

Will Zubeen Garg dominate Assam 2026 assembly election issues !



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Nava Thakuria 25 February 2026 Updated 9 Apr 25101 views

Even all political parties, not to speak of millions of fans and well-wishers of Assam's revered cultural icon Zubeen Garg, continue preaching for sparing the maverick singer's name in doing politics, his mysterious death last year in a foreign land may dominate the electoral politics in the forthcoming legislative polls. Indications surface that Assam assembly elections (scheduled for March-April 2026 along with West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry) will observe a high voltage campaigning on Zubeen's unexplained demise in Singapore on 19 September 2025 and subsequent investigation and judicial processes. Even after five months of his final departure, Zubeen continues to influence the young people in their social media outbursts demanding justice and nothing else.

As the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), precisely State chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, faced an initial backlash for 'mishandling' the icon's sudden death issue, the prime opposition party recently filed a series of charges including the demand for a prompt justice to the bereaved family of Zubeen. Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC), while releasing the Chargesheet 2026 targeting the BJP-led government in Dispur, highlighted the inefficient way of investigations into Zubeen's unsolved death issue. The party, once ruled Assam and other north-eastern States for decades with little oppositions, also raised the issue of rising public debts, illegal wealth concentrations, failure to deliver on promises for Koch Rajbongshi, Tai Ahom, Moran, Motok, Chutia and Tea Tribes people, inactions on various irregularities detected by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, closure of government schools, along with others.

During the recent visit of senior Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to Assam, the Wayanad Parliamentarian raised the issue of Zubeen stating that the legendary king of humming always stayed away from politics and hence there should be no politics over his unfortunate death. Ms Priyanka did not forget to visit Samadhi Kshetra of Zubeen at Sonapur locality near Guwahati to pay tribute to the departed soul. Personally attacking CM Sarma for pursuing politics of polarization, the Gandhi scion denounced the relentless mental harassment to APCC chief Gaurav Gogoi and his family over their gratuitous Pakistan links. She also visited the sacred Shakti Peeth atop Nilachal hills in the heart of Guwahati to seek eternal blessings from Devi Kamakhya.

Assam police team had already arrested seven individuals suspecting their involvement in the alleged 'murder' of Zubeen as he was in the island nation to perform in the 4th North East India Festival, scheduled for 19, 20 and 21 September 2025. All the accused including Shyamkanu Mahanta (organizer of the festival) Siddharth Sharma (Zubeen's manager), Shekhar Jyoti Goswami (bandmate), Amritprava Mahanta (co-singer), Sandipan Garg (Zubeen's cousin) and two personal security officers still remain under the judicial custody. A special investigative team, formed under top Assam police officer Munna Prasad Gupta, travelled to Singapore to collect material for the probe and later filed a thousand-page chargesheet in the court on 12 December.

Recently, the bereaved family wrote a letter to the PMO on 24 January urging Prime Minister Narendra Modi to initiate for constituting a special court to expedite the concerned trials. Garima Saikia Garg, wife of the 53-year-old singer turned filmmaker, expressed concern over delays in the trial at the local court. Earlier, during a media interaction, Ms Garg expressed worries as distressing news relating to Zubeen's death surfaced from Singapore stating that he died while being 'severely intoxicated' and swimming in the sea without a mandatory life jacket. Pointing out to Singapore's mainstream newspaper The Straits Times, which reported on 14 January that there was no foul play at Zubeen's demise, they insisted on facilitating appropriate diplomatic intervention in Singapore to unearth circumstances that prompted the disaster.

Mentionable is that Singapore police investigator David Lim during a coroner's inquiry testified that Zubeen consumed alcohol, refused a life vest before jumping off a yacht, and ultimately drowned near Lazarus island. The officer informed that his friends, who were present at the yacht, attempted to persuade Zubeen to swim back from the sea waters to the vessel before he suddenly became motionless and began floating face down. Zubeen was immediately brought back on board and efforts were made to resuscitate him. Later he was declared dead at Singapore General Hospital at 5.15 pm (local time). The cause of death was confirmed as drowning. The singer did not exhibit suicidal tendencies, nor was he coerced or subjected to duress, asserted the officer, adding that Zubeen ignored repeated reminders by the yacht captain to wear a life jacket.

The recently concluded four-day budget session in the State legislative assembly also witnessed the opposition leaders demonstrating for a fast-track trial and justice for Zubeen. Earlier, APCC president Gogoi criticised CM Sarma for alleging a murder conspiracy to Zubeen's death, arguing that Singapore's findings contradicted such claims. Gogoi asked whom now the Assamese public should believe as Singapore authorities repeatedly stated there was no evidence of unnatural death. Responding to the criticism, Sarma said the Assam investigation was independent of Singapore's and praised the State police for a thorough inquiry. Sarma also insisted politicians refrain from speculation since the matter is before the court. Months back, the ruling BJP also organised a series of Nyay Yatras in Guwahati, Nalbari, Mangaldoi, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh, Cachar etc to emphasise on speedy judicial proceedings over Zubeen's demise.

It was preceded by an influential Congress leader from south India visiting the bereaved family to pay tributes to Zubeen. Karnataka deputy chief minister DK Shivakumar, while attending the post-death rituals organised in Jorhat termed Zubeen as a cultural ambassador whose work transcended boundaries in his lifetime. More recently, a Samajwadi Party leader in Dhubri raised a question over the fate of investigation and trials regarding Zubeen's death. The leader SP, a strategic supporter to the Congress in Assam, also demanded an independent central agency probe (preferably by the Central Bureau of Investigation) to investigate the matter so that the people of Assam can have a clarity over Zubeen's death and also the justice overdue for months.

The current term of 126-member State legislative assembly is expiring on 20 May 2026. The last two consecutive Assam elections (2016 and 2021) witnessed the overwhelming victory for the BJP-led alliance. Recently, a team led by chief election commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, ECs Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi with other poll-officials visited Assam. The representatives from national and local political parties in Guwahati urged the ECI team during a meeting to hold the election within two phases. The local media space is now over-poured by election related news and views. A recent television talk show in a Guwahati-based news channel (NewsLive Bangla, which was anchored by journalist Rupa Chowdhury and graced by three speakers including practicing lawyer Shubhrajyoti Sarkar and Barak-valley resident Kamakhya Purkayastha and this writer) also highlighted the electoral issues ahead of the polls.

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