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Barak Valley's connectivity with Manipur gets a boost as direct Imphal-Silchar flights resume

Alliance Air launches twice-weekly service under Manipur's viability gap funding scheme; 55-minute journey expected to ease travel, strengthen regional links and open up fresh economic opportunities

SILCHAR

The Barak Valley is set to regain a faster air connection with neighbouring Manipur with the restoration of direct flights between Silchar and Imphal. Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh on Tuesday inaugurated a twice-weekly Alliance Air service, reviving an important regional aviation link that is expected to make inter-state travel considerably more convenient.

The resumption of the service is particularly significant for passengers from southern Assam, who have often had to depend on lengthy road journeys to reach Manipur. The direct flight is expected to benefit students, patients, business travellers, government officials and families moving between the two regions.

Operated using ATR 72 aircraft, the flights will run every Tuesday and Thursday under the Manipur government's Viability Gap Funding (VGF) scheme through the State Transport Department.



The journey between Imphal and Silchar will take approximately 55 minutes, with ticket prices ranging from Rs 4,732 to Rs 5,208. Officials said the frequency could be increased in the future depending on passenger demand and operational feasibility.

Passengers will also have the option of accessing connecting flights through airlines such as IndiGo on days when the direct Alliance Air service is unavailable.

The service was inaugurated at Imphal International Airport on Tuesday. Following the launch, Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh said his government was committed to strengthening connectivity to make travel more accessible, expand opportunities and accelerate the overall development of Manipur.

He also expressed appreciation for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's initiatives to improve regional air connectivity and passenger convenience.

A strategic link for the Barak Valley

The restoration of the Imphal-Silchar route is more than an addition to the region's flight schedule.

Silchar is an important commercial, educational and healthcare centre for southern Assam and adjoining areas, while Imphal serves as Manipur's principal administrative and economic hub.

A direct air connection between the two cities could encourage greater movement of people, strengthen business interactions and make educational and medical facilities more accessible across state boundaries. It could also provide an additional travel option for tourists exploring the wider Northeast.

The development assumes importance against the backdrop of the region's geographical challenges, where difficult terrain and long road distances often make inter-state journeys time-consuming.

A flight lasting less than an hour offers a substantially quicker alternative, although its long-term impact will depend on regular operations, affordable fares and passenger demand.

Separately, the Chief Minister inspected the ongoing construction of the New Integrated Terminal Building at Imphal International Airport and reviewed the progress of the project with officials of the Airports Authority of India (AAI).

According to Singh, the proposed terminal is expected to facilitate round-the-clock airport operations and increase the airport's annual passenger-handling capacity from the existing 1.39 million to five million after completion.

The expanded infrastructure is expected to accommodate rising passenger traffic and provide fresh opportunities for tourism, trade and investment in Manipur.

The Chief Minister instructed the agencies executing the project to complete the construction within the stipulated timeframe while maintaining the required quality standards.

With the Imphal-Silchar flight service returning and airport infrastructure undergoing expansion, Manipur is seeking to strengthen its aviation network. For the Barak Valley, the revival of the direct connection offers an opportunity to improve its links with the wider Northeast and reduce the travel barriers that have long affected movement between the neighbouring regions.

PERSPECTIVE

When you talk, you're repeating what you already know - but if you listen, you may learn something new.

Assam Police under scrutiny after alleged clash between IPS officers at Kokrajhar party

KOKRAJHAR

An alleged physical altercation between two senior IPS officers at a late-night gathering in Assam's Kokrajhar district has triggered questions over discipline and accountability within the state police administration.Kokrajhar Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Akshat Garg reportedly sustained serious injuries following a confrontation with Deputy Inspector General (DIG) YT Getsu during a party organised at the Saraikhola Battalion premises. According to reports, the gathering was hosted by Garg and attended by several police officials. An argument allegedly broke out between the SSP and the DIG during the event before escalating into a physical altercation. The exact circumstances leading to the confrontation, however, remain unclear.

The incident reportedly reached the Assam Police headquarters late at night, prompting attention from senior officials.

Instead of immediately initiating a formal inquiry, Director General of Police (DGP) reportedly deputed IPS officer Surendra Kumar to intervene and facilitate a settlement between the two officers.

The reported handling of the matter has raised questions about whether established disciplinary procedures will be followed and whether the circumstances of the alleged assault will be independently examined.

The incident has also drawn attention to the issue of accountability within the police hierarchy, particularly when allegations of misconduct involve senior officers. Questions remain over the nature and extent of Garg's injuries, the sequence of events at the gathering and the possible role of other officials present.

WHO SAID WHAT



Putting Punjab and the welfare of Punjabis first!
I am extremely delighted that the Shiromani Akali Dal returns to the NDA family and that too on the Parkash Purab of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Ours is a natural alliance that will ensure Punjab gets pro-people governance that takes the state to new heights of progress.Nurtured by Atal Ji, Advani Ji and Sardar Parkash Singh Badal Ji, the Akali Dal-BJP Alliance has stood the test of time. I am confident that our Alliance will emerge as the preferred choice of the people of Punjab.

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

Dima Hasao steps up flood defence with eight new infrastructure projects

HAFLONG

With recurring floods and riverbank erosion continuing to threaten settlements and commercial areas in Assam's Dima Hasao district, the Dima Hasao Autonomous Council (DHAC) has initiated eight development projects with a major focus on strengthening flood protection and improving rural connectivity.

Foundation stones for the projects were laid across Harangajao, Mahur, Maibang and Jinam Valley in the presence of senior council leaders and local representatives. The initiatives combine riverbank protection measures with infrastructure development aimed at improving connectivity, market access and economic opportunities in the hill district.

A major component of the package involves construction of flood protection walls and restoration of vulnerable riverbanks along the Jatinga, Diyung, Mahur and Jinam rivers. These waterways have been identified as critical areas requiring protection, particularly during the monsoon when rising water levels and erosion threaten nearby settlements and public infrastructure.

At Harangajao, restoration work will be undertaken along the left bank of the Jatinga River near the Public Works Department (PWD) Bridge. A separate flood protection wall will be constructed along the river's right bank to safeguard Harangajao Market and adjoining areas.

In Mahur town, flood protection walls are planned along both banks of the Diyung River, while a similar structure will be built along the left bank of the Mahur River at Maibang.

Jinam Valley Village will also receive protection infrastructure, with a flood protection wall proposed along the right bank of the Jinam River to safeguard the local market area and playground.

The projects are expected to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable settlements and protect important public and commercial spaces from recurring riverine flooding.

Connectivity and market infrastructure in focus

Apart from flood management, the development package includes two bridge projects in Harangajao to improve movement for residents, traders and commuters.

One bridge will connect LVJ School with New Harangajao Railway Station, while another will be constructed along the Harangajao Bazar approach road. The projects are expected to improve access to railway facilities and facilitate the transportation of goods and passengers.

Another key initiative is the construction of a Tribal Multipurpose Marketing Centre at Harangajao under the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA).

The proposed centre is intended to improve market access for tribal communities, provide better opportunities for marketing local products and strengthen economic activities in the area.

The foundation-laying ceremonies were attended by DHAC Chairman Mohet Hojai, Executive Members Monjoy Langthasa and Zosumthang Hmar, Member of Autonomous Council (MAC) John Phoitong, Harangajao CDC Chairman Pratap Haflongbar and Hadingma CDC Chairman Ronmanon Johori, among other dignitaries.

Winter to tighten its grip on Tripura from December 2, IMD forecasts temperature drop

AGARTALA

Tripura is likely to witness a gradual transition towards winter from December 2, with minimum temperatures expected to fall in the coming days and a more pronounced cold spell forecast across the state from the second week of December, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

Until then, temperatures are likely to remain above the seasonal average, delaying the onset of the usual winter chill. The IMD has also ruled out rainfall over the next seven days, indicating that dry weather is expected to prevail across the state.

However, residents may have to contend with dense fog during the early morning hours. The Meteorological Department has issued a fog warning for the next three days, cautioning that visibility could fall significantly at isolated locations across different districts, including the state capital Agartala.

Dr Partha Roy, head of the IMD in Agartala, said the recent passage of a cyclone had brought substantial moisture into the region, contributing to rainfall and foggy conditions in several parts of Tripura.

The impact was evident at Agartala Airport on Tuesday morning, when visibility dropped to approximately 200 metres for nearly an hour between 5.30 am and 6.30 am. According to the department, visibility could remain between 200 and 550 metres at one or two locations in each district.

The weather system also triggered localised rainfall across several districts on Monday. North Tripura recorded the highest precipitation at 27 mm, while West Tripura received around 15 mm. Despite the recent rainfall, the IMD expects predominantly dry conditions over the coming week.

Barak River ordeal ends: Missing BSF jawan rescued alive in Bangladesh



SILCHAR

A missing Border Security Force (BSF) constable, K. Benu, has been rescued alive in Bangladesh after being swept away by the strong current of the Barak river while pursuing suspected cattle smugglers along the India-Bangladesh border in Assam's Cachar district.

Benu was rescued by personnel of the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) from Amalshid village. He is currently staying at the BGB's Amalshid border outpost camp and is expected to be handed over to the BSF through formal procedures on Tuesday.

The incident occurred on Sunday night when Benu and Head Constable Jitendra Yadav, both posted at the Harinagar Border Outpost in the Katigorah area, were conducting a routine patrol along the international border.

According to reports, the two personnel spotted four to five suspected cattle smugglers moving near the border. On noticing the security personnel, the suspects reportedly jumped into the Barak river in an attempt to evade arrest.

The BSF personnel also entered the river to pursue them. While Yadav managed to swim back to the bank safely, Benu was caught in the strong current and swept away, triggering an extensive search operation.

The BSF company commander informed the local police about the incident in the early hours of Monday. Subsequently, multiple agencies, including the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and river police, were mobilised to search for the missing constable along the river stretch near the international border.

The search operation continued amid concerns over Benu's safety, until confirmation emerged that he had been found alive on the Bangladesh side.

His rescue has brought relief to BSF personnel and his family, while the proposed handover is expected to facilitate his return to India.

The incident has also brought into focus the operational coordination between the BSF and BGB in addressing emergencies along the India-Bangladesh border.

Manipur's Human Tragedy Finds a Wider Audience Through 'Fireflies in the Dark'

Yogesh Lohan's Manipuri feature, weaving together three stories of survival amid the 2023 violence, selected for Kolkata International Film Festival 2026

GUWAHATI/IMPHAL

The human stories behind Manipur's 2023 ethnic violence are set to reach another international audience, with Manipuri-language feature film Enoong Ngallamdai (Fireflies in the Dark) selected for the official programme of the Kolkata International Film Festival (KIFF) 2026.

Directed by Yogesh Lohan, the 85-minute film moves beyond the familiar images of conflict, displacement and destruction to explore how ordinary people struggle to preserve their lives, dignity and humanity amid violence.

The narrative unfolds through three interconnected stories: a pregnant woman trying to deliver her child amid gunfire, a young boy searching for his missing mother with a displaced calf as his companion, and a cafe owner who risks her own safety to shelter people fleeing the violence.

Written by Chingsanglakpa and Lohan, the film employs a non-linear narrative to portray the experiences of people caught in the conflict. Rather than concentrating on the political and ethnic dimensions of the violence, it focuses on the personal tragedies and acts of compassion that often remain outside conventional news coverage.



Lohan developed the screenplay after travelling to Manipur and meeting survivors of the violence, drawing on their experiences to shape the film's characters and narrative.

"Manipur's conflict is not just about violence and displacement. It is also about the lives of ordinary people, their fears, their dignity and their instinct to survive. I wanted to tell a story that looks beyond the headlines and brings the human experiences of the conflict to the forefront," the director said.

Produced by Jani Viswanath, the film was shot at actual locations across Manipur with support from local communities. The production team sought to capture the consequences of the conflict without sensationalising violence or reducing the experiences of survivors to cinematic spectacle.

Viswanath described the filmmaking process as both a creative and deeply human experience, saying the resilience of the people encountered during production left a lasting impression on the team.

The film seeks to underline the devastating consequences of conflict for innocent civilians, irrespective of where such violence occurs, she said, adding that its selection for KIFF was encouraging as it continued to reach wider audiences.

The Kolkata selection follows the film's world premiere at the Vancouver International Film Festival on October 6, 2026, where it was screened in the Panorama Cinemas of Asia section. It was also featured in the WAVES Film Bazaar 2025 viewing room catalogue as a Manipuri-language fiction feature.

The cast includes Bala Hijam Ningthoujam, Leishangthem Tonthoingambi Devi, Angom Pamdamba Singh, Aheibam Chiranjit, Luwang Yumlembam and Ratan Lai. Several first-time actors, including residents of remote villages and relief camps, have also been part of the production.

Ravi Ranjan Sharma handled cinematography, while Meena Longjam served as creative director. Sound design was undertaken by Amrit Pritam and Debajit Changmai, with Daniel B George composing the music and Tinni Mitra handling editing. Rajni Basumatary is the executive producer, and Hemam Ricky is the creative producer.

With its selection for KIFF, Fireflies in the Dark adds another platform to its festival journey, bringing a deeply personal account of Manipur's continuing human tragedy to audiences beyond the state.

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INDIA-NEPAL TIES

Nepal Prime Minister Balen Shah's November 22-23, 2026, visit to India carries significance far beyond the usual formalities of diplomatic engagement. His decision to make India the destination of his first bilateral foreign visit since assuming office in March sends an important political and diplomatic message: despite occasional differences and shifting geopolitical equations, India remains central to Nepal's foreign policy calculations.

The visit also presents an opportunity to give India-Nepal relations a fresh direction. For years, the relationship has rested on historical, cultural, religious and social connections. The open border, shared traditions, family ties and centuries-old civilisational links have created a bond that few neighbouring countries enjoy. From Janakpur and Ayodhya to Pashupatinath and Kashi, and from Lumbini to India's Buddhist heritage, the two countries share a cultural landscape that transcends political boundaries.

However, history alone cannot sustain a modern strategic partnership. In an increasingly competitive geopolitical environment, friendship must be reinforced by economic cooperation, infrastructure development, energy security, technological collaboration and mutual trust. The traditional roti-beti relationship remains valuable, but it must now evolve into a partnership capable of addressing the aspirations of a new generation.

The challenge of rebuilding strategic trust

India-Nepal relations have experienced considerable fluctuations in recent years. Political disagreements, border disputes, trade-related concerns and Nepal's growing engagement with China have occasionally strained bilateral ties. Some of Balen Shah's earlier remarks concerning India had also generated diplomatic unease.

Yet, Nepal's decision to prioritise India for its first bilateral engagement suggests that Kathmandu recognises the importance of maintaining a constructive relationship with New Delhi. This should be welcomed as an opportunity rather than interpreted as a geopolitical victory over China.

Nepal has every right to pursue an independent foreign policy and maintain economic relations with both its powerful neighbours. Its geographical position makes such a balancing act inevitable. India, therefore, must avoid viewing Nepal's engagement with China exclusively through the lens of strategic rivalry.

The real test of Indian diplomacy lies in convincing Kathmandu that a closer partnership with New Delhi will expand Nepal's development opportunities rather than restrict its choices. India must be a dependable partner, not a demanding neighbour.

Nepal's reported request for nearly $2 billion in grants and concessional assistance during Balen Shah's visit highlights the economic expectations attached to this engagement. India's positive response to Nepal's development proposals is encouraging, but financial assistance alone cannot transform the relationship.

What Nepal needs is sustained investment, technology transfer, employment generation, infrastructure development and greater access to regional markets. India, with its economic scale and technological capabilities, is well placed to support these aspirations.

Hydropower offers perhaps the strongest foundation for such cooperation. Nepal has enormous untapped hydropower potential, while India's demand for clean and renewable energy continues to rise. A mutually beneficial arrangement can help Nepal generate revenue, attract investment and strengthen its economy, while India secures a reliable source of clean electricity.

The long-term target of electricity trade of up to 10,000 MW between the two countries represents an important step. However, projects such as Pancheshwar and Lower Arun, along with cross-border transmission infrastructure, must move beyond prolonged negotiations and administrative delays.

Energy cooperation should become the cornerstone of a new India-Nepal economic partnership. Both governments must demonstrate the political will to resolve outstanding differences and accelerate implementation.

Geographical proximity has not always translated into seamless connectivity between India and Nepal. Better railway networks, roads, air links, pipelines and digital infrastructure are essential for unlocking the economic potential of the two countries.

The proposed Raxaul-Kathmandu railway, expanded integrated check posts and improved trade corridors could significantly reduce transportation costs and strengthen cross-border commerce. Similarly, the development of the Ayodhya-Janakpur connection can deepen religious tourism and people-to-people contact.

Nepal's demand for additional air routes for airports such as Bhairahawa and Pokhara also deserves constructive consideration. Security and technical requirements must be respected, but practical solutions should be found through sustained dialogue.

Connectivity is not merely about transporting passengers and goods. It is about creating economic interdependence, generating employment and bringing communities closer. India must recognise that infrastructure cooperation with Nepal is an investment in long-term regional stability.

Despite the positive atmosphere surrounding the visit, several sensitive issues remain unresolved. The Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura boundary disputes continue to cast a shadow over bilateral relations. Nepal's demand for a review of the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship, the Gorkha recruitment issue, trade imbalance and disagreements over major infrastructure projects have also contributed to periodic tensions.These concerns cannot be brushed aside in the name of historic friendship. Nor should they be allowed to dominate the entire relationship.Both countries must demonstrate political maturity and a willingness to engage in transparent negotiations. Territorial sensitivities require respect, historical disagreements require factual examination, and bilateral treaties must remain open to constructive discussion where necessary.A strong relationship is not one without disagreements; it is one that possesses the institutional capacity and political confidence to resolve them.

China's expanding economic and infrastructure engagement with Nepal is an important consideration in the evolving regional equation. Kathmandu has been exploring cooperation with Beijing in connectivity, energy and other development sectors, including projects associated with the Belt and Road Initiative.India should not respond to this development with insecurity or political pressure. Nepal's development choices must be respected. Instead, New Delhi should strengthen its own partnership by delivering projects efficiently, ensuring reliable trade access and expanding cooperation in education, healthcare, technology, employment and renewable energy.

The most effective answer to China's growing influence is not confrontation but performance. If India can consistently deliver on its commitments, its geographical proximity, economic strength and deep social connections will remain significant advantages.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Don't listen to yourself; listen to the advice that you give others.

- Michael Lottner

Sixth schedule to the constitution of India and its dimension to administered tribal in the North East India

RWNGWRA NARZARY

The constitution of India, the largest written constitution of the world having 12 schedules, provides unique provisions for administering tribal areas in most states in the fifth and sixth schedule of the constitution. Fifth schedule provides a special framework for the administration of tribal areas of the ten states across India other than North-eastern states whereas the sixth schedule provides a special framework for administering the tribal areas in the north-eastern states of India viz: Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura.

There are tenth numbers of sixth schedule autonomous council in the North-east, first created in the year1951 as Karbi-Anglong Autonomous Council and the last tenth number was created in 2003 as Bodoland Territorial Areas District (BTAD)in Assam with a view to make solution to the Bodoland issue.

The Government of India for the first time after 68 years of formation of sixth schedule council (1951) initiated to strengthen the administration of sixth schedule council through the 125th constitution amendment Bill, 2019 which was introduced in the parliament was a virtuous initiative and need of the hour.

Creation of Sixth schedule council in 1951, taking initiative for enhancement of power and function after 68 years through the introduction of 125th amendment Bill in 2019, sending it to standing committee and submission of reports in the parliament and thereafter kept in freeze signifies the half-hearted approach for the development of the tribals of Northeastern region.

The 125th constitution amendment Bill, 2019 once again came out in limelight with Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) Accord, 2020. The BTR Accord, 2020 was also assured to be implemented through the amendment of article 280 and 125th constitution amendment bill, 2019 by bringing legislation in the parliament.

The BTR accord set an example of winding up the conflict between the movement organizations and the government, ensuring a lasting solution to the Bodoland movement impacting several organizations of the north-eastern region to enter into agreement. More than ten thousand members of various arms organizations had surrendered and joined in the mainstream leading to establishment of peace and harmony in the region. It is noteworthy to mention that, in the name of Solution to the Bodo issue three times agreement in between Government and the Bodo leaders have been made creating Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC) under state act in 1993, Bodoland Territorial Areas District (BTAD) under sixth schedule of the constitution of India in 2003 and Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) enhancing area and power and function of BTAD in 2020.

The question is, why three times an agreement had to be signed for a single issue of a region. Understanding is clear that the BAC Accord of 1993 was denounced by the Bodo leaders because of non-workable of BAC with no boundary settlement leading to another movement for a separate state of Bodoland.

The 2003 BTAD accord was signed with Bodo Liberation Tigers(BLT) creating Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) under Sixth Schedule provision of the constitution with the commitment of upholding peace and development of BTAD in exchange for a separate state of Bodoland. But one of the armed groups i.e National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) which was demanding sovereign Bodoland was not included in the process of solution rather the group remained active demanding solution of the issue.

In the meantime, several separate states like Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand and then Telangana were created sidelining the Bodoland that triggered the movement for Bodoland afresh and consequently the third Bodo Accord, 2020 was signed with the commitment of full-fledged implementation of the accord.

The main soul of the BTR accord, 2020 lays in the few clauses of the MoS viz: clause 2(i) to augment area and power of BTC and streamline its functioning and Clause 4.3 amendment to the article 280 and the sixth schedule to the constitution as per the constitution (125th amendment) Bill, 2019 to improve the financial resources and administrative powers of BTC has been initiated. The constitution amendment Bill was introduced in the parliament in January 2019.

The Bodo peace accord,2020 will be meaningful only when its main clauses pertaining to amendment of the article 280 and 125th constitution amendment Bill,2019 are constitutionally approved by parliament as assured in the accord.

This accord is also elapsing 6 years and the file of implementation is snoozing in the bed room of the government with no sign of awakening. It creates a question mark among the signatories in the will of the government. In my few years of experiences in the parliament, I have learned to observe and understand that the honorable members either from treasury benches or opposition during the debate and discussion expresses their concern and advocate seamlessly on the upliftment of tribals, dalits, downtrodden societies in their speeches. I have received a blurry response while trying to raise the issue of accord implementation in the parliament. There is no doubt that the Government of India under the dynamic leadership of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and the vibrant home minister Shri Amit Shah jee have been taking a substantial care in bringing peace, stability and development of Northeastern region particularly for the state of Assam. The creation of BTC under the Sixth Schedule provision of the constitution was a brainchild of the BJP led NDA government in the Centre.

The Chief Minister of Assam Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma is effectively managing the governance through dynamic approach for the solution of Bodo issue which is appreciable. The NDA government rather has suitable numbers of MPs for rolling out the 125th amendment Bill, 2019 in the parliament and of course the will power of the Government matters.

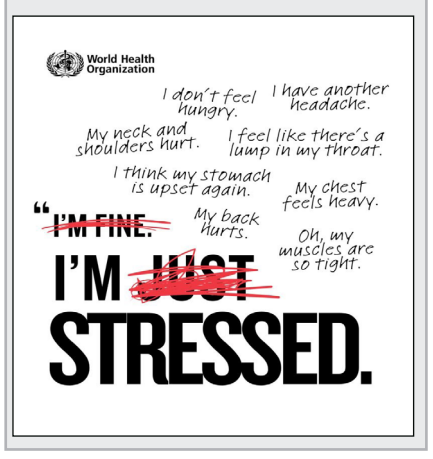
The people of BTR of Assam with their full faith in the leadership of the NDA government expect the passing out of the 125th Amendment, 2019 Bill in the coming winter session in 2026. The rolling out the 125th Amendment Bill,2019 in the Parliament will be a robust initiative to connect the Sixth Schedule Council with the process of sustainable peace and development of the nation viz-a-viz "Vikshit Bharat".

Rwngwra Narzary,
Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha

DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

Stress can increase feelings of anxiety and irritability, affecting our overall health and well-being.

Taking breaks, staying active, getting enough sleep and talking to someone you trust can all help manage stress.
~ United Nations





Himanta Invites Modi to Bhupen Hazarika Centenary, Holds Key Talks with Union Ministers

PM accepts invitation for November 29 event; Assam CM discusses infrastructure, healthcare, railway expansion and state finances during Delhi visit

SILCHAR

The controversy over the proposed reduction in the length of Silchar's elevated corridor has reached the Prime Minister's Office, with a local advocate seeking clarification on whether the reported change has received the necessary administrative and technical approvals.

In a representation dated November 20, advocate Dharmananda Deb questioned reports that the originally proposed 3.5-km flyover could be reduced to two separate stretches measuring approximately 542 metres and 500 metres.

Deb has asked the PMO to clarify whether the 3.5-km project, which he said had received Assam Cabinet approval, remains the officially sanctioned plan and whether any competent authority has formally approved a change in its scope.



The representation follows a review meeting held on November 20 to discuss possible modifications to the proposed elevated corridor.

At the centre of the advocate's concerns is also the reported allocation of Rs 147 crore for land acquisition. He has sought a detailed account of the land acquired so far, compensation disbursed to landowners and the proposed utilisation of the acquired land if the original project is significantly scaled down.

He has also questioned what would happen to public funds already committed to the land acquisition process if the proposed reduction goes ahead.

"Silchar does not seek assurances. Silchar seeks transparency, accountability and the infrastructure development promised to its people," Deb said in his memorandum.

The advocate has further sought clarification on whether residents, landowners and other affected stakeholders were consulted or given an opportunity to submit objections before any decision on the project's revised scope was considered.

His representation also seeks details of the technical assessments undertaken for the original project, including soil investigations, traffic studies and evaluations of alternative routes. According to Deb, any substantial alteration to a major infrastructure project should be supported by appropriate technical assessments and formal administrative clearances.

He argued that discussions at a review meeting or public announcements alone cannot substitute the prescribed procedures for modifying an approved project.

The issue has raised questions about the future of the elevated corridor, which was proposed to address traffic congestion in Silchar. The reported plan to replace the longer stretch with two relatively short sections has prompted concerns over whether the revised proposal would meet the original project's objectives.

Deb has sent copies of his representation to Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari and Assam Cabinet Minister Krishnendu Paul, seeking their attention and necessary action.

The PMO has been requested to clarify the status of the original project, the authority behind the proposed changes and the accountability framework governing the land acquisition and expenditure.

The representation places the focus on a larger question: whether Silchar will receive the infrastructure project originally promised or a substantially reduced version, and whether the process of any such change will be made transparent to the public.

MPSC Recruitment Row: MSU President Launches Indefinite Hunger Strike in Aizawl

AIZAWL

The president of the Mizo Students' Union (MSU) has launched an indefinite hunger strike at the Mizoram Public Service Commission (MPSC) premises in Aizawl, escalating the union's protest over alleged recruitment errors and administrative lapses.

The hunger strike began on Monday evening, November 23, following a peaceful sit-in demonstration organised by the union outside the commission's office. The MSU reiterated its demand for the resignation of the MPSC chairman, holding him responsible for what it described as repeated mistakes in recruitment procedures.

Speaking after the demonstration, the MSU president alleged that the commission had committed several errors over the past two years despite repeated representations by the student body seeking corrective measures.

He said a sit-in protest alone would not be sufficient to press the union's demands and announced that he would personally lead the indefinite hunger strike.

The latest controversy centres on the alleged errors in the recruitment process for Storekeeper posts under the Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) Department.

The MSU has cited 24 corrigenda issued since the incumbent chairman assumed office on May 20, 2024, along with four court cases, as grounds for demanding accountability from the commission.

The union has also flagged alleged irregularities in the MCS Combined Examination 2025, recruitment for Junior Grade Mizoram Engineering Service posts and the Storekeeper selection process under the FCS&CA Department.

Accusing the chairman of failing to adequately supervise the commission's functioning, the MSU president said he should take moral responsibility for the alleged lapses and step down.

Assam College Teachers Take Protest to Streets Over Unresolved Service Benefits

GUWAHATI

Mounting frustration over unresolved service-related grievances has pushed college teachers across Assam into a statewide agitation, with members of the Assam College Teachers' Association (ACTA) staging a "Pen Down" strike, total non-cooperation and demonstrations.The protests, including a major gathering at Chachal in Guwahati, brought several long-standing issues in the state's provincialised higher education sector into focus, particularly pension security, career progression, pending financial benefits and the implementation of University Grants Commission (UGC) regulations. Teachers carrying placards said repeated representations and attempts to resolve the disputes through discussions with the government had failed to produce satisfactory results. They maintained that their demands were not for additional privileges but for the implementation of provisions already recognised under UGC guidelines."We're not asking for any added perks, but what we deserve under the UGC guidelines. Since such protests hamper the educational curriculum of colleges, we waited and wanted to resolve the issues through dialogue with the government. But it's disheartening that we had to resort to protest to make our voices heard," a protesting teacher said.In a statement, ACTA described the agitation as a last resort to secure what it termed justice for the teaching community, protect professional dignity and prevent further deterioration of the provincial higher education system.

A central demand of the association is the reopening of the OM 2013 Portal to address pending service-related matters in accordance with UGC regulations. Teachers have also sought a shift from the New Pension Scheme (NPS) to the Old Pension Scheme (OPS), arguing that the existing arrangement does not adequately address their post-retirement financial security concerns.

AASU Turns 60, Puts Assam's Education and Identity Challenges in Spotlight

GUWAHATI

As the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) marked the 60th anniversary of its Constitution, the influential student organisation used the occasion to look beyond its legacy and highlight challenges confronting Assam's education system, linguistic identity and indigenous communities.

More than 1,000 representatives from across the state gathered at Arjun Bhogeswar Baruah Stadium in Sarusajai, Guwahati, on Monday for the Central Representatives' Convention. Held in an open public space for the first time, the event also provided a platform to discuss AASU's future direction and its continuing role in Assam's social and political landscape.

The anniversary programme, originally scheduled for August, had been postponed due to floods in Upper Assam, said AASU chief adviser Samujjal Bhattacharya. He announced that celebrations would continue throughout the year, extending from grassroots units to the state level.

Bhattacharya said the organisation would seek public support as it continued its efforts to safeguard students' interests and protect the rights and identity of indigenous communities.

AASU president Utpal Sarma, meanwhile, paid tribute to the organisation's martyrs and former members, crediting their contributions for the public trust it enjoys. He said the convention would deliberate on emerging challenges and determine the organisation's future course amid what he described as growing attempts to undermine AASU.

Reiterating its political independence, Sarma said AASU remained committed to regionalist and progressive principles and was not aligned with any political party.

The organisation also reiterated its opposition to the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), with Sarma confirming that its legal challenge against the legislation remained pending before the Supreme Court.

On the citizenship and electoral roll issues, he called for re-verification of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, arguing that the exercise should identify and remove the names of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh. He also pointed to the continuing debate over constitutional safeguards for Assam.

Education and language emerged as prominent themes during the convention, with university leaders expressing concern over the weakening condition of educational institutions and the declining use of Assamese.

Nagaon University Vice-Chancellor Hitesh Deka raised questions about the condition of institutions established through public efforts, alleging that many had witnessed a serious deterioration over the past decade. He likened their declining condition to a transition towards becoming "cremation grounds" and questioned the government's commitment to reviving them.

Deka urged AASU and other regional student organisations to take a more active role in protecting educational institutions. He also advocated establishing libraries in villages and expressed concern over the diminishing interest in education in rural areas.

On the linguistic front, he cautioned that according Assamese the status of a classical language would not, by itself, ensure its survival. Greater everyday use and sustained efforts to promote the language, he suggested, were essential to preserving its relevance.

Japan to Hire 3,000 Manipuri Youths as Heavy Vehicle Drivers Under SSW Programme

IMPHAL

Manipur is preparing to facilitate overseas employment for 3,000 youths as heavy vehicle drivers in Japan under the India-Japan Specified Skilled Worker (SSW) programme, in an initiative described as the first of its kind in the country.

The initiative was discussed during a meeting between Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh and a visiting delegation from Japan's Konoike Group at the Secretariat in Babupara on Monday evening.

The delegation was led by Kazuhiro Hasumi, Chairman and Managing Director of Konoike India Pvt. Ltd. Representatives of NSDC International and the state's Department of Skills, Labour, Employment and Entrepreneurship (SLEE) also attended the meeting.

Discussions focused on a proposed 'Hire-and-Train' model under which selected candidates would receive specialised training before being placed in overseas employment.



Separately, Konoike India Private Limited launched a dedicated training programme for aspiring heavy vehicle drivers at Yaralpat on Monday in collaboration with the Institute of Driving Training and Research Centre (IDTRC), Manipur, and the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).

Addressing the launch programme, IDTRC Member Secretary Shantikumar Naorem said the initiative would create international career opportunities for young people in the state. Successful candidates are expected to receive five-year employment contracts in Japan, he said.

Online registration for the programme will remain open until the second week of December. Interested applicants can obtain further details from the IDTRC office at Yaralpat.

According to Naorem, shortlisted candidates will undergo a five-month Japanese language course at Manipur University, alongside technical driving training at the IDTRC facility.

Educational and training loans will also be facilitated through the State Bank of India (SBI) to make the programme financially accessible to selected applicants.

Under the stated eligibility criteria, candidates must:

" Be between 20 and 45 years of age.

" Have passed at least Class X.

" Have a clean criminal record.

Selected candidates are expected to receive a starting monthly salary of approximately Rs 1.2 lakh during the first six months of employment in Japan, along with overtime allowances.

The programme is being positioned as an overseas employment pathway combining language proficiency, specialised driving skills and industry-linked recruitment.Further details regarding the selection process and application requirements are available through the IDTRC office at Yaralpat.

Manipur Chief Secretary Calls for Alternative Livelihoods to End Poppy Cultivation

IMPHAL

Manipur Chief Secretary Rajeev Singh Thakur has urged officials to encourage poppy farmers to switch to alternative crops, stressing that adequate support and livelihood opportunities must be provided to facilitate the transition.

Thakur chaired a review meeting with district-level officers and officials from various departments at the Deputy Commissioner's office in Tuibong, Churachandpur, on November 23 to assess the implementation of government programmes and development initiatives.

During the meeting, departments presented updates on healthcare, rural development, livelihood promotion, horticulture, e-governance and other sectors.Emphasising the need to promote sustainable livelihood opportunities, the Chief Secretary asked officials to motivate poppy cultivators to adopt alternative crops and ensure that necessary assistance was available to support them through the transition.

He also called on government officials to remain sensitive to public concerns, respond promptly to grievances and ensure effective delivery of public services.On administrative reforms, Thakur stressed the adoption of the e-Office system across departments and called for a transition towards paperless governance. He also underlined the importance of interdepartmental coordination and effective implementation of government schemes.The Chief Secretary specifically directed officials to ensure that benefits under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), VB-G RAM G, pension programmes and other development initiatives reached internally displaced persons (IDPs) as well as the local population.

Following the review meeting, Thakur interacted with representatives of displaced government employees, MPSC 2026 trainee officers and civil society organisations.Earlier, he visited a relief centre at Mata village in Churachandpur Sub-Division, where he interacted with internally displaced people and listened to their concerns. He instructed the concerned departments to extend all possible assistance to affected families.

On his return, the Chief Secretary also inspected Khuga Dam and held discussions with officials responsible for its maintenance. He reviewed the dam's present condition and functioning.

The visit formed part of the administration's review of development programmes, public service delivery and relief measures in Churachandpur district.

ED Attaches Rs 70.09 Lakh Assets in Nupur Bora Case; Total Seizure Reaches Rs 3.62 Crore

Former Barpeta circle officer accused of amassing assets disproportionate to known income; mutual funds, insurance policies and property advances among latest attachments

GUWAHATI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached assets worth Rs 70.09 lakh in its money laundering investigation against former Barpeta Circle Officer Nupur Bora, taking the cumulative value of properties attached in the case to approximately Rs 3.62 crore.

The latest action was carried out by the agency's Guwahati Zonal Office-I under Section 5(1) of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

The investigation originated from an FIR registered by the Chief Minister's Special Vigilance Cell, Assam, against Bora and others. The Vigilance Police filed a chargesheet against Bora on November 12, 2025, followed by a supplementary chargesheet on March 31, 2026, against her husband Gagan Chandra Kalita, father Kinaram Borah and Lot Mandal Surajit Deka before the Special Judge, Assam, in Guwahati.

According to the chargesheet, Bora allegedly accumulated assets worth approximately Rs 4.01 crore disproportionate to her known sources of income during the check period between January 17, 2019, and September 15, 2025. The alleged assets were estimated at 458.64 per cent of her known income.



The ED alleged that Bora accumulated unaccounted cash during her tenure as Circle Officer and deposited the money into bank accounts held in her name and those of her husband and father.

The agency further claimed that the funds were subsequently routed through multiple bank accounts, including those belonging to her subordinate Surajit Deka and his father, before being transferred into Bora's home loan and savings accounts.

Investigators also alleged that agreements for purchasing land were executed in the names of Bora's father and husband, with one agreement subsequently re-executed in Bora's name instead of her husband's. A vehicle was allegedly purchased in the name of a contractual employee of the Circle Office.

According to the ED, the suspected proceeds of crime were invested in mutual funds, used to pay life insurance premiums and deployed as advances for purchasing immovable properties.

Assets attached in latest action

The latest provisional attachment, valued at Rs 70.09 lakh, includes:

" SBI Mutual Fund units worth Rs 13.45 lakh held in Bora's name.

" Three life insurance policies valued at Rs 21.64 lakh.

" Rs 35 lakh paid as advances under agreements for purchasing two plots of land at Maj Jalukbari and Garal village, along with a flat in Guwahati.

The agency said it had identified alleged proceeds of crime amounting to approximately Rs 4.01 crore.

Earlier, in proceedings related to the alleged underlying offence, the Special Judge, Assam, Guwahati, had ordered the attachment of cash, jewellery, a flat, a plot of land, a vehicle and bank balances belonging to the accused. The properties were collectively valued at around Rs 2.92 crore.

The order was passed on April 2, 2026, under Section 107 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023.

With the latest action, the cumulative value of assets attached through PMLA and proceedings related to the underlying offence has reached approximately Rs 3.62 crore.

Further investigation is underway, the ED said.

The latest attachment is provisional and does not by itself establish guilt. The allegations will be subject to adjudication through the legal process.

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NATIONAL

Congress targets PM Modi over Jewar airport renaming, recalls Nehru's refusal to name projects after him



NEW DELHI

The Congress on Tuesday criticised the Uttar Pradesh government's decision to rename the Noida International Airport at Jewar after Prime Minister Narendra Modi, citing instances when former prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru had refused proposals to name public projects after him.

Congress general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh said the Jewar airport, inaugurated by Modi on March 28, 2026, had been renamed the Narendra Modi International Airport, Noida-Jewar despite sluggish passenger traffic.

In a post on X, Ramesh said the airport's Phase-I spans over 3,000 acres acquired amid controversy, with an investment of more than Rs 30,000 crore. He, however, pointed out that the airport had yet to see a single scheduled international flight.

"This has not prevented the airport being renamed as the Narendra Modi International Airport Noida-Jewar," he said.

Referring to the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, Ramesh asked what would be named after the prime minister next."There was a different time when in January 1949 the Prime Minister of India refused to have the Fateh Maidan in Hyderabad named after him and in December 1956 he had also put a stop to the proposal to rename the Banihal Tunnel in J&K in his honour," Ramesh said.He also cited former Union Education Minister MC Chagla's autobiography, Roses in December, to highlight Nehru's opposition to such proposals. According to Ramesh, Chagla had wanted the proposed second university in Delhi to be named after Nehru in the early 1960s, but the then prime minister promptly vetoed the suggestion.

In October, the Uttar Pradesh Cabinet approved a proposal to rename the Noida International Airport at Jewar as the Narendra Modi International Airport, Noida-Jewar. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, briefing reporters after the Cabinet meeting, said the state government was grateful to Modi for the airport, describing it as a major gift to Uttar Pradesh. He said the facility would become the state's largest airport and a major aviation hub in the country.

Modi laid the foundation stone for the greenfield airport on November 25, 2021, and inaugurated its first phase on March 28, 2026. Commercial flight operations commenced on June 15.

'Costs not shared equally': India invokes Bengal famine at UNSC to flag impact of conflicts on Global South

NEW DELHI

Invoking the 1943 Bengal famine at the UN Security Council, India has underscored the disproportionate impact of conflicts on the Global South and called for measures to prevent food insecurity amid the Ukraine war.

India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni, told a high-level briefing of the Security Council on Monday that developing countries were bearing the brunt of food, fuel, fertiliser and energy shortages caused by global conflicts.

"India has consistently emphasised that the costs of conflict are not shared equally," he said.

"Global South countries are the most adversely affected by the food, fuel, and fertiliser crisis caused by today's global conflicts," he added.

Invoking the Bengal famine, which killed over three million people, Parvathaneni said it was a reminder of the "terrible human cost" of a distant conflict caused by unchecked wartime priorities and calculations.

Addressing the briefing on 'Protecting critical energy infrastructure and Black Sea lifelines of global food supply', Parvathaneni said that in an interconnected world, the implications of the Ukraine conflict, now in its fifth year, were being felt everywhere.

Recalling Prime Minister Narendra Modi's message that the world has to move from endless war to the end of war, he reiterated India's readiness to contribute to all efforts towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

He also stressed that Modi was firmly on the side of the Global South when he said that "this is not an era of war."

India noted with concern that conflicts exacerbate food insecurity by disrupting agriculture, displacing communities, damaging infrastructure and hindering humanitarian access.

Their consequences extend globally through disruptions to energy, fertiliser supplies, transport and agricultural trade, disproportionately affecting the Global South.



"For the Global South, peace is not in the abstract. It is achieved when hungry mouths are fed, when a ship reaches a port, and when a seafarer returns home safe," Parvathaneni said.India called on the Security Council to prioritise humanitarian access, protection of civilian infrastructure and freedom of navigation, ensuring that humanitarian supplies and legitimate trade remain unaffected."For India, this is why dialogue and diplomacy, safe commercial shipping and uninterrupted grain and energy flows are practical necessities," he said."This current situation is not different from the time of the Second World War, when peoples not responsible for the start of the conflict became their unintended collateral damage," he added.

"The pain and suffering caused by the devastating Bengal famine of 1943 in India that killed over 3 million people in India, is a stark reminder of the terrible human cost of a distant conflict caused by unchecked wartime priorities and calculations," Parvathaneni said.

"It is precisely because of these harsh consequences that India attaches such importance to preventing food insecurity," he said.

Parvathaneni said India's commitment to protecting Black Sea lifelines and global food supplies was rooted in the recognition that the region, like India, was one of the world's major food baskets.He noted that the Black Sea region and India together account for nearly a fifth of global cereal production, while Russia and Ukraine account for almost a quarter of global exports of wheat, maize and barley.

"Their importance to global food security underscores how disruptions to agricultural production, maritime connectivity, and international trade can have consequences far beyond the immediate regions affected," he said.

He highlighted India's humanitarian assistance, including wheat supplies to Afghanistan, rice to Sudan and aid to Palestine, as an example of its commitment to global food supply chains.

India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni.

India also expressed concern over merchant vessels and their crews increasingly coming under attack in global conflicts, citing incidents in which Indian seafarers had lost their lives.

"We call for an end to the targeting of commercial shipping and seafarers, and for safe navigation through international waterways to be restored at the earliest," Parvathaneni said.

He recalled that India and Liberia had launched the Group of Friends on Safety and Security of Shipping and Seafarers during the UN high-level week in September.

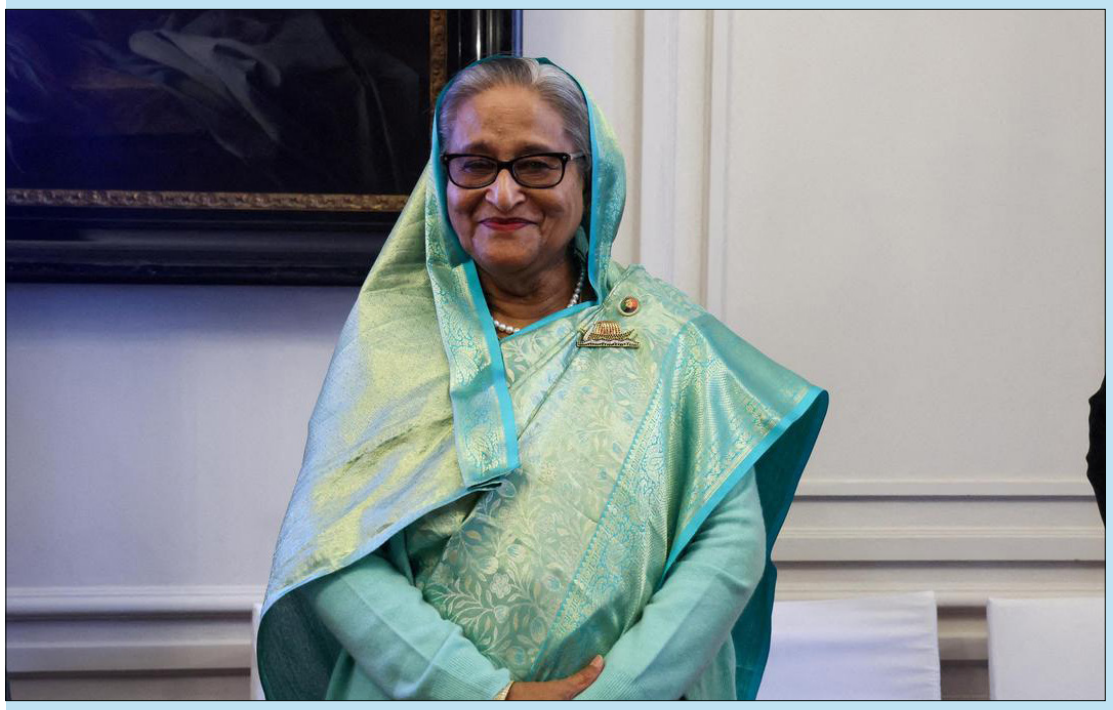
UN Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo warned that attacks on energy infrastructure were more extensive than during the corresponding period last year, disrupting heating, electricity and water supplies.

She also expressed concern over continued drone attacks in the Black Sea, threatening civilian navigation and disrupting food exports.

World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Director Luke Lindberg, briefing via video conference, warned that Black Sea food shipments had fallen sharply despite grain remaining available.He said around 10 million tonnes of Russian and Ukrainian wheat, enough to feed 44 million people, may not reach global markets this year.Lindberg urged member states to rally around three "red lines": no more famines, no more weaponisation of food and no more attacks on humanitarians.UN Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator Alexander De Croo said the agency was working with national and local authorities in Ukraine to restore power and essential services ahead of winter, while laying the foundations for longer-term recovery.

INTERNATIONAL

Ousted leader Sheikh Hasina plans to return to Bangladesh on December 16, spokesperson says



DHAKA

Ousted Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina plans to return to her country from exile in India on December 16, coinciding with the country's Victory Day celebrations, her spokesperson said on Tuesday, setting the stage for a possible confrontation with the government of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman.

Hasina, who fled to India on August 5, 2024, following a student-led mass uprising that ended her 15-year rule, has asked the Bangladesh government to arrange her return from Delhi to Dhaka aboard the national carrier, Biman Bangladesh Airlines.

"Since Sheikh Hasina was flown to India on a Bangladesh aircraft on August 5, 2024, she now calls upon the government to arrange for her air transport from Delhi back to Dhaka," her spokesperson Syed Mozammel Ali said in a statement.

December 16 is observed as Victory Day in Bangladesh, marking the country's victory over Pakistan in the 1971 Liberation War, which led to its independence.

The choice of the date is politically significant as Hasina's father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was the central figure in Bangladesh's independence movement and the country's founding leader.

The announcement comes amid heightened political tensions over Hasina's proposed return. The former prime minister faces a death sentence imposed in absentia by Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal over her government's deadly crackdown on the 2024 student-led uprising.

The tribunal found her guilty of crimes against humanity. Hasina has rejected the proceedings and maintained that the cases against her are politically motivated.

The United Nations estimated that up to 1,400 people were killed during the violence surrounding the uprising, which began over a controversial government job quota system and escalated into a nationwide movement demanding Hasina's resignation.

Bangladesh's current government has warned that Hasina would be arrested if she returned. Dhaka has also sought her extradition from India under the two countries' existing extradition treaty.On Monday, a Bangladeshi minister said she would be arrested and jailed upon her return, while indicating that there had been no official discussions with New Delhi about arranging her proposed journey.

Hasina's Awami League, which ruled Bangladesh for much of the past 15 years, has also been barred from political activities. The ban prevented the party from contesting the February 2026 general election, which was won by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), led by Tarique Rahman. Rahman was sworn in as prime minister in February, following the BNP's return to power after years in opposition.

Hasina's proposed return also comes after Bangladesh rejected her recent request for new travel documents, adding to uncertainty over how she intends to travel back to the country. India has not publicly responded to Dhaka's latest extradition request.

Her announcement is likely to further intensify the political standoff between the Awami League and the BNP-led government, with the prospect of her return raising questions over her arrest, the status of her legal cases and the future of her banned party.

Trump's bizarre Truth Social post celebrates Jensen Huang's return as Nvidia CEO



WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump posted a strange doctored image of Jensen Huang holding a red bra in his hand with Nvidia flag in the background resembling the one clicked right after his assassination attempt at Butler, Pennsylvania on July 2024.

The picture was shared on his Truth Social page on Monday, November 23 after Jensen Huang was reinstated as the CEO of Nvidia. Jensen was suspended as the CEO of the AI-chip making giant briefly following his reported affair with an alleged Chinese spy.

Trump took credit for reinstating Huang as the CEO of the company saying his intervention played a major role in the board's decision to bring back Huang.

In one of the posts preceding the image, he said "The NVIDIA Board of Directors has made the correct and proper decision to return Jensen Huang to the position of CEO. The Country needs Jensen's leadership at NVIDIA in order to ensure the Success and Prosperity of not only the Company, but the American Economy."

"The United States Government has no reason to believe that Jensen's return to NVIDIA poses any risk to National Security," he added.

As recently as Sunday, the US president backed Jensen Huang "a good man" who "made some bad decisions." He said, "I would love to see him be back. You have one of the truly most brilliant minds in the world, and where is he going to go?"

Trump also said, "I'd like to see Jensen make a big apology and go back because he created something with Blackwell," referring to the most advanced chips designed by Nvidia.

Both Trump and Huang are facing backlash over the U.S lawmakers over the decision to re-appoint Huang as the CEO.

Rep. Robert Garcia of the Democratic Party and the incoming House Oversight Committee chairman said Trump's involvement "raises serious national security and corruption questions."

Sen. Elizabeth Warren incoming chairperson of the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee in a statement said, "The reckless decision to bring Jensen Huang back as CEO does not change the fact that Mr. Huang, NVIDIA executives, and the company's board still owe Congress answers about the company's compliance with U.S. export controls."

She also demanded that the Trump administration must explain what inputs was given and by whom to support his (Huang) reinstatement.

As Jensen Huang returns as the CEO, he is scheduled for closed-door transcribed interview with the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the House Intelligence Committee, and the Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party on December 1.

He will also testify at a public hearing before the Senate Banking Committee chaired by Sen. Tim Scott on December 3.

Nvidia stocks closed gaining $39.52 to $165.05 with a market cap near $3.98 trillion. The S&P 500 also rose by 4.7% and NASDAQ gained by 6.5 per cent- 7 per cent in its strongest single day rally since April 2025.

Guru Nanak's Environmental Message Offers a Roadmap for a Planet in Crisis



From the sanctity of air, water and earth to community-led river restoration, the Sikh founder's teachings hold lessons for tackling pollution, climate change and unsustainable consumption

As the world struggles with worsening air pollution, shrinking water resources and the consequences of climate change, the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji offer a perspective that goes beyond religious observance. His vision of nature as an inseparable part of human existence presents an ethical framework for addressing some of the most pressing environmental challenges of the 21st century.

On the occasion of Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Prakash Purab, the relevance of his message deserves renewed attention, particularly at a time when environmental degradation is threatening public health, livelihoods and ecological balance across large parts of the world.

Guru Nanak, born in 1469 at Talwandi, now known as Nankana Sahib, did not formulate a modern environmental doctrine. Yet his spiritual philosophy placed nature at the centre of human responsibility. His celebrated words in Japji Sahib - "Air is the Guru, Water the Father, and Earth the Great Mother" - establish a relationship of reverence between humanity and the natural world.

The message is profound: nature is not merely a collection of resources to be exploited for economic gain. It is the foundation of life and deserves respect, care and protection.

This philosophy challenges the dominant development model that often places short-term economic interests above ecological sustainability. If air is regarded as a teacher, water as a parent and earth as a mother, their destruction becomes not simply an environmental offence but a failure of human responsibility.

From spiritual teachings to environmental action

One of the most compelling examples of this philosophy translating into practical action can be seen in the revival of the Kali Bein river in Punjab.

Associated with the spiritual journey of Guru Nanak at Sultanpur Lodhi, the river had gradually deteriorated into a polluted water channel, clogged with silt, water hyacinth, sewage and industrial waste.

In 2000, Sant Balbir Singh Seechewal and local volunteers began efforts to restore the river through collective labour and community participation. Initially relying largely on manual work, the initiative gradually expanded to include the removal of waste, cleaning of riverbanks and diversion of village sewage into treatment ponds.

The restoration effort demonstrated how community participation, sustained commitment and the principle of Sewa (selfless service) could contribute to environmental recovery.

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The Kali Bein experience offers an important lesson for policymakers and communities: ecological restoration need not always begin with expensive infrastructure or elaborate government programmes. Public participation and a shared sense of responsibility can also become powerful instruments of change.

Environmental degradation as an ethical failure

The environmental crisis confronting northern India illustrates the urgency of revisiting such principles.

Every winter, large parts of the region face hazardous air pollution caused by a combination of vehicular emissions, industrial activity, construction dust and agricultural stubble burning. Children, elderly people and those with existing respiratory vulnerabilities are particularly exposed.

Punjab faces an additional challenge. Despite its agricultural importance and association with the five rivers, the state is grappling with falling groundwater levels, water contamination and declining soil health after decades of intensive agricultural practices.

Plastic waste, untreated sewage and industrial discharge continue to put pressure on rivers and other water bodies. Meanwhile, changing rainfall patterns, extreme heat and floods are adding to the uncertainty faced by farmers and vulnerable communities.

These problems cannot be addressed through technology and regulation alone. They also require changes in consumption patterns, public behaviour and the relationship between economic development and natural resources.

Guru Nanak's teachings provide a moral basis for such a shift.

Three principles, a sustainable way of life

The three foundational principles associated with Guru Nanak - Naam Japo, Kirat Karo and Vand Chhako - can also be understood as a philosophy of environmental responsibility.

Naam Japo, or remembrance of the Divine, encourages humility, awareness and gratitude. It reminds individuals that human beings are part of a larger creation and cannot claim absolute ownership over nature.

Kirat Karo, or earning through honest labour, raises questions about the ethics of economic activity. Industries that discharge untreated waste into rivers, businesses that damage ecosystems for profit and development projects that disregard environmental consequences contradict the principle of honest livelihood.

Economic prosperity cannot be considered sustainable when its costs are transferred to communities through polluted air, contaminated water and damaged agricultural land.

Vand Chhako, or sharing with others, offers another important lesson in an age of excessive consumption and unequal access to resources. Sharing demands restraint and a recognition that the planet's resources must also remain available to future generations.

Together, these principles offer an ethical foundation for responsible production, reduced waste, equitable resource distribution and sustainable development.

Langar and the culture of responsible consumption

The Sikh institution of Langar, the community kitchen that serves food to everyone regardless of caste, religion or social status, provides another example of how spiritual values can influence everyday practices.

Beyond its message of equality and community service, Langar offers lessons in responsible food consumption, collective participation and reducing waste.

Sikh organisations and gurdwaras have increasingly incorporated environmental initiatives into community activities. These include replacing disposable plastic utensils with reusable steel alternatives, installing solar panels, harvesting rainwater, composting kitchen waste and organising tree plantation drives.

Sikh Environment Day, observed annually on March 14, has also emerged as an initiative encouraging communities to connect religious observance with environmental protection.

Such efforts demonstrate the potential of religious and community institutions to promote sustainable practices at the grassroots level.

Turning Gurpurab celebrations into environmental commitments

The teachings of Guru Nanak can acquire greater practical significance if celebrations are accompanied by concrete environmental action.

Tree plantation programmes, protection of existing green cover, rainwater harvesting, conservation of local ponds and rivers, and reducing single-use plastic are among the measures that households, educational institutions and gurdwaras can adopt.

Community kitchens and large gatherings can also introduce better waste-management practices and discourage food wastage.

Similarly, celebrations can place greater emphasis on traditional lamps, flowers and community activities rather than fireworks that contribute to air and noise pollution.

Agriculture also requires collective attention. Farmers need accessible alternatives to stubble burning, including machinery for in-situ crop residue management, crop diversification and adequate financial incentives. Blaming farmers alone cannot resolve a problem that also involves policy gaps, economic pressures and inadequate infrastructure.

Government agencies, agricultural institutions, industries and consumers must share responsibility for protecting soil, water and air.

Guru Nanak's journeys, known as the Udasis, took him across different regions and communities, where he emphasised the unity of the Creator, human equality and the dignity of honest labour. His message transcended geographical, religious and social boundaries.

That universal outlook makes his environmental philosophy relevant far beyond the Sikh community.

Five centuries ago, Guru Nanak presented nature as a sacred relationship rather than an economic possession. Today, as humanity confronts the consequences of ecological exploitation, that message carries renewed urgency.

The true tribute to the first Sikh Guru may therefore lie not only in devotional gatherings and religious ceremonies but also in how people treat the environment around them.

Protecting the air we breathe, the water we drink and the earth that sustains our livelihoods is ultimately an expression of the reverence he taught humanity to practise.



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- ART & CULTURE, THEATRE, CINEMA, MEDIA & ENTERTAINMENT
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