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Manipur Security Operation: Ex-Serviceman Killed, Surrendered KCP-PWG Chief Among Eight Arrested

Six alleged active cadres of the banned outfit held in joint CRPF-police operation in Imphal West; arrest of chairman months after public surrender raises questions over rehabilitation monitoring

IMPHAL

An ex-serviceman was killed and eight people, including the self-styled chairman of the banned Kangleipak Communist Party-People's War Group (KCP-PWG), were arrested during a joint security operation in Manipur's Imphal West district early Friday.

The operation was carried out by the Central Reserve Police Force's Quick Action Team (QAT) and Imphal West district police commandos at Yurembam Awang Leikai, under Patsoi police station, around 2 am.

According to police sources, security personnel launched a search operation in the locality and cordoned off a residential premises. An exchange of fire reportedly broke out when the team attempted to enter the house.

Khaidem Shyamkumar, 58, an ex-serviceman from Wabagai Yangbi Maning, sustained bullet injuries during the confrontation. He was rushed to the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) in Imphal, where he later succumbed to his injuries. His body has been kept in the hospital mortuary.



Shyamkumar was reportedly involved in coordinating surrendered underground cadres and facilitating their rehabilitation. Official records indicate that he retired from the Indian Army in December 2011 after serving in the Armoured Corps, including the Central India Horse regiment.

KCP-PWG chairman among those arrested

Eight persons were arrested during the operation, including six alleged active cadres of the KCP-PWG.

The outfit's self-styled chairman, Laishram Ranjit, alias Tamnganba or Loya, a resident of Yurembam Awang Leikai, was among those apprehended.

The other five alleged active cadres were identified as Thangjam Shashikanta Meetei, 19, alias Yaima; Thokchom Debarani Devi, 44, alias Malemnganbi; Wahengbam Momocha, 38, alias Loyangamba; Sorokhaibam Amarjit Singh, 26, alias Hallakpa Khguman; and Naorem Olen Singh, 20.

The remaining two arrested persons were identified as Ningthoujam Arunjit Meitei, 33, of Yaiyangpokpi Awang Leikai, and Thangjam Nishikanta Singh, 24, of Mayang Imphal Kokchai. Both are residents of Imphal West district.

Intelligence sources indicated that the two were preparing to participate in the second phase of the surrender process.

Surrender and rehabilitation process under scrutiny

Ranjit's arrest is particularly significant as he was among 46 KCP-PWG cadres who reportedly surrendered their arms and joined the mainstream at a homecoming ceremony on July 21 at Mantripukhri Garrison, the headquarters of the Inspector General of Assam Rifles (South), in Imphal.

Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh and Home Minister Govindas Konthoujam had welcomed the cadres during the ceremony.

The arrest of the outfit's chairman less than four months after the public surrender has raised questions about the activities of surrendered insurgents and the monitoring of their rehabilitation.

However, the circumstances surrounding Ranjit's alleged involvement in fresh underground activities have not yet been officially detailed.

PERSPECTIVE

Forgiveness is the number one trait linked to happiness in humans.

Manipur Loses Sitting Patsoi MLA Sapam Kunjakeshwor Singh; Mortal Remains to Arrive Today

IMPHAL

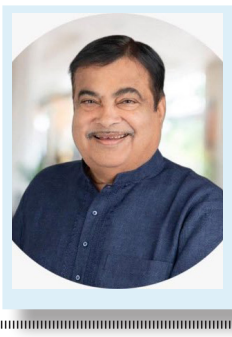
Two-time legislator dies at Apollo Hospital in New Delhi after prolonged health complications; Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh mourns his demiseManipur's political circles were plunged into mourning on Friday following the death of sitting Patsoi MLA Sapam Kunjakeshwor Singh at a hospital in New Delhi. His mortal remains are expected to be brought back to the state later in the day.The legislator reportedly breathed his last around midnight at Apollo Hospital, where he had been undergoing treatment after his health deteriorated over the past few days. He was airlifted to the national capital for advanced medical care as his condition became critical.Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh expressed deep sorrow over the MLA's demise, describing it as an irreparable loss to Manipur.In a condolence message shared on social media on Friday, the Chief Minister said Sapam Kunjakeshwor Singh's dedicated service to the people and contributions to the state would always be remembered with respect.

He also conveyed his condolences to the bereaved family and prayed for strength for them to overcome the loss.

Sapam Kunjakeshwor Singh had a political career spanning several years. He was first elected to the ninth Manipur Legislative Assembly in 2007 as an Independent candidate from the Patsoi Assembly constituency.

He returned to the Assembly in 2022 after winning the Patsoi seat in the 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly election on a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) ticket.

WHO SAID WHAT



West Bengal, we have approved 679.55 crore for 3 road development projects under the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF) - Roads Scheme.
Additionally, 375.78 crore has been approved for the construction of a new bridge over the River Dwarakeshwar in Hooghly district under the CRIF - Setu Bandhan Scheme.
These projects will improve regional connectivity, reduce travel time, boost trade, tourism and economic development across the region.

#PragatiKaHighway #GatiShakti

~ Nitin Gadkari, Minister of Road Transport & Highways, GoI

World Children's Day: Himanta Highlights Assam Schemes, Says Every Child Deserves to Dream Big



GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday reiterated his government's commitment to ensuring equal opportunities for children, saying every child should have the freedom to dream big and the support to turn those aspirations into reality.Marking World Children's Day on November 20, Sarma said a child's future should not be determined by social or economic circumstances.

In a social media message, the Chief Minister highlighted several state government initiatives aimed at improving access to education and supporting children's overall development.

Among the schemes he mentioned were Nijut Moina and Nijut Babu, along with the distribution of free textbooks, bicycles and scholarships. These measures, he said, were intended to ensure that financial and social constraints do not prevent children from pursuing their ambitions."No child's aspirations are held back by circumstances," Sarma said, emphasising the need to build an environment in which every child can thrive.

World Children's Day is observed globally on November 20 to promote children's rights and draw attention to issues concerning their health, education, safety and overall well-being.

The observance commemorates the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on November 20, 1989. The convention recognises every child's right to education, healthcare, protection and opportunities for development.The day also serves as a reminder of the challenges faced by children from economically disadvantaged and marginalised communities, particularly in accessing quality education and essential services.In Assam, the government's focus on educational assistance and financial support has been positioned as part of a broader effort to make opportunities more accessible to children across different socio-economic backgrounds.

Dr Thangjam Dhabali Singh Conferred 17th O.N.E. India Award 2026



BISWADEEP GUPTA

IMPHAL: Renowned pathologist and entrepreneur Dr Thangjam Dhabali Singh has been conferred the 17th O.N.E. (Our North East) India Award 2026 by My Home India in recognition of his contributions to healthcare, tourism, employment generation and socio-economic development in Manipur. The award was presented by Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Arlekar at a ceremony held on November 17 at the Swatantryaveer Savarkar Rashtriya Smarak in Dadar, Mumbai. The ceremony was presided over by Padma Shri awardee and noted endocrinologist Dr Shashank Joshi. My Home India founder and former BJP National Secretary Sunil Deodhar and the organisation's president, Dr Harish Shetty, were also present.

Dr Singh began his entrepreneurial journey in 1983 with an initial investment of Rs 20,000 and went on to establish the Babina Group. Over the years, the group expanded its operations across healthcare, hospitality and tourism, creating employment opportunities and contributing to infrastructure development in Manipur. Beyond his business activities, Dr Singh has also been actively involved in humanitarian and social welfare initiatives. His contributions include cancer screening programmes, heritage preservation efforts and support for the development of the Imphal Peace Museum. His contribution to strengthening India-Japan relations was earlier recognised by the Japanese government, which conferred upon him the prestigious Order of the Rising Sun in 2020. Instituted by My Home India, the O.N.E. India Award honours individuals who have made significant contributions to the development of the northeastern states and the promotion of national integration.

The 2026 recognition acknowledges Dr Singh's sustained efforts towards improving healthcare, promoting tourism, generating employment and advancing the socio-economic development of Manipur.

Mizoram, Assam agree to freeze border status quo, step up joint patrols



AIZAWL/SILCHAR

In a move to prevent fresh disputes along the Mizoram-Assam border, the administrations of Kolasib district in Mizoram and Hailakandi district in Assam have agreed to maintain the existing status quo and intensify joint patrolling in forest areas.

The decisions were taken at a coordination meeting held at Buhchangphai on November 19, where officials from the two neighbouring districts discussed pending border-related issues and ways to prevent unauthorised activities.

The two sides agreed to prevent unauthorised cultivation of oil palm and areca nut, as well as the construction of private roads and other infrastructure in forest areas. They also stressed the need to ensure compliance with the Forest (Conservation) Act.

Forest officials and police personnel from both states will carry out joint patrols along the border to check such activities and improve coordination on the ground.

The meeting also discussed facilitating the transportation of areca nuts from Mizoram. Objections relating to the construction of roads and culverts at Ramjani Nallah and the Inner Line Reserve Forest will be addressed in accordance with the law.

As part of efforts to maintain regular communication, the two district administrations agreed to hold periodic physical and virtual meetings and set up a WhatsApp group for faster information-sharing.

The officials also agreed to continue joint action against drug trafficking under the Narcotics Coordination Centre (NCORD) framework.

Kolasib Deputy Commissioner H Dolianbuaia, Superintendent of Police Lalrinpuia Varte, Hailakandi Deputy Commissioner Jay Vikas and Senior Superintendent of Police Amitava Sinha attended the meeting.

Manipur Targets Child Marriage-Free Status by 2030, Adopts Statewide Declaration

State-level consultation calls for collective action against child marriage and child sexual exploitation; special focus on vulnerable and conflict-affected children

IMPHAL

Manipur has set an ambitious target of becoming a child marriage-free state by 2030, with the government and child rights organisations adopting a joint declaration to strengthen child protection and intensify efforts against child marriage and sexual exploitation.

The declaration was adopted at a State-Level Consultation on Ending Child Marriage and Combating Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Material (CSEAM), held at the City Convention Centre in Imphal.

The resolution, adopted by the Manipur Commission for Protection of Child Rights (MCPCR), the Social Welfare Department and Just Rights for Children, calls upon citizens not to organise, participate in, support or encourage child marriages. It also urges people to report such cases and take lawful steps to prevent marriages involving minors.

The initiative aims to make every village, ward, district and institution in Manipur child-friendly and free from child marriage, with particular attention to children and families facing displacement,



insecurity and other vulnerabilities.

MCPCR Chairperson Keisam Pradipkumar said child marriage was often treated as a family matter or customary practice, despite being a serious violation of children's rights and the law.

He pointed out that the practice undermines children's dignity, freedom, education, health and future prospects, with girls disproportionately affected."In Manipur, where children are already experiencing complex social, economic and humanitarian vulnerabilities, we cannot allow poverty, displacement, insecurity or social conventions to become excuses for child marriage," Pradipkumar said.

Just Rights for Children National Secretary Rishikant referred to the National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5), which found that 16.3 per cent of women aged 20-24 in Manipur had been married before reaching the legal age.

He stressed that ending child marriage would require sustained public participation alongside government intervention. Effective action in every reported case and better coordination among Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPOs), District Child Protection Units (DCPUs), district administrations and civil society organisations were essential, he said.

Referring to the Centre's 100-day campaign against child marriage, Rishikant called for coordinated efforts to ensure that children were protected from exploitation and harmful social practices.

Focus shifts to digital child protection

Beyond child marriage, the consultation placed considerable emphasis on emerging threats to children in the digital environment, particularly the creation and circulation of child sexual abuse material using artificial intelligence and online platforms.

Pradipkumar called for a comprehensive State Child Protection Policy covering both conventional forms of abuse and newer risks associated with social media, digital platforms and artificial intelligence.

He recommended age-appropriate digital safety education in schools and stronger safeguards against AI-generated child sexual abuse material, online impersonation and the misuse of children's photographs and personal information.

He also stressed the need for effective mechanisms to report harmful online content, ensure its prompt removal, preserve digital evidence and coordinate with cybercrime authorities and technology platforms.

Strengthening the Cyber Crime Unit and establishing a coordinated response involving police, DCPUs, Child Welfare Committees (CWCs), educational institutions and child protection agencies were among his other recommendations.

Manipur Police Training College Assistant Director Victoria Yengkhom described child sexual exploitation and abuse material as an emerging concern. She emphasised the need to equip law enforcement personnel with specialised skills while educating children about online exploitation and abuse.

The consultation was organised by the MCPCR and Social Welfare Department in collaboration with India Child Protection and Just Rights for Children, a national civil society network working on child protection.

Social Welfare Department Deputy Director Konsan Saroja Devi, government officials and civil society representatives also attended the programme.

The declaration marks a renewed commitment to child protection in Manipur, although achieving the 2030 target will depend on effective enforcement, institutional coordination, community participation and sustained support for children in vulnerable and conflict-affected communities.

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PUNJAB CANNOT AFFORD TO IGNORE THE WARNING SIGNS

The killing of six policemen, recurring grenade attacks and suspected attempts to target critical infrastructure point to a disturbing pattern in Punjab. Whether these incidents are linked to an organised terror network or driven by local criminal elements, the state needs a coordinated security response, credible investigations and greater public accountability.

The killing of Head Constable Vinod Kumar in Gurdaspur should serve as a serious wake-up call for Punjab's security establishment. He is the sixth policeman to have lost his life in a series of attacks across the state this year. The manner of his killing, allegedly by two masked assailants who lured him onto a motorcycle before shooting him, exposes the growing vulnerability of those entrusted with maintaining law and order. An organisation calling itself Tehreek-e-Taliban Hindustan has claimed responsibility on social media, adding another troubling dimension to the incident.

This cannot be dismissed as just another criminal killing. Repeated bomb blasts, grenade attacks, targeted assaults on police personnel and reported attempts to disrupt railway infrastructure suggest a pattern that demands urgent scrutiny. Punjab has endured one of the darkest chapters of militancy in India's recent history. The state knows the devastating consequences of allowing extremist networks to gain ground. That experience should make the authorities particularly alert to the possibility of attempts to revive militancy.

However, identifying the nature of the threat is as important as responding to it. Are these incidents part of a coordinated campaign by organised terror networks, possibly operating with external support, or are local criminal groups exploiting an atmosphere of insecurity to settle personal scores and create panic? It is also possible that some perpetrators are deliberately invoking terrorism to mislead investigators and attract wider attention. These possibilities cannot be treated as interchangeable. Each requires a different investigative approach, and only evidence-based probes can establish the truth.

Social media claims by obscure organisations should neither be accepted at face value nor dismissed as empty propaganda. Investigators must establish whether the claims have any operational connection with the perpetrators, whether there is a wider network behind the attacks and whether the incidents share common methods, funding channels or logistical support. Premature conclusions, particularly those driven by political considerations, could compromise investigations and allow the actual perpetrators to escape scrutiny.The responsibility for preventing further attacks rests primarily with the Punjab Government and its security agencies. The state police, intelligence agencies and central security establishments must strengthen coordination, share actionable intelligence and identify vulnerabilities before they are exploited. Investigations should extend beyond the immediate attackers to examine possible handlers, financial networks, recruitment channels and cross-border connections wherever evidence warrants such scrutiny.

Equally important is the morale and protection of the police force. When personnel are repeatedly targeted, the consequences go beyond individual tragedies. Such attacks undermine confidence within the force and create an impression that those responsible for protecting citizens are themselves increasingly exposed. Better intelligence, effective surveillance, protection of vulnerable personnel and swift action against identified networks are essential. Arrests alone will not be enough; credible prosecutions and convictions must follow.The government must also resist the temptation to turn every security incident into a political contest. Public safety cannot be subordinated to the need to defend an administration's image or discredit its opponents. The families of the victims deserve more than compensation announcements and formal condolences. They deserve justice, while the people of Punjab deserve reassurance based on facts and measurable action.Transparency must form an important part of the response. Once investigations establish the circumstances behind these attacks, the government should communicate its findings to the public without compromising operational requirements. Uncertainty and speculation flourish when credible information is absent.Punjab's history offers a clear lesson: security threats become far more difficult to contain when early warning signs are ignored. The killing of Vinod Kumar must therefore be treated not as an isolated tragedy but as an urgent test of the state's preparedness. Whether the danger comes from organised militancy or criminal networks masquerading as terrorists, the response must be firm, impartial and intelligence-driven. Punjab cannot afford another descent into fear and violence. Vigilance today is the price of peace tomorrow.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The world is changed by your example, not by your opinion."
~Paulo Coelho

Zakiganj: The First Dawn of Liberation, Victory Won Through Bloodshed, and a Glorious Chapter in the Journey of a Nation

SANGRAM DATTA:

The history of a locality sometimes becomes a reflection of the history of an entire nation. Certain places do not merely preserve memories of their people, rivers, or settlements; they carry the legacy of a nation's struggle, sacrifice, bravery, and dream of freedom. Zakiganj, a border town in Sylhet, holds such a distinguished place in the history of Bangladesh's Liberation War. At dawn on November 21, 1971, Zakiganj was liberated from the occupation of the Pakistani forces, earning its place in history as the first locality in Bangladesh to be freed from enemy occupation. Beyond this military victory, the establishment of civilian administrative activities in the liberated territory also made Zakiganj an important witness to the early journey of the independent state of Bangladesh.

The history of Zakiganj, therefore, is not merely the story of the liberation of a border upazila or a particular locality. It is the story of a nation's yearning for independence, the resistance of ordinary people, the dedication of young patriots, the blood and suffering of countless individuals, and the emergence of the administrative foundations of an independent country. The courage and sacrifice demonstrated by the people of Zakiganj during the turbulent days of 1971 deserve due recognition in Bangladesh's national history.

Situated on the banks of the Kushiyara River, Zakiganj is an important border locality in the northeastern corner of Bangladesh. Across the river lies Karimganj in India's Assam state, with the waters of the Kushiyara separating the two territories. Located approximately 91 kilometres from Sylhet city, Zakiganj was part of Karimganj Police Station in undivided India before the Partition of 1947. Following Partition, it became part of East Pakistan. Because of its geographical position, Zakiganj developed a close military and humanitarian connection with Karimganj during the Liberation War. On one side stood the occupying Pakistani forces; on the other, across the border, freedom fighters received training and the Indian allied forces prepared for military operations. Together, these circumstances transformed Zakiganj into an important battlefield of the Liberation War.

On the night of March 25, 1971, Pakistani occupation forces, armed with modern weapons, launched a brutal assault on the unarmed Bengali population. Under the name of Operation Searchlight, one of the most horrific massacres in history began in Dhaka and spread to different parts of the country. News of these atrocities quickly reached even the remotest regions. Students, young people, and political activists in Zakiganj were deeply angered by the brutality and began preparing to resist the Pakistani regime.

The Pakistani flag was burned, and the flag of independent Bangladesh, bearing the map of the country, was raised. Efforts were initiated to collect weapons from the police station and organise training and resistance activities. Among those who played leading roles in organising the local freedom movement were Awami League leader Md. Abdul Latif M.C.A., Abdul Aziz (Kutula Mia), Nichhar Ali Mukhtar, Bali Mia, Nuruddin, Chhatra League leaders Mahtab Ahmed, Fayzur Rahman, and Ahmed Al Kabir.

Md. Akram Ali, a leader of the Matia faction of the Bangladesh Students' Union, affiliated with the NAP (Muzzafar), and then vice-president of Sylhet M.C. College, also played an important role in organising the struggle alongside Abdul Baich. Badrul Haque Badai, a leader of the Menon faction of the Students' Union, initially joined as a supporter of the freedom fighters. Their organisational contributions demonstrate that the Liberation War in Zakiganj was not confined to armed resistance; it was also driven by political awareness, student participation, and the collective preparation of ordinary people.

However, amid these preparations for resistance, a Pakistani military jeep carrying eight to ten soldiers entered Zakiganj on April 18, 1971. Their arrival emboldened local anti-liberation elements. Some people welcomed the Pakistani forces with slogans such as "Pakistan Zindabad" and "Muslim League Zindabad." Among those who came forward to receive them were Mahmudur Rahman, Atikur Rahman (Atai Mia), Shafiqul Haque (Sofai Mia), Ashhab Uddin Ahmed, Tabarak Hossain, and Harunur Rashid, among others. With their cooperation, Section 144 was imposed in Zakiganj town.

One of the most heartbreaking examples of the brutality of the occupation was the killing of ten-year-old Farid. He was too young to understand even the meaning of Section 144. Perhaps he had simply stepped outside his home that day for some ordinary necessity. When Pakistani soldiers spotted him at the intersection of Zakiganj Bazar, they shot and killed him mercilessly.

Farid became the first martyr of Zakiganj. The soil of this locality was stained with the blood of a child. His death was not merely an irreparable loss for one family; it marked the beginning of a horrifying chapter of Pakistani military brutality in Zakiganj. The sacrifice of ordinary people like Farid reminds us that the cost of the Liberation War cannot be measured by military victories alone. It also encompasses the lives, dreams, and tears of innocent people.

Following this, Pakistani soldiers began conducting raids in different villages. They set fire to the homes of prominent local figures, looted property, and carried out widespread destruction. Among those whose houses were attacked were Abdur Rahim Sarpanch, Anwar Hossain (Sonaullah), Nichhar Ali Mukhtar, Fayzur Rahman, Akram Ali, Tabarak Ali, Balai Mia, and Mostakim Haider, among others.

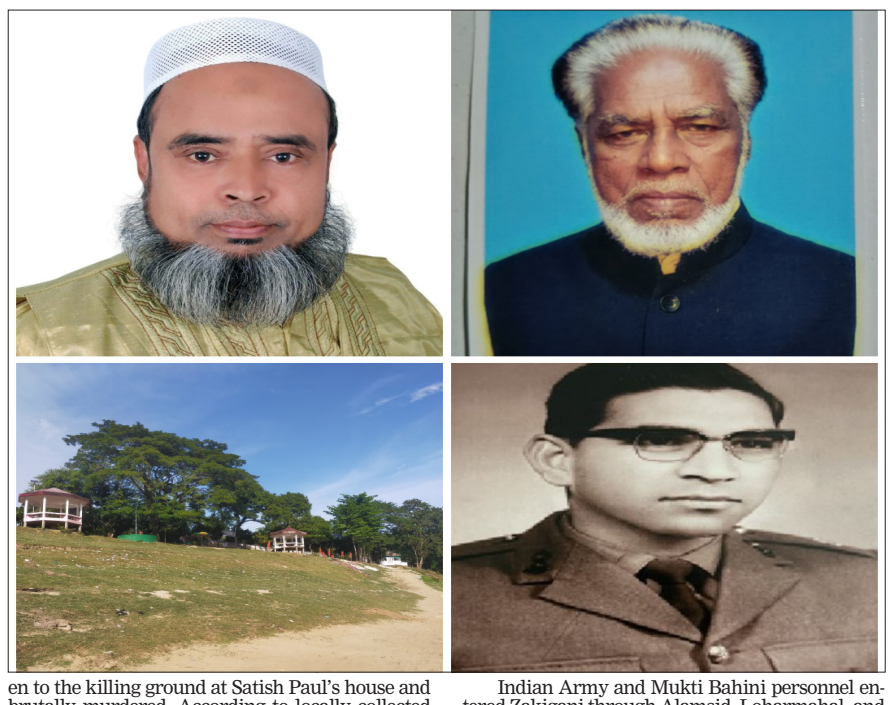
With the assistance of Pakistani forces, anti-liberation elements participated in looting the property of ordinary people. Numerous women were subjected to abuse and torture. During this period, Al-Badr, Razakar, Assam Peace Committee, and the notorious Khunti Bahini were formed in Zakiganj. These groups actively assisted Pakistani soldiers in carrying out massacres and atrocities. The local Razakar force was led by Commander Harunur Rashid. The names of several collaborators, including Razakar Kutu, Panki, and Mosta, remain associated with anti-liberation activities. Mosta was also known as "Mosta the Executioner." Acting on the instructions of the Pakistani forces, he participated in killing freedom fighters and Bengali civilians.

Despite the killings, oppression, and occupation, the people's desire for independence never diminished. On the contrary, the more intense the oppression became, the stronger their determination to resist grew. Inspired by patriotism, young people chose the path of armed struggle. More than 400 students and young men from Zakiganj crossed the Kushiyara River into India and joined the Mukti Bahini, the Bangladesh Liberation Force. There, they received military training and prepared to fight the Pakistani forces inside the country.

Meanwhile, thousands of men and women crossed the border into India to escape the killings and persecution of the Pakistani military. On one side were refugees facing lives of uncertainty; on the other were young freedom fighters preparing for armed resistance. These two parallel experiences further expanded the struggle for independence in Zakiganj. This history reminds us that the Liberation War was not fought only by those who carried weapons. Refugees forced to abandon their homes, ordinary people who provided shelter, and everyone who supported the freedom fighters were also part of the struggle for independence.

One of the most painful reminders of the Liberation War in Zakiganj is the abandoned house of Satish Paul, located near Moskhondor Canal on the eastern outskirts of the town. The Pakistani occupation forces turned this house into a killing ground. At the abandoned residence of Anwar Hossain (Sonaullah), a member of the Zakiganj Union Parishad, in Pirer Chak, the Pakistani forces established a military camp. Pakistani Army officer Captain Basharat was stationed at the local Dak Bungalow. Military operations in different areas were directed from there.

From April 19 to November 20, 1971, for more than seven months, countless Bengalis were taken to the killing ground at Satish Paul's house and brutally murdered. According to locally collected information, approximately 100 people were killed there. On a single day, at the same time, 12 people from Loharmahal village were murdered at this site. Anyone suspected by the Pakistani forces and their Razakar collaborators of supporting the Liberation War or assisting the Mukti Bahini was brought there and killed.



The identities of all those who were martyred at this killing ground have not yet been recovered. However, among those whose names have been preserved through local accounts are Rahman Ali of Pirer Chak, Habibur Rahman of Keshri, Nurai Mia of Shahidabad, the father of Mutalib EPR of Ilakj, Abdul Wahab of Kapna, Kuti Mia of Khechua, Nabakumar Bairagi of Beu, Brajendranath, Samiranath, Mirzan Ali of Loharmahal, Nilambar Ali, Chhatoi Mia, Cherag Ali, Ilash Ali, Achhai Mia, Shanai Mia, Hayat Ali, Abdur Rahman, Nur Uddin, Akaddas Ali, Abdul Jalil, Motsim Ali of Senapatir Chak, Kala Mia of Anandapur, and Abdur Rahim Sarpanch.

These names are not merely entries on a list. Behind every name lies a family, a life, a dream, and an unfinished story. The identities of many victims may have disappeared in the passage of time, but their sacrifices must never be erased from the history of Zakiganj's Liberation War. The history of a nation's independence becomes complete only when the sacrifices of unknown people who gave their lives for freedom receive the recognition they deserve. Preserving and bringing attention to the killing ground at Satish Paul's house is therefore not merely a local responsibility; it is a national responsibility.

After taking control of Zakiganj, Pakistani soldiers conducted operations in Chargram and several other areas. Looting, arson, violence against women, and killings made ordinary people's lives unbearable. Yet even amid these terrifying circumstances, the freedom fighters remained committed to their mission. With the support of local residents and military training across the border, their resistance became increasingly organised.

During this period, freedom fighters conducted between 10 and 15 operations in the Zakiganj area and brought substantial quantities of weapons and ammunition under their control. These operations gradually weakened the positions of the Pakistani forces. The courage of the freedom fighters, the support of local residents, and military preparations across the border combined to create the conditions for Zakiganj's final liberation.

The final phase of the Liberation War in Zakiganj is closely connected with the military preparations in Karimganj, across the Kushiyara River, in India's Assam state. In November 1971, Pakistani forces were positioned on one side of the river, while Indian troops prepared for military action on the other. Both banks were gripped by the tension of an impending battle.

In November 1971, Major Chaman Lal Sharma was serving as Battery Commander of the Indian Army's 99 Mountain Regiment, deployed in Karimganj, Assam. To monitor the movements of Pakistani troops and prepare for a possible confrontation, the Indian Army established a military base at Deulitila in Karimganj. Across the border, Pakistani soldiers maintained their positions in Zakiganj.

At that time, Karimganj had the atmosphere of a military zone. Army patrol vehicles frequently moved through the streets. Military equipment, including armoured vehicles, was stationed at various government schools and colleges. Areas such as Shambhu Sagar Park near the statue of Rabindranath Tagore, Char Bazar, Daspatti, and Steamer Ghat witnessed visible military activity and control by the Indian Army.

In preparation for the operation in Zakiganj, Major Chaman Lal and his fellow officers established contact and developed good relations with several influential residents of Karimganj. Information and local knowledge provided by residents helped them identify safe routes into Bangladesh, the locations of Pakistani bunkers, available weapons, and military positions. These details played an important role in preparing the plan for the attack on Zakiganj, with Major Chaman Lal making a significant contribution.

The Indian Army units deployed in Karimganj operated under the overall operational command of IV Corps, headquartered in Agartala. The corps was commanded by Lieutenant General Sagat Singh. Information about the geographical features on both sides of the border, river-crossing routes, and Pakistani defensive positions proved particularly valuable in planning the joint operation.

Finally, the historic moment arrived. At dawn on November 21, 1971, a joint operation by the Indian allied forces and the Bangladesh Mukti Bahini began with the objective of liberating Zakiganj from enemy occupation. It was believed that the Pakistani soldiers stationed in Zakiganj would be occupied with Eid celebrations that day. This assumption was considered a potential tactical advantage in planning the operation. The principal objective was to break the Pakistani defensive positions through simultaneous attacks from multiple directions. Major Chaman Lal Sharma, Battery Commander of the Indian Army's 99 Mountain Regiment, played a significant role in planning and leading the operation. In the first phase, soldiers from Delta Company crossed the Kushiyara River and secured the border areas adjacent to the river. Subsequently, soldiers from Charlie and Echo Companies, led by Major M. M. Kapoor, crossed the river alongside BSF personnel and established roadblocks at strategic locations. Meanwhile, Alpha and Bravo Companies, under Major B. B. L. Narang, took up positions at their designated Forming Up Place (FUP).

After advancing to a position approximately 800 yards from Zakiganj, soldiers of Delta Company, together with other platoons, divided into several groups and launched coordinated attacks from different directions. This carefully planned multi-pronged assault placed the Pakistani forces under intense pressure. The joint forces successfully advanced into Zakiganj.

In addition to Major Chaman Lal's 99 Mountain Regiment, the operation involved the 64 Cavalry, 9 Guards, Border Security Force (BSF), and a company of the East Bengal Regiment. After approximately three and a half hours of intense fighting, the Pakistani forces were forced to retreat from Zakiganj. As they fled, they abandoned substantial quantities of weapons and ammunition.

Indian Army and Mukti Bahini personnel entered Zakiganj through Alamsid, Loharmahal, and Zakiganj Customs Ghat. The coordinated attacks from different directions shattered the Pakistani defensive positions. Pakistani soldiers and Razakars scattered and began fleeing towards Atgram. Some were killed, while others were captured by the joint forces.

The seven-month-long Pakistani occupation finally came to an end. The flag of independent Bangladesh began flying over Zakiganj. The people erupted in joy at their liberation. The dawn of November 21 was therefore not merely the memory of a military victory; it was the culmination of a long wait, bloodshed, suffering, and struggle for freedom.

Yet this victory came at a tremendous cost. Three brave members of the Indian forces sacrificed their lives during the operation to liberate Zakiganj. Major Chaman Lal Sharma of the 99 Mountain Regiment and Guardsman Deen Nath Yadav of the 9 Guards Battalion were wounded by enemy fire and eventually succumbed to their injuries. Border Security Force Sub-Inspector Bharat Singh Gurung also laid down his life during the operation.

Major Chaman Lal played an exceptionally important role in the operation. His courage, military foresight, communication with local residents, and leadership on the battlefield made a significant contribution to the liberation of Zakiganj. Because of his sacrifice, the people of Karimganj came to remember him as the "Saviour of Karimganj." Deen Nath Yadav and Bharat Singh Gurung also earned the respect and affection of local residents.

Major Chaman Lal was a dedicated and courageous military officer. By sacrificing his life in the line of duty, he demonstrated unwavering commitment to his country and upheld the proud traditions of the Indian Army. He was survived by his wife, Mrs. Rajbir Chaman Lal, and son, Manish Kumar.

The sacrifice of these three soldiers from another country while fighting for the independence of Bangladesh gives our Liberation War a deeper humanitarian significance. Their sacrifice demonstrates that the struggle of 1971 was not merely a fight for the independence of a particular territory; it was also a collective struggle by people who stood for humanity, justice, and freedom. Their memories deserve equal respect from the people of Bangladesh.

The memory of their sacrifice is preserved at the 1971 War Memorial, located beside Dak Bungalow Road in present-day Sribhumi, formerly Karimganj, in Assam, India. Built in honour of Major Chaman Lal and his fallen comrades, this memorial is not merely a tribute to three Indian soldiers. It is also an important historical testament to the Liberation War fought along the Zakiganj border.

According to local historical accounts, on November 23, 1971, volunteers from the Karimganj Youth Corps and Nari Shakti Sangha collected blood-soaked soil from the battlefield and preserved it in front of the then Dak Bungalow. Their initiative marked the beginning of efforts to preserve the memory of the fallen soldiers. Initially, the site was protected with a bamboo fence, but a permanent memorial was constructed there in later years.

Even today, the memorial recalls the bloody battle of November 21. For the people of Zakiganj and Karimganj, standing on opposite banks of the Kushiyara, it represents a remarkable legacy of cooperation, courage, and sacrifice during the Liberation War. Although an international border separates the two countries, the struggle of 1971 has bound the histories of these two neighbouring communities together.

The significance of Zakiganj's liberation was not limited to the freeing of a locality from enemy occupation. An initiative was also undertaken to establish the civilian administration of independent Bangladesh in this liberated territory, making Zakiganj even more important in the history of the Liberation War. After freeing a territory from enemy control, restoring normal civilian life, reopening educational institutions, establishing administrative order, and ensuring public safety were essential steps in demonstrating the existence of an independent state.

The Mujibnagar Government began working towards restoring normal administrative and civilian life in liberated areas. As part of this initiative, efforts were made to reopen Zakiganj Government High School on November 30, 1971. A total of eight teachers, including Md. Akram Ali, were appointed to conduct educational activities at the school.

An inaugural ceremony was organised on the school premises. Lieutenant General Jagjit Singh Aurora, Commander of the Indian Eastern Command, attended as the chief guest. In his speech, he declared Zakiganj the first liberated territory of Bangladesh. The historic establishment of the civilian administration of independent Bangladesh in this locality also received special importance during the event.

Among the other distinguished guests were Dewan Farid Gazi, Chairman of the Mujibnagar Government's Civil Administration Council for Northeast Zone-1; Abdur Rahim M.N.A.; Abdul Latif M.C.A.; and Major C. R. Dutta, Commander of Sector 4, along with other prominent figures of the Liberation War.

The entire programme was conducted by veteran freedom fighter Md. Akram Ali, one of the newly appointed assistant teachers. Daud Haider Qureshi, then administrator of Shalutikar Airport (now Sylhet M.A.G. Osmani International Airport), was appointed as the administrator of Zakiganj. Veteran freedom fighter Enam Ahmed Chowdhury, Ahmed Al Kabir, Masuk Uddin Ahmed, and Khalil Uddin Ahmed also played important roles in maintaining peace and order and conducting administrative activities in the newly liberated locality.

This civilian administration continued its activities in Zakiganj until December 16, 1971, when the entire country was finally liberated from Pakistani occupation.

These events make Zakiganj's historical significance even more evident. Within just a few days of the military victory on November 21, initiatives were taken to reopen the school, appoint teachers and an administrator, and operate civilian administrative activities. In other words, Zakiganj was not merely a battlefield in the struggle for independence; it was also an important centre for putting the administrative and state structures of independent Bangladesh into practice in a liberated territory.

Establishing an independent state requires more than freeing its territory from enemy occupation. It also requires functioning administration, education, public safety, and the restoration of normal social life. The initiatives undertaken in Zakiganj during the Liberation War provided an important early example of the practical experience of governing an independent Bangladesh. For this reason, the historical significance of Zakiganj cannot be fully understood if its story is confined only to military victory.

This chapter of Zakiganj's history deserves greater attention in our national narrative. Its identity as the first locality liberated from enemy occupation is significant, but the establishment of civilian administration in the liberated territory is equally important. Yet this administrative initiative receives comparatively little attention in many national discussions of the Liberation War. More research, preservation of historical documents, and sustained media coverage are necessary to address this gap.

The history of Zakiganj carries the contributions of countless individuals. Some organised resistance, some fought with weapons in their hands, some crossed the Kushiyara to receive military training, some endured the hardships of life as refugees, while others helped establish administration and educational activities in the liberated territory. It was their collective contributions that made the history of Zakiganj's Liberation War so rich and significant.

The martyrdom of ten-year-old Farid, the memory of countless victims killed at the Satish Paul house killing ground, the courage of more than 400 young men who crossed the Kushiyara to receive training in India, the suffering of thousands of refugees, the operations conducted by freedom fighters, and the sacrifices of members of the Indian allied forces—all these experiences together form a unique chapter in Bangladesh's history of independence.

Preserving this history is not simply about remembering the past. It is also a responsibility to convey the true value of independence to future generations. In particular, the killing ground at Satish Paul's house, the memory of Farid as the first child martyr, the liberation of Zakiganj on November 21, and the establishment of civilian administration in the liberated territory must be properly preserved and brought to public attention. At the same time, initiatives should be taken to recover the identities of the martyrs, document the memories of freedom fighters, collect testimonies from local eyewitnesses, and prepare a comprehensive historical record.

The shared history of Zakiganj and Karimganj, on opposite banks of the Kushiyara River, should also be presented to the younger generation. On one bank stood the occupation and brutality of the Pakistani forces; on the other was the military preparation for liberation. The Kushiyara, flowing between the two localities, remains a silent witness to their fear, suffering, courage, and longing for freedom. The war memorial in Karimganj is another important reminder of this shared history.

For the preparation of this feature report, the necessary information, historical accounts, and overall assistance were provided by Mostak Ahmed, a former politician and municipal commissioner of Zakiganj town. His information and cooperation were particularly helpful in highlighting many important events, personalities, and historical landmarks associated with the Liberation War in Zakiganj.

Those bloody days of 1971 have now become part of history. But for the people of Zakiganj, they are more than memories of the past; they are a source of pride, identity, and an invaluable legacy of independence. The history of a locality whose soil was stained with the blood of martyrs, whose young people crossed the border to receive military training for freedom, and where the combined operations of the allied forces and the Mukti Bahini brought the first victory of liberation is inseparable from the national history of Bangladesh.

Standing on the banks of the Kushiyara, Zakiganj is therefore much more than a border upazila. It is a glorious memorial ground of Bangladesh's Liberation War, a remarkable testament to the courage of those who fought for independence, and an important chapter in the early establishment of civilian administration in the independent state of Bangladesh.

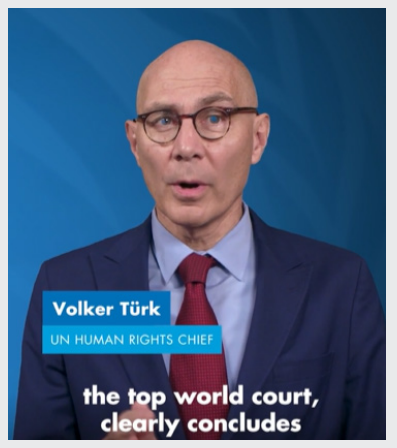
The dawn of November 21, 1971, was not merely a sunrise of liberation for the people of Zakiganj; it was a shining milestone in Bangladesh's journey towards victory. The history of Zakiganj, where the flag of liberation first flew over a liberated locality and where administrative activities of the independent state began to take shape, deserves to be presented with due honour at the national level.

Because the history of independence is not merely a source of pride; it is also a reminder of our responsibility. The glorious story of Zakiganj must therefore not only be remembered but also preserved—not merely celebrated as a victory of the past but passed on to future generations. The more we learn about and engage with the history of our independence, the deeper our sense of responsibility towards that history will become.

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

UN Human Rights Chief @volker_turk applauds today's landmark judgment by the @CIJ_ICJ which found Myanmar committed genocide against the Rohingya people.

States must now reflect seriously on the implications of the Court's findings for their own relationship with those in power in Myanmar. ~ UN Human Rights



Assam Cabinet clears six new municipal boards, expands urban limits and revises panchayat pay

From new urban local bodies and land allocation for agricultural research to higher honorariums for elected panchayat representatives, the November 19 Cabinet decisions signal a wider push to reshape local governance and rural administration.

GUWAHATI

The Assam government has cleared a series of measures aimed at expanding urban administration, strengthening agricultural infrastructure and revising the financial benefits of elected rural representatives, with the state Cabinet approving six new municipal boards and higher monthly remuneration for Panchayati Raj Institution members.

At its meeting on November 19, the Cabinet also approved amendments to three autonomous council laws to facilitate elections to their general councils without political party affiliations.

Six new municipal boards, expansion of 23 urban bodies

The six new municipal boards will be established at Laluk, Harmutty-Banderdewa, Ghilamara, Majuli, Udharbond and Mirza-Bijoynagar.

The Cabinet also approved the expansion of municipal areas and ward delimitation in 23 existing urban local bodies. The municipalities covered include Sonai, Badarpur, Barpeta, North Lakhimpur, Palashbari, Rangia, Biswanath Chariali, Gohpur, Sonari, Moran, Patacharkuchi, Golaghat, Sarupathar, Kampur, Nalbari, Tihu, Sivasagar, Amguri, Nazira, Simaluguri, Dhubri, Gauripur and Golakganj.

The decisions are expected to bring additional areas under urban administrative structures and facilitate the reorganisation of municipal wards.

Autonomous council elections to be non-political

In another significant decision, the Cabinet approved amendments to the Matak Autonomous Council Act, 2020, the Kamatapur Autonomous Council Act, 2020, and the Moran Autonomous Council Act, 2020.The proposed amendments will enable elections to the general councils of these three autonomous councils to be conducted on a non-political party basis.

The Cabinet also approved an increase in the monthly remuneration of elected representatives at all three levels of the Panchayati Raj system. Under the revised structure, Zilla Parishad presidents will receive Rs 15,000 per month, while vice-presidents will get Rs 10,000 and members Rs 5,500.At the Anchalik Panchayat level, the monthly remuneration has been fixed at Rs 10,000 for presidents, Rs 7,000 for vice-presidents and Rs 6,000 for members.

Gaon Panchayat presidents will receive Rs 6,500, vice-presidents Rs 4,000 and members Rs 2,600 per month.The Cabinet approved the allotment of 1,568 bighas of government land in Dhemaji for establishing the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI).Under Mission Basundhara 4.0, the Cabinet further approved a provision to classify areas as urban only up to one kilometre from existing town limits, facilitating larger land allotments for indigenous communities. The provision will not apply to Kamrup Metropolitan and Kamrup districts.

To promote agricultural diversification and mechanisation, the government approved the distribution of 2,313 agricultural machines across the state with a 75 per cent government subsidy.The move is intended to improve access to farm equipment and encourage farmers to diversify agricultural activities.

The Cabinet also approved the enactment of the Innovation and Startup Policy in Higher Educational Institutes.The policy seeks to develop educational institutions as centres of excellence and create an ecosystem where ideas generated by students, faculty members, alumni and aspiring entrepreneurs can be converted into commercially viable products and ventures.

In a move aimed at simplifying regulatory procedures, the Cabinet approved the Assam Legal Metrology (Enforcement) (Second Amendment) Rules, 2026.The amendment will allow verification and stamping of low-risk weights and measures through a self-certification mechanism.The decisions were announced following the state Cabinet meeting held on November 19.

Harvested paddy burnt in Imphal East, locals demand immediate probe

IMPHAL

A farmer in Manipur's Imphal East district has suffered heavy losses after unidentified miscreants allegedly set fire to his harvested paddy stacks, prompting local organisations to demand an immediate investigation and arrest of those responsible.

The incident took place between 7.30 pm and 8 pm on Wednesday at a field along Kyamgei Saga Palli Road. The paddy belonged to local farmer Maibam Sanatomba, a substantial portion of whose harvested crop was reduced to ashes.

According to Sanatomba's son-in-law, Wairokpam Umakanta, people present nearby tried to douse the flames and alerted the Fire Service. However, much of the produce was destroyed before fire personnel reached the spot.

Sanatomba has urged law enforcement agencies and local authorities to identify and apprehend those behind the incident. The motive for the alleged arson remains unclear.

The incident has heightened concerns among farmers, particularly as it follows a similar case reported early Wednesday morning in the Senjam area of Imphal West, where harvested paddy was also reportedly set on fire.

Condemning the attack, the Khagemba Youth Club of Kyamgei Mayai Leikai held an emergency meeting on Thursday and adopted a resolution demanding the swift arrest of the perpetrators.

The organisation said the destruction of a farmer's hard-earned produce was a serious offence and called for a thorough investigation.In a move to support the affected farmer, the Kyamgei Apunba Lup and Kiyamgei Gram Panchayat announced that they would jointly extend financial assistance to help offset his losses.The two organisations also decided to approach the concerned government department to seek official compensation for Sanatomba.

700-Cr Proposal for Two Flyovers to Ease Silchar Traffic Congestion



OUR CORRESPONDENT

SILCHAR: In a major initiative to address the long-standing traffic congestion in Silchar town and modernise its transport infrastructure, a proposal has been prepared for the construction of two separate flyovers at Rangirkhari and Capital Point.

Minister Kaushik Rai informed on Friday that an important meeting was held at the District Commissioner's office with public representatives, officials of the Public Works Department (PWD) and prominent citizens to discuss ways to improve the town's traffic and road connectivity.

During the meeting, it was unanimously decided to propose two flyovers, each measuring 500 metres, at Rangirkhari and Capital Point. The connecting road will also be upgraded into a four-lane stretch, with improved drainage facilities and footpaths.

The proposed project is estimated to cost around Rs 700 crore. The proposal will now be forwarded to Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma for the necessary approval.

Rai said the proposed infrastructure development would mark a significant step towards modernising Silchar's road network and addressing the town's persistent traffic problems. If approved and implemented, the project is expected to improve traffic movement and provide better connectivity for residents and commuters.

Meghalaya moves to Sixth Pay Commission, clears new police recruitment framework

KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

SHILLONG: Meghalaya has initiated a fresh review of government employees' salaries and service conditions while preparing for another round of police recruitment, with the state Cabinet approving the constitution of the Sixth State Pay Commission and revised recruitment guidelines for Meghalaya Police.

Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma announced the decisions on November 19, saying the pay commission would be headed by former chief secretary DP Wahlang and would submit its recommendations within eight months.

The commission will examine the existing pay structure and service conditions of government employees. Employees will also be given opportunities to place their concerns and suggestions before the panel, including through direct consultations involving their



representatives.

Sangma said the government had retained the flexibility to add further Terms of Reference to ensure that relevant issues and expectations of employees could be considered.

Alongside the pay review, the Cabinet approved revised Uniform Guidelines for Recruitment of Police Personnel in Meghalaya Police and the reconstitution of the Central Recruitment Board (CRB).

The recruitment board will have additional representation from different police ranges, including the Eastern and Western Ranges, along with technical members. The government said the expanded structure would make the selection process more participatory and comprehensive.

The revised guidelines cover registration fees, physical examinations and examination centres, among other aspects, with an emphasis on transparency and administrative efficiency.

The decision comes after the recruitment of around 3,000 police personnel last year. Sangma said approximately 2,000 additional vacancies were expected to be advertised shortly, opening up another recruitment opportunity for aspiring candidates.

Three service rules approved

The Cabinet also cleared three sets of service rules covering specialised and welfare-related government services.

These include the Meghalaya Clinical Psychologists' Service Rules, the Meghalaya Occupational Therapists' Service Rules and the Meghalaya Family Welfare Education Service Rules.

According to Sangma, the government has made it mandatory for every department to have clearly defined service rules so that recruitment, vacancies and promotions are governed by transparent procedures rather than ad hoc arrangements.

The move is intended to establish greater consistency in government administration while providing employees with clearer career progression and service-related guidelines.

The Cabinet decisions mark two parallel administrative priorities for Meghalaya: reviewing the compensation structure of government employees and strengthening recruitment procedures across the police and other government departments.

Gaurav Gogoi accuses BJP of criminalising dissent, says protesters face abuse and arrests

KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI: Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi on Wednesday accused the BJP of using intimidation, abusive language and arrests to silence dissent, alleging that people raising questions about government policies and demanding their rights were increasingly being treated as adversaries rather than heard.

Speaking in Delhi, Gogoi said young people, including members of Gen Z, expected honesty and accountability from political leaders. However, he alleged that those expressing dissatisfaction or raising public concerns were facing hostility instead of constructive engagement.

Citing examples of protests by different sections of society, Gogoi claimed that farmers demonstrating over their demands were branded "Khalistanis", students raising educational issues were labelled



"Pakistanis", while unemployed youth and workers seeking their rights faced intimidation and arrests.

He also referred to the alleged use of the National Security Act (NSA) against protesters and labourers in Uttar Pradesh and other parts of the country.

"One thing is to say something, but when sections of society dissent and demand, PM's party gives them only abuses and arrests," Gogoi said.The Congress leader argued that the right to question the government and express disagreement was fundamental to democratic functioning. He accused the BJP of being uncomfortable with criticism and attempting to discourage public participation in political debate.

Defends Sonia Gandhi's memoir

Gogoi also defended Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi's memoir after Shiv Sena members reportedly tore pages from the book over its remarks on Hindutva ideologue VD Savarkar.

Describing the memoir as inspirational, Gogoi said it reflected Sonia Gandhi's ability to overcome personal trauma, continue serving the country and hold her family together despite difficult circumstances.

He said readers would find lessons in her personal experiences and that he saw nothing objectionable in the book.

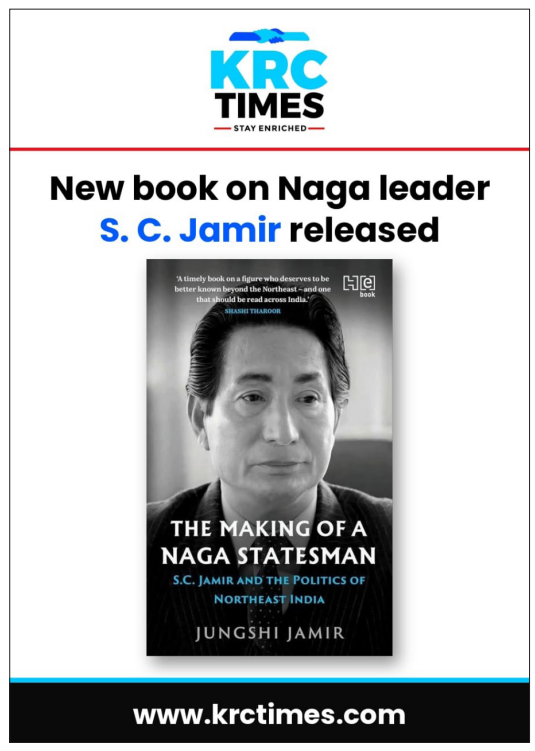
Rahul Gandhi remarks trigger fresh political exchange

Gogoi also responded to BJP criticism of Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi over his remarks during an interaction at Columbia University.

Accusing the ruling party of fearing democratic questioning, Gogoi alleged that the BJP was attempting to suppress voices that challenged its policies and political positions.

The Congress MP's remarks come amid a wider political confrontation between the ruling BJP and the opposition over freedom of expression, protest rights and the accountability of those in power.

New Biography on S.C. Jamir Explores His Political Journey and Northeast India's History



KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

DIMAPUR: A new biography titled The Making of a Naga Statesman: S.C. Jamir and the Politics of Northeast India, authored by Jungshi Jamir, was released nationwide on November 19, 2026.

Published by Hachette India, the 280-page hardcover book, priced at Rs 799, chronicles the political journey of S.C. Jamir, from his early life in Ungma village to his emergence as a prominent political figure in the Northeast. It traces his career as a Union Minister, four-time Chief Minister of Nagaland and Governor of four states. Drawing on interviews and family archives, the book offers insights into Jamir's political life and his contributions to the region's political history. It also explores the broader history of post-Independence Northeast India, covering key issues such as Naga identity, sovereignty, insurgency and peace initiatives. Author Jungshi Jamir, an Assistant Professor of International Relations, presents an account that connects the life of the veteran Naga leader with the larger political developments that shaped Northeast India.

Assam-Arunachal border demarcation gets December deadline, boundary pillars by January 2027



GUWAHATI

Assam and Arunachal Pradesh have set a firm timeline for demarcating three agreed stretches of their long-disputed inter-state boundary, with the survey scheduled for completion by December 25, 2026, and the installation of boundary pillars targeted for January 31, 2027.

The timeline was discussed at a coordination meeting held at the Golden Pagoda in Namsai on Friday, ahead of the proposed field exercise by the Survey of India (SoI).

The exercise will cover three stretches along the Assam-Arunachal boundary in Tinsukia district: Namsai-Tinsukia, Lower Dibang Valley-Tinsukia (Parbuk to Paglam), and Lohit-Tinsukia.

The involvement of the Survey of India is expected to provide a technical basis for marking the agreed boundary sections, while officials from both states will coordinate the administrative and logistical arrangements.

The meeting was attended by Tinsukia District Commissioner Sumit Sattawan, Sadiya Co-District Commissioner Sindhu N Raghavan, senior police officials and representatives of the administrations of both states.

Discussions covered the deployment of administrative personnel, field-level coordination and security arrangements for the survey.

Additional District Commissioners, Circle Officers, Land Revenue Assistants, GIS Assistants and Forest officials from the two states will be involved in the exercise. Concerned Gaon Pradhans will also assist the officials in identifying the survey locations.

Police personnel and other security forces will be deployed to maintain security during the operation. The State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) will be engaged wherever required.

The district administration will arrange accommodation and provide logistical support to the Survey of India team during the field exercise.

Following completion of the survey and demarcation, boundary pillars will be installed along the identified stretches by January 31, 2027.

The border exercise comes ahead of Union Home Minister Amit Shah's two-day visit to Arunachal Pradesh on November 21 and 22.During the visit, Shah is scheduled to attend the presentation of the President's Colours to the Arunachal Pradesh Police at the Police Training Academy in Banderdewa, Itanagar, at 10 am on November 21. A Bada Khana will follow.

He will later chair a review meeting on major development projects at Lok Bhavan in Itanagar at 2.30 pm. A separate meeting at 3.30 pm will focus on matters concerning the Union Home Ministry and the Arunachal Pradesh government.



Quest!

People have a greater risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and depression if they often sleep for 10 hours or longer.

NATIONAL

Cyclone Akvan landfall process begins, over 3 lakh people evacuated in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR

The landfall process of Cyclone Akvan commenced in the early hours of Friday as the storm's cloud mass began interacting with the north Andhra Pradesh-south Odisha coast, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

Latest satellite imagery indicated that the land interaction had begun, with the cyclone likely to move north-northwestwards and cross the coast close to Gopalpur by Friday noon. The system is expected to bring maximum sustained wind speeds of 70-80 kmph, gusting up to 90 kmph.

The cyclone is under continuous surveillance by Doppler weather radars at Visakhapatnam and Gopalpur, the IMD said.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi held a late-night meeting on Thursday to review the state's preparedness and response measures. More than three lakh people have been evacuated to safer places across 20 districts as a precautionary measure, he said.

Around 4,170 pregnant women have also been shifted to safer locations, of whom 1,317 have delivered babies, Majhi added.

A total of 9,341 cyclone shelters have been kept ready across the state, with 2,623 made operational. As many as 418 response teams have been deployed for field-level operations. These include 60 Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF), 14 National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), 216 Odisha Fire Service and 128 Odisha Forest Development Corporation (OFDC) tree-cutting teams. Another 28 Fire Service teams have been kept on standby.

With heavy rainfall likely to trigger landslides in hilly areas, the government has also evacuated residents of vulnerable hilltop and foothill hamlets. As many as 941 landslide-prone villages have been identified in Ganjam, Gajapati, Rayagada, Kandhamal, Malkangiri and Koraput districts.

Arrangements have been made to shift residents of these villages to safer locations. Most of those evacuated in Kandhamal and Gajapati districts belong to landslide-prone areas, the Chief Minister said.

On fishermen from Andhra Pradesh reportedly stranded near the Odisha coast, Majhi said the government had taken necessary measures to ensure their safety with the assistance of the Indian Coast Guard. Arrangements were being made to bring them safely to Ganjam district.

The cyclone has also disrupted rail services, with 47 trains cancelled and the timings of 28 others revised, the Chief Minister said.



India votes in support of UNGA resolutions on Palestine



NEW DELHI

India has voted in favour of four United Nations General Assembly resolutions concerning Palestine, including those affirming the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, supporting the continuation of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees and declaring Israeli settlements in occupied territories illegal.

The 193-member UN General Assembly voted on the resolutions on Wednesday.

India supported a resolution on the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, which was adopted with 162 votes in favour, eight against and a similar number of abstentions. The resolution reaffirmed their right to self-determination, including the establishment of an independent State of Palestine, and urged UN member states and specialised agencies to support efforts towards its realisation.

New Delhi also voted in favour of a resolution on the operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). The resolution reaffirmed the need for the agency to continue its work and stressed the importance of its unimpeded operations and delivery of services, including emergency assistance, to Palestinian refugees.

It was adopted with 143 votes in favour, nine against, including Israel and the United States, and 20 abstentions.

India also backed a resolution on Palestinian refugees' properties and their revenues, which reaffirmed their entitlement to their property and the income derived from it in accordance with the principles of equity and justice.

The resolution urged the Palestinian and Israeli sides to address the issue of refugees' properties and revenues, as agreed between them, as part of final-status peace negotiations. It was adopted with 155 votes in favour, nine against and a similar number of abstentions.

The fourth resolution concerned Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan. It reaffirmed that the settlements were "illegal and an obstacle to peace and economic and social development".

The resolution called for an immediate and complete halt to all Israeli settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, and urged the implementation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

India was among 143 countries that voted in favour. Israel and the United States were among the 11 countries that voted against, while 17 abstained.

Separately, Palestinian Ambassador to India Abdullah M Abu Shawesh told reporters in New Delhi that Palestine shared a longstanding relationship with India.

He said India was the first non-Muslim and non-Arab country to recognise the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and to recognise the State of Palestine.

"We have had a good relationship with India in the past, now, and I'm pretty sure in the future. And India is supporting and backing the Palestinian two-state solution, of course, and the Palestinian in the United Nations," he said.

INTERNATIONAL

Trump, Xi and Putin hold rare 3-way talks on nuclear risks but deliver no breakthroughs



SHENZHEN

For U.S. President Donald Trump, the meeting with the leaders of two other nuclear powers -- China's Xi Jinping and Russia's Vladimir Putin -- was supposed to be a diplomatic triumph: It would serve as proof that Trump could negotiate with two of America's toughest rivals.

Before the trio met Thursday in a villa in the Chinese tech hub of Shenzhen, the U.S. president sought to flatter both Xi and Putin as his friends. The wars in Ukraine and Iran were on the agenda, as was reducing the dangers posed by their nuclear arsenals.

But after roughly 70 minutes behind closed doors, they agreed to a far narrower agenda. They would like to reform the United Nations, refine more fossil fuels and curb the reach of the International Criminal Court.

What was billed as a historic trilateral meeting in the end looked like a fleeting photo op. Trump quickly left the villa and boarded Air Force One without saying a word to reporters about his time with Xi and Putin. Still, he hailed the visit as "Highly Consequential" on social media as he made his way back to Washington and announced he would hold a press conference on Friday at the White House.

Following the Shenzhen talks, Trump dialed into a meeting in Berlin between U.S. envoys Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy alongside more than 40 European leaders who are supporting Ukraine's war effort. Trump told the Berlin gathering that he spoke to Xi and Putin about finding a peaceful end to the Ukraine war, Witkoff said.

The agreements stemming from the trilateral meeting were modest, but the rhetoric that came at the start of it was not.

"We are really making history," Trump said. "The United States, Russia and China are uniquely positioned to discuss how to reduce the number of nuclear weapons on Earth and also to lessen the risk of those weapons being used."

After the meeting, Xi called it positive, constructive and fruitful, while Putin described the trilateral talks as open and candid, calling the format "useful and substantive."

"It is a serious collaborative work," he said in response to a question about whether the image of the meeting itself mattered more than the substance.

The last nuclear arms pact between Russia and the United States, known as New START, expired in February, and Trump has said he wants "a new, improved and modernized" deal that includes China. But China has less motivation to accept limits given that its arsenal of more than 600 warheads is far smaller than the more than 5,000 warheads believed to be in each of the U.S. and Russian stockpiles.

Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, said the meeting could at best start a process that would eventually lead to a sustained set of talks for reducing nuclear arsenals.

"We need more than diplomatic theater and photo opportunities between Xi, Putin and Trump," Kimball said. "And one meeting will not likely produce dramatic breakthroughs."

The U.S. president earlier had a separate one-on-one with Xi, their third substantial meeting this year.

Trump said they had a shared interest in having oil flow through the Strait of Hormuz, a key waterway for oil shipments from the Middle East that was repeatedly shut because of attacks in the Iran war. Trump suggested he would push Xi to buy more agricultural products from America.

Xi said that relations between the U.S. and China have been "generally stable and improved" during Trump's presidency. The official Chinese news agency Xinhua reported that Xi discussed Taiwan with Trump and said the two countries needed to improve communication on economic and trade issues.

Trump also added to his calendar a separate sit-down with Putin, marking the first time the leaders have met for talks since their discussions in Alaska last year that failed to broker a deal on Russia's war in Ukraine.

"Wonderful things can come out of this — or at least start," Trump said, calling Putin "my friend."

Trump has frequently boasted of his rapport with Putin, as relations between the U.S. and Ukraine appear to have cratered recently. Trump rejected new Russia sanctions, while Kyiv was undermined by disruptions in satellite support for its drones during the war. After their trilateral meeting, the three leaders took aim at the International Criminal Court for overstepping its jurisdiction, saying government officials should enjoy immunity from its prosecutions. Putin is wanted by the court, and Trump's administration has imposed sanctions on ICC officials and the institution itself as part of a campaign to dismantle the tribunal over investigations into the United States and its allies, including Israel.

The U.S. president's ambitions going into the meeting recalled an era of great power politics when wealthier countries felt entitled to decide the fate of seemingly lesser nations. Trump was negotiating with China and Russia without the involvement of Ukraine — or allies like Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Japan and South Korea that also have stakes in the outcome of any talks.

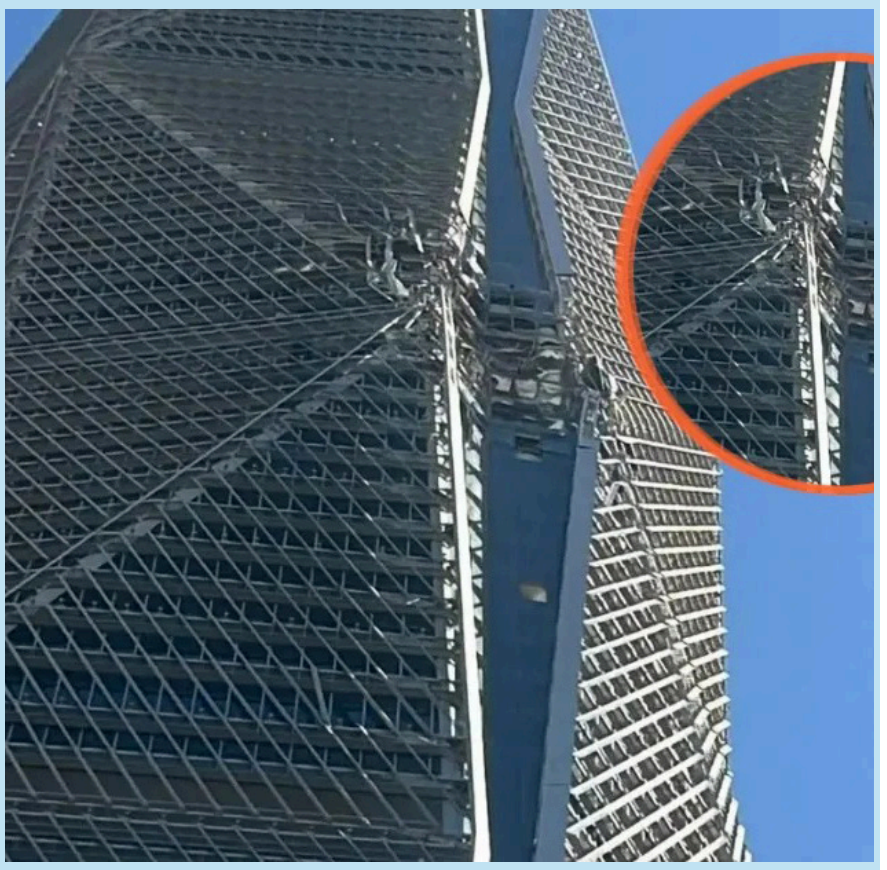
Trump has long believed his ability to create personal connections gives him a diplomatic edge. Xi made a symbolic gesture of friendship Wednesday by taking the unusual step of greeting Air Force One on the tarmac, and the two leaders turned their handshake into a one-armed hug.

But for all the compliments the U.S. president has showered on the two autocrats, he did not always appear to have the same deep relationship based on common interests that Xi and Putin share.

On Wednesday at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, Xi greeted Putin by calling him "my old friend." The Russian leader responded by declaring Xi to be his "dear friend." China has helped economically support Russia after its 2022 invasion of Ukraine, providing Putin with a financial lifeline after the U.S. and its allies imposed new sanctions.

By contrast, when Xi went to the White House for a state visit in September, he was far more restrained with Trump, saying they had built a "personal rapport and stayed in touch." Trump and Xi have one more meeting planned this year, at the G20 summit in Florida in December. There were also signs of friction Thursday in the U.S.-China relationship despite Trump's praise of Xi. Chinese officials blocked a Bloomberg reporter from the trilateral meeting after she asked a question at the earlier Trump-Xi session. And Chinese television showed a video of Trump appearing drowsy, while the White House posted a clip of Trump helping Xi up an escalator.

Saudi Arabia confirms Houthi attack damaged Riyadh's tallest building



RIYADH

Saudi authorities on Thursday confirmed a Houthi attack damaged a landmark tower in Riyadh's financial district, hours after an explosion rocked the capital and witnesses reported damage to the city's tallest building.

Saudi Arabia has been battling a surge in attacks since fighting reignited in neighbouring Yemen's civil war, where Riyadh backs the internationally recognised government against the Houthis.

"The attack resulted in material damage to several floors of the tower and two adjacent buildings, but no casualties," the civil defence agency said in a statement on X.

It did not identify the building, but released a photograph appearing to show damage to the glass exterior of the building that houses the Public Investment Fund. It is the second time this month that a tower in Riyadh's King Abdullah Financial District has sustained damage. Earlier in November, a tower belonging to oil giant Aramco was damaged in a Houthi strike.

In the early hours of Thursday, AFP journalists in the Saudi capital reported that a powerful blast was heard. The Saudi-led military coalition fighting the Houthis said it had "addressed a missile threat launched by the terrorist Houthi militia towards Riyadh".

Witnesses later told AFP that the PIF tower had been damaged. "The facade is damaged across several floors, with windows blown out," said one person who requested anonymity. "The damage also affected some of the buildings surrounding PIF tower, causing the glass facades on some to shatter. Some of the buildings are residential," the witness added. Two other witnesses confirmed the damage to the tower, which AFP was unable to visit. Since early September, most employees in the building had been working remotely, they told AFP.

Later on Thursday, residents across Riyadh received mobile phone alerts warning of a "hostile aerial threat", but no explosion was heard.

Digi-SAPNE 3.0 Launched in Manipur to Accelerate Technology Startups and Innovation Across the State









IMPHAL

Atal Incubation Centre – Manipur Technical University (AIC-MTU) Innovation Foundation, in collaboration with the Planning Department, Government of Manipur, Startup Manipur, and Atal Incubation Centre – Sikkim Manipal University Technology Business Incubation Foundation (AIC-SMUTBI), officially launched Digi-SAPNE 3.0 (Digital Startup Accelerator Program for North East) in Manipur today at Sangai Hall, Hotel Imphal. Supported by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, and implemented with AIC-SMUTBI as the Knowledge and Technical Partner, the initiative aims to identify, mentor, and scale promising technology startups, student innovators, and early-stage entrepreneurs across the state.

The inaugural ceremony was graced by Shri Rajeev Singh Thakur, Chief Secretary, Government of Manipur, as the Chief Guest, alongside Guests of Honour Prof. W. Chandbabu Singh, Vice-Chancellor, Manipur Technical University; Dr. Muralidhar V. Pai, Vice-Chancellor, Sikkim Manipal University; and Shri Prateek Deshmukh, Director, Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog, Government of India. The programme began with a welcome address by Dr. R.K. Radhesana Devi, Director, Planning Department, Government of Manipur, emphasizing the State Government's commitment to expanding Manipur's entrepreneurial ecosystem, followed by an overview of the accelerator by Dr. Tejbanta Chingtham, CEO, AIC-SMUTBI.

Building on Manipur's strong track record in earlier editions—where Cohort 1 startups Medilane and Green Biotech collectively raised over 3 crore in funding, generated more than 5 crore in revenue, and created over 70 local jobs, and Cohort 2 startup Adbble Sons Pvt. Ltd. secured a 10 lakh grant—Digi-SAPNE 3.0 offers eligible technology startups access to a grant pool of up to 80 lakh, structured mentorship, business model validation, market linkages, and incubation support across sectors such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), agri-tech, healthcare, and manufacturing. The session concluded with a formal Vote of Thanks by Shri Laishram Jimmy, CEO, AIC-MTU Innovation Foundation, inviting innovators and startups across Manipur's districts to apply before the December 5, 2026 deadline.

About AIC-MTU Innovation Foundation:

Registered under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013, and hosted at Manipur Technical University (MTU), Takyelpat, Imphal, Atal Incubation Centre – Manipur Technical University (AIC-MTU) Innovation Foundation is a Partner Incubation Centre of AIC-SMU TBI working in coordination with Startup Manipur to foster technology-driven entrepreneurship, student innovation, and enterprise development across Manipur.

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