

# Protests, vandalism, arson continue to rock Manipur

## Mobs Try To Storm Family Homes Of CM And A BJP MLA

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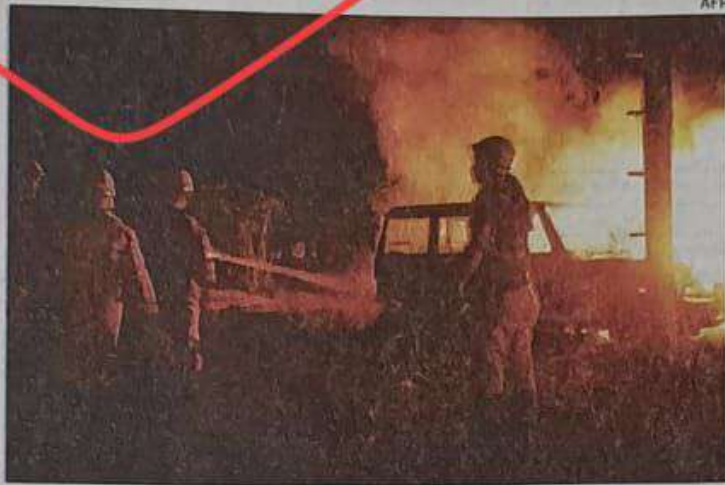
**Guwahati:** Violence in Manipur escalated further on Thursday as large mobs defied curfew and attempted to storm the ancestral home of chief minister N Biren Singh in Imphal East and the residence of BJP legislator Kebi Devi in Imphal West, triggering hours-long battles between security forces and protesters.

To halt the mobs' progress in both locations, security forces resorted to tear-gas shelling. Manipur police said both houses were secure and adequately protected.

The protests began Tuesday over the disappearance and suspected killing of two students — 17-year-old girl Hijam Linthoingambi and 20-year-old youth Phijam Hemjit — who were last seen together on a motorbike on July 6.

Over the past two days, clashes have been reported from multiple locations, leaving many people and more than a dozen police personnel wounded. Two students were wounded by pellets that security forces fired to disperse protesters marching towards the CM's official residence in Imphal city on Wednesday. A 97-year-old man was also wounded when he was struck by a stray bullet in the back.

The night-long violence continued into the early hours of Thursday, as a mob targeted Imphal West deputy commissioner's office, setting fire to three vehicles, one of which belonged to police. They assaulted a policeman and snatched his weapon. Mobs also blocked several roads within the city with burning tyres and logs.



Firefighters in action after a vehicle was torched by miscreants near the deputy commissioner's office in Imphal West on Wednesday

## Tribal banker attacked in Assam

A tribal from Manipur's Churachandpur working as manager of a public sector bank in Assam's Hailakandi district was attacked and seriously injured on Wednesday, reports **BB Goswami**. Three persons from another community have been held, though the main accused is absconding, Assam police said.

L Tun Khan Siam is in ICU with a head injury after being hit with bricks. Police, however, clarified that the assault had nothing to do with the ethnic strife in Manipur, but stemmed from a spat one of the accused had with the manager over opening an account.

Siam said in his FIR that he was shopping in the Lala area on his way back home from work when some persons started abusing him in English for his ethnicity and questioned why he was there. Siam said he ignored them and went to a nearby fish market. However, the men followed him, blocked his road and started assaulting him. Siam said his cries for help drew a crowd, and the attackers fled. Some organisations from the community to which the attackers belonged have condemned the assault.

Curfew will be temporarily lifted in Imphal East and West districts for six hours from 5am on Friday to allow residents to purchase essential items.

Peace rallies were organised by various student unions and they condemned the actions of security forces against protesters on Tuesday and Wednesday. The government formed a committee to investigate complaints of excessive force used on protesters, particularly students.

Security forces have used various measures, including tear gas shells, stun bombs, pepper sprays, electric shock batons, and batons, to control the protesters.

The Manipur Commission

for Protection of Child Rights has called upon security forces to exercise restraint and discourage the use of batons, tear gas, and rubber bullets "arbitrarily and abruptly" against teenagers.

"There were several protests and rallies in connection with the viral photos of dead bodies (purportedly) of two missing students. Miscreants in the crowd used iron pieces and stones (marbles) against security forces. In retaliation security forces used minimum force to disperse the congregation and fired some tear gas shells in which some people got injured," police tweeted.

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## Srinagar SSP repatriated to Manipur amid fresh unrest

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** Amid a fresh bout of violent protests in Manipur, this time over the kidnapping and killing of two students, the central government has cut short the inter-cadre deputation of Srinagar's senior superintendent of police (SSP)

**Rakesh Balwal**, a Manipur cadre IPS officer, and repatriated him to his parent cadre.

Balwal, who led many important anti-terror operations as the Srinagar SSP while also getting a strong grip on the law and order situation there, will be returning to Manipur almost a year ahead of the end-date of his inter-cadre deputation. The Manipur government had sought his premature repatriation around 20 days back, as per sources.

The home ministry had approved Balwal's deputation to AGMUT cadre for three years in October 2021. However, sources said a need was felt lately to have more officers who are perceived as "neutral" amid the deep ethnic divide that has pitted local communities like Meitis and Kukis against one another. It was precisely for this reason that two key postings were made right at the outset of violence in Manipur — the appointment of retired IPS officer and CRPF ex-chief Kuldiep Singh as security adviser to Manipur government and inter-cadre deputation of CRPF officer Rajeev Singh, a Tripura cadre officer, to lead the Manipur police





# Justice should be easy, accessible and fast: President

■ **Legal Correspondent**

JABALPUR, Sept 27

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PRESIDENT Droupadi Murmu said that justice in the country should be easy, accessible and fast. President Murmu said that justice should not become so expensive that it goes out of reach of the common man. For this, there is a need to strengthen institutional efforts. With this belief, if the Nyay Bhavan is ready, it will give new energy to the judges, lawyers and employees to perform their duties together. President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday laid the foundation stone for the new sprawling High Court building in IIITDM campus.

The President said "I have had earlier said that the people of the judiciary and the police should think and find a solution for those who are in jail for minor crimes. This is the country of 'Panch Parmeshwar'. I believe that the dispute resolution system should be further strengthened. This will also reduce the burden on the judiciary. Murmu said that today's foundation stone laying is an important step. For this I congratulate the CM of Madhya Pradesh and the officials of the High Court."

Governor Mangubhai Patel, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Chief Justice of Madhya Pradesh High Court Justice Ravi Malimath and Advocate General of Madhya Pradesh Prashant Singh, Judges of the High Court, District Court, Jabalpur Collector Superintendent of Police, Union Minister Pahlad Singh Patel, Mayor Jagat Bahadur Singh, members State Bar Council were present on the occasion.



# China def min, MIA since Aug, skips meet with Xi

Chinese defence minister Li Shangfu missed a key meeting attended by President Xi Jinping, bolstering reports he's being investigated for corruption and has been removed from his role. Li, who also holds the title of state councillor, wasn't among the participants of a Politburo study session on Wednesday, according to video footage aired on state broadcaster China Central Television.

Li's absence marked the first time he's missed an event he was expected to attend since US officials earlier this month said they had intelligence indicating he'd been removed from his post.

A Chinese defence ministry spokesperson, senior Col Wu Qian said in a one-sentence response Thursday that he was "not aware of the situation", in the ministry's first

public comments on the disappearance of the defence minister from public view.

Li hasn't been seen since giving a speech on August 29. He is the second senior official to disappear this year, following former foreign minister Qin Gang, who was removed from office in July.

Qin Gang was also absent from Wednesday's meeting, where Xi urged officials to safeguard national security as China opens to

the outside world.

Li's disappearance and Qin's ouster have been fodder for Xi's critics. The disappearance of officials without explanation is not uncommon in China and often followed months later by the announcement of criminal charges against the person. The disappearance of two sitting ministers in rapid succession, though, is unusual. AGENCIES





# Onus with private sector to lead country on sustainable growth path: NITI Aayog VC

■ “India is on the move, there is no doubt about it. India has the largest working age population in the world, (and) resilient physical and digital institutions,” he said

NEW DELHI, Sept 27 (PTI)

THE Government is facilitating holistic development but the onus lies on the private sector to lead the country on a sustainable growth trajectory, NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Suman Bery said on Wednesday.

The private sector contributes 40 per cent of Research and Development (R&D) in the country, while its share in developed countries is 70 per

cent, Bery said, while addressing an event organised by the Public Affairs Forum of India (PAFI). “If we are to transit from the middle income trap, the private sector needs to enhance its contribution to R&D through its own investments and under corporate social responsibility,” the NITI Aayog VC said.

The onus is on the private sector to lead us on a sustainable growth trajectory, Bery said. He said, the relationship between the public and private sectors needs to be redefined in the Amrit Kaal, to lead the country to a path of sustainable growth.

Bery further said that India's take-off moment has arrived, backed by the advantage of having the world's largest working population and

resilient physical and digital institutions. “This is India's take-off moment. 1/5th of humanity will have rising living standards,” he said.

“India is on the move, there is no doubt about it. India has the largest working age population in the world, (and) resilient physical and digital institutions,” he said.

Bery also pointed at the need to address significant challenges, including managing urbanisation, making regulations consistent and continuous, and adapting to disruptive technologies.

Noting that India has the advantage of having the largest arable land, Bery said the issue of raising agricultural productivity and having opportunities for displaced labour is a big challenge.

# Taiwan reveals 1st domestically made submarine

**Kaohsiung:** Taiwan unveiled its first domestically developed submarine on Thursday, a major step in a project aimed at strengthening the island's deterrence against the Chinese navy, though it won't enter service for another two years. Taiwan, which China claims as its own territory, has made the indigenous submarine programme a key part of an ambitious project to modernise its armed forces. President Tsai Ing-wen, who initiated the plan in 2016, showed off the new submarines on Thursday in the southern city of Kaohsiung. "In the past, a domestically developed submarine was considered an impossible task. But, today, a submarine manufactured by our country's people sits before our eyes," Tsai said. REUTERS



# Ukrainian forces are 'gradually gaining ground': Nato chief

**Kyiv** : Nato secretary general **Jens Stoltenberg**, on an



unannounced visit to Kyiv, said on Thursday that Ukrainian forces were "gradually

gaining ground" in their counteroffensive against Russian forces.

Speaking at a joint press conference with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, Stoltenberg said "every metre that Ukrainian forces regain is a metre that Russia loses".

"And there is a stark contrast: Ukrainians are fighting for their families, their future, their freedom," he added. "Moscow is fighting for imperial delusions."

Zelensky stressed Ukraine's need for more air defence against Russian attacks, saying Moscow had used over 40 Shahed drones in strikes on Ukraine the previous night alone. "And so it is almost every night. In the conditions of such intense attacks against Ukrainians, against our cities, ports, we need a corresponding increase in pressure on Russia and a corresponding increase in our air shield," he said.

Stoltenberg said he was "constantly pushing" Nato allies to provide more sup-

## Putin calls elections in 'occupied' areas a step towards integration

President Vladimir Putin said Thursday that elections conducted this month in Russian-held parts of Ukraine



marked a step towards their full integration into Russia. The votes in the Donetsk, Luhansk,

Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions — all partly under Russia's control — were denounced by Kyiv as illegal. "This is, of course, a significant event, an important step towards the full entry of the new regions into the single legal, state space of our big country," Putin told newly elected governors. REUTERS

port to Ukraine and speed up delivery, "not least" of air defence systems. He announced that Nato now had over-arching framework contracts in place with arms companies worth €2.4 billion (\$2.53 billion) for ammunition, including €1 billion in firm orders.

He said such contracts would allow Nato members to replenish their depleted stockpiles while also continuing to provide Ukraine with ammunition. REUTERS