



4th India-Bhutan Youth Summit

22 - 30 October 2025

REPORT

CENTRE FOR
ESCALATION
OF PEACE

CEP



pallavan
youth driven effort
LEARNING TO LEAD
Pallavan Learning Systems



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ABOUT THE SUMMIT

Centre for Escalation of Peace (CEP), Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies (RIGSS), India-Bhutan Foundation (IBF), and Pallavan Learning Systems (PLS) successfully organised the 4th India-Bhutan Youth Summit from October 22–30, 2025.

The first India-Bhutan Youth Summit was organised in 2018 to mark 50 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The launch of the Summit came at an opportune moment to celebrate this enduring friendship and partnership. The second and third summits followed in 2019 and 2024 respectively, further strengthening the ties between the youth of both nations.

The main objective of the Youth Summit was to enhance the understanding and appreciation among young participants of the importance of building and sustaining the India-Bhutan friendship. It aimed to create a network of potential ambassadors who would carry forward this collaboration for years to come. The summit provided a platform for meaningful dialogue, cross-cultural engagement, and networking opportunities for the youth from both nations.

The broad theme for the 2025 Summit was “Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC) and the Neighbourhood.” 22 Participants from India and Bhutan came together in the Indian states of Meghalaya and Assam, and in the Bhutanese border town of Phuentsholing, for a nine-day programme combining exposure, learning, and adventure. The itinerary included an introduction to both countries, a three-day trek across the scenic landscapes of Shillong, interactive sessions on the summit theme, and meetings with eminent personalities from India and Bhutan. Participants also visited significant sites and interacted with local communities to deepen their understanding of the countries and their shared aspirations.

Participants also experienced aspects of college life in both India and Bhutan, hosted respectively by the Royal Global University (Assam) and the College of Science and Technology (Phuentsholing). During the programme, they had the opportunity to interact with distinguished leaders including Mr. Sabyasachi Dutta, Director of Asian Confluence; Dr. A.K. Buragohain, Vice Chancellor of Royal Global University; Dasho Chewang Rinzin, Vice Chancellor of the Royal University of Bhutan (RUB); and Mr. Rabssel Dorji, Chief of Communications at the Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC).

Both structured sessions and informal exchanges during the summit inspired participants to identify potential collaborative themes for future engagement. They collectively developed project proposals across five key areas — Environment, Education, Community, Digital Forum, and Gender — aligning their contributions with their individual skills, knowledge, and interests. In addition to the group projects, participants maintained daily reflections on the Pallavan Learning Systems online portal, documenting their experiences and learning throughout the summit. After the summit concluded, they submitted individual reports detailing their personal journeys and group presentations linking the summit theme to the broader India-Bhutan relationship.

The 4th India-Bhutan Youth Summit concluded with a renewed commitment to fostering cross-border friendships and nurturing a growing community of youth ambassadors dedicated to strengthening India-Bhutan relations.



ABOUT THE ORGANISERS



Centre of Escalation of Peace, India

www.cepeace.org

The Centre for Escalation of Peace (CEP) takes the view that peace is not just the absence of war. Peace cannot be taken for granted; constant effort is required to enhance it as an anchor in a sea of rapid and far-reaching strategic and socio-economic change. As such, peace must not merely be sustained, but escalated through various strategies & tactics akin to the pursuit of victory during war.

With that in mind, the CEP has continuously sought to create platforms and establish programs that encourage the free exchange of ideas across borders, with a distinct focus on empowering young minds. Its dialogues & activities revolve around three 'pillars of calmness', namely (i) Youth and Education; (ii) Trade & Sustainable Development; and (iii) Society & Culture.



Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies, Bhutan

www.rigss.bt

The Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies (RIGSS) is a premier leadership institute and think tank established by His Majesty The King of Bhutan in 2013. The first of its kind in the country, RIGSS is an autonomous, not-for-profit institute to promote excellence in leadership and governance through training, discourse and research.

RIGSS offers a wide range of leadership training and assessment programmes for different sectors. It also carries out research on the accomplishments and future direction for governance. RIGSS courses and research work provide a comprehensive and analytical understanding of pertinent national issues, emerging trends, and challenges and opportunities for the country.

Besides leadership training and research, RIGSS organises public lectures by eminent speakers, policy debates and seminars and international symposiums. It also organises the Track-II India-Bhutan Dialogue (IBD) in partnership with the Centre for Escalation of Peace (CEP) in New Delhi, an effort to further strengthen India-Bhutan friendship and cooperation.



India-Bhutan Foundation, Bhutan

www.indiabhutanfoundation.com

The India-Bhutan Foundation was established on 29 August 2003 during the visit of the King of Bhutan (then Crown Prince) to India through an MoU signed between the Royal Government of Bhutan and the Government of India, with the aim of enhancing people-to-people exchanges through activities in mutually agreed areas, in particular, in the educational, cultural, scientific, and technical fields.

The Ambassador of Bhutan to India and the Ambassador of India to Bhutan are the Co-Chairpersons of the Foundation's Board of Directors.

The foundation finances proposals received from Bhutanese or Indian nationals for studies; research; educational activities; in-service training for citizens of Bhutan and India at institutions of learning located at each other's countries; exchange visits of scholars, poets, writers, journalists, artists, and other professionals; seminars; symposia; workshops; and support to non-governmental organizations in the two countries whose work contributes to achieving objectives of the Foundation.



Pallavan Learning Systems

Pallavan Learning Systems, India

www.pallavanlearningsystems.com

Pallavan Learning Systems (PLS) is an educational research organisation that promotes the philosophy of wholistic development, focusing on five areas: Cerebral, Emotional, Physical, Social and Spiritual. The Five Areas of Development emphasises the interconnectedness of all areas and focuses on learning how to learn so that all learners are able to actualise their potential. Since 2016, every year, the Five Areas of Development has been recognised by HundrEd, Finland as one of the most influential ideas in education in the world.

Pallavan Learning Systems has numerous years of experience working with schools and institutes operating in various settings – public and private, urban and rural, local and international – and catering to diverse groups of learners – 1.5 to 25-year-olds, learners with special needs, and disadvantaged youth. With the deep understanding of learners and conviction that education is the best route to self-actualisation, PLS continues to strive to make meaningful contributions to the global field of education.

ITINERARY

Day-Date	From	To	Duration	Event
DAY ONE - Guwahati: Wednesday, October 22, 2025				
	12:00:00	14:00:00	2:00:00	Arrival of participants in Guwahati
	14:00:00	17:00:00	3:00:00	Check-in and settling in
	17:00:00			Inaugural session
	17:00:00	17:05:00	0:05:00	Welcome remarks by CEP representative
	17:05:00	17:10:00	0:05:00	Address by RIGSS representative
	17:10:00	18:10:00	1:00:00	- Introduction and sharing of expectations - Orientation to the Learning Portal - Group report writing strategy - Daily individual reflections in diary and on the portal
	18:10:00	18:30:00	0:20:00	Break
	18:30:00	19:30:00	1:00:00	Visit the Museum of The Assam Royal Global University
	19:30:00	20:30:00	1:00:00	Welcome Dinner
	20:30:00			Retire for the day and prepare for early morning departure
DAY TWO - Camping, Shillong: Thursday, October 23, 2025				
	7:00:00	8:00:00	1:00:00	Breakfast and check-out
	8:00:00	12:00:00	4:00:00	Drive to Mawphlang Sacred Forest, Shillong
	12:00:00	13:00:00	1:00:00	Lunch
	13:00:00	16:00:00	3:00:00	Exploration of Mawphlang Sacred Forest
	16:00:00	17:00:00	1:00:00	Drive to basecamp and settling in
	17:00:00	18:30:00	1:30:00	Session 1 - Discussion Theme: Global Issues How do I see the world today? This session invites participants to reflect on the state of the world from their perspective. What global issues concern them most—climate change, conflict, inequality, disconnection, digital overload? What does it mean to be a world citizen today? Through this conversation, participants will share their personal hopes, anxieties, and expectations for a shared future, and identify areas where youth voices and actions can make a difference.
	18:30:00	19:00:00	0:30:00	- Team session: formation of groups and selection of project topics for closing presentations - Invitation to prepare cultural show presentations

			for the final day (optional) - Check-in and updates on the Learning Portal
19:00:00	19:30:00	0:30:00	Traditional storytelling around the bonfire
19:30:00			Dinner & Retire for the day
DAY THREE - Camping, Shillong: Friday, October 24, 2025			
7:00:00	8:00:00	1:00:00	Morning circle and reflective writing exercise (Letter to Self)
8:00:00	8:40:00	0:40:00	Breakfast: traditional high tea with cooking demonstration
8:40:00	12:40:00	4:00:00	Hike along the David Scott Trail
12:40:00	13:40:00	1:00:00	Riverside lunch
13:40:00	15:10:00	1:30:00	Session 2 - Discussion Theme: India-Bhutan Friendship (focus on GMC and the Neighbourhood) Understanding each other through our countries. Participants from Bhutan and India will share their knowledge, impressions, and lived experiences of each other's countries. What do they know or admire about each other's histories, cultures, and societies? What aspects of governance, politics, democracy, and public life inspire pride or raise concerns? This session is an opportunity to understand how young people perceive their nations and the India-Bhutan relationship—and to nurture mutual respect and empathy.
15:10:00	16:10:00	1:00:00	Walk back to the camp
16:10:00	16:40:00	0:30:00	Break
16:40:00	18:10:00	1:30:00	Session 3 - Team Building Activities Building trust, collaboration and friendship. Through fun, interactive team-building exercises, participants will be encouraged to step out of their comfort zones, build trust, and forge new bonds. These activities aim to cultivate listening, problem-solving, and collective decision-making—skills essential for leadership, collaboration, and intercultural understanding.
18:10:00	18:40:00	0:30:00	- Briefing for the next day - Group presentation discussions - Check-in and updates on the Learning Portal
18:40:00	19:40:00	1:00:00	Traditional music performance
19:40:00			Bonfire, dinner, and retire for the day

DAY FOUR – Shillong: Saturday, October 25, 2025

7:00:00	8:00:00	1:00:00	Breakfast at the camp
8:00:00	10:00:00	2:00:00	Drive to Shillong City
10:00:00	11:30:00	1:30:00	Visit to Don Bosco Museum, Shillong
11:30:00	12:30:00	1:00:00	Check-in and settling in
12:30:00	13:30:00	1:00:00	Lunch Break
13:30:00	17:00:00	3:30:00	Exploration of Shillong: - Iewduh Traditional Market - Commercial Market, Police Bazaar
17:00:00	18:30:00	1:30:00	Meeting with an eminent person
19:00:00	19:00:00	0:00:00	Dinner & retire for the day

DAY FIVE – Guwahati: Sunday, October 26, 2025

7:30:00	8:30:00	1:00:00	Breakfast and check-out
9:00:00	12:30:00	3:30:00	Drive to Guwahati
12:30:00	13:00:00	0:30:00	Check-in and settling in
13:00:00	14:00:00	1:00:00	Lunch Break
14:00:00	15:30:00	1:30:00	Meeting with an eminent person
15:30:00	18:30:00	3:00:00	Exploration of Guwahati: - Brahmaputra River Heritage Centre
18:30:00	19:00:00	0:30:00	- Briefing for the next day - Group Presentation Discussion - Check in updates on Learning Portal
19:00:00			Dinner and retire for the day

DAY SIX – Travel: Monday, October 27, 2025

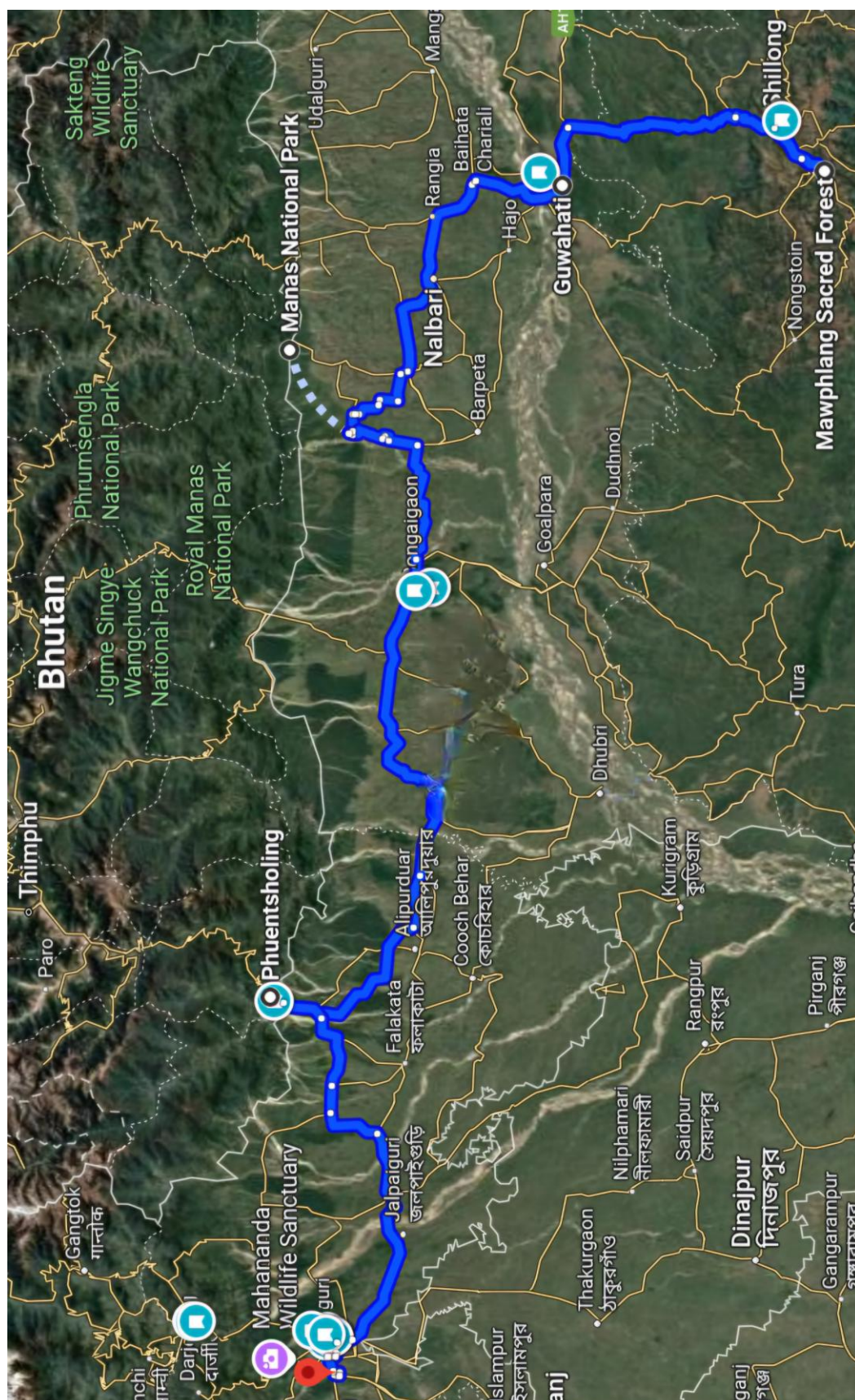
6:00:00	7:00:00	1:00:00	Breakfast and check-out
7:00:00	16:00:00	9:00:00	Drive to Phuentsholing, Bhutan
16:00:00	17:00:00	1:00:00	- Check-in and settling in - Brief session on Bhutanese etiquette - Group presentation discussions - Check-in and updates on the Learning Portal
			Dinner and retire for the day

DAY SEVEN – Phuentsholing: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 (BHUTAN TIME)

7:30:00	8:30:00	1:00:00	Breakfast
9:00:00	10:30:00	1:30:00	Session 4 - A session on Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC) What it means to Bhutan and the world?
10:30:00	11:00:00	0:30:00	Break
11:00:00	12:30:00	1:30:00	Cultural visit to Milarepa Lhakhang
12:30:00	13:30:00	1:00:00	Lunch Break

13:30:00	15:00:00	1:30:00	Session 5 – Youth Leadership and the Future of India-Bhutan Relations Duration: 30-minute session followed by a 1-hour Q&A session
15:00:00	15:30:00	0:30:00	Tea break
15:30:00	17:30:00		Exploration of Phuentsholing Town
18:00:00	19:00:00	1:00:00	- Briefing for the next day - Group Presentation Discussion - Check in updates on Learning Portal
19:00:00			Dinner and retire for the day
DAY EIGHT – Phuentsholing: Wednesday, October 29, 2025			
7:30:00	8:30:00	1:00:00	Breakfast
8:30:00	12:30:00	4:00:00	Preparation for presentations, completing Portal updates and reflections
12:30:00	13:30:00	1:00:00	Lunch
13:30:00	16:00:00	2:30:00	Preparation for final presentation and cultural show
16:00:00	17:30:00	1:30:00	Group presentations, sharing, and future planning
17:30:00	18:30:00	1:00:00	Engagement with eminent people
18:30:00	19:00:00	0:30:00	Break
19:00:00	20:00:00	1:00:00	Cultural show and concluding dinner
20:00:00			Retire for the day and prepare for early morning departure
DAY NINE – Siliguri: Thursday, October 30, 2025			
7:00:00	8:00:00	1:00:00	Breakfast
8:00:00	13:00:00	5:00:00	- Indian participants travel to Siliguri/Bagdogra International Airport - Bhutanese participants depart for home/college
			END OF PROGRAMME

ROUTE MAP



LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

SLN	Name	Nationality	College/University
1	Adrita Buragohain	Indian	Dibrugarh University, Assam, India
2	Amrutha Bharathi Chowdary Thunga	Indian	Shiv Nadar Institute of Eminence, Uttar Pradesh, India
3	D. Adithya Rahul	Indian	St. Stephen's College, Delhi, India
4	Dawa Choden	Bhutanese	Jigme Namgyel Engineering College, Bhutan
5	Keerthana S	Indian	Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Tamil Nadu, India
6	Kezang Choden Namgyel	Bhutanese	Sherubtse College, Bhutan
7	Kinzang Choden Tshering	Bhutanese	Royal Thimphu College, Bhutan
8	Kshetrimayum Jobalaxmi Devi	Indian	Miranda House, Delhi, India
9	Md Sazad	Indian	Second Chance School, Ritinjali, India
10	Mohammad Faisal Iqbal	Indian	Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Tamil Nadu, India
11	Monash Monger	Bhutanese	College of Science and Technology, Bhutan
12	Namgyel Dema Norbu	Bhutanese	Norbuling Rigter College, Bhutan
13	Pelden Wangchuk	Bhutanese	College of Natural Resources, Bhutan
14	Pema Lhazin	Bhutanese	Gedu College of Business Studies, Bhutan
15	Ritesh	Indian	St. Stephen's College, Delhi, India
16	Ryka Gogoi	Indian	The Assam Royal Global University, Assam, India
17	Seldon	Bhutanese	College of Language and Culture Studies, Bhutan
18	Shree Banerjee	Indian	Jalpaiguri Government Engineering College, West Bengal, India

19	Sonam wangchuk	Bhutanese	Gyalpozhing College of Information Technology, Bhutan
20	Tashi Lhamo	Bhutanese	Paro College of Education, Bhutan
21	Tendral Zangmo	Bhutanese	Samtse College of Education, Bhutan
22	Zenab Sabunwala	Indian	CEPT University, Gujarat, India

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS



Adrita Buragohain

Dibrugarh University, Assam, India

Adrita Buragohain is a PhD scholar in History at Dibrugarh University, Assam. Her research examines ethnic identification, political autonomy, and resistance in post-independence Assam. She holds a Master's degree in Modern History from the University of Delhi, where she built a strong foundation in historical debates and interdisciplinary methodologies.

She is currently working on an ICSSR-sponsored project on the change and continuity of Ahom rituals and traditions, further exploring the intersections of culture, identity, and historical memory. Her professional journey includes a role as Research Assistant at the Prime Ministers' Museum and Library, New Delhi, where she specialized in archival research, documentation, and digitisation of rare manuscripts. She also interned at the National Museum, contributing to collections management and supporting the Indo-Thai exhibition in collaboration with the Thai Embassy.

Beyond academics, Adrita has represented Assam as a national-level badminton player and continues to nurture her love for sports. She enjoys traveling, reading, and films, and is deeply interested in intercultural dialogues that create meaningful connections across borders.



Amrutha Bharathi Chowdary Thunga

Shiv Nadar Institute of Eminence, Uttar Pradesh, India

Amrutha Thunga is an undergraduate student of International Relations at Shiv Nadar Institute of Eminence, where she also pursues a minor in Sociology. Her academic interests focus on how environmental destruction functions as a structural tool of violence against marginalized communities. Multilingual and curious about global connections, she is fluent in Telugu, Hindi, and English, and is currently learning Mandarin.

A trained Kuchipudi dancer with over 12 years of experience, Amrutha has performed across India as well as in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Mauritius. She has also engaged in cultural exchange workshops, blending her passion for art with her academic focus through a research project on using classical dance as a tool of cultural diplomacy.

Alongside her artistic and academic pursuits, Amrutha enjoys painting, reading, films, and trekking. She values intercultural exchange and creative collaboration, and looks forward to opportunities where performance and scholarship meet in shaping dialogue.



D. Adithya Rahul

St. Stephen's College, Delhi, India

Adithya Rahul is a fourth-year History student at St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi. As President of the Students' Union, he launched initiatives to strengthen youth participation in decision-making, promote informed discourse, and enhance student engagement with public service. He founded the *Deenabandhu Andrews Samwaad*, the College's first flagship policy dialogue bringing together policymakers, thinkers, and students, which was featured in national and regional media. Under his leadership, the annual cultural festival Harmony expanded to its largest edition in fifteen years, while welfare initiatives such as digital cafeteria payments, extended library hours, renovated facilities, and gender sensitization programs further enriched campus life.

Beyond governance, Adithya has been actively engaged in social service through the College's Social Service League. He coordinated the first post-COVID blood donation drive, mobilizing over 400 donors, and led the "Skip a Meal" campaign to support Delhi's marginalized communities. Believing that leadership is as much about listening as speaking, he values dialogue and collaboration, and sees the India-Bhutan Youth Summit 2025 as a meaningful opportunity to exchange perspectives and deepen cross-border understanding.



Dawa Choden

Jigme Namgyel Engineering College, Bhutan

Dawa Choden, a student at Jigme Namgyel Engineering College, comes from a humble background where neither of her parents had the

opportunity to pursue formal education. Determined to carry forward their unfulfilled dreams, she has become the first in her family to access higher education. Her journey has been shaped by resilience and perseverance, as she has faced numerous challenges with courage, turning each obstacle into an opportunity for growth. She strongly believes that education is not just a personal achievement but also a means of inspiring and uplifting others.

Passionate about women's empowerment, Dawa advocates for equal opportunities and the transformative impact they can have on families, communities, and nations. Deeply patriotic, she holds unwavering loyalty to her King, family, and country, and aspires to serve Bhutan with integrity and purpose. Beyond academics, she is committed to refining her skills and knowledge so she can meaningfully contribute to her nation's progress. For Dawa, living a purposeful life dedicated to resilience, service, and empowerment remains her greatest goal.



Keerthana S.

Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Tamil Nadu, India

Keerthana S is a fourth-year dual-degree student at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras, specializing in Engineering Design and Data Science. Born and raised in Chennai, she is driven by curiosity and a passion for interdisciplinary problem-solving, with research interests at the intersection of healthcare and artificial intelligence. Through academic projects and internships, she has explored innovative ways to integrate technology with medicine, combining technical knowledge with a desire to make meaningful social impact.

Beyond academics, Keerthana is deeply connected to her cultural heritage as a trained Carnatic violinist with over 12 years of practice. She is also an avid quizzer, having won national-level competitions, and enjoys tennis, birdwatching, and traveling—experiences such as exploring Kashmir and the Andaman Islands have broadened her appreciation for India's diversity. Keerthana values collaboration, dialogue, and cross-cultural exchange, and sees the India-Bhutan Youth Summit 2025 as an opportunity to learn, share, and grow alongside peers from across the region.



Kezang Choden Namgyel

Sherubtse College, Bhutan

Kezang Choden Namgyel is a third-year student of Economics and Political Science at Sherubtse College, with strong interests in youth leadership, advocacy, and sustainable development. She currently serves as Vice-Coordinator of the Sherubtse Y-PEER Network, where she has organized training of trainers and sensitization programs on sexual and reproductive health, teenage pregnancy, and gender-based violence, empowering peers to engage with real-life challenges more confidently. Alongside her academic work, she has gained exposure to policy and research, co-authoring a policy brief on gender-based violence with BCAN and working as an enumerator for a World Bank-funded research project.

Kezang has also demonstrated her entrepreneurial spirit through competitions and innovation events, earning recognition at Motithang HSS and Sherubtse Business Idea Pitching Competitions, and as runner-up in the Green Genius Hackathon organized by EcoVation. In 2025, she was awarded the OMLAS Fellowship, a program dedicated to empowering next-generation sustainability leaders in Asia. These experiences have reinforced her belief in the power of youth to drive meaningful change, and she remains committed to personal growth and contributing to her community's progress.



Kinzang Choden Tshering

Royal Thimphu College, Bhutan

Kinzang Choden Tshering, from Ura in Bumthang, is a fourth-year Development Economics student at Royal Thimphu College and a recipient of the DAHE scholarship. She has been recognized with the Dean's Certificate from 2022 to 2025 for her consistent academic excellence. Alongside her studies, she has built leadership experience as a Residence Assistant for two years, coordinator of RTC Rovers, and currently as Head of Marketing and Communications for the RTC She_Leads Club. She has also represented her college at the 2024 JICE International Exchange Program in Tokyo and participated in leadership workshops with the Bhutan Chevening Alumni Network and UN-led youth entrepreneurship discussions.

Fluent in English, Dzongkha, and Hindi, Kinzang values collaboration and communication in both independent and team settings. She actively volunteers with RTC Tarayana, the Red Cross Society, and RTC Rovers, strengthening her sense of service and community engagement. Beyond academics, she enjoys dancing and traveling, which allow her to explore new cultures. She looks forward to contributing her perspectives, learning from others, and building stronger connections between Bhutan and India through the summit.



Kshetrimayum Jobalaxmi Devi

Miranda House, Delhi, India

Kshetrimayum Jobalaxmi Devi, from Manipur, is a fourth-year student at Miranda House, University of Delhi, pursuing a BA Multidisciplinary degree with History as her major and Philosophy as her minor. Alongside her academic work, she has taken on leadership roles as Course Coordinator for the Placement Cell and as part of the Northeast Society, serving as Creative Head (2023–24) and Vice President (2024–25). These experiences reflect her commitment to collaboration, representation, and cultural engagement.

Curious and reflective by nature, Jobalaxmi is passionate about music, dance, folk narratives, food, and languages. She expresses these interests through writing, choreography, and design, often drawing inspiration from the traditions of Northeast India. Deeply rooted in her identity, she aspires to preserve and share regional narratives authentically while celebrating diversity and inclusivity. For her, youth forums are a space to foster dialogue, exchange perspectives, and strengthen cultural connections.



Md Sazad

Second Chance School, Ritinjali, India

Md Sazad, a young and ambitious individual from Siliguri, West Bengal, completed his 12th standard through the Board of Open Schooling & Skill Education, Sikkim. Driven by his aspirations, he moved to Delhi to pursue his dreams and joined the Second Chance School, where he successfully completed a six-month course in Soft Skills and Life Skills. This experience helped him cultivate essential personal and professional attributes.

To further build on his skills, Sazad pursued a Diploma in Bakery & Pastry at the prestigious Indian School of Hospitality (ISH). This training equipped him with the expertise and confidence to excel in the culinary world. He is currently interning at The Leela Palace, New Delhi, where he is gaining valuable hands-on experience and refining his craft.

Sazad's ultimate goal is to become a renowned pastry chef, recognised for his creativity, attention to detail, and passion for baking. Committed to continuous learning and self-improvement, he is eager to embrace new challenges and opportunities that will enable him to grow both personally and professionally, and to make a lasting mark in the culinary industry.



Mohammad Faisal Iqbal

Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Tamil Nadu, India

Mohammad Faisal Iqbal is a Dual Degree student in Biological Engineering at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras. Originally from Delhi, he is passionate about exploring how science, creativity, and collective effort can shape more sustainable and inclusive futures. At IITM, he has served as Head of the Global Engagement Council, coordinated international student exchanges, contributed to placement initiatives, and worked as a cinematographer with IITM TV. His academic experience includes a research internship in China, which broadened his global outlook and deepened his interest in cross-cultural learning.

Beyond academics, Faisal is strongly committed to community service and cultural engagement. He has mentored school students, collaborated with NGOs on education, menstrual health equity, and animal welfare, and participated in initiatives that foster awareness and inclusivity. In creative spaces, he has explored photography and fashion as platforms for storytelling and expression. He values dialogue, empathy, and the bringing together of diverse voices, and sees the India-Bhutan Youth Summit 2025 as an opportunity to build friendships, exchange perspectives, and contribute to shared understanding across borders.



Monash Monger

College of Science and Technology, Bhutan

Monash Monger, from Samtenling in Sarpang Dzongkhag, is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering at the College of Science and Technology. A graduate of The Royal Academy under the Druk Gyalpo's Institute, he has continued to balance academics with leadership, currently serving as the Chief Councilor of his college. In this role, he has gained valuable experience in working collaboratively with peers, representing student interests, and contributing to a stronger campus community. His academic and leadership journey reflects his belief in learning as a pathway to both personal growth and service to others.

Beyond academics, Monash is passionate about sports and hiking, pursuits that keep him active while teaching discipline, endurance, and balance. He values teamwork, curiosity, and resilience, qualities that guide him in applying his knowledge for positive change. Through both his studies and extracurricular experiences, he aspires to contribute meaningfully to society and sees youth forums as opportunities to learn, share, and strengthen connections across borders.



Namgyel Dema Norbu

Norbuling Rigter College, Bhutan

Namgyel Dema Norbu, fondly known as Namja, is a student at Norbuling Rigter College with a deep passion for literature, writing, and minimal art. Thoughtful and imaginative, she often finds inspiration in colors and words, which empower her to express her views with confidence. While naturally introverted when meeting new people, she embraces opportunities to share her ideas with larger audiences, driven by a strong curiosity and a love of learning. She actively seeks knowledge and values every chance to broaden her intellectual horizons.

Namgyel describes herself as someone navigating the fast-paced world of her generation with resilience and creativity. She enjoys exploring new experiences and perspectives, seeing adventure as a way to grow personally and intellectually. Balancing introspection with expression, she aspires to use her voice and creativity to inspire others and to contribute

meaningfully to her community. For her, platforms like youth forums are spaces to connect, learn, and celebrate diverse ideas.



Pelden Wangchuk

College of Natural Resources, Bhutan

Pelden Wangchuk is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Animal Science at the College of Natural Resources, Bhutan. His upbringing and studies have nurtured a strong interest in sustainability, food security, and community development. Through his academic journey, he has gained hands-on experience in animal production, dairy farm management, and the analysis of pasture and vegetation using contemporary tools such as ArcGIS. These experiences have deepened his understanding of how research and innovation can enhance ecological balance and productivity while supporting livelihoods.

Pelden is particularly inspired by the theme of this year's India-Bhutan Youth Summit, *Gelephu Mindfulness City and the Neighbourhood*. He believes that purposeful progress lies not only in infrastructure but also in cultivating people, culture, and the environment. For him, sustainable agriculture and livestock management are vital to achieving harmony between communities and nature. He views the summit as a meaningful opportunity to learn from leaders, exchange perspectives, and explore avenues for regional collaboration. With a commitment to sustainability and mindful growth, he aspires to contribute to building resilient and inclusive futures.



Pema Lhazin

Gedu College of Business Studies, Bhutan

Pema Lhazin, the eldest of three daughters, is in her final year at Gedu College of Business Studies, where she is pursuing a Bachelor of Commerce with a major in Accounting. With an ambition to become a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), she has been shaped by a curiosity for learning and a wide range of interests that have influenced both her academic and personal growth. One of her most defining experiences was spending a year in Finland on an exchange program, where she gained invaluable lessons in independence, adaptability, and cross-cultural understanding.

Pema deeply values the relationship between India and Bhutan and is eager to contribute to the dialogue at the India-Bhutan Youth Summit 2025. She believes her academic background, diverse interests, and international exposure position her to bring fresh perspectives to conversations on collaboration and mutual understanding. For her, the summit is not only an opportunity to learn from others but also a platform to build connections and contribute meaningfully to strengthening ties between the two nations.



Ritesh

St. Stephen's College, Delhi, India

Ritesh is a History graduate from St. Stephen's College, Delhi. Growing up in a village shaped his values of hard work, integrity, and compassion, while his academic journey nurtured a love for learning and inquiry. In 2019, he was selected for ISRO's Young Scientist Programme, where he learned from leading scientists and interacted with peers from across India, an experience that emphasized the value of dialogue and cultural diversity.

In 2025, Ritesh participated in the Gurukul Programme of the Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, which reinforced his belief in dialogue as a pathway to conflict resolution. His academic and personal interests increasingly align with public policy and international relations, where he hopes to contribute through research and engagement.

Beyond academics, Ritesh enjoys reading, traveling, and reflecting on ways to strengthen civic values. He sees platforms like youth summits as an opportunity to learn, collaborate, and contribute to fostering trust and friendship across borders.



Ryka Gogoi

The Assam Royal Global University, Assam, India

Ryka Gogoi is a second-year Political Science Honours student at The Assam Royal Global University. Curious and disciplined, she has a strong interest in national and international political issues, which she

explores through research, writing, and academic competitions. She has contributed articles to newspapers and magazines, honing her ability to analyse and communicate complex ideas.

At university, Ryka serves on the Executive Board of the Literary Club, Sigma Voice, and actively participates in Model United Nations conferences, strengthening her skills in diplomacy, negotiation, and conflict resolution. She is also a Senior Wing NCC cadet with the 30 Assam Battalion, where she was recognised with the Best Cadet Award at the Combined Annual Training Camp 2025.

Her interests extend beyond academics into sports such as Mixed Martial Arts, Lawn Tennis, and Swimming, alongside achievements in Shot Put and Kettlebell Lifting. She has also contributed to community service initiatives, including awareness campaigns and food distribution. Ryka sees youth forums as a chance to develop as a leader, learner, and global citizen.



Seldon

College of Language and Culture Studies, Bhutan

Seldon is in the final year of studies at the College of Language and Culture Studies, where a love for learning and curiosity about new ideas shape both academic and personal pursuits. Passionate about writing and problem-solving, Seldon enjoys activities that foster creativity, critical thinking, and self-expression. Student life has offered opportunities to engage in academic projects, cultural events, and community initiatives, all of which have contributed to personal growth while strengthening skills in teamwork, discipline, and time management.

Beyond academics, Seldon values helping others and finds inspiration in spending time in nature. These experiences provide balance and motivation, grounding an outlook that emphasizes compassion and resilience. With a strong belief in continuous growth, both personally and academically, Seldon strives to make a meaningful impact through active engagement, learning experiences, and contributions to the community.



Shree Banerjee

Jalpaiguri Government Engineering College, West Bengal, India

Shree Banerjee is in his final year of Mechanical Engineering at Jalpaiguri Government Engineering College, West Bengal. Alongside his academic journey, he has taken on leadership roles that reflect his commitment to innovation and social responsibility. He serves as Secretary of the Entrepreneurship and Development Cell, where he fosters a culture of creativity and entrepreneurship among students, and as Secretary of the Centre for Innovation Club, the college's technical forum promoting collaboration in technology-driven initiatives. He is also the Cashier of *Jyoti – A Ray of Hope*, a social initiative dedicated to providing free education to underprivileged children.

Shree feels privileged to have been nominated for the Peace Conference between India and Bhutan, which he sees as an opportunity to exchange ideas, learn from diverse perspectives, and contribute to strengthening bilateral ties. Beyond academics and organizational work, he enjoys music and reading fiction, particularly horror literature. He aspires to carry forward the values of peace, inclusivity, and collaboration in his future endeavours.



Sonam Wangchuk

Gyalpozhing College of Information Technology, Bhutan

Sonam Wangchuk is a third-year student of Artificial Intelligence and Data Science at Gyalpozhing College of Information Technology. Alongside his academic journey, he serves as CEO of EnkiRealm Creatives, an IT-enabled services company, and is a founding member of the Bhutan AI Society. Passionate about the potential of technology, he is particularly interested in how artificial intelligence can address pressing challenges in climate change, biodiversity conservation, and healthcare. His recent research has focused on projects such as environmental DNA for carbon sequestration, early detection of brain tumors, and AI-driven applications designed to improve daily life.

Beyond academics and professional pursuits, Sonam enjoys networking, socializing, and learning from diverse perspectives. He has represented Bhutan in the Jenesys Programme in Japan and participated in national-level debates, competitions, and technology meetups,

experiences that have expanded his vision of innovation as a tool for meaningful impact. Guided by curiosity, collaboration, and a strong sense of purpose, Sonam is committed to creating solutions that support Bhutan's carbon-neutral goals and contribute to global sustainability efforts.



Tashi Lhamo

Paro College of Education, Bhutan

Tashi Lhamo is a student at Paro College of Education with a strong passion for learning, leadership, and personal growth. Open-minded and curious, she embraces new ideas and opportunities that help her step outside her comfort zone, even when it feels challenging. She strives to go beyond studying for exams, cultivating a love for reading and continuous learning. Known for her persistence, Tashi approaches difficulties with determination, often pushing through challenges until she achieves her goals.

She values kindness, respect, and empathy as essential qualities, believing they are as important as knowledge in shaping character and relationships. Committed to self-improvement, she seeks out meaningful activities that contribute to her growth and allow her to make a positive impact on others. For Tashi, learning is not only about academic achievement but also about resilience, discipline, and becoming a better version of herself. She looks forward to engaging with diverse perspectives and contributing to discussions on education and personal development.



Tendral Zangmo

Samtse College of Education, Bhutan

Tendral Zangmo is a third-year student at Samtse College of Education, where she is pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Education with a specialization in English and Geography. Originally from Samdrup Jongkhar Dzongkhag, she completed her schooling there before joining college and now also serves as a student councillor. Her academic journey reflects both commitment and leadership, supported by a strong family bond that continues to inspire her growth.

Outside academics, Tendral enjoys painting, reading, listening to music, and playing volleyball. She has recently taken up crocheting and also loves hiking and exploring new places, which provide her with fresh perspectives and creativity. She values balance, personal development, and the support of her four siblings, who motivate her to keep working hard. Tendral is delighted to return to Shillong for the second time, having first visited during Class 12 to participate in the 7th Northeast Green Summit. She looks forward to the India-Bhutan Youth Summit 2025 as an opportunity to learn, connect, and share experiences.



Zenab Sabunwala

CEPT University, Gujarat, India

Zenab Sabunwala is a fifth-year undergraduate student of Urban Design at CEPT University. Her academic work examines how people shape cities and how economic forces influence urban development. She combines her interest in urban research with a long-standing passion for world history and the evolution of cities.

Actively engaged in the public realm, Zenab has participated in debates and diplomacy conferences since her school years. At CEPT, she revived her program's newsletter and directed the spring production of the university's longest-running theatre club, experiences that highlight her ability to lead teams, manage projects, and bring diverse people together.

She is particularly interested in how urban design can foster inclusivity and community, and looks forward to applying her skills to build vibrant, sustainable cities. Beyond academics, she enjoys theatre, literature, and cross-cultural dialogue. For Zenab, international youth gatherings are an opportunity to collaborate and imagine more equitable urban futures.

DAILY DOCUMENTATION

Wednesday, 22 October 2025

The Bhutanese delegation arrived at 8:00 a.m. at Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport, Guwahati, from Paro International Airport. They were received by the organizing team and escorted to The Assam Royal Global University (RGU), where university officials extended a warm welcome.

After breakfast at the campus café—featuring Indian and South Indian dishes such as dosa and dum vegetable biryani—the participants were taken on a guided campus tour. The visit included the GHI Building Block, where they interacted with faculty and lab technicians who briefed them on the university’s academic structure and range of over 100 programmes. The delegation appreciated the institution’s diversity and multidisciplinary approach. Following lunch and rest at their accommodation, they prepared for the evening’s inauguration ceremony.



Indian participants arrived in batches from cities including Delhi, Chennai, Ahmedabad, Dibrugarh, and Bagdogra, between 11:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. While waiting at the airport, participants interacted informally, sharing their academic backgrounds and expectations for the summit. By 6:00 p.m., they reached RGU and proceeded directly to the inauguration ceremony.

The Bhutanese participants, attired in traditional dress (Kira and Tego for the girls, Gho for the boys), were present alongside officials from the Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies (RIGSS) to welcome their Indian counterparts. The ceremony opened with a Manipuri Welcome Dance performed by RGU students, symbolizing unity and cultural exchange.

Choki Wangchuk from the Centre for Escalation of Peace (CEP) delivered the opening address, welcoming delegates from both nations. Hasta Bdr Rai from RIGSS expressed gratitude to CEP, RGU, and other partners for their collaboration.

Mr. D. N. Singh, Registrar (Academics), emphasized the importance of thinking beyond conventional academic boundaries, while Ms. Gurpreet Kaur Anand, Deputy Director, Office of International Relations, encouraged participants to step out of their comfort zones and fully engage with the summit's learning opportunities.

All participants then introduced themselves briefly, sharing their name, institution, home city, key interest area, and expectations from the summit. Following this, Thupten Tsewang conducted an orientation on the Pallavan Learning Portal, explaining its features and the importance of completing daily reflections and reports. The organizing team outlined the next day's schedule



and activity plan. Closing remarks were delivered by Ms. Anand and Mr. Wangchuk, after which participants received a welcome kit containing a diary, T-shirt, water bottle, and badge.

The opening day was marked by polite formality as both delegations began interacting. As the evening progressed, conversations became more relaxed and engaging. Participants showed genuine curiosity about each other's cultures and educational experiences, laying the groundwork for meaningful collaboration in the days ahead.

Day 1 concluded with a spirit of mutual respect and anticipation. Participants from both India and Bhutan expressed enthusiasm to engage, exchange ideas, and collaborate over the coming days. The inaugural day successfully established the tone for a constructive and enriching India–Bhutan Friendship Summit.



Thursday, 23 October 2025

The second day of the summit began with a journey to the Mawphlang Sacred Forest in Meghalaya. The drive was picturesque, winding through the lush hills of the region. A minor delay occurred when one of the vehicles experienced a tire issue, but the drivers quickly resolved it, and the group resumed their journey without difficulty. Upon arrival, participants were served a traditional meal and noted that the local cuisine of the Northeast is light, wholesome, and primarily boiled or steamed rather than fried or heavily spiced.

The caretaker of the Mawphlang Sacred Forest welcomed the group and delivered a detailed and engaging briefing on the sanctity of the forest. His passion for both the environment and his

culture was evident as he spoke. He shared that he had authored a book cataloguing the rich flora and fauna of the region and highlighted his ongoing efforts to engage local Khasi youth in conservation initiatives. His talk provided a meaningful introduction to the intricate link between traditional beliefs and environmental preservation.



The group learned that the forest holds deep spiritual significance for the Khasi people, who worship nature and ancestral spirits rather than idols. Rituals in the forest are traditionally led by a bearded priest and often involve offerings or animal sacrifices. Women, according to local custom, do not participate in certain rituals as it is believed that they may become emotional during such ceremonies. The caretaker also mentioned that the last major ritual in the forest took place in 1950. The very name “Mawphlang,” meaning “grassy stone,” reflects the intertwining of nature and culture in Khasi tradition.

The participants gained insight into the Khasi matrilineal system in which lineage and inheritance pass through the mother’s line, with property traditionally going to the youngest daughter. The caretaker spoke about Reverend Thomas Jones, who introduced the Khasi alphabet, and about historical figures such as David Scott, a British officer who played a key role in establishing

colonial routes through the region. The group also learned that Meghalaya's population is composed of approximately seventy-nine per cent Christians and twenty-one per cent followers of indigenous faiths.



The discussion touched upon the region's economic and geographical features as well. Guwahati historically served as a major trading hub for areca nut or supari, and Meghalaya is rich in limestone resources. Participants were particularly intrigued by the ecological wealth of the forest and the community's commitment to protecting it through traditional laws. One example of this is the prohibition on cutting or removing anything from the sacred grove, a practice that has helped preserve its pristine ecosystem. The caretaker also mentioned the Himalayan Yew tree, now near extinction, whose oil is extremely valuable and whose wood has been used to craft bows and arrows. Participants observed pine trees of distinct male and female varieties, identifiable by their cones—the smaller ones producing pollen and the larger ones bearing seeds.

The visit left participants deeply moved by the balance between reverence and restraint that governs Khasi life. The Red Bull ritual, still performed as a sacred offering by a bearded priest, was cited as an enduring expression of this devotion. The group left the forest with a heightened

appreciation for how belief systems, social structures, and ecological awareness coexist harmoniously within the Khasi worldview.



Following the exploration of the sacred forest, the group embarked on a trek to the Trout Farm. The path was long and demanding but offered breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape. Along the way, participants came across the grave of a British officer's daughter, which served as a quiet reminder of the region's colonial past. During the trek, facilitators spoke about the three major tribes of Meghalaya—Khasi, Garo, and Jaintia—each with distinct languages, traditions, and customs.

Upon reaching the Trout Farm, tents were pitched in pairs, and everyone was treated to a refreshing cup of milkless tea. As dusk settled, participants gathered for a reflection session structured around three questions: What is our perception of the world today? What social, political, or environmental issues concern us most deeply? And what would an ideal world or future look like?

The discussion that followed was both insightful and thought-provoking. Participants spoke passionately about issues such as gender inequality, weaknesses in education systems, the negative influence of social media, the ongoing degradation of the environment, and a growing loss of empathy and connection among people. The exchange was candid and analytical, with participants linking their personal observations to broader global themes.



As the evening continued, a local artist performed a song-story about La Phalang, a deer whose tragic death at the hands of villagers inspired remorse and gave rise to the belief in the forest's sacredness. The performance was deeply moving, blending music and narrative to convey the intimate connection between human emotion and the natural world.

Dinner was served around a warm bonfire, where participants shared laughter, stories, and reflections under the open sky. The evening fostered camaraderie and a sense of shared purpose, bringing together individuals from different backgrounds in a spirit of friendship and introspection.

Day 2 offered a rare opportunity to experience how nature, spirituality, and community life intertwine in the Khasi worldview. The visit to Mawphlang Sacred Forest and the trek that followed deepened participants' understanding of indigenous conservation practices and their cultural roots. The day concluded with meaningful reflection, creative expression, and renewed appreciation for both human diversity and environmental harmony. It was an immersive learning experience that left a lasting impression on everyone involved.



Friday, 24 October 2025

The third day of the summit began early with a refreshing morning atmosphere as participants gathered for breakfast before embarking on another day of engaging activities. Breakfast featured a variety of rice-based dishes typical of Meghalaya, offering a glimpse into the region's simple yet wholesome culinary traditions.

The first activity of the day was a traditional cooking demonstration, where participants learned to prepare Putharo, a popular Khasi delicacy made from rice flour mixed with water and cooked

in a Sarao, a traditional clay pot. The demonstration was both educational and cultural, revealing how food in Khasi society is not merely sustenance but an expression of heritage, celebration, and togetherness. The facilitator explained that Putharo is commonly prepared during significant life events such as births, weddings, and harvest festivals, symbolizing unity and gratitude within the community.



After the cooking session, the group set out to hike the historic David Scott Trail, one of the oldest routes in Meghalaya named after a British officer. The trail meanders through dense forests, undulating hills, and clear streams, offering panoramic views of the surrounding valleys. Along the way, participants took part in a team-based puzzle game designed to test problem-solving, communication, and collaboration. The activity demonstrated how shared effort and coordination can overcome challenges—an apt reflection of the summit's spirit of partnership between India and Bhutan.

The journey was also rich in cultural insights. Local stories and legends connected to the landscape were shared by guides—tales of mountain formations resembling animals and an ancient arch bridge built centuries ago. These stories reflected how folklore continues to shape

the community's relationship with nature. After completing nearly twenty kilometers of trekking, the group reached the endpoint and stopped by the riverside for lunch.

Lunch by the river was a serene experience. Surrounded by the sound of flowing water and the green expanse of the forest, participants enjoyed a simple yet memorable meal. The calm setting invited reflection on the role of nature in sustaining human connection and wellbeing, reinforcing the importance of environmental mindfulness.



After returning to campus and taking a short break, participants reconvened for an evening of reflection and dialogue. The session began with a short Shamatha meditation, encouraging mindfulness and deep breathing to center attention and calm the mind. This was followed by a period of self-reflection, where participants contemplated personal questions such as “What’s missing in my life?” The exercise created a quiet and introspective atmosphere, allowing everyone to pause and reconnect with their inner thoughts before moving into the group discussion.

The reflection evolved into a structured dialogue session focusing on themes that connected both nations—history, governance, education, gender equality, economy, mental health, and

culture. Participants shared their perspectives with sincerity, drawing from their personal experiences and observations. The conversation underscored the diversity of viewpoints while revealing a shared commitment to creating more inclusive, equitable, and compassionate societies.



Across the discussion, several recurring themes emerged, including the need for accessible and meaningful education, platforms for youth dialogue, recognition of talent and creativity, gender equity, environmental sustainability, and digital awareness. Participants emphasized the importance of combining traditional wisdom with modern innovation to address contemporary challenges. They also reflected on how leadership, civic engagement, and mindfulness can guide societies toward harmony and shared prosperity.

The day concluded with a sense of fulfillment and connection. The discussions demonstrated how young people from India and Bhutan can collectively identify common issues and propose actionable solutions that transcend borders. The closing reflections highlighted seven broad themes—education, forums for dialogue, talent development, community service, women’s empowerment, environment and nature, and responsible digital engagement—each representing an area of future collaboration.

Day 3 thus stood out as a day of cultural immersion, intellectual exchange, and emotional resonance. Through shared experiences of cooking, hiking, meditation, and dialogue, participants deepened their appreciation for cultural diversity and the values of cooperation, respect, and mindfulness that underpin the India–Bhutan Friendship Summit.



Saturday, 25 October 2025

The day began early at 6:00 a.m. as participants prepared for another day of exploration and learning. Breakfast was served at 7:30 a.m., consisting of bread with eggs, chana, bananas, and black tea topped with froth. The meal provided a simple yet energizing start to the day. Before departure, the guides surprised everyone with small gifts—a thoughtful gesture that set a warm and cheerful tone for the morning.

At 8:20 a.m., the group commenced a short hike to the top of a nearby hill, enjoying the crisp morning air and scenic surroundings. The trail offered beautiful views of the rolling hills and

greenery of Meghalaya. By 9:30 a.m., the group reached the buses, packed their belongings, and continued towards the day's first destination.



Around 11:25 a.m., the participants arrived at lewduh Market, one of the oldest and largest traditional markets in Shillong. Upon arrival, they were divided into three smaller groups, each guided by a local expert who explained the market's historical and cultural importance. The visit offered an opportunity to observe how traditional trade practices and community interactions continue to thrive amidst modern development. Participants were particularly struck by the sense of community ownership within the market and the role of women traders, who form a vital part of the region's economic fabric.

By 1:55 p.m., the market tour concluded, and the group proceeded to Golf Links, a lush open space known for its tranquil setting and colonial-era charm. Lunch was served there at 2:20 p.m., allowing participants to relax and unwind after an active morning.

Following lunch, the group visited the Don Bosco Museum, arriving at 3:00 p.m. The museum visit was a highlight of the day, offering a comprehensive view of the Northeast's diverse cultures,

traditions, and ways of life. Through its galleries and exhibits, participants explored the rich artistic, social, and spiritual heritage of the region. The visit provided meaningful insights into the interconnectedness of communities across the Northeast and deepened participants' appreciation of India's cultural plurality. The museum tour concluded at 4:00 p.m., and by 5:00 p.m., the group returned to their accommodation for a short rest before the evening engagement.



In the evening, participants attended a special interaction and dinner session hosted at the Asian Confluence Headquarters in Shillong. The event began at 7:00 p.m. and featured an engaging conversation with an eminent local leader who spoke about the importance of cross-border collaboration, sustainable regional development, and the shared cultural and environmental realities of neighboring countries.

The discussion emphasized the need for meaningful partnerships among nations with similar geographical and ecological contexts, encouraging collective approaches to growth that balance tradition, innovation, and sustainability. Participants found the session deeply inspiring, as it linked the summit's themes of friendship and cooperation to real-world examples of regional development.

Following the interaction, the group explored the venue briefly before gathering for dinner at 9:30 p.m. The evening concluded on a warm and reflective note, as participants shared conversations over a delicious meal and looked back on a day filled with learning, culture, and meaningful exchange.



Day 4 was marked by exploration, learning, and dialogue. From experiencing the rhythm of local life in lewduh Market to appreciating the artistic and cultural legacy preserved in the Don Bosco Museum, participants gained valuable insights into the region's economic, historical, and social dynamics. The evening interaction further enriched the day's experiences by connecting local perspectives with broader global ideas of collaboration and sustainable growth.

The day ended with a sense of fulfillment and gratitude, as participants reflected on the lessons learned and the friendships strengthened through shared discovery and dialogue.

Sunday, 26 October 2025

The day began promptly at 7:30 a.m. at the IXTSY Hostel, where participants were fully prepared, having packed their belongings and readied themselves for departure. Breakfast was served before the journey and included a wholesome spread of breads accompanied by jam, butter, and peanut butter, alongside boiled eggs and coffee.

By 8:30 a.m., the group departed for Guwahati. The drive through the scenic hills of Meghalaya was calm and reflective, allowing participants to enjoy the changing landscape as they descended from Shillong. A brief 15-minute rest stop midway provided time for hot coffee and light refreshments before continuing the journey. The atmosphere remained peaceful, with many participants using the opportunity to rest and prepare for the day's activities ahead.

At approximately 12:00 p.m., the group arrived in Guwahati, where a warm welcome awaited them at The Assam Royal Global University (RGU). A delicious lunch was served upon arrival, offering participants a chance to relax and rejuvenate before the afternoon's academic session.



Following lunch, participants attended an insightful lecture by Professor (Dr.) Alak Kumar Buragohain, Vice Chancellor of Assam Royal Global University. The session explored the themes of Right Livelihood, Sustainable Development, and Buddhist Economics. Professor Buragohain drew upon his rich academic experience and reflections from his 2018 visit to Bhutan, where he had been invited to deliver a keynote address during the celebration of fifty years of India–Bhutan friendship.

He spoke about the need to view livelihood not merely as a means of earning but as a path aligned with ethics, purpose, and community well-being. He emphasized that true progress arises when science works in harmony with religion, philosophy, sociology, and history—encouraging an integrated approach to human development.

Professor Buragohain recommended two influential works for further study: *Small Is Beautiful* and *Our Common Future*. His talk underscored the interconnectedness of all living beings and

the responsibility of humanity to pursue development rooted in balance, compassion, and sustainability. The session concluded around 3:00 p.m., leaving participants with much to reflect upon.



In the afternoon, the group visited the Mahabahu Brahmaputra River Heritage Centre, one of Guwahati's most significant cultural landmarks. The centre celebrates the history and living heritage of the Brahmaputra River—revered both as a lifeline and as a sacred presence in the life of Northeast India.

Participants explored the tree-lined walkways, the Art Garden, the open-air amphitheatre, and the 170-year-old Heritage Bungalow that houses exhibits on the region's riverine culture. The modern glass façade café and the Riverside Garden, with its viewing decks overlooking the majestic Brahmaputra, offered a serene and contemplative experience. The visit provided an opportunity to appreciate the deep relationship between people and nature in the region's cultural consciousness. The group spent about an hour at the site before continuing their journey.

Later in the evening, the participants visited the City Centre Mall in Guwahati, arriving at around 5:20 p.m. The visit allowed them to experience the city's contemporary urban life. Many participants took the opportunity to purchase souvenirs and local products for their families, while others sampled local street food from nearby vendors.

By 7:30 p.m., the group returned to the RGU Hostel, where dinner was served. The day concluded with a final meeting in the conference hall at 8:50 p.m., during which participants shared reflections, discussed key insights, and completed their individual and group daily reports. The session provided a moment to consolidate the day's learning and prepare for the concluding phase of the summit.



Day 5 of the India–Bhutan Friendship Summit offered a blend of intellectual engagement, cultural immersion, and personal reflection. The morning journey and lecture introduced participants to the principles of sustainable living and holistic development, while the visit to the Brahmaputra Heritage Centre provided a tangible connection to the themes of nature, heritage, and community. The day ended with a sense of gratitude and introspection as participants reflected on how these experiences deepened their understanding of harmony between progress, culture, and ecology.

Monday, 27 October 2025

The seventh day of the India–Bhutan Youth Summit began with renewed excitement as participants prepared to cross into Bhutan, marking the beginning of the second phase of the summit. After a wholesome breakfast at The Assam Royal Global University (RGU), everyone packed their belongings and assembled for departure.



At around 8:00 a.m., the delegation set out for Phuentsholing by bus. The journey was lively and filled with camaraderie—participants shared songs, stories, and reflections from the previous week, fostering a sense of unity and anticipation. The drive through Assam’s lush green countryside, dotted with tea gardens and villages, offered picturesque views of rural life and kept the group engaged throughout the morning.

Around early afternoon, the delegation stopped at NH-27 Kitchen in Bongaigaon for lunch. A traditional Assamese thali was served, featuring rice, dal, mixed vegetables, papad, and local pickles. The simple yet flavourful meal offered a glimpse into the warmth and richness of

Assamese hospitality. The break also allowed participants to refresh and stretch before continuing their journey toward the Indo–Bhutan border.

Post-lunch, the group resumed the drive toward Phuentsholing. The atmosphere grew more vibrant as the buses neared Jaigaon—the last Indian town before the Bhutan border. Crossing into Phuentsholing was a memorable experience for everyone, symbolizing not only a change in geography but also a transition into a new cultural and social setting.

Located in the Chukha district, Phuentsholing serves as the gateway to Bhutan and immediately impressed participants with its calm, orderly environment and striking contrast from the bustling Indian border town. Upon arrival, the Indian participants completed their entry permit procedures at the Immigration Centre for Tourists. The process was smooth and efficient, allowing the group to soon proceed to the Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies (RIGSS), where the next leg of the summit was scheduled to take place.



At RIGSS, participants received a warm welcome from the institute’s faculty and staff. The session began with an introductory briefing by a senior representative, who outlined the institute’s vision, objectives, and role in strengthening leadership and governance in Bhutan. The speaker elaborated on how RIGSS serves as a platform for nurturing thoughtful, responsible, and ethical leadership within the country and across the region.

The orientation also touched upon the broader goals of the India–Bhutan Youth Summit, emphasizing collaboration, cultural understanding, and the development of young leaders who could serve as bridges of friendship between the two nations. The interaction was both informative and inspiring, encouraging participants to reflect on their own responsibilities as representatives of their respective countries and as emerging global citizens.

Following the session, dinner was served at RIGSS. The meal featured a delightful mix of Bhutanese and Indian dishes, with Ema Datshi—the traditional Bhutanese preparation of chillies and cheese—emerging as a clear favorite among participants. The evening offered an opportunity for informal conversations, during which participants shared reflections on the day’s experiences and their expectations for the sessions ahead.

After dinner, the group proceeded to the College of Science and Technology (CST) guest house, where accommodations had been arranged. The serene setting of the guest house provided a peaceful contrast to the day’s travels. Participants settled into their rooms, some engaging in quiet discussions while others retired early, reflecting the calm rhythm of life in Bhutan.

The sense of accomplishment and anticipation was palpable—having successfully completed the journey from India, participants now looked forward to immersing themselves in the Bhutan segment of the summit and the learning opportunities it promised.

Day 7 of the India–Bhutan Youth Summit marked an important transition—both geographical and symbolic—as participants moved from India into Bhutan. The day combined elements of travel, cultural immersion, and intellectual engagement. The warm welcome at RIGSS and the enriching discussions on leadership and collaboration set the tone for the next phase of the summit.

The day concluded with a shared sense of excitement and curiosity as participants prepared to embark on a deeper exploration of Bhutanese culture, governance, and values in the days to come.

Tuesday 28 October 2025

The day commenced with a scheduled virtual briefing at 9:00 a.m. with Mr. Rabssel Dorji, Chief of Communication for the Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC). The session provided a comprehensive strategic overview of GMC, a national transformation initiative envisioned and guided by His Majesty, The King of Bhutan.

Mr. Dorji began by contextualizing Bhutan’s geographic location between South Asia and Southeast Asia, emphasizing that this position is not merely a geographical fact but a long-term geo-economic advantage. He explained that Bhutan’s compact national scale allows for swift policy implementation, and when combined with enlightened leadership, renewable energy

resources, and abundant natural capital, it positions Bhutan as a corridor of sustainable opportunity within the region rather than a passive participant in regional development flows.



During the session, Mr. Dorji elaborated that GMC will function as a Special Administrative Region with autonomous executive, legislative, and judicial authority under the principle of “*One Nation, Two Systems*.” Civic security, he noted, will be embedded as part of the operational infrastructure—ensuring an environment where safety is systemic, not reactive, allowing individuals to move freely and confidently at all hours. The GMC governance model will be empowered to adopt global best practices and innovative policy frameworks designed to attract high-quality international investment while maintaining Bhutan’s ethical and environmental integrity.

Importantly, Mr. Dorji highlighted that a minimum of 70 percent of the total 2,600 sq. km area of GMC will remain under forest cover. This commitment makes environmental stewardship a legally mandated principle and not a rhetorical objective. Sustainability, therefore, is codified as a structural design feature, integrating ecological preservation with economic ambition.

The briefing also introduced the eight priority economic pillars around which the GMC initiative is being developed:

- Spiritual industries
- Wellness and health ecosystems
- Education and the knowledge economy
- Agri-tech and forestry
- Green energy and technology-based manufacturing
- Finance and digital assets

- Aviation and logistics
- Mindful tourism

This framework, he explained, reflects that GMC is not a conventional industrial or economic zone, but a sovereign developmental platform—an innovative model of nation-building designed for long-term competitiveness and balanced prosperity. The participants gained a nuanced understanding of how GMC seeks to align economic progress with cultural continuity, global engagement, and mindful living.

Following the briefing, the group travelled to Milarepa Lhakhang, a serene and spiritually significant temple revered for its historical and cultural importance. The group arrived at approximately 10:30 a.m. and spent time exploring the sacred site, taking in its tranquil surroundings and traditional Bhutanese architecture. The visit offered participants a space for reflection, allowing them to connect the themes of mindfulness and nation-building discussed earlier with Bhutan's deeply rooted spiritual traditions. The stillness of the temple and its profound sense of peace provided an experiential reminder of how spirituality remains central to Bhutan's identity and social cohesion.



At 3:00 p.m., participants met with Mr. Chewang Rinzin, Vice Chancellor of the Royal University of Bhutan, for a leadership dialogue that focused on the moral and ethical foundations of authentic leadership. The discussion emphasized that while skills and intelligence contribute to capability, humility remains the defining trait that separates genuine leadership from authority-based power.



Mr. Rinzin articulated that leadership devoid of values eventually collapses into ego and self-interest. He urged young leaders to cultivate inner discipline, empathy, and ethical integrity, asserting that true leadership is measured by responsibility and restraint, not rank or recognition. The conversation left a deep impression on the participants, reinforcing the importance of humility and self-awareness as core leadership attributes.

Day 7 of the program provided high strategic and philosophical value. The morning's insight into the Gelephu Mindfulness City expanded participants' understanding of Bhutan's visionary approach to sustainable and mindful development—an initiative that integrates governance, economics, and spirituality into a coherent national strategy. The afternoon's leadership dialogue

further deepened this perspective by linking institutional ambition with personal character and ethical responsibility.

By the end of the day, participants had developed a richer appreciation of how national transformation is rooted in values-based leadership—where progress is pursued without compromising identity, ecology, or humanity. The day effectively bridged strategic understanding with personal reflection, reinforcing the alignment between individual growth and nation-building ethos.



Wednesday 29 October 2025

The final day of the India-Bhutan Youth Summit began with breakfast at 7:30 a.m. at the Royal Centre for Hospitality (RCH). After a refreshing meal, participants assembled in the recreation room at 8:30 a.m. for the morning session, which focused on preparing project reports, refining presentations, and reflecting on the week's experiences.

The discussions were animated and purposeful. Participants shared insights from their journey across India and Bhutan, revisiting key learnings on governance, sustainability, leadership, and

cross-cultural understanding. The atmosphere was both reflective and celebratory, as each group worked collaboratively to consolidate their ideas and final presentations.



A tea break at 10:45 a.m. provided a brief pause, featuring freshly steamed momos and hot tea—a simple yet comforting local treat that added warmth to the morning. The productive discussions continued until lunch at 12:45 p.m., after which participants returned to their hostel at 2:00 p.m. to prepare for the evening’s closing ceremony. By 3:30 p.m., everyone reconvened at the Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies (RIGSS) to finalize their group presentations.

The final presentation session began at 5:00 p.m., marking the culmination of several days of collaborative effort and shared learning. Each group presented their project outcomes and reflections, highlighting innovative ideas and practical solutions inspired by the summit’s discussions. The presentations captured the collective spirit of the India–Bhutan Youth Summit—one of friendship, curiosity, and a commitment to building a more compassionate and sustainable future. The session concluded at 6:30 p.m., transitioning smoothly into the official closing ceremony.

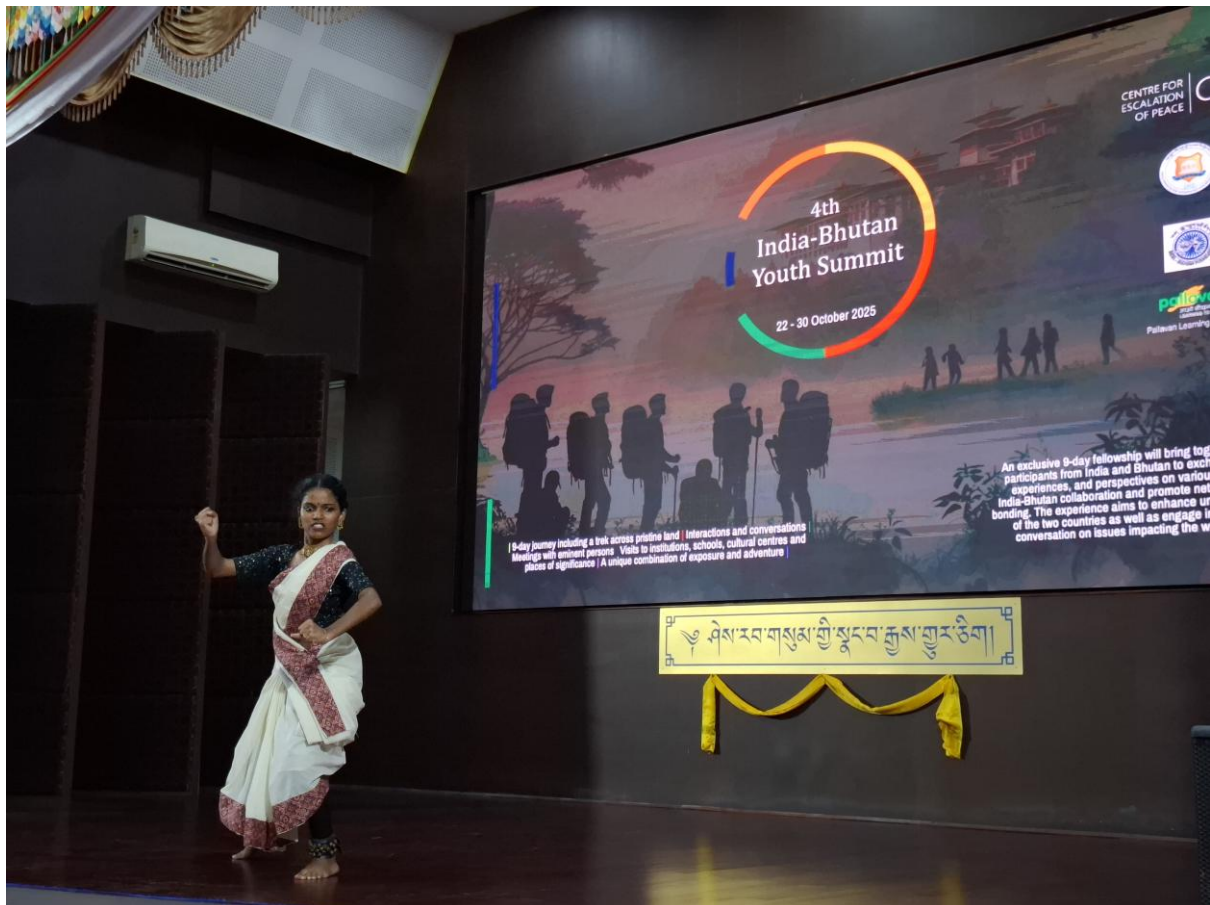
The ceremony opened with welcoming remarks from a senior representative of RIGSS, followed by an address that reflected on the purpose, impact, and success of the summit. The speakers commended the participants for their enthusiasm, discipline, and genuine engagement throughout the program.



Reflections were then shared on behalf of both delegations, encapsulating the shared emotions and learnings of the past week. Words of gratitude and inspiration were offered by distinguished guests, acknowledging the importance of youth-led initiatives in strengthening India–Bhutan relations. Certificates of participation were then awarded to all delegates, marking their contributions and achievements during the summit.

A heartfelt vote of thanks followed, expressing appreciation to the organizing teams, facilitators, institutions, and participants whose collective efforts made the summit possible. The tone of the event was both celebratory and introspective, underscoring the enduring spirit of friendship that the summit aimed to foster.

After a short tea break at 7:30 p.m., the celebrations continued with a vibrant cultural evening organised jointly by the College of Science and Technology (CST) and the India–Bhutan Youth Summit participants. The performances featured traditional Bhutanese dances, lively Rigsar music, and Indian cultural acts that together created a colourful and joyful exchange of artistic expression. The audience responded enthusiastically, celebrating the diversity and unity that defined the summit.



The evening concluded with a closing dinner, where participants shared their final conversations and exchanged heartfelt goodbyes. Laughter, gratitude, and emotion filled the air as everyone reflected on the friendships formed, lessons learned, and experiences shared over the course of the program. Group photos and farewells marked the end of a memorable journey that had brought together two nations through their youth.

Day 8 brought the India–Bhutan Youth Summit 2025 to a meaningful and emotional close. The day's activities—ranging from group discussions and presentations to cultural performances—embodied the summit's core purpose of fostering understanding, collaboration, and leadership among young people of both nations.

As the final evening came to an end, participants carried with them a deep sense of accomplishment and connection. The summit concluded not as an ending, but as the beginning of continued dialogue and friendship between the youth of India and Bhutan, reaffirming the shared vision of a compassionate and sustainable future.



Thursday, 30 October 2025

After eight enriching days of travel, dialogue, cultural exchange, and learning, the final day of the India-Bhutan Youth Summit dawned with mixed emotions of gratitude and farewell. Participants began the morning by preparing for their journeys home, reflecting on the memorable experiences and friendships formed over the course of the program.

At Phuentsholing, the Bhutanese participants gathered to bid farewell to their Indian counterparts. In a touching gesture of goodwill and camaraderie, they presented small tokens of appreciation, symbolizing the bonds of friendship that had grown stronger throughout the

summit. The exchange was filled with warmth, laughter, and heartfelt words of thanks, marking the culmination of a truly collaborative experience between the youth of both nations.

After the farewell ceremony, the Indian delegation departed from Phuentsholing, crossing the border back into India. The journey to Bagdogra Airport was quiet and reflective, as participants looked back on the days spent together—filled with learning, cultural immersion, and shared purpose.

Upon arrival at the airport, the group exchanged final goodbyes, expressing deep gratitude to the organizers, facilitators, and peers who had made the summit such a meaningful experience. There were hugs, laughter, and moments of nostalgia as participants promised to stay in touch and continue the spirit of collaboration and friendship that the summit had inspired.

Day 9 marked the formal conclusion of the India-Bhutan Youth Summit 2025. As the participants set out for their respective destinations, the atmosphere was filled with a sense of accomplishment and connection. The summit had not only strengthened the historic bond between India and Bhutan but had also created lasting friendships, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to future collaboration.

With gratitude, reflection, and the promise of continued partnership, the India-Bhutan Youth Summit 2025 came to a heartfelt close—leaving every participant with memories and lessons that will endure far beyond the journey itself.



CONCLUSION

Centre for Escalation of Peace (CEP), Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies (RIGSS), India-Bhutan Foundation (IBF) and Pallavan Learning Systems (PLS) collaborated to organise the 4th India-Bhutan Youth Summit from October 22-30, 2025.

This year's summit took place in the Indian states of Meghalaya and Assam and in the Bhutanese border town of Phuentsholing, and brought together 11 participants each from India and Bhutan for a 9-day immersive programme. The agenda was designed to blend learning with adventure, offering participants unique experiences that went beyond traditional educational settings. The highlight of the summit was a three-day trek through scenic landscapes of Shillong, providing a hands-on opportunity to experience the natural beauty of the state and bond with fellow participants.

The broad theme for the 2025 Summit was “Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC) and the Neighbourhood.” Throughout the summit, there were numerous discussions centered around India-Bhutan collaboration on various themes such as cross-border cooperation, sustainability, happiness, and youth leadership. These conversations allowed the participants to explore pressing issues and exchange ideas on how both nations could work together in these areas. Structured sessions and informal exchanges during the summit inspired participants to identify potential collaborative themes for future engagement. They collectively developed project proposals across five key areas — Environment, Education, Community, Digital Forum, and Gender — aligning their contributions with their individual skills, knowledge, and interests.

In addition to these discussions, participants had the opportunity to interact with distinguished leaders including Mr. Sabyasachi Dutta, Director of Asian Confluence; Dr. A.K. Buragohain, Vice Chancellor of Royal Global University; Dasho Chewang Rinzin, Vice Chancellor of the Royal University of Bhutan (RUB); and Mr. Rabtsel Dorji, Chief of Communications at the Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC).

At the end of the summit, participants were encouraged to reflect on their experiences, offering detailed feedback on the programme and its impact. They were tasked with submitting individual

reports as well as group project proposal presentations addressing critical issues related to the theme and the broader India-Bhutan relationship.

Looking forward, the summit organisers expect the participants to serve as ambassadors for the India-Bhutan Youth Summit community, which is set to grow and evolve in the years to come. The programme aims to build a lasting network of young leaders who will continue to promote the values of cooperation, friendship, and mutual understanding between India and Bhutan, fostering a future of strengthened collaboration between the two countries.



READINGS & RESOURCES

Mandatory:

India-Bhutan Youth Summit 2018:

Centre for Escalation of Peace (CEP) and Pallavan Learning Systems (PLS), in collaboration with Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies (RIGSS), organized the inaugural India-Bhutan Youth Summit from September 21 to 29, 2018 in the Kingdom of Bhutan. The launch of the India-Bhutan Youth Summit came at an opportune time to celebrate the 50 years of friendship and partnership. [Read more](#)

India-Bhutan Youth Summit 2019:

Centre for Escalation of Peace (CEP) in collaboration with Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies (RIGSS) and Pallavan Learning Systems (PLS), organized the second India-Bhutan Youth Summit from September 3 to 12, 2019 in Delhi & Uroli, India. The summit was funded by the India-Bhutan Foundation. [Read more](#)

India-Bhutan Youth Summit 2024:

The Centre for Escalation of Peace (CEP), Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies (RIGSS), and Pallavan Learning Systems (PLS) jointly organised the 3rd India-Bhutan Youth Summit from 9–18 September 2024. The summit was funded by the India-Bhutan Foundation. [Read more](#)

India-Bhutan Youth Summit 2025:

The Centre for Escalation of Peace (CEP), Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies (RIGSS), India-Bhutan Foundation (IBF), and Pallavan Learning Systems (PLS) jointly organised the 4th India-Bhutan Youth Summit from 22–30 October 2025. The summit was funded by the India-Bhutan Foundation. [Read more](#)

India-Bhutan Youth Summit Webinar:

The pandemic has changed the landscape of how we communicate and connect with one another. The webinar sought to bring together ex-participants of India-Bhutan Youth Summit to discuss the current situation and share their experiences and insights. The webinar provided a

platform to understand how the youth is viewing the current situation and identify opportunities for young people to take care of themselves, support each other, and help their communities during the pandemic and beyond. [Click here to read the report](#)

Person of Substance eBook:

2018 marked the first India Bhutan Youth Summit which was held in Bhutan. In order to select from a long list of entries for the summit, participants were asked to write an essay on what they thought makes a person of substance. This book is a compilation of their essays. [Click here to read the book](#)

Suggested:

India-Bhutan: Friends Through Decades and Beyond:

Centre for Escalation of Peace (CEP) along with Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies (RIGSS) has brought out a collaborative book on India and Bhutan to commemorate 50 years of diplomatic relations. The book deals with various aspects of this relationship, primarily politics, economics, culture and the environment. With the view to allow the book to be equally representative of Indian and Bhutanese viewpoints, each topic is divided into two parts, one written by someone in India and the other by the Bhutanese counterpart. [Click here to read the book](#)

Explore Culture First Edition:

The Republic Day Edition of the Explore Culture magazine brings together a range of topics like culture, music, cinema, history, travel, leadership, business, politics, economy, sustainability and climate change. All the articles in the magazine focus on the countries: India and Bhutan. The magazine aims to make citizens in both India and Bhutan more aware about their own culture as well as expose them to interesting knowledge about the neighbouring countries' culture. [Click here to read the magazine](#)

Explore Culture Second Edition:

The Independence Day Edition of the Explore Culture magazine brings together a range of topics written by the participants of the India-Bhutan Youth Summit, 2019. Since all the articles are written by the youth, Explore Culture is an interesting amalgamation of ideas which reflect on trends among the youth of both the countries. [Click here to read the magazine](#)

Explore Culture Third Edition:

This issue of Explore Culture celebrates the work of women leaders from various fields in India and Bhutan. We recognize that the next generation of collaborators, leaders and other prominent people in the world will include women taking center stage. The women celebrated in this issue have contributed extensively to various fields including writing, direction, cooking, acting, research, education, travel and a variety of other fields. [Click here to read the magazine](#)

Explore Culture Fourth Edition:

This issue has been dedicated to travel and lifestyle. It is possible that the one thing that we have missed the most during 2020 has been traveling. Travel has been central in helping people explore the cultures of other countries and develop understanding and tolerance towards other cultures. The best way to immerse yourself in another culture and look at things from someone else's shoes is to travel in them. [Click here to read the magazine](#)



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