential threat to these delicate social structures.

It was within this context that APFRA was enacted. The stated objective of the Act was to prevent religious conversions achieved through force, fraud, or inducement. On the surface, this appears reasonable. No society should tol-

understood that belief cannot be imposed or restricted without undermining human dignity. Faith is not a matter of regulation—it is a matter of conviction.

While the Constitution allows reasonable restrictions in the interest of public order, morality, and health, such restrictions must be precise, necessary, and proportionate. The concern with APFRA is that it risks crossing this line. Instead of narrowly targeting coercion, it creates a broader framework that can affect even voluntary and genuine expressions of faith.

This raises a fundamental question: does APFRA protect freedom, or does it inadvertently limit it?

One of the most critical issues with APFRA lies in its language. Terms such as "inducement" and "allurement" are inherently vague. They are open to interpretation, and this lack of clarity can lead to inconsistent and, at times, unjust application.

Consider a situation where a religious organization provides education, healthcare, or humanitarian assistance. Are these acts of service, or are they forms of inducement? The answer may vary depending on perspective.

This ambiguity creates a climate of uncertainty. Individuals and organizations may become hesitant to engage in legitimate activities for fear of legal repercussions. In effect, the law may discourage acts of compassion rather than prevent wrongdoing.

A law that is unclear in its definition risks being unclear in its justice.

At the heart of this debate lies the issue of personal autonomy. The decision to embrace or change one's religion is among the most intimate choices an individual can make. It involves personal reflection, spiritual exploration, and often, profound life experiences.

When the state imposes procedural requirements or scrutiny on such decisions, it enters a deeply personal space. This raises ethical and constitutional concerns.

Can belief be subject to approval? Can conscience be regulated?

In a free society, the answer must be no.

Respecting individual autonomy does not mean ignoring the possibility of misuse. It means addressing misuse without undermining the freedom of all. Laws must be carefully designed to punish coercion without casting suspicion on genuine faith.

Social Harmony: Protection or Disruption?

Supporters of APFRA often argue that it is necessary to maintain

re-evaluated.

Changing Times, Changing Realities

More than four decades have passed since the enactment of APFRA. The world has changed, and so has India. There is greater awareness of human rights, increased access to education, and a stronger emphasis on individual freedoms.

Arunachal Pradesh itself has evolved. Its people are more connected, more informed, and more engaged with national and global conversations.

In this changing context, it is only natural to reassess laws that were created in a different era. This is not about rejecting the past, but about adapting to the present.

A law that does not evolve with society risks becoming outdated and ineffective.

Do We Need APFRA Today?

This question must be asked honestly and without bias.

India already has laws that address coercion, fraud, and undue influence. The Indian Penal Code provides mechanisms to deal with such offenses. If someone is forced or deceived into conversion, legal action can be taken under existing provisions.

Why, then, is a separate law like APFRA necessary?

If its purpose is already covered by other laws, its continued existence may not only be redundant but potentially problematic.

The Human Dimension

Beyond legal arguments, there is a human dimension that cannot be ignored.

Laws are not just words on paper—they affect real lives. They shape how people think, act, and relate to one another.

When individuals feel that their beliefs are being monitored or judged, it creates a sense of fear. When communities feel targeted, it creates a sense of exclusion.

This is not the spirit of democracy.

A democratic society must empower its people, not make them feel constrained. It must trust its citizens, not suspect them.

A Call for Dialogue, Not Division

The issue of APFRA should not be approached with anger or hostility. It requires calm, thoughtful, and inclusive dialogue.

Different perspectives must be heard and respected. Concerns about cultural preservation, social harmony, and individual freedom must all be taken into account.

The goal is not to create winners and losers, but to find a path that upholds justice for all.

Towards a Better Framework

Repealing APFRA is not about removing protection—it is about restoring balance.

It is about ensuring that laws do not overreach into personal freedoms. It is about aligning state legislation with constitutional values. It is about building a society where trust replaces suspicion.

Repeal does not mean absence of law. It means better law.

A Moral Responsibility

Ultimately, the question of APFRA is not just legal—it is moral.

Do we believe in the freedom of conscience?

Do we trust individuals to make their own choices?

Do we value unity over division?

If the answer to these questions is yes, then the path forward becomes clear.

Conclusion: A Clarion Call

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

Sipped Assam Tea?

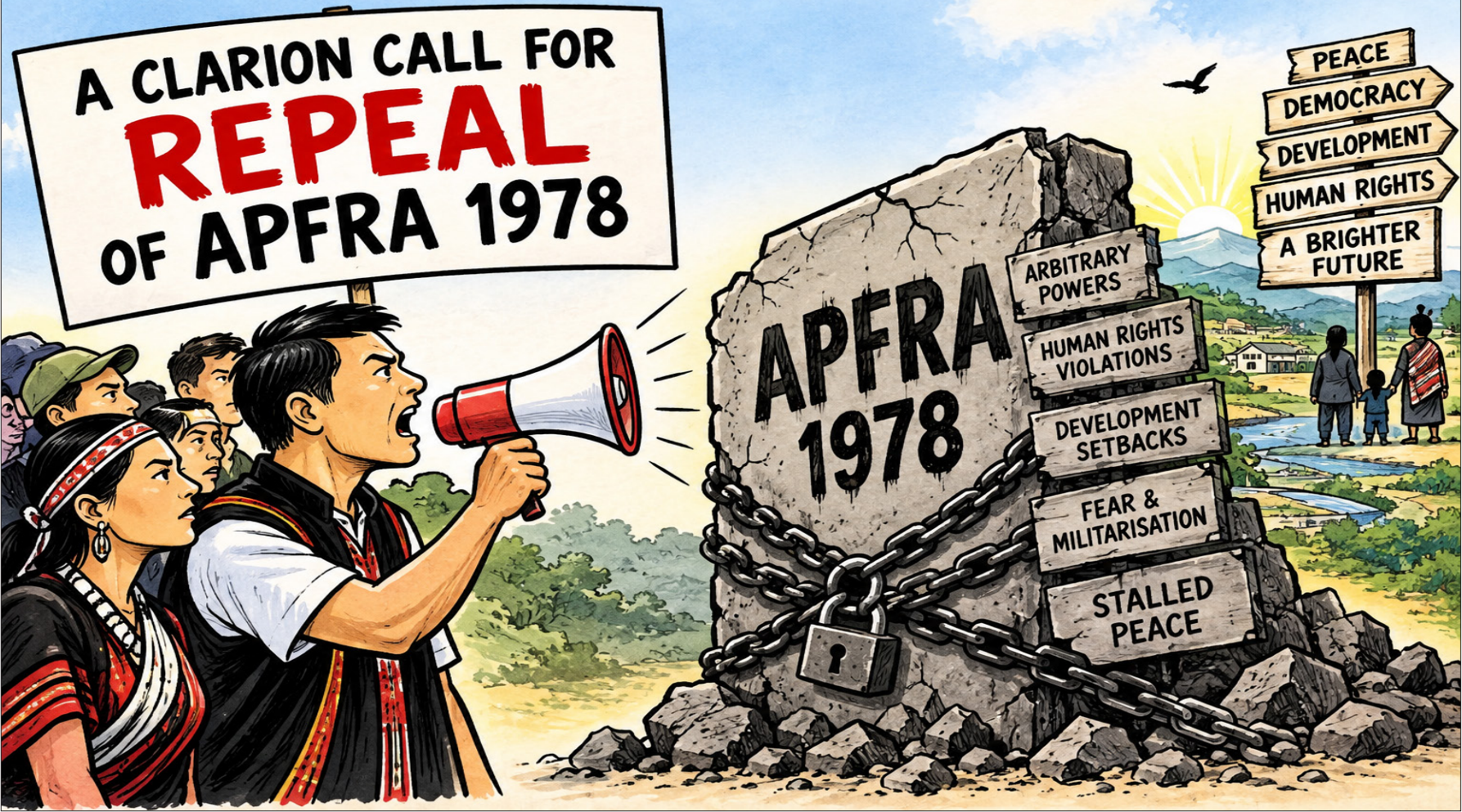
Now it's time for
Assam Coffee ☕

On International Coffee
Day, let's celebrate the
farmers, entrepreneurs
and innovators brewing
a new chapter for
Assam.

~ Dr. Himanta Biswa
Sarma, CM, Assam



This is a clarion call—not of protest, but of purpose. A call to reflect. A call to en-



erate coercion or deception in matters as sensitive as faith.

However, the intention behind a law and its long-term impact are not always the same. What may begin as a protective measure can, over time, evolve into a restrictive force—especially when it deals with something as deeply personal as belief.

India's Constitution stands as a moral and legal compass for the nation. Under Article 25, every citizen is guaranteed the freedom to profess, practice, and propagate religion. This is not a limited or conditional freedom; it is a fundamental right.

The framers of the Constitution

social harmony. This is an important concern, especially in a culturally diverse state like Arunachal Pradesh. However, the relationship between law and harmony is complex.

A law that is perceived as targeting specific communities or practices can create tension rather than reduce it. It can lead to feelings of discrimination, mistrust, and alienation.

True harmony is not achieved through restriction, but through understanding. It is built on dialogue, respect, and mutual acceptance.

If a law contributes to division—even unintentionally—it must be

If the concerns that led to APFRA still exist, they must be addressed—but in a manner that is fair, clear, and constitutional.

This may involve:

Strengthening existing laws against coercion and fraud

Promoting education and awareness

Encouraging interfaith dialogue

Building trust between communities

These approaches focus on solutions rather than restrictions. They address the root of the problem without compromising freedom.

Why Repeal Matters

gage. A call to act. The Arunachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act, 1978, served a purpose in its time. But times have changed, and so must our laws.

Let us move towards a future where freedom is not regulated but respected. Where diversity is not feared but celebrated. Where laws empower rather than restrict.

Let us have the courage to re-examine, the wisdom to understand, and the will to act.

The repeal of APFRA is not just a legal step—it is a step towards a more just, inclusive, and free society.

And that is a step worth taking. Dr Yumri Taipodia

Assam CM links Silchar road woes to Rs15,000-crore infrastructure works

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday said he would return to Barak Valley for a two-day review after Durga Puja, as he attributed the poor condition of roads in Silchar to multiple infrastructure projects being executed simultaneously across the region.

Sarma, visiting Barak Valley for the first time since taking oath for a second consecutive term, reviewed several ongoing development projects during his visit but said a detailed assessment could not be carried out because of political engagements.

"After Durga Puja, I will come again and review them properly so



that the projects can be completed soon," he said.

Addressing concerns over Silchar's deteriorating roads, the Chief

Minister said the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) and the Public Works Department (PWD)

were together executing road projects worth more than ₹15,000 crore.

"The main problem is that tremendous road work is going on. NHIDCL and PWD together are undertaking more than ₹15,000 crore worth of work, and because everything is happening together, the roads are in bad condition," Sarma said.

He said most of the ongoing road projects were expected to be completed within a year.

On the proposed flyover in Silchar, Sarma acknowledged that construction would cause inconvenience but said the project would go ahead, with test piling already completed.

He estimated that residents could face disruption for two to two-and-a-half years during construction.

"Development brings struggle," Sarma said, referring to the difficulties faced during flyover construction in Guwahati before the projects gained wider public acceptance.

The Chief Minister also stressed the need for officials to review development works on the ground rather than relying solely on assessments from Guwahati. "When we sit and review here, solutions come up," he said. Sarma said the Model Code of Conduct, in force ahead of the October 3 Silchar civic polls, had limited the scope for a detailed review during his current visit.

He said regular visits by the Chief Secretary, ministers and senior officials would help identify problems and accelerate implementation.

"If the Chief Secretary, I or other ministers come here every month and discuss the issues, we can carry forward many works firsthand," he said. Sarma added that he had met more than 200 people during his visit who were unable to travel to Guwahati to raise their concerns.

"If the government is at the doorstep, it benefits a lot," he said.

Asked about a visit to Barak Valley during Durga Puja, Sarma said his schedule would depend on the election but confirmed that he would return for two days after the festival.

"Let the election be completed first. If I don't have any work during Puja, I will visit Barak Valley. Anyway, I will come after Puja for two days," he said.

Sikkim Arts and Literature Festival returns to Gangtok from October 28

Gangtok

The second edition of the Sikkim Arts and Literature Festival (SALF) will be held in Gangtok from October 28 to 30, bringing together writers, poets, artists and cultural practitioners for three days of discussions, performances and workshops.

The festival will be held at Ridge Park and will explore themes including identity, memory, belonging, landscape and contemporary culture, organisers said.

Presented by the Students' Welfare Board under the Education Department of the Sikkim government and produced by Teamwork Arts, SALF 2026 will feature writers and artists including Chuden Kabimo, Mamang Dai, Nawaraj Parajuli, Ranjit Hoskote, William Dalrymple, Yuvan Aves, Guru T Ladakhi and Stephen Alter.

The festival is an initiative of Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang and aims to provide young people with opportunities to engage with literature, art, culture and contemporary ideas.

Sonam Chopel Sherpa, chairman of the Students' Welfare Board, said the festival would create a platform for young audiences to engage with cultural expressions while bringing Sikkim's languages, traditions and contemporary experiences into wider conversations.

"We want our students and young audiences to see culture not simply as something to be preserved, but as something they can actively participate in, question, reinterpret and carry forward," Sherpa said.

The programme will examine the literary and cultural traditions of Sikkim and its diverse communities while bringing perspectives from across the Himalayan region into discussions on identity, belonging, memory and landscape.

Among the featured sessions will be 'Echoes of Verse', where Mamang Dai and Ranjit Hoskote will join Guru T. Ladakhi to

Assam clarifies: No ban on citizens visiting government schools

GUWAHATI

Assam Education Minister Ranoo Pegu on Wednesday clarified that the School Education Department has not issued any notice or circular restricting guardians, citizens or civil society members from visiting government or provincialised schools. Pegu said reports claiming that the department had imposed such restrictions were incorrect.

In a social media post, the minister said citizens and guardians could visit schools and offer suggestions, provided such visits did not disrupt regular classes or affect the academic environment. "Guardians and citizens are welcome to visit our schools and offer suggestions. However, visitors must ensure that regular classes are not disrupted and that the academic atmosphere is maintained," Pegu said.

The minister also said a show-cause notice had been issued to a Cluster Resource Centre Coordinator (CROC), Nurul Hussain, for allegedly circulating a false WhatsApp message claiming

that civil society members were barred from visiting schools. The clarification comes amid reports of visits by a delegation of the Cockerroach Janata Party to schools in Assam under its 'School Theek Karo' campaign. The campaign has involved visits to schools to highlight issues related to infrastructure and other facilities. The issue also follows a reported confrontation in Palashbari on September 23, when members of the group visiting a primary school allegedly faced objections while attempting to interact with local residents. The circumstances of that incident and allegations made by the respective sides could not be independently verified.

Pegu's clarification makes clear that there is no departmental order preventing citizens or civil society groups from visiting government or provincialised schools. However, visitors are expected to ensure that their presence does not interfere with teaching or disturb the academic environment.

Assam Cabinet clears 84.6 acres for Barak Valley's first agricultural college



GUWAHATI

The Assam Cabinet has approved the allotment of 84.6 acres of land at Patharkandi in Sribhumi district for the proposed first agricultural college in the Barak Valley, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said. The institution will be Assam's fourth agricultural college and is expected to expand access to agricultural higher education for students in the Barak Valley. Sarma announced the Cabinet decision in a post on X, saying the land allotment had been approved for setting up the agricultural college at Patharkandi.

The proposed institution is expected to provide students from the region with opportunities to pursue agricultural studies closer to home while developing practical skills and exploring new approaches to farming and allied activities.

Highlighting the importance of agricultural education, the Chief Minister said innovation in the sector would play an important role in shaping the future. The college is also expected to encourage more young people to take up agricultural education and contribute to the development of the state's farm sector through research, skills and innovation. The land allotment marks an important step towards establishing the Barak Valley's first agricultural college. Further details on the proposed campus, academic programmes, infrastructure and the timeline for commencement of classes are yet to be announced.

The new institution is expected to widen opportunities for higher education in agriculture in the region and strengthen the academic and technical ecosystem around the sector.

Ninong Ering backs Siang project, calls for informed debate on mega dam

PASIGHAT

Pasighat West MLA and former Union Minister Ninong Ering has backed mega dam projects, saying large-scale hydropower infrastructure could help with flood control, irrigation and regional development if adequate safety measures are put in place and the concerns of affected communities are addressed.

Speaking to the media, Ering urged people to adopt a positive and informed approach towards the proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP), which is planned to generate around 11,000 MW or more of power.

"I am 72 years old, and I was a member of the Brahmaputra Flood Control team in the 1970s. Since then, I have been in favour of mega dams to control floods and support irrigation," Ering said.

Citing projects such as the Bhakra Nangal and Hirakud dams,



the MLA said India had experience in developing large dams with measures aimed at addressing seismic risks, as well as arrangements for the rehabilitation and relocation of affected people.

He also highlighted the potential for tourism and other economic activities to emerge around major infrastructure projects.

At the same time, Ering acknowl-

edged concerns over the seismic vulnerability of the Northeast, noting that the region falls within an earthquake-prone zone. He also referred to China's plans for a major hydropower project, stressing the need for adequate precautions while pursuing large-scale infrastructure development.

On the proposed SUMP, Ering emphasised the need for a Pre-

Feasibility Report (PFR) to assess the project's technical viability, potential benefits and possible impacts.

He urged people to allow the preliminary assessment to be carried out, saying this would provide a clearer understanding of the Siang River's potential and the opportunities and challenges associated with the project.

The proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project has been the subject of discussions over its potential contribution to hydropower generation, flood management and water security. At the same time, concerns have been raised over seismic safety, environmental consequences and the possible displacement of communities.

Ering's remarks come amid the continuing debate over the project's feasibility and its implications for Arunachal Pradesh and the wider Northeast.

Tripura HC orders release of minor allegedly kept away from parents for four months

AGARTAL

The Tripura High Court has directed the immediate release of a minor girl who was allegedly kept away from her parents for nearly four months, following a habeas corpus petition filed by her father.

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice M.S. Ramachandra Rao and Justice S. Datta Purakayastha passed the interim order on Wednesday, directing the authorities to release the girl and hand her over to her parents.

According to advocate Purro-sottam Roy Barman, who represented the girl's father, the minor is from Gandacherra in Dhalai district. She was allegedly taken from her home against her parents' wishes and subsequently placed under the custody of the Dhalai Child Welfare Committee.

The lawyer said the matter dates back to May 23, when several women allegedly assaulted the girl at her residence. Her father subsequently lodged an FIR at Gandacherra Police Station.

Roy Barman alleged that during the first week of June, police took the girl from her home despite objections from her parents and handed her over to the Child Welfare Committee.

The father subsequently approached the Dhalai District Magistrate, Sub-Divisional

Magistrate and the Child Welfare Committee on several occasions, seeking the release of his daughter and restoration of her custody. However, the lawyer claimed that no effective action followed.

The father then moved the High Court with a habeas corpus petition, seeking the production and release of his daughter.

During Wednesday's hearing, the state was asked to respond to the allegations. According to the petitioner's counsel, the state could not establish a legal basis for keeping the minor separated from her parents.

The counsel further alleged that the girl had been kept at a home in Abhaynagar, Agartala, under the supervision of the Child Welfare Committee. He also alleged that mandatory procedures under the Juvenile Justice Act had not been followed.

The High Court has directed the state government to file an affidavit responding to the allegations. The order for the girl's release is interim in nature. The court will examine the wider issues raised in the habeas corpus petition, including the legality of the minor's custody and the conduct of the officials concerned, in subsequent proceedings.

The case is scheduled to come up for hearing again in the second week of November.

Sikkim Arts and Literature Festival returns to Gangtok from October 28

GANGTOK

The second edition of the Sikkim Arts and Literature Festival (SALF) will be held in Gangtok from October 28 to 30, bringing together writers, poets, artists and cultural practitioners for three days of discussions, performances and workshops.

The festival will be held at Ridge Park and will explore themes including identity, memory, belonging, landscape and contemporary culture, organisers said.

Presented by the Students' Welfare Board under the Education Department of the Sikkim government and produced by Teamwork Arts, SALF 2026 will feature writers and artists including Chuden Kabimo, Mamang Dai, Nawaraj Parajuli, Ranjit Hoskote, William Dalrymple, Yuvan Aves, Guru T Ladakhi and Stephen Alter.

The festival is an initiative of Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang and aims to provide young people with opportunities to engage with literature, art, culture and contemporary ideas.

Sonam Chopel Sherpa, chairman of the Students' Welfare Board, said the festival would create a platform for young audi-



ences to engage with cultural expressions while bringing Sikkim's languages, traditions and contemporary experiences into wider conversations.

"We want our students and young audiences to see culture not simply as something to be preserved, but as something

they can actively participate in, question, reinterpret and carry forward," Sherpa said.

The programme will examine the literary and cultural traditions of Sikkim and its diverse communities while bringing perspectives from across the Himalayan

region into discussions on identity, belonging, memory and landscape.

Among the featured sessions will be 'Echoes of Verse', where Mamang Dai and Ranjit Hoskote will join Guru T. Ladakhi to discuss poetry, memory, landscape and lived experience.

Nepali poet Nawaraj Parajuli will present 'Kavita Concert: Beats of Poetry', a performance exploring the rhythm and theatrical possibilities of poetry.

Another session, 'These Hills Called Home', will bring Chuden Kabimo and Stephen Alter into conversation with Sharda Chhetri on identity, belonging, memory and the Himalayan landscape.

The festival will also include workshops for adults and children conducted by Gangtok-based creative organisations Tangible Tangerines and Mind Matters.

Festival producer and Teamwork Arts senior vice-president Syed Shams Jawaid said the event would bring together writers, poets, thinkers and cultural practitioners from Sikkim, the wider Himalayan region, India and beyond.

He said the festival would remain open and free to all audiences and encouraged young people to attend the sessions and engage with diverse ideas and perspectives.

With its focus on literature, art and Himalayan cultural conversations, the three-day festival is expected to provide a platform for both established voices and young audiences to explore the region's evolving cultural identity.

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Rahul Gandhi asks who at EC ordered ‘illegal’ Form 6 change, whether TCS was pressured

NEW DELHI

Rahul Gandhi on Thursday questioned who at the Election Commission ordered Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) to make an “illegal” change to online Form 6, used for fresh voter registration, and whether the IT major was pressured into carrying it out.

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh claimed that the change in Form 6 was orchestrated by “the PM-HM duo”.

In a post on X, Gandhi asked whether Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) was pressured into doing this.

“The online Form 6 was changed illegally, as the EC’s own Commissioners have recorded. Who at the ECI ordered Tata Consultancy Services to make that change?” Gandhi said in a post on X.

Ramesh said, “Form 6 changes were introduced by the CEC unconstitutionally in mid-July 2026 to remove Gen Z voters from the electoral roll. Clearly, the move was orchestrated by the PM-HM (Narendra Modi-Amit Shah) duo.”

The Congress leaders’ remarks came a day after the opposition INDIA bloc announced a series of joint protests over alleged irregularities in the electoral process, including marches in all districts and five major rallies.

The bloc also demanded that future elections be conducted using ballot papers and urged the Supreme Court to expedite cases concerning the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and alleged electoral malpractices.

At a meeting attended by leaders of 19 opposition parties, which lasted more than three-and-a-half hours, it was



“Who at TCS signed off on it? And were they pressured into doing it?” he asked.

Tagging Gandhi’s post, decided that opposition MPs would march to the Election Commission on October 6.

Opposition leaders will orders have full legal sanction and are issued in accordance with established statutory procedures.

PM Modi hails Indian pilot Smit Machchhar as ‘hero’ for foiling flydubai crash attempt



NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday hailed Indian pilot Captain Smit Machchhar as a “hero” after he was seriously injured in an alleged attempt by his co-pilot to crash a flydubai flight bound for Tel Aviv, saying his courage helped save hundreds of lives.

“Captain Smit Machchhar is a HERO. In the face of the gravest danger and despite being seriously injured, he showed immense courage and an unwavering resolve to protect the lives of others,” Modi said in a post on X.

“His valour helped save

hundreds of lives and avert a great tragedy,” he said, adding that India was proud of the pilot and praying for his speedy recovery.

Flight FZ1073, operating from Dubai to Tel Aviv on Wednesday, was carrying 174 passengers, including 27 children, when a violent confrontation broke out in the cockpit.

According to Israeli officials and passenger accounts, the co-pilot allegedly stabbed Machchhar and attempted to take control of the aircraft. The Boeing 737 subsequently went into a steep descent, losing nearly 14,000 feet in less than a minute before

emergency procedures were initiated. Despite his injuries, Machchhar is reported to have opened the cockpit door, allowing passengers and crew members to enter and overpower the co-pilot. Two off-duty flydubai pilots travelling as passengers also helped regain control of the aircraft, according to reports.

The aircraft diverted to Prince Sultan Bin Abdulaziz Airport in Tabuk, Saudi Arabia, where it landed safely. The passengers and crew were subsequently taken to safety, with the passengers later continuing their journey to Israel on another flight.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday also described Machchhar as a “true hero”, saying the Indian pilot’s actions, along with those of passengers and crew, prevented a catastrophic mid-air disaster.

“My salute to the Indian pilot Captain Smit Machchhar for his extraordinary bravery,” Netanyahu said, wishing him a speedy and full recovery.

He also praised the passengers and crew who intervened, saying they showed “extraordinary resourcefulness and courage”.

Israeli officials said the co-pilot, reported to be an Omani national, was arrested by Saudi authorities.

The motive behind the incident remains unclear and is subject to investigation. Flydubai has also urged against premature speculation while authorities establish the facts. Machchhar, who joined flydubai in 2022, previously spent about 11 years with Indian airline SpiceJet. He has extensive experience flying Boeing 737 aircraft and is reported to have around 9,750 hours of flying experience.

US President Donald Trump has also praised Machchhar, calling him a hero after speaking to Netanyahu about the incident.

The dramatic episode triggered emergency alerts aboard the aircraft and briefly raised fears of a hijacking before passengers and crew managed to subdue the attacker and ensure the plane’s safe landing. The full sequence of events and the motive remain under investigation.

INTERNATIONAL

FlyDubai mid-air crisis: How passengers stormed the cockpit and helped save 174 lives



TEL AVIV

A copilot stabbed a captain in an apparent attempt to crash a jetliner Wednesday as it was flying 174 people to Israel. Passengers burst into the cockpit and wrestled with the attacker even as the plane descended sharply, witnesses and Israel’s government said.

The plane made an emergency landing in Saudi Arabia. The shaken passengers from the FlyDubai flight from Dubai to Tel Aviv landed Wednesday evening in Israel on another flight, as onlookers cheered. Israel’s emergency services said they treated three passengers with minor injuries.

It was not clear what motivated the attack, which led Israel to scramble warplanes amid concerns about a possible hijacking. In a CNN interview aired on Wednesday evening, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the attacker was an Omani national and was being interrogated in Saudi Arabia, where he was arrested.

Aviation experts were surprised the plane did not crash after a descent so extreme that most of the rudder was ripped off the tail.

“We’re going to die,” passenger Naama Bershadski recalled thinking as she closed her eyes and prayed.

A video shared by Netanyahu’s office showed passenger Yaniv Hayoun, who grappled with the attacker, wearing a bloodied shirt and hugging the prime minister, who told Hayoun: “I look at you and I see a lion. I see a great hero.”

President Donald Trump told reporters at the White House that he and Netanyahu

In an interview with Fox News Channel’s Sean Hannity that aired Wednesday night, Netanyahu said the attacker might have hit the captain with an axe. Airlines are generally required to carry crash axes in the cockpit for use in an emergency to break open a window to escape or break open a panel to access a fire.

“Despite being stabbed and seriously injured, he fought back, resisted, opened the cockpit door, and enabled passengers and crew to overpower the attacker — preventing a catastrophic midair disaster,” Netanyahu said of the wounded captain on X. “He saved the lives of 174 people, including Israeli citizens and other nationals.”

Israel’s Foreign Ministry said those on board were from Israel, India and the United Arab Emirates. The U.S. State Department said four passengers had American citizenship.

FlyDubai said its flights to and from Israel would be suspended while an investigation takes place. Netanyahu said he spoke with the UAE’s president, who agreed that Israel would join in interrogating the suspect.

The incident came at a busy travel time as the Jewish High Holy Days wrap up. In addition, national elections will be held on Oct. 27 and many Israelis plan to fly back to vote, since Israel doesn’t permit absentee voting from abroad.

Netanyahu had warned in recent days of unspecified, heightened security threats. The country is a week away from the anniversary of the Hamas-led Oct. 7, 2023, attack on Israel, which has triggered a series of wars.

In the chaos about two and a half hours after leaving Dubai, the flight descended from 33,000 feet to 17,000 feet (around 10,000 meters to 5,100 meters) in about a minute, before making an erratic circle close to the Jordanian border and landing in Tabuk about an hour later, according to FlightRadar24, which identified the aircraft as a Boeing 737 Max 8.

According to a statement by Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz International Airport in Tabuk, the plane landed there at 9:45 a.m., an hour after making a distress call.

“Suddenly the aircraft started to fall down, like, a massive turbulence, like a massive G force, for 20 or 30 seconds,” passenger Almog Italic said.

Former United Airlines pilot and aviation safety expert Steve Arroyo said he was surprised the plane was able to land safely after most of the rudder was ripped off the tail during the extreme descent.

“That was a serious descent and strong aerodynamic forces on that rudder for that to happen. I’m just amazed the aircraft didn’t come apart,” Arroyo said.

Another expert, Jeff Guzzetti, said that given the rate of descent, it may not have been possible for the plane to level out if it had fallen below 10,000 feet.

“It is remarkable they were able to pull out of that dive. What saved them is there was enough altitude left for them to recover,” said Guzzetti, who used to investigate crashes for the National Transportation Safety Board and the Federal Aviation Administration in the U.S.

A person who heard the flight’s communications with air traffic control described the plane being turned away by Saudi Arabia and Jordan before eventually landing in Tabuk.

The person said the pilot’s voice was trembling as he called “mayday” and said a hijacking was taking place and ambulances would be needed. But Saudi Arabia initially denied clearance to land and directed him to Jordan. The plane was told to wait for clearance from the Jordanian military and then turned away.

The pilot then returned to Saudi Arabia and said he had to land in Tabuk. The air control operators gave no reason for the refusals. The person who heard the communications spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar said he spoke with his counterpart in the UAE and they agreed to work together “against extremist elements seeking to harm security and undermine stability in the region.” An official confirmed that Israel had scrambled warplanes, fearing a hijacking. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the incident was under investigation.

Israelis were targeted in a string of hijackings and airplane attacks by Palestinian militants in the 1960s and 1970s. Israel has not experienced a hijacking in decades but maintains some of the strictest airport security in the world, including on Israel-bound



WASHINGTON

The Trump administration is removing Syria from a list of countries that are not allowed to purchase or import US weaponry, a step that is part of a monthslong process of easing sanctions on the new government in Damascus and its leaders.

In a notice published Wednesday in the Federal Register, the State Department said it was amending its International Traffic in Arms Regulations, or ITAR, so that Syria no longer was among the nations subject to a policy of denial for licenses and other approvals needed for the sale of US weapons and munitions.

The change effective Thursday means that arms sales requests from Syria will now be considered on a case-by-case basis.

President Donald Trump acted last year to ease economic sanctions on Syria that had been in place for decades during now-ousted President Bashar Assad’s rule.

In August, Secretary of State Marco Rubio rescinded Syria’s designation as a state sponsor of terrorism, helping pave the way for the latest step in drawing closer to the current government.

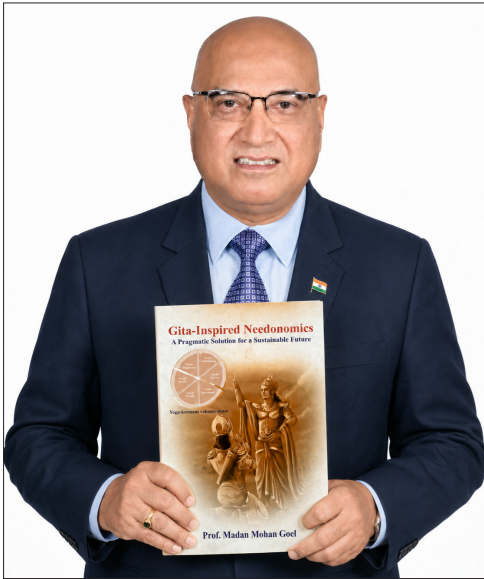
The State Department has also announced plans to reopen the US Embassy in Damascus. It has been closed for 14 years.

With Syria’s removal from the ITAR blacklist, only seven countries remain subject to the

policy of denial for licenses for US arms exports: Belarus, China, Cuba, Iran, Myanmar, North Korea and Venezuela. Syria’s interim president, former rebel leader Ahmad al-Sharaa, overthrew the Assad government nearly two years ago and has embarked on a policy of change that has impressed the Trump administration. His moves have led to hopes of eventual stability in a country that was wracked by civil war and the Islamic State insurgency that engulfed northeast and western Iraq for years.

Wednesday’s withdrawal of US forces from Iraq may mean that the Syrian government plays a greater role in preventing an IS resurgence.

Non-Violence in Economics: Gandhi’s Legacy in the Needonomics Framework



PROF. M.M. GOEL PROPOUNDER, Needonomics School of Thought



October 2, 2026 marks the 157th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, whose leadership, Satyagraha and commitment to non-violence played a defining role in India’s freedom struggle and inspired movements for justice across the world. The day is observed in India as Gandhi Jayanti and internationally as the United Nations’ International Day of Non-Violence.

The UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 61/271 on June 15, 2007, designating October 2 as the International Day of Non-Violence and calling for the dissemination of the message of non-violence through education and public awareness.

For the Needonomics School of Thought (NST), a Kurukshetra-based think tank, Gandhi Jayanti provides an opportunity to extend the principle of non-violence beyond politics and social relations into the economic sphere.

1. Non-Violence in Economics
The idea of “Non-Violence in Economics” calls for an economic order in which human needs, dignity, fairness and sustainability take precedence over unrestrained greed and accumulation.

Gandhi demonstrated that resistance need not become violent to be effective. Through mass participation, non-cooperation and civil disobedience, he challenged colonial authority through moral courage and collective action. Satyagraha was not passive submission; it was a disciplined pursuit of truth without hatred or violence.

This distinction remains relevant today. Economic competition, excessive consumerism, resource pressures and unequal access to opportunities can generate tensions within societies and across nations. Economics, therefore, cannot be concerned merely with production, income and consumption; it must also consider the human consequences of economic choices.

2. From Greedonomics to Needonomics
Needonomics begins with a fundamental question: Are we consuming because we genuinely need something, or because we have been encouraged to desire more?

The distinction between need and greed is central to the Needonomics School of Thought. Greedonomics—the economics of excessive wants and accumulation—can encourage overconsumption, waste, exploitation and an endless race for more.

Such tendencies can contribute to inequality, environmental pressure and social discontent. Needonomics offers a corrective by placing Need over Greed and human welfare above the compulsive pursuit of material accumulation.

3. Needo-Consumption: Consume with Consciousness

The alternative is Needo-consumption—mindful consumption based on genuine needs rather than artificial wants or compulsive accumulation.

Needo-consumption does not reject markets, enterprise, technology or prosperity. Instead, it calls for responsibility in using them. Before making a purchase, a Needo-consumer can ask three simple questions: Is it needed? Is it affordable? Is it responsible?

These questions have both economic and ethical significance. When consumers avoid needless expenditure, producers receive clearer signals about genuine demand. When businesses respect workers, consumers and the environment, economic value can be created without imposing avoidable social costs.

Responsible consumption is not anti-growth. It is a call for better-quality growth with goodness.

4. Non-Violence Across the Economic Chain
Non-violence in economics should not be limited to consumer behaviour. It must extend across the entire economic chain—production, consumption, distribution and governance.

A business that exploits workers may be profitable, but such profit carries a social cost. A production system that damages nature may create output today while transferring costs to future generations. A government that uses public resources without prudence compromises the trust of taxpayers.

Economic non-violence therefore means reducing avoidable harm while creating value. It requires businesses to balance profit with responsibility, governments to protect public interest, consumers to exercise restraint and institutions to remain accountable.

5. Gandhi, Simplicity and Responsible Prosperity
Gandhi’s emphasis on simplicity, self-restraint and ethical living has renewed relevance in the contemporary consumer economy. Advertising, digital platforms and easy access to credit can continuously expand perceived wants.

The challenge is not consumption itself but consumption without reflection. Needonomics consequently advocates “Need over Greed” and “Value over Volume.” Prosperity should improve the quality of life rather than merely increase the quantity of possessions. The objective is not to reject material progress but to place it within a framework of human values and social responsibility.

6. Peace, Progress and Prosperity
The global economy also requires a broader understanding of peace. Conflicts may arise from political, territorial and historical disputes, while competition over resources, markets and economic advantage can add to tensions.

No economic philosophy can eliminate war, terrorism or conflict, whose causes are complex and multidimensional. Yet moderation, fairness, cooperation and responsible resource use can help reduce some of the pressures associated with exploitation, exclusion and discontent.

The Needonomics vision is captured in PPP: Peace, Progress and Prosperity. Peace provides the foundation for development, progress expands opportunities, and prosperity should ultimately serve human welfare.

fare. These three objectives become meaningful and sustainable when economic activity is guided by responsibility, morality and concern for the common good.

7. Responsibility of Every Stakeholder
Needonomics places responsibility on every participant in the economy.

Consumers must distinguish genuine needs from unnecessary wants. Businesses must balance profit with social and environmental responsibility.

Governments must protect public interest and use public resources transparently and prudently.

Workers deserve dignity, fair opportunities and humane working conditions.

Citizens must recognize that economic rights are accompanied by economic responsibilities.

An economy becomes humane when responsibility is shared rather than transferred from one stakeholder to another.

8. Gandhi Jayanti as a Day of Economic Introspection

The most meaningful tribute to Gandhi cannot be confined to ceremonies, speeches or symbolic remembrance. His principles acquire contemporary relevance when translated into everyday conduct.

Truth in transactions, restraint in consumption, fairness in business, compassion in relationships and accountability in public life can collectively contribute to a culture of non-violence.

October 2 can become a day of economic introspection. Can we move from Greedonomics to Needonomics? Can excessive consumption give way to Needo-consumption? Can we pursue prosperity without compromising human dignity and nature? These are not merely economic questions. They are civilizational questions.

9. Conclusion:
Gandhi gave the world the moral force of Satyagraha—the pursuit of truth through non-violent means. Needonomics seeks to carry that spirit of restraint, responsibility and human welfare into economic behaviour. The objective is not less prosperity, but better prosperity—prosperity that is inclusive, ethical, sustainable and rooted in human dignity. On Gandhi Jayanti 2026, let us renew our commitment to Need over Greed, Values over Volumes, and responsible consumption over reckless accumulation. Let us work towards an economic order in which Peace, Progress and Prosperity reinforce one another. That would be a fitting tribute to Gandhi: not merely remembering non-violence, but practicing it in the way we consume, produce, govern and live.

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