

India enters AI era of administrative reforms, says Jitendra Singh

Shillong, Jul 13: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh, today declared that India is entering a new era of administrative reforms driven by artificial intelligence (AI). Speaking at a public event in Shillong, the Minister emphasized that AI-enabled governance will transform the delivery of public services, enhance transparency, and strengthen citizen-centric administration across the country. Highlighting the government's vision, Dr. Singh noted that AI applications are already being integrated into multiple sectors, including healthcare, agriculture, education, and public grievance redressal. He explained that the adoption of AI tools will streamline decision-making, reduce bureaucratic delays, and ensure faster response to citizen needs. "Artificial



intelligence is not just a technological innovation; it is a governance innovation that will redefine how administration interacts with people," he said. The Minister pointed out that the North-Eastern states, including Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh, are being prioritized for pilot projects in AI-based gov-

ernance. These initiatives aim to bridge regional gaps, empower local administrations, and provide equitable access to digital services. He added that AI-powered platforms will help monitor developmental schemes, track resource utilization, and improve accountability at every level of government. Dr.

Singh also underlined the importance of capacity building, stating that training programs for civil servants and government employees are being rolled out to equip them with AI literacy. He stressed that administrative reforms must be accompanied by human resource development to ensure effective implemen-

tation. "Technology alone cannot deliver results unless officials are prepared to adapt and innovate," he remarked. The Minister assured that safeguards are being put in place to address concerns related to data privacy, ethical use of AI, and inclusivity. He reiterated that the government's approach is to balance innovation with responsibility, ensuring that AI serves as a tool for empowerment rather than exclusion. The announcement in Shillong marks a significant step in India's broader reform agenda, which seeks to modernize governance structures and align them with global best practices. Observers believe that the integration of AI into administration will not only improve efficiency but also strengthen democratic accountability by making governance more responsive and transparent.

91,385 D-Voters Listed In Assam Electoral Rolls: CM Himanta Biswa Sarma

Guwahati, Jul 13: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma informed the Assembly on Monday that the state currently has 91,385 individuals listed as 'doubtful voters' or D-voters in its electoral rolls. Responding to a question raised by Congress MLA Nurul Islam, Sarma Noted that Sonitpur district accounts for the highest number, with 13,719 names marked as D-voters. Barpetta district follows with 8,081 such entries, while Udalguri and Nagaon also record significant figures, each with more than 7,800 individuals categorized as doubtful voters. The disclosure Emphasizes the scale of the issue across multiple districts, reflecting ongoing challenges in voter verification and electoral roll management in Assam. The presence of D-voters has long been a matter of political and social debate in the state, with questions raised about citizenship verification and its impact on democratic participation. Sarma's statement in



the Assembly has once again brought the matter into sharp focus, particularly as Assam continues to grapple with concerns over identity and inclusion in its electoral process. The disclosure underscores the scale of the issue across multiple districts, reflecting ongoing challenges in voter verification and electoral roll management in Assam. The

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Assam Rifles Jawan Dies, 4 Others Injured In Nagaland IED Explosion

Kohima, Jul 13: An Assam Rifles jawan lost his life and four others sustained injuries in a suspected improvised explosive device (IED) blast in Nagaland's Chumoukedima district on Monday. According to Defence PRO Colonel Amit Shukla, the explosion occurred while an Assam Rifles vehicle was on operational movement in the area. Security forces swiftly launched a search operation to track those responsible for the attack. The injured personnel were evacuated and shifted for medical treatment. The incident has heightened concerns over insurgent activity in the region, where security forces remain on high alert. Authorities are continuing their investigation into the blast, which targeted the paramilitary force known for its role in maintaining peace



and security in the Northeast. Local sources reported that the blast created panic among residents, with many fearing a resurgence of militant violence in the district. Civil society groups condemned the attack, calling it a setback to efforts aimed at fostering stability and development in Nagaland. They urged both the government and insurgent groups to prioritize dialogue over violence, stressing that such incidents

only deepen mistrust and insecurity. Political leaders expressed condolences to the family of the slain jawan and wished speedy recovery to the injured. They reiterated support for the armed forces and emphasized the need for co-ordinated intelligence-based operations to prevent further attacks. Analysts believe the incident could influence ongoing discussions between the government and insurgent factions, underscoring the fragile nature of peace in the region. The Assam Rifles, often described as the "Sentinels of the Northeast," has been at the forefront of counter-insurgency and peacekeeping operations. Monday's attack serves as a reminder of the risks faced by personnel in their mission to safeguard communities and uphold national security.

Nearly 80% forms distributed in Meghalaya roll revision, West Jaintia tops

Shillong, July 13: The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Meghalaya, announced that nearly 80 percent of enumeration forms have been successfully distributed across the state as part of the ongoing electoral roll revision exercise. The initiative, aimed at ensuring comprehensive voter registration and verification, has witnessed strong participation from citizens and officials alike. According to official data, West Jaintia Hills district has recorded the highest distribution rate, reflecting proactive engagement by local election authorities and community volunteers. Other districts have also reported steady progress, with the overall state average nearing the 80 percent mark. The distribution of forms is a critical step in updating elec-



toral rolls, enabling eligible voters to confirm or correct their details ahead of upcoming elections. Speaking on the development, election

officials emphasized that the revision process is designed to strengthen democratic participation by ensuring accuracy and inclusivity in voter

lists. They noted that the exercise includes door-to-door distribution, awareness campaigns, and special drives to reach remote and rural areas.

Citizens are being encouraged to promptly fill and return their forms to facilitate timely verification. The Chief Electoral Officer highlighted that the revision is not only about updating records but also about reinforcing public confidence in the electoral system. "Every eligible voter must be counted, and every entry must be accurate. This is the foundation of free and fair elections," the statement read. Observers believe that the strong progress in Meghalaya demonstrates the effectiveness of coordinated efforts between state authorities, district officials, and community stakeholders. With West Jaintia Hills setting the pace, other districts are expected to accelerate their distribution in the coming weeks to achieve full coverage.

Subansiri hydropower project to finish by march with flood cushion

Itanagar, July 13: The Subansiri Lower Hydropower Project, India's largest hydroelectric initiative, is set for completion by March 2027 with an added flood cushion to enhance safety and resilience. Officials confirmed that the project, located across Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, has reached its final stages of construction and commissioning. The inclusion of a flood cushion is designed to mitigate risks from seasonal river fluctuations and climate variability, ensuring both energy generation and community protection. Engineers highlighted that the cushion will provide additional storage capacity, allowing better regulation of water flow



during peak monsoon periods. The project, being executed by NHPC Ltd, is expected to generate 2,000 MW of clean energy, significantly boosting the region's power supply and supporting India's renewable energy targets. Beyond elec-

tricity generation, the Subansiri project is anticipated to strengthen flood management systems, improve irrigation potential, and contribute to socio-economic development in the Northeast. Officials noted that the completion timeline

reflects the government's commitment to balancing infrastructure growth with environmental safeguards. The project has undergone extensive technical reviews and safety checks, with special focus on downstream impact and community concerns. Speaking on the development, senior NHPC representatives stated that the Subansiri Lower Hydropower Project will stand as a landmark achievement in India's hydropower sector, combining sustainable energy with disaster preparedness. The March 2027 completion target marks a decisive step toward harnessing the region's hydro potential while ensuring long-term resilience against floods.

Mizoram CM Lalduhoma Inaugurates Zo Fair In Aizawl To Promote Tribal Handicrafts

Aizawl, July 13: Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma on Monday inaugurated the week-long Zo Fair (Aadhi Bazaar) at Dawrpui Multipurpose Hall in Aizawl. The fair is jointly organised by the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and the Cooperation Department of the Government of Mizoram. The fair features traditional handicrafts and indigenous products brought by artisans from various North Eastern states and different parts of Mizoram. A total of 25 stalls have been set up, including 13 from North Eastern states and 12 from



Mizoram. Among them are two Tribal Food Cuisine stalls, while the remaining stalls display handwoven textiles, bamboo products, food items and other natural produce. The fair will remain open throughout the

week. Addressing the inaugural programme, Lalduhoma said the history of the people of the North East had long been preserved through traditional attire, handicrafts and indigenous skills before being documented

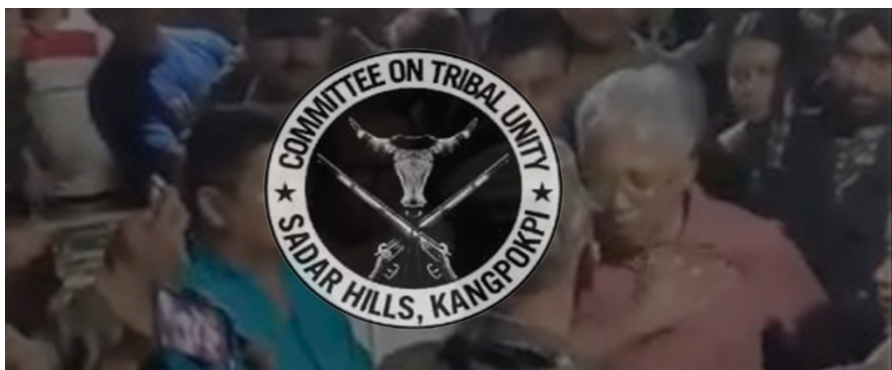
in written form. He said the products displayed at the fair reflected generations of inherited craftsmanship and cultural traditions. The Chief Minister said that although modern technology has enabled mass production of many goods, traditional handcrafted products continue to require skilled manual work. He described such crafts as an important part of the identity, history and culture of tribal communities and urged artisans to continue preserving their traditional skills. He also noted that demand for these products from outside the region is increasing, creating better market opportunities.

CoTU slams MP Bimol Akoijam over Leimakhong, Army insult habit

Imphal, July 13: Alleging MP Bimol Akoijam of fueling tensions, the Committee on Tribal Unity (CoTU), Sadar Hills Kangpokpi, on Monday launched a blistering attack on Inner Manipur MP over the July 11 Leimakhong incident, alleging that his repeated criticism of the Indian Army and Central security forces had become a "habit" and accusing him of aggravating an already volatile situation. The committee alleged that the pandemon-

ium was instigated by none other than Parliamentarian Bimol Akoijam, who on July 11 at Leimakhong evoked the sentiments of the mob over the torching of abandoned houses belonging to the Meitei community. CoTU claimed that while Akoijam often projected himself as a champion of "checks and balances", his repeated public criticism of the Centre, the Central Armed Police Forces and the Indian Army had

crossed the line. "Confronting or accusing the Centre Security Forces and the Indian Army of dereliction of duty has become more of his habit than a legitimate recourse as a parliamentarian," alleged the committee. CoTU further asserted that the Kuki-Zo community equally deserved a parliamentary voice to speak for its "survival and security", while accusing the state government of appeasing "radicalised" elements by allegedly overlooking what it described



as the continued communal blockade of essential supplies

to Kangpokpi district. The committee also alleged

that the prescriptive policy of appeasing a section of what it

termed the "radicalised Kacha Naga community" by overlooking their alleged sabotage of the supply of essential goods and commodities, purportedly as a bargaining tool for justice for the six individuals killed, warranted a comprehensive review from both political and security perspectives. It further emphasised that the progress made by the National Investigation Agency (NIA), along with the CRPF and the Manipur Police, with the arrest of

two individuals suspected to be involved in the case on July 10, deserved to be acknowledged by all. Maintaining that protests against the prolonged disruption of essential supplies were unavoidable, CoTU nevertheless unequivocally condemned the torching and destruction of properties during the Leimakhong incident and cautioned against any recurrence that could further aggravate the already fragile law-and-order situation.

Floods Cut Off Arunachal Border Town After Kumey River Breaches Banks

Itanagar, July 13: The Kumey River surged past its danger mark this week, swallowing the remote border town of Parsi Parlo. Relentless monsoon rains turned the Kurung Kumey district into a disaster zone. The water is rising fast. Infrastructure is failing under the pressure of the deluge.

Floodwaters poured into schools, government buildings, and private homes. Streets in local colonies vanished beneath the currents. Landslides tore through the mountain terrain and wiped



out several valley bridges. The destruction has effec-

tively trapped local residents. Authorities confirmed the

primary route to the district headquarters at Koloriang is blocked. This gap in the road network stops the flow of essential supplies and emergency services. Officials have issued safety warnings to the public as the weather remains volatile. The region faces a high risk of more slides as the rain persists. A local official stated, "The situation is being closely monitored, with concerns that further rain could aggravate flooding and trigger additional landslides in the mountainous district."

Manipur MP slams centre and state governments for recent incidents

Imphal, July 13: Congress MP Dr Anomcha Bimol Akoijam on Sunday criticized both the state government and Centre for the protracted violent crisis in Manipur.

He alleged that the recent violence at Kanto Sabal in Imphal West adjoin Kangpokpi district exposed the continuing failure of both the state and central governments in handling the crisis.

He described yesterday's incident of fresh arson of houses belonging to Meitei members in the Indian Army cantonment area as a continuation of the violent conflict that began on May 3, 2023.

Addressing a news conference, the Congress MP from Inner Manipur Parliamentary Constituency said the inaction and lack of coordination among the Central security forces have raised serious concerns over the



government's response to recurring incidents of violence.

He also criticized what he described as the incompetence of the Indian Army in managing the conflict, alleging that its repeated inability to prevent or contain fresh outbreaks of violence reflects a continuing failure to effectively curb conflicts as they arise in Manipur.

Referring to the recent Kanto Sabal incident, he said the situation is an "exact replica" of the events witnessed since May 3, 2023, pointing to what he termed as non-coordination among the deployed central forces and delayed intervention.

Dr Akoijam further asserted that the crisis should not be viewed solely through the lens of a Meitei-Kuki con-

flict, he urged the public and policymakers to understand the broader dimensions of the crisis, arguing that reducing it to an ethnic conflict overlooks deeper issues of governance, security, and conflict management.

He also called for greater accountability and a more effective strategy to prevent further escalation of violence in the state.

The Chief Minister of Tripura has commenced new discussions with Mizoram to address the inter-state border disputes

Agartala, July 13: Senior officials of Tripura and Mizoram will soon hold talks to discuss the long-pending inter-state border dispute along the 109-km boundary shared by the two northeastern states, officials said here on Sunday.

A senior official said Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha has taken the initiative to revive the dialogue with Mizoram to resolve the long-standing border issue through mutual discussions.

Addressing an official function here on Saturday, CM Saha said he had discussed the inter-state border dispute with Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma during the 73rd plenary session of the North Eastern Council (NEC) held in Shillong.

"When I proposed to the Mizoram Chief Minister that we should hold talks to resolve the inter-state border dispute, he immediately agreed," CM Saha said.

"I suggested that before a Chief Minister-level meeting, senior officials of both states should first sit together and discuss the issue in detail. Thereafter, we can meet and take the matter forward. The Mizoram Chief Minister readily agreed to my proposal," he added.

The 73rd NEC plenary session was attended by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Union Minister for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Jyotiraditya Scindia, Minister of State for DoNER Sukanta Majumdar, and the Governors and Chief Ministers of all eight northeastern states.



Tripura is surrounded by Bangladesh on its southern, western and northern sides. The state shares an 856-km international border with Bangladesh, accounting for nearly 84 per cent of its total boundary. It also has a 53-km inter-state border with Assam and a 109-km border with Mizoram. The border dispute between Tripura and Mizoram has remained unresolved for several years.

Tensions often surface whenever either state undertakes development or construction work in areas claimed by both sides, with the other state raising objections. In one such in-

MLAs Accused of Wasting Valuable Assembly Question Hour

Guwahati, July 13: Assam Minister Pijush Hazarika on Monday expressed concern over the wastage of valuable time during the Question Hour in the State Assembly, alleging that several MLAs remain absent despite notifying that they would raise questions.

Hazarika said many legislators inform the Assembly about their intention to ask questions during the Question Hour but fail to be present, resulting in the loss of crucial legislative time. He urged Speaker Ranjit Kumar Das to take appropriate action against such absentee MLAs to ensure

the effective functioning of the House.

Responding to the issue, Speaker Ranjit Kumar Das appealed to the leaders of all political parties to take necessary steps and ensure that their legislators remain present during the Question Hour after submitting questions.

Govt Taking Extremely Tough Stand Against Drugs: Pijush Hazarika

Guwahati, July 13: The Assam Government has adopted an uncompromising approach against drug trafficking, Minister Pijush Hazarika said in the Assam Legislative Assembly on Monday.

Replying to a question raised by the Congress MLA from Mankachar, the minister said that the number of drug-related cases registered since 2021 has increased nearly tenfold compared to the cases registered 12 years ago.

He attributed the sharp rise in cases to Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma's strong political will and firm commitment to combating the drug menace. Hazarika further informed the House that, on average, around 100



kg of heroin has been seized annually over the past five years, reflecting the government's intensified anti-drug drive across the state. He reiterated

that the government remains determined to eradicate the drug menace through sustained enforcement and strict legal action.

NetZero plan for Dimapur unveiled

Guwahati, July 13: In a landmark initiative aligned with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for Viksit Bharat 2047 and India's commitment to sustainable development, NetZero Horizon and Good Shepherd Welfare Society (GSWS) have unveiled their proposal to develop Dimapur as the country's first NetZero District under the flagship NetZero District Model (NDM).

A high level delegation comprising Deepak Thakur, consulting advisor, NetZero

Horizon; Rahul Deo, editor in chief, NetZero Horizon; Saurav Kumar, managing editor, NetZero Horizon; and Imli Yanger Jamir, president, GSWS, met Governor Nand Kishore Yadav at Lok Bhawan, Kohima on July 11, to present the vision and roadmap for the initiative.

According to GSWS, the Governor welcomed the proposal, extended his best wishes for its successful implementation, and accepted the invitation to be chief guest at the upcoming event "Grid to Growth" scheduled

for August 29 in New Delhi. The NetZero District Model seeks to transform Dimapur into a nationally recognised model for climate resilient and inclusive development by focusing on four strategic pillars—energy security, water security, green skilling and community led governance. The initiative is envisioned as a scalable framework that can be replicated across districts in India, supporting the country's transition towards a low carbon and resilient economy. The delegation reaffirmed

that the initiative is inspired by the Prime Minister's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, translating national climate ambitions into actionable district level interventions. The programme will include stakeholder consultations, institutional partnerships, growth. With this initiative, NetZero Horizon and GSWS aim to establish a replicable blueprint for district level climate governance that contributes meaningfully to India's long term net zero aspirations and sustainable development goals.

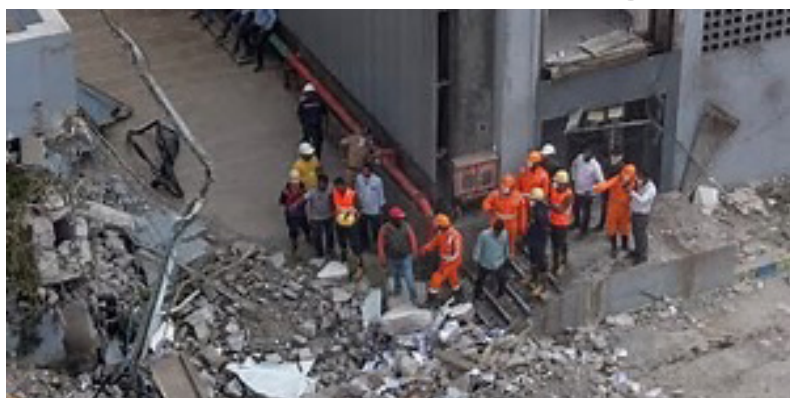
TNL raises inquiries regarding the arrest of two individuals in connection with the Liangmai

Imphal, July 13: The Working Committee of Tangkhul Naga Long (TNL), the apex civil society body of the Tangkhul Naga community, has questioned the arrest of two individuals in connection with the abduction and killing of six Liangmai Naga civilians in Manipur, describing the action as a "bizarre exercise" and urging authorities to arrest those it claims are the actual perpetrators, reports India Today NE.

In a statement issued on July 11, TNL referred to the July 10 arrest of Pradip, a member of the Meitei community, and his wife Ayingbi alias Mangaih, a resident of Leilon Vaiphei village.

The arrests were carried out by a joint team of the Manipur Police, the National Investigation Agency (NIA), and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

The couple was arrested in connection with the alleged abduction of 18 Liangmai Naga civilians on May 13, 2026, and the subsequent killing of six men whose mutilated bodies were recovered on June 10. Questioning the arrests, TNL alleged that the move appeared to be an attempt



to divert public attention from demands for the arrest of those directly involved in the abduction, illegal detention, and killings.

The organisation further claimed that the Kuki-Zo Council had publicly acknowledged responsibility for the abduction and killing of the civilians. It also alleged that the involvement of Leilon Vaiphei village chief Lalboi Vaiphei alias Khailensang, along with several women from the village and armed cadres of the Kuki National Front-Presidential

(KNF-P), had been corroborated by the statements of survivors but had not been acted upon by the investigating agencies.

TNL urged the state government and law enforcement agencies to pursue the investigation with fairness, transparency, and accountability.

"The state government and the law enforcement agencies must remain steadfastly committed to truth, transparency and accountability to deliver justice in the larger interest of the people," the organisation said.

RPF strengthens security through anti-crime operations

Imphal, July 13: The Railway Protection Force (RPF) of Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has continued its relentless efforts to strengthen passenger security and curb unlawful activities across its jurisdiction through a series of successful operations conducted during July 7 and 8, 2026.

A press release by Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) Kapinjal Kishore Sharma stated that RPF personnel, in coordination with the Government Railway Police (GRP), Excise Department, Child Welfare authorities and other law enforcement agencies, achieved significant success in combating narcotics trafficking, liquor smuggling, theft and other criminal activities while also extending timely humanitarian assistance to passengers in distress. During the operations, RPF teams also recovered over 15 kilograms of ganja valued at approximately Rs 7.60 lakh from different railway stations under Northeast Frontier Railway. In separate cases, 185 bottles of liquor worth over Rs 20,000 were recovered from trains and railway premises, leading to the apprehension of offenders and subsequent legal action by the concerned authorities.

The RPF further intensified its drive against theft and other criminal activities by apprehending several offenders involved in mobile phone theft cases. During these operations, seven mobile phones collectively valued at around Rs 1.04 lakh were recovered and handed over to the Government Railway Police for further legal proceedings. The release by the CPRO also stated that RPF



personnel rescued seven minor children, including six boys and one girl, from different railway stations across NFR and safely handed them over to the respective Child Welfare Committees and Child Help Desks for rehabilitation and care. These timely interventions helped prevent vulnerable children from potential exploitation and ensured their safety.

RPF personnel also extended immediate assistance to an elderly ailing passenger at a railway station. The passenger was identified through available documents, shifted to the Railway Health Unit for first aid and later referred to a higher medical facility by railway ambulance under RPF escort. The passenger's family members were also promptly informed.

To reduce the flow of pollution into Bangladesh, Tripura intends to use more surface water

Agartala, July 13: With the dual goals of enhancing flood resilience and guaranteeing a sustainable supply of drinking water, the Tripura government has started two significant long-term infrastructure proposals for Agartala: a Rs 1,000-crore flood protection project and an ambitious river-linking plan to bring surface water from the Gomati River to the state capital.Speaking at an official event here, Chief Minister Manik Saha stated that by investigating sustainable surface water sources, his government hopes to progressively lessen reliance on groundwater for drinking, household, and other necessities. Speaking to the media following the opening of a refurbished water body in Agartala, the Chief Minister stated that the proposed flood mitigation project calls for the installation of three more pumping stations and the construction of two protective embankments in order to greatly enhance the city's drainage system and lower the risk of urban flooding.Depending on funding availability, he said the project would be carried out in stages. Saha gave all departments instructions to stay on high alert and make



sure they are well prepared to handle any disaster during the upcoming monsoon season, citing the terrible floods that struck Tripura in July and August of 2024. He gave officials instructions to maintain sufficient supplies of food, drinking water, medications, and other necessities, keep boats, rescue equipment, and relief shelters ready, keep a close eye on river water levels and embankments around-the-clock, and promptly warn locals in low-lying and vulnerable areas.In order to lessen the capital city's reliance on iron-rich groundwater, which has long presented problems for the drinking water delivery system, the Chief Minister stated that the government is also considering a plan to transport

surface water from the Gomati River, which is about 60 kilometers from Agartala. According to Saha, experts have found the proposal to be technically feasible, as Agartala already has an extensive water distribution network that could facilitate the supply of treated surface water with minimal additional distribution infrastructure. He said a Detailed Project Report would comprehensively assess the technical feasibility of the project, the availability of water in the Gomati River throughout the year, the quantity of water that can be sustainably diverted, and other environmental and engineering aspects before any final decision is taken. The Chief Minister said the Gomati River would be the first

to be considered under the proposed river-linking initiative. If found viable, the concept could subsequently be expanded to utilise water from other rivers in the state before they flow into neighbouring Bangladesh. However, Saha clarified that the river-linking proposal is still at the planning stage and no final decision has yet been taken, with all aspects to be thoroughly examined through detailed technical studies before the project is taken forward. Tripura has 12 major and medium rivers, of which eight flow through different districts before joining major rivers in neighbouring Bangladesh. Besides these eight rivers, the waters of several canals also flow into Bangladesh. According to Saha, at a previous meeting, a minister from Bangladesh expressed worries that people living on the other side of the border were experiencing skin and other health issues due to contaminated water from some of the canals that run from Tripura. The Chief Minister said, "In light of this, we have decided to establish a water treatment plant to treat the canal water before it flows into the neighboring country."

SC sends a notice and requests a SIT status report on the Ayodhya Ram temple donation investigation

Ayodhya, July 13: The Uttar Pradesh government's special investigation team (SIT) was ordered by the Supreme Court on Monday to submit a status report on the investigation into the alleged embezzlement of donations received at the Ram temple in Ayodhya. The court also indicated that it may consider issuing additional directives after reviewing the investigation's progress. A bench led by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant is hearing petitions for an independent investigation into alleged financial irregularities involving the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust. The court has requested the Uttar Pradesh government to disclose the members of the Special Investigation Team (SIT) handling the case and to file a status report before proceeding further. The Trust has been notified, as its response is deemed crucial for the case's consideration.Solicitor General Tushar Mehta confirmed that investigations are ongoing, with eight individuals currently in custody following a First Information Report (FIR) linked to the SIT inquiry. Among the petitions, one filed by Narendra Kumar Goswami calls for a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe and a financial

audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG). Additionally, advocates Ajay Kumar Rai and Dinesh Kumar Yadav seek a similar FIR registration and demand an independent, expedited CBI investigation into the purported misallocation of temple donations. Furthermore, RJD MP Sudhakar Singh's petition advocates for a court-monitored CBI investigation and a thorough forensic audit of the Trust's financial dealings.Singh's plea emphasizes the need for an independent agency to conduct a forensic examination of all donations and assets, and urges the preservation of financial documents, digital ledgers, UPI transaction logs, and bank statements to prevent evidence tampering. Additionally, his petition seeks the establishment of an oversight mechanism by the court, requesting that the Trust be restricted from making any major financial decisions, including contracts or investments, without explicit approval from this oversight committee. The Trust is also required to provide the Supreme Court with a comprehensive account of all donations received since its inception, detailing the form of donations and their use.

Two spa owners in Silchar were detained by police

Silchar, July 13: After conducting raids on June 25, Silchar police were able to apprehend the two fugitive owners of illicit spa salons. According to an input, Rohit Debnath and Rupali Das, the proprietors of Lotus Spa and Lovely Spa, respectively, were in the city on Saturday, according to additional SP Manas Saikia on Sunday. The two accused were eventually taken into custody by the police.Saikia claimed that shortly after the police raided Rupali and Rohit's salons, 28 women who were reportedly participating in

the flesh trade under the guise of spa and makeup salons were arrested. Rupali and Rohit had vanished since the raids on their parlors, Saikia continued. According to Saikia, they had already questioned Silchar Medical College and Hospital principal Dr. Bhaskar Gupta. The space that Rohit Debnath hired is owned by Dr. Gupta, who stipulated that no illicit trading will take place there. Rupali and Rohit, Saikia remarked On suspicion of unlawful human trafficking, the police detained a number of



female employees from the parlors, most of whom were from the Brahmaputra Valley and one of whom was from Dimapur. The majority of the female employees detained from the parlors came from the Brahmaputra Valley, while one was from Dimapur.

After 20 years of discussion, India's theater command plan is almost approved

New Delhi, July 13: India's efforts to reorganize its armed services into unified theater commands have primarily taken place in committee reports, seminar rooms, and the occasional sharp statement by a service chief for almost 20 years. That is now shifting. With General NS Raja Subramani appointed to the position since the end of May and General Anil Chauhan's tenure as Chief of Defence Staff behind him, the theaterization file is reportedly on its way to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's desk for a decision that could alter how India fights its next war. The plan is in its most advanced state to date, according to officials familiar with the process, with the broad architecture mostly resolved and the remaining issues limited to a few difficult issues, chief among them how resources, personnel, and command authority are divided between the services and the new theatre commanders who would sit above them.The Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force now operate independently. When a crisis arises, they collaborate rather than act as a single unit, and they

plan and train independently. That would be reversed via theaterization. A single officer would oversee operations across all three services in a given region, with geographically or functionally defined commands in charge of army, naval, and air assets. The blueprint for military reform in India focuses on three major formations: a command along the China border, one oriented towards Pakistan, and a maritime command for coastal security. Each formation is to be led by a four-star officer, creating a new tier of military leadership alongside existing service chiefs. This reform aims to address the need for integrated operations due to the multifaceted nature of modern conflict that transcends traditional military domains. General Subramani, the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), is tasked with implementing this reform based on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of "Jointness, Atmanirbharta and Innovation," and is expected to build upon groundwork laid by his predecessor. The concept of theatre commands has evolved since the Kargil

conflict and was institutionalized with the establishment of the CDS post in 2019.However, the integration process has proven complex, as merging distinct services with differing operational doctrines raises questions about authority, accountability, and budget allocation. Tension exists between "force generation," managed by service chiefs, and "force application," under theatre commanders, which must be resolved to prevent confusion during high-stakes operations.

The proposal requires approval from the Ministry of Defence and the Cabinet Committee on Security, marking a potentially groundbreaking restructuring of India's military since Independence. If approved, India would join nations like the United States and China in adopting integrated military commands, though actual implementation will likely take several years. The speed at which the defence minister processes the proposal will indicate the likelihood of these long-discussed reforms moving beyond mere proposals to concrete actions.

In Delhi, a man is killed after being struck by a speeding SUV; the driver is arrested

New Delhi, July 13: A 45-year-old man was walking home with a buddy on the roadside after ending work in Rajouri Garden when he was fatally struck by a speeding SUV. Police apprehended the driver and confiscated the car, officials said on Sunday.According to the police, the motorist who fled was apprehended on Sunday after the collision happened on Saturday in West Delhi. The deceased was identified as Uday Kumar, also called Uday Mahato, a Khyala native who worked at a private store in Rajouri Garden. After finishing work, Uday was walking home with his friend, Raghubir Nagar resident Subhash Kumar, when a speeding Scorpio struck him and drove off, according to the police. "The speeding SUV struck Uday, while his friend narrowly escaped," one eyewitness reported to police throughout the course of the investigation. After Subhash took the wounded guy to Guru Gobind Singh Hospital, the medical staff pronounced him dead.According to police, a team arrived at the hospital and began an investigation after learning about the accident from a hospital notification. Police were able to identify the suspect thanks to the eyewitness' sharing of the offending vehicle's registration number. Despite the SUV having already escaped, police claimed the crime squad examined the scene of the collision. Devansh Kumar, a 25-year-old Naraina Vihar resident, was detained by police after they filed a formal complaint. They also confiscated the car that was involved in the collision.The body was given to the victim's family after a post-mortem, according to the police. Family members, including the deceased's wife and two kids, called for the driver to be prosecuted right away on Saturday. According to the police, more research is being done.

92-year-old Army Veteran Accuses Rajasthan of Fraudulently Selling Allotted Land

New Delhi, July 13: Captain Chunnilal, a 92-year-old retired Indian Army officer, claims that using false paperwork and an impersonation, his agricultural land in Rajasthan's Jaisalmer district was fraudulently mortgaged, transferred, and sold without his knowledge. The police have opened an investigation and filed a case in response to his accusation.Despite having the original ownership documents, Captain Chunnilal, a veteran of the 1962 war with China and the 1965 and 1971 wars with Pakistan, claimed that the land given to his family under the rehabilitation program for the Pong Dam project in Himachal Pradesh was unlawfully transferred and sold. The veteran, a former Army officer, shared his

plight regarding the fraudulent sale of his land in Mohangarh, which he transformed from barren desert to fertile agricultural land after being relocated due to the Pong Dam project. He received insufficient compensation and was allotted land in Mohangarh, which he improved through years of hard work. However, he later discovered that his land had been sold through fake documents and impersonation. Despite his efforts to report the issue to various police stations, he faced bureaucratic hurdles and delays.His son, Multan Singh Thakur, highlighted the difficulty of getting support from the authorities, emphasizing that their family has approached multiple police stations to no avail, leading to frustration

and health deterioration for the aging veteran. The family received assurances from the Superintendent of Police that action would be taken, yet they continue to struggle and appeal for assistance from the Himachal Pradesh government. Retired Sergeant Lalaram Chaudhary, assisting in the case, also stressed the urgency of delivering justice for the veteran and demanded accountability from the authorities involved. He recounted that the land was fraudulently sold for about Rs 25 lakh, despite the veteran possessing all original documents. Meanwhile, the Additional Superintendent of Police confirmed that the case is under investigation, with a commitment to take necessary action following the findings.

During a fight, an Odisha man's wife hits him in the head with a cell phone, killing him



Bhubaneswar, July 13: During a family argument, a man in the Bolangir region of Odisha is said to have died when his wife smacked him in the head with a cell phone. According to preliminary reports, the husband and wife got into a fight at their home on Saturday. The spouse was allegedly gravely hurt when the wife struck him in the head with a cell phone during the fight. The injured man was sent right away to Bolangir's District Headquarters Hospital

(DHH), where he was treated. He was released from the hospital and went back to his home when medical professionals noticed an improvement in his condition.However, his health apparently abruptly declined soon after he got home. He was hurried back to the District Headquarters Hospital for emergency care by family members. He was pronounced dead despite the physicians' best efforts to save him.Police started an inquiry after the occurrence to ascertain the precise order of events and the cause of death. The post-mortem report, which is anticipated to offer more clarification, is being awaited by officials.Residents of the area were stunned by the episode, which also brought attention to the terrible outcomes that can occasionally result from domestic conflicts. According to police, more legal action will be taken in light of the investigation's conclusions.

An apprehended suspended employee of the Badrinath Dham Temple Committee is accused of stealing donations



New Delhi, July 13: According to Uttarakhand Police on Monday, Pramod Nautiyal, the main suspect in the purported donation processing anomalies at the Badrinath shrine in Uttarakhand, was taken into custody from his Dehradun home.According to a news outlet, senior superintendent of police (Chamoli) Surjit Singh Panwar stated that Nautiyal was detained by Chamoli Police on Sunday night and brought to Badrinath, where

he is being questioned.Nautiyal served as the Badrinath-Kedarnath Temple Committee (BKTC) chairman's personal assistant.Notably, the BKTC is the statutory organization in charge of overseeing the Badrinath temple and a number of other Uttarakhand shrines.

After a preliminary internal investigation revealed purported inconsistencies in Badrinath Dham's contribution processing, he was suspended. The accusations of

irregularities in donation management against Nautiyal were deemed to be prima facie genuine by a four-member investigating committee established by the BKTC.On Friday, July 17, the Uttarakhand High Court is set to consider a case that Nautiyal filed contesting both his suspension and the FIR that was lodged against him.

CCTV footage purportedly showed Nautiyal "suspiciously hiding or stealing" money, gold and silver coins, shaligram stones, and offering envelopes from the temple's donation counting area, according to Uttarakhand Police. According to investigators, the video purportedly showed Nautiyal visiting and exiting the donation counting room several times before heading to his office, suggesting the possibility that the missing items had been hidden there, according to a news outlet. According to the story, police also claimed that the video showed Nautiyal giving envelopes that were thought to contain between ₹10,000 and ₹12,000,

as well as hiding or taking bundles of ₹500 and ₹100 bills, gold and silver coins, and shaligram stones. The investigation started after purported anomalies were discovered on July 2 when pilgrims' offerings were counted at the Badrinath shrine.

According to a preliminary investigation, money had been taken out of the counting room without following the correct protocol.A three-person committee was also established by the Uttarakhand government last week to look into the issue.The Garhwal division commissioner is in charge of the committee, which will present the state government with its conclusions and suggestions.

The police, the Special Investigation Team (SIT), the departmental inquiry committee of the BKTC, and the high-level committee are all concurrently investigating the case.The Congress party attacked the BJP administration over reports of offering theft at the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya and Badrinath Dham.

Supreme Court Stay Against Cow Slaughter Ban Order Obtained by the Vijay Government

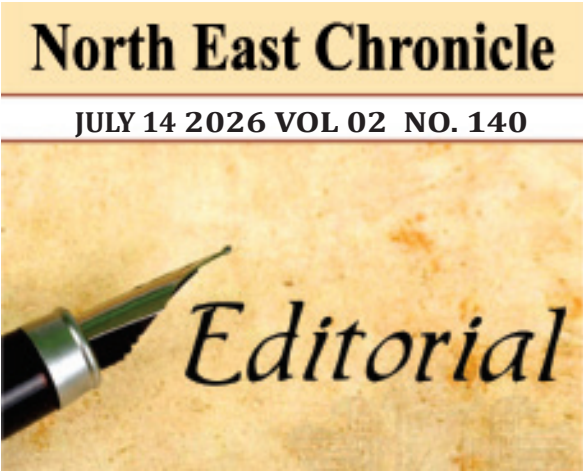
New Delhi, July 13: The Madras High Court's ruling requiring the Tamil Nadu government to make sure that no cow or calf be killed in the state on the eve of Bakrid or on any other day was stayed by the Supreme Court on Monday, highlighting the need for "correction."The Madras High Court's May 27 ruling to enforce an August 1976 government order prohibiting cow slaughter throughout the state was challenged in the Supreme Court by the Vijay-led Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, or TVK, administration.

The state challenged the high court's ruling, arguing that a judicial directive that conflicts with a statutory requirement cannot be upheld when the law permits the killing of a specific

class of cows in specified locations. A Division Bench of Justices GR Swaminathan and V Lakshminarayanan issued the Madras High Court order, which was based on the 1976 ruling that forbade the killing of cows for the purpose of increasing milk supply and boosting the rural economy.The decision's author, Justice Swaminathan, emphasized that Article 48 of the Constitution mandated that the state take action to forbid the slaughter of draught cattle as well as cows, calves, and other milch.

The judge emphasized that the cow was a venerated animal and that it had been connected to our civilization since the time of Lord Krishna, even during the Constituent Assembly delibera-

tions. While some Hindu temples in Tamil Nadu also practice ritual animal sacrifices during yearly festivals, Muslims traditionally slaughter animals during Bakrid at private homes and religious gatherings in compliance with local laws. Community leaders contend that it is unfeasible to restrict such sacrifices to only authorized slaughterhouses because many facilities are unable to accommodate festival demand. The Tamil Nadu government has argued that current legislation, such as the Tamil Nadu Animal Preservation Act and other rules pertaining to slaughterhouses, already control the locations and circumstances in which animals may be killed, but they do not completely forbid it.



India and the Nordics

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s outreach to the Nordic countries is often framed through the familiar language of trade, technology and clean energy cooperation. Yet the larger significance of India’s engagement with Northern Europe lies elsewhere. Beneath the economic agreements and diplomatic symbolism is a deeper story about how international law and global governance are beingreshaped in an increasingly fragmented world. and trade policy are becoming deeply interconnected. Environmental standards are no longer merely domestic regulatory choices; they are evolving into instruments that shape market access and international competitiveness. India’s engagement with Nordic states therefore goes beyond clean energy partnerships. It reflects an effort to understand and influence the legal frameworks that will govern future trade. Whether in green shipping, sustainable infrastructure or carbon accounting, the next phase of globalisation is likely to be regulated through climate-linked legal obligations. Countries that fail to adapt risk exclusion from emerging economic networks. The Nordic outreach also intersects with another major global debate: digital governance. India has increasingly projected itself as a leader in digital public infrastructure through initiatives such as UPI and Aadhaar-linked governance systems. At the same time, Nordic and European states are shaping global conversations around data privacy, artificial intelligence regulation and digital sovereignty. This creates both convergence and tension. Europe’s regulatory approach, reflected in frameworks such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), prioritises privacy protections and institutional oversight. India, meanwhile, seeks a more developmental and statedriven digital model that balances innovation, public service delivery and strategic autonomy. The legal questions emerging from these differing approaches are profound. Who controls cross-border data flows? How should artificial intelligence be regulated? Can digital sovereignty coexist with open digital trade? These are no longer technical policy matters; they are becoming foundational questions of international law and governance. India’s Nordic engagement thus reflects an attempt to shape these debates rather than merely react to them. As digital governance becomes central to economic power and national security, partnerships with technologically advanced democracies gain strategic significance. The geopolitical context of the visit is equally important. The Russia-Ukraine war has fundamentally altered Europe’s security architecture. Traditionally neutral Nordic countries such as Finland and Sweden have moved closer to NATO, reflecting a broader collapse of the post-Cold War assumption that economic interdependence alone could guarantee stability. India’s position in this evolving landscape remains distinctive. New Delhi has sought to preserve strategic autonomy by maintaining relations with both Russia and Western powers. This balancing approach has sometimes generated criticism in Europe, particularly among states that view the Ukraine conflict through the lens of territorial sovereignty and international legality. Yet India’s Nordic outreach suggests that strategic autonomy does not necessarily imply strategic isolation. Instead, India appears to be building flexible partnerships based on issue-specific cooperation rather than alliance politics. This reflects a broader trend in contemporary international relations: the rise of “minilateralism,” where states cooperate through smaller, purpose-driven coalitions instead of rigid geopolitical blocs. Such arrangements may increasingly define the future of global governance. In a fragmented international order marked by weakening multilateral institutions and intensifying great-power competition, middle powers are seeking pragmatic and adaptable partnerships. India’s engagement with the Nordic region fits squarely within this evolving diplomatic logic. Ultimately, Modi’s Nordic outreach should be understood not as a peripheral diplomatic exercise but as part of India’s larger attempt to navigate a rapidly changing international system. The central contests of the coming decades over climate governance, digital regulation, Arctic access and strategic alignment will be fought as much through legal norms and regulatory institutions as through military or economic power. For India, the challenge is no longer simply securing a seat at the table. It is helping shape the rules themselves. That is why the Nordic connection matters. From a legal standpoint, India’s approach to Nordic engagement is grounded in principles firmly embedded in international law. India has consistently upheld the sanctity of state sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, and the peaceful resolution of disputes, all of which are foundational pillars of the United Nations Charter. These commitments are not merely rhetorical; they are reflected in India’s decades-long support for multilateral treaty regimes, including UNCLOS, the Paris Agreement and the World Trade Organization’s dispute settlement framework. As one of the world’s largest democracies and a founding member of several key international institutions, India occupies a legally legitimate position in advocating for reforms to global governance structures that better reflect contemporary geopolitical realities. The existing international legal order, largely designed in the post1945 era, increasingly struggles to accommodate the interests of emerging economies. India’s engagement with Nordic nations, who are themselves influential architects of international regulatory frameworks, offers a constructive path toward co-authoring more equitable and representative legal norms. India’s legal tradition, rooted in constitutional pluralism and judicial independence, also positions it as a credible partner in advancing rule-of-law frameworks internationally. In a world where the legitimacy of multilateral institutions is under strain, partnerships between established legal democracies and rising powers committed to rules-based conduct are indispensable. India’s Nordic outreach is, in this sense, as much an assertion of legal identity as it is a diplomatic one.

Israel seldom makes an effort to conceal the fact that torture and execution are now commonplace in its prisons

“This is the end. I don’t see myself surviving. They brought me here to kill me.” These were the words of Dr Hussam Abu Safiya to his lawyer earlier this month. Abu Safiya was the director of the Kamal Adwan hospital in northern Gaza. Eighteen months ago he was seized by Israeli forces and has since been held without charge or trial. He reports being struck with hammers and batons, daily beatings and loss of consciousness. The latest images of him show a much gaunter man than the one who had been the voice of besieged healthcare workers in Gaza, doing their jobs in impossible circumstances. In June, Abu Safiya was transferred to Rakefet prison, an underground facility first built to hold senior organised crime figures, then closed on the grounds that it was inhumane. It was reopened in late 2023 by the far-right national security minister Itamar Ben-Gvir. Abu Safiya and the other Palestinian prisoners there never see daylight, a violation of the Geneva conventions. Across the Palestinian territories and Israel, about 3,500 prisoners like him are held under “administrative detention” that can be renewed every six months, indefinitely. Nearly 200 of them

are children. Once a Palestinian is detained under these rules, they are essentially abducted by the state. “Real hell” is what is experienced once detained. Ali al-Samoudi, a Palestinian journalist, was released earlier this year, unrecognisable. He had lost 60kg, about half of his body weight. “Prison today is hell in every sense of the word,” he told CNN. “Everything they practised with us was punishment and revenge.” The scale of abuse, torture and death in Israeli prisons is well documented, but every once in a while an image appears that is Abu Ghraib-like in its relish and abandon. Earlier this month, a photo taken by an Israeli soldier was posted on social media. It shows a Palestinian man from Gaza face down, stripped to his underwear, bound with ropes to a plank and an iron rod. The caption said “good morning” in Hebrew. The echoes of Abu Ghraib were all there, the sinister gloating, the sexualised humiliation of stripped prisoners, the taking of photos as some sort of trophy. These are not isolated incidents, or even measures established during the current conflict, although they have accelerated during it. The administrative detentions and abuse

are part of a wider longstanding system that has severed Palestinians from human rights, and appears to be designed to terrorise, break morale and collectively punish. For decades, the Israeli state has practised a policy of keeping the bodies of Palestinians, refusing to hand them over to their families for burial. Some bodies are buried in numbered graves in sealed military zones, others are held in freezers. Among those are 100 Palestinians who died in Israeli custody. No information has been provided about how they died. And then there are the missing. Those in Gaza who, according to eyewitnesses, were detained by Israeli authorities, but never recorded. These amount to “enforced disappearances” according to the Israel-based human rights organisation HaMoked, which is trying to trace the whereabouts of almost 2,000 people. These are only snippets, snapshots of a state in which Palestinians live under a regime of torment. The result is layered, diverse and complex forms of trauma that seem to signal to Palestinians that their lives and even corpses belong to the Israeli state. The practical infrastructure of abuse is shocking enough, but it feels like there is

also an important psychological dimension, a sort of continuous smothering of the notion of autonomy. So many of the detained include those with roles and profiles that suggest leadership or express community values; journalists, doctors and civil society members. These people are part of the network that underlies a state or society, which must be shattered to communicate that there is no such thing as Palestine or a Palestinian people.What is remarkable is how much of it is happening in plain sight. How often it is shown clearly by a picture, whether it is of footage of a Palestinian prisoner appearing to be sexually abused, or of the man in his underwear tied to a rod. How much it is documented by rights groups, posted by Israeli soldiers, bragged about by Israeli politicians. And how little it is protested within Israel, or how rarely it moves Israel’s allies in the west to express real outrage or demand real action. In the UK there is a focus on settler violence, sanctioning settlers and as Andy Burnham recently suggested, banning trade with illegal settlements. But that seems like an effort to locate the main problem away from the heart of the Israeli state.

Assam’s audacious anti-polygamy reforms aimed at achieving gender justice

Another important step in the state’s ongoing endeavour to change personal laws in the interest of gender justice and women’s empowerment is the Assam government’s proposal to fire government personnel found engaging in polygamy. The most recent statement, which comes after the Assam Prohibition of Polygamy Act, 2025, is part of a larger change in governance where access to state benefits and public employment are increasingly correlated with legal compliance. Although the action has sparked political discussion, it also brings up more significant constitutional, social, and administrative issues regarding equality, personal laws, and the state’s role in advancing social transformation. The proposal, which was included in the Budget for 2026–2027, aims to change the Assam Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1964 so that government workers who are discovered to be engaging in polygamy could be fired. Men convicted of polygamy would also lose their eligibility for government assistance programs. In a similar vein, state welfare benefits would not be available to those convicted under any criminal statute. This is a significant development in the reform program for Assam. In the past, the state’s main goal was to make polygamy illegal. By expanding responsibility to the areas of public employment and welfare, it is making it clear that people who break laws intended to defend women’s rights cannot also claim the benefits of state support or public service. The philosophy behind this policy is clear. Government employment is not merely a source of income but a public trust. Civil servants are expected to uphold constitutional values, obey the law and set standards of responsible citizenship. If the state has declared polygamy a punishable offence, allowing public servants convicted of such offences to continue in government service would undermine the credibility of both the law and public administration. The proposal also reflects an emerging governance model that increasingly links welfare to lawful conduct. Across India, governments have experimented with behavioural conditions attached to welfare benefits, whether relating to sanitation, education or environmental compliance. Assam’s decision extends this principle to criminal offences that affect women’s

rights. The legal foundation of the proposal lies in the Assam Prohibition of Polygamy Act, 2025, one of the country’s most comprehensive pieces of legislation specifically targeting polygamy. The Act prescribes imprisonment of up to seven years and fines for individuals entering into polygamous marriages. Those who conceal an existing marriage before contracting another face imprisonment extending up to ten years. Repeat offenders are liable for enhanced punishment. The law goes beyond punishing the principal offender. Religious functionaries, village heads, Qazis, parents or guardians who knowingly facilitate or conceal prohibited marriages may also face criminal liability. Such provisions recognise that unlawful marriages often involve multiple actors whose participation enables violations to continue. Importantly, the legislation remains prospective. Marriages validly contracted under previous personal or customary laws before the Act came into force remain legally protected. This safeguard reflects the constitutional principle against retrospective criminalisation while ensuring that future violations attract legal consequences.The Act also provides for compensation mechanisms for women adversely affected by prohibited marriages, recognising that legal reform must be accompanied by institutional support for victims. The amendment to the Assam Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1964, further strengthens this framework. These Rules, framed under the proviso to Article 309 of the Constitution, regulate disciplinary proceedings, penalties and appeals relating to government employees. Any amendment introducing dismissal for practising polygamy would therefore operate within an established statutory disciplinary framework rather than through arbitrary executive action. This ensures adherence to principles of natural justice. Government employees facing disciplinary proceedings would continue to enjoy procedural safeguards, which include the right to an inquiry, the opportunity to present their defence, and access to appellate remedies. From a constitutional perspective, Assam’s reforms draw strength from the Directive Principles of State Policy. Article 44 encourages the state to endeavour to secure a Uniform Civil Code, while Article 15 permits

special measures to advance women. Although personal laws continue to govern marriage across different communities, the Constitution also places upon the state a responsibility to eliminate discriminatory social practices. Supporters say that polygamy often leads to unfair family structures that hurt women more than men in terms of their emotions, finances, and social lives. Multiple marriages may lead to fragmented inheritance, unequal financial support, abandonment and prolonged litigation. Criminalising such practices is, therefore, viewed as a legitimate effort to promote substantive gender equality. The reforms also reflect changing judicial attitudes. Over recent decades, the Supreme Court has increasingly interpreted personal laws through the broader framework of constitutional morality, gender justice and fundamental rights. The landmark judgement invalidating instant triple talaq demonstrated the judiciary’s willingness to subject personal law practices to constitutional scrutiny where they undermine women’s dignity and equality. However, Assam’s legislation is also notable for what it excludes. The Act does not apply to areas governed under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, including the Bodoland Territorial Region, Karbi Anglong, West Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao. Similarly, Scheduled Tribes notified under Article 342 remain governed by customary laws where multiple marriages continue to enjoy legal recognition. These exemptions reflect India’s constitutional commitment to protecting tribal customs and cultural autonomy. At the same time, they also illustrate the complex legal pluralism that continues to characterise Indian family law. Across the country, marriage continues to be regulated through diverse legal systems. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, abolished polygamy among Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs by making monogamy an essential condition for a valid marriage. The Special Marriage Act, 1954, similarly mandates monogamy for civil marriages irrespective of religion. Muslim Personal Law, however, continues to permit Muslim men to marry up to four wives subject to conditions of equal treatment. This distinction has long remained at the centre of debates concerning the Uniform Civil Code and legal reform.

Nigel Farage’s crypto cash: accountability is not a conspiracy

Twice now, the Guardian’s questions about Reform UK’s finances appear to have been pre-empted by stories friendly to the party. This paper revealed in April that Nigel Farage received £5m from the crypto billionaire Christopher Harborne – but an interview with Reform UK’s leader, claiming he needed the cash “for security”, was published hours earlier in the Telegraph. Then, Richard Tice’s suggestion that the National Crime Agency (NCA) had leaked the MP’s bank statements landed on the Telegraph site on Tuesday, just before the Guardian said bankers had reported the £5m donation to law enforcement over money-laundering concerns. A party serious about probity would have no issue answering questions about such cash. Instead, Reform uses a pliant media outlet to frame scrutiny as persecution. In Mr Farage’s world, the questions become the scandal, not the large undisclosed sums. That is a warning about how an authoritarian nationalist party that aspires to govern treats accountability: not as a democratic obligation, but as an attack. MPs must declare relevant gifts from the year before entering parliament. Mr Farage says that the £5m did not need to be registered because it was a personal gift. The issue is before the parliamentary commissioner for standards. By forcing a byelection, Mr Farage asks voters not to judge him by the Commons rules, but whether the parliamentary inquiry itself is an establishment plot. If it sounds Trumpian, that’s because it is. Democratic norms work only when politicians recognise their importance and submit to them even when they are inconvenient. Like Donald Trump, Mr Farage does the opposite. Perhaps equally telling is that like Mr Trump, Reform promotes a vehicle for rampant speculation and has also gained from it. Mr Farage has embraced cryptocurrency aggressively, urging the Bank of England to drop a crypto policy that could be costly for Reform’s billionaire backer. The £5m gift to Mr Farage came from Mr Harborne, a crypto billionaire with a significant stake in Tether, the world’s largest stablecoin issuer. Tether made profits of \$13bn in 2024. That year, NCA officials who uncovered a multibillion-dollar laundering scheme said that it had become the “cryptocurrency du jour” for criminals. Tether has since frozen \$4.2bn of its tokens because of crime links. Regulators warn that too many young people in Britain are turning to crypto, often borrowing because they think they will win big. The US offers a warning. In 2025, Mr Trump disbanded the US unit investigating cryptocurrency fraud while promising to make America the “crypto capital of the planet”. Nearly a million buyers of his memecoin reportedly lost \$3.8bn, while Mr Trump pocketed \$636m. Faragism borrows the same architecture: grievance sells speculation, deregulation protects sellers, and elite enrichment masquerades as a plebeian revolt. The Guardian’s reporting points to a wider financial ecosystem around Reform: vast crypto wealth, opaque intermediaries, personal gifts, loans, property transactions and fundraising vehicles through which large sums moved with limited visibility. Bankers have filed suspicious activity reports involving senior Reform figures. These are not evidence of wrongdoing. But they are warnings that a party seeking power can’t simply wave away. This seems to be not just a question about one undeclared gift, but about financial networks with links to crypto cash in and around Reform. That does not prove illegality. But it does make transparency essential. Voters have a right to know.

Trump and Tehran: everyone loses when the US and Iran overplay their hands

The familiarity of the cycle shouldn’t overshadow the seriousness of the repercussions as the US and Iran resume threats, strikes, and a fruitless attempt to escalate the conflict. Tehran announced on Sunday that it had once more closed the Hormuz Strait. Due to the US and Israel’s illegal conflict, the World Food Programme is already feeding 1.5 million fewer people this year. As pre-existing crises worsen, vulnerable nations suffer the most: an additional 2.5 million people in Somalia and 2.3 million in Afghanistan are unable to fulfil their basic food demands.This humanitarian disaster cannot be resolved by de-escalation. We have not yet experienced the full impact on food production. The strait was key to global fertiliser exports; as prices soared, many farmers cut back on use. The drying up of remittances from migrant workers in the Gulf hurts Asian as well as African nations.In Iran itself, and Lebanon,

thousands of people, including civilians – many of them children – have been killed and essential infrastructure destroyed. Iranians are sliding deeper into economic catastrophe, and the regime is cracking down harder under the cover of war. Tehran’s retaliation has caused death and damage across the region. Consumers worldwide are paying more for energy and food. With the midterms approaching, the domestic impact helped push Mr Trump towards agreeing a memorandum of understanding (MOU), with 60 days to negotiate a broader deal. Yet less than a month in, strikes have resumed, after Iran struck ships transiting the strait and the US retaliated. At issue is a key section of the MOU. Its vagueness was not an oversight, but an attempt to accommodate clashing positions. It states that Iran will restore shipping, ensure safe passage and work with Oman on the

strait’s future administration, with the possibility of future fees apparently left open. Iran interpreted that as cementing, not overturning, its new control – and targeted ships while then used a separate US-coordinated route.Rhetoric from both sides does not help. Tehran decreed, as it mourned for its late supreme leader, Ali Khamenei, that revenge for his killing “must inevitably be carried out”. Mr Trump responded that the US military will “decimate and destroy all areas of Iran” if he faces any assassination attempt, and has called its leaders “scum”. Yet while Mr Trump has said that the MOU and ceasefire are over, he maintains that talks will continue. This is not so much a repeat as a doom loop; each iteration increases suspicion and complicates issues. The US can U-turn again to allow Tehran to export oil – but the sector cannot recover when

customers have no confidence.Ending the war depends on resolving an issue the war created: Iranian control of the strait. The immediate priority should be to facilitate humanitarian shipments. Beyond that, Oman and others are attempting to establish the exit route from a crisis which its principals have been unable to find. One proposal would allow navigational fees to be charged, but on a non-compulsory basis and under the aegis of a UN body. That has potential, though leverage probably matters more than profit to a militarised, more headline regime. Mr Trump wants to claim a triumph, not a compromise. But neither side can secure decisive victory, and neither wants an open-ended war, even if they are unwilling to make the concessions needed. The rest of the world must try to coax them back to their senses – or live with the consequences.

3 companies riding India’s Rs 97,021 crore rooftop

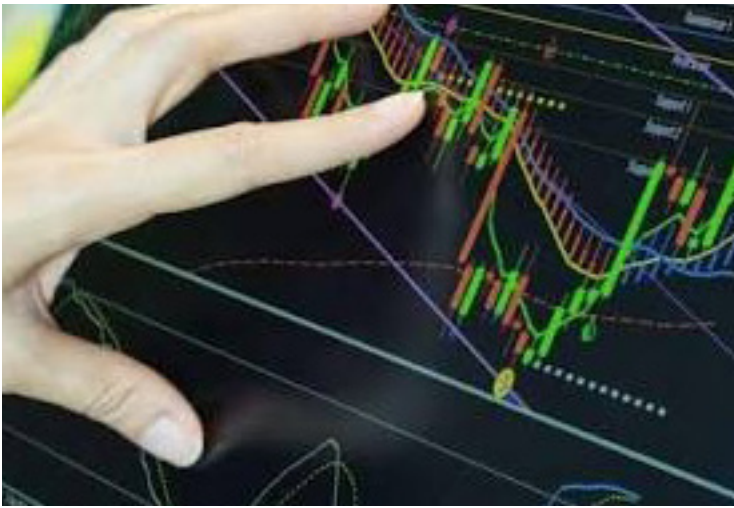
New Delhi: India’s renewable energy market encompasses not only Solar, Wind Energy, Solar Pumps, Green Hydrogen, and Energy Storage Systems but also Rooftop Solar. Notably, rooftop solar adoption in India is still very low, with only 1 in 100 eligible Indian households having installed it, making it one of India’s largest untapped clean energy opportunities.Rooftop solar has reached only around 40 lakh of India’s nearly 30 crore eligible households. This translates to a penetration of just 1.3%, which is drastically lower than countries such as Australia (30-38% penetration), the Netherlands (24%), and Germany (12%). The penetration is on track to reach 75 lakh households by December 2026.Bridging the ₹2.5 Lakh Crore Gap

This single statistic captures both the current reality and the scale of the opportunity ahead. The PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, backed by a ₹75,021 crore outlay, aims to solarise 1 crore households. Even then, India would reach only 3.3% penetration among eligible households, underscoring the vast long-term headroom for growth. Furthermore, the 2026 budget allocated ₹22,000 crore to expand rooftop solar penetration in India. This brings the total policy support for rooftop solar to ₹97,021 crore. Overall, the under-penetration creates a total addressable market opportunity of ₹2.5 lakh crore by 2030. These initiatives are working. In FY26, rooftop installations reached a record 8.7 GW, up from 6.0 GW in FY25 and 4.6 GW in FY24. The existing 11.5 GW pipeline also provides strong visibility. Shakti Pumps Investor Presentation projects the market to reach 48.6 GW of installations by 2032, which is 5.6x the installations as of FY26.Increasing rooftop solar adoption is also key to India’s ambitious goal of reaching 500 GW of non-fossil capacity by 2030. This is because rooftop solar currently accounts for 20% of the total solar market. Against this backdrop, we examine three leading companies with meaningful exposure to India’s fast-growing rooftop solar market. Tata Power, part of the Tata Group, has been the #1 solar rooftop provider in India for eleven consecutive years. The company provides end-to-end solar solutions to residential, commercial, and industrial consumers. Tata Power’s retail network spans 700+ cities, 650+ channel partners, and over 3,000 retailers.

Two sectors flash bullish signals as Nifty eyes fresh highs

New Delhi: Despite a recovery on Friday, post a mid-week plunge, Nifty’s inability to clear the recent peak does ring some caution as we go into the new week. However, optimism persists as 61% of the Nifty 500 have managed to close above their respective 10-day SMA, the highest level last week, suggesting that risk appetite is strong. Although the MACD histogram remains in negative territory, it has begun to flatten, indicating that selling pressure is easing and bearish momentum is fading. The current rebound attempt is also taking place near the support of a widening wedge pattern, further reinforcing the significance of the prevailing support zone.

A decisive breakout above the 10,100-10,200 resistance band would strengthen the case for a bullish reversal and could open the path for a move towards 10,700. While near-term confirmation is still awaited, the broader technical structure remains constructive as long as the index continues to hold above its key channel support levels.Among sector-specific indices, media, auto and financial services indices are trading below their respective 10-day SMAs, but not by a large distance to be of concern. Meanwhile, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) increased their long positions in the index future segment to 34,427 contracts.



Thanks to a 9% jump in long positions on Friday, the week-on-week rise has come to 15%. Short positions also declined during the period, easing 2.88% to 289,138 contracts. Furthermore, close to 60% of realty stocks registered short covering on a week-on-week basis, indicating that market participants are reducing bearish positions and increasingly positioning for upside opportunities.

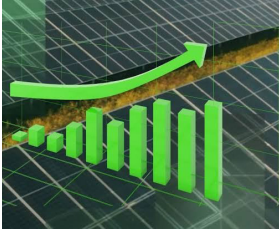
The combination of a multi-time-frame breakout, strong momentum readings and supportive derivatives activity points to continued outperformance from the sector. As long as the breakout zone remains intact, the index appears well positioned to advance towards its near-term upside targets of 960

compared with the previous week. Consequently, the long-short ratio of FIIs in the index future segment is at 10.6, below both the 30-day mean and 90-day mean, which are at 11.3 and 14.01, respectively. Despite this, we are inclined to see the reduction in shorts and increase in longs on Friday, the trend to follow, especially as the long-short ratio is recovering from a near record low. Against this backdrop, we highlight two sector themes that merit attention.Bulls strengthen hold on Nifty Realty

The Nifty Realty Index has delivered a strong breakout from a prolonged consolidation phase on both the daily and weekly charts, reinforcing the continuation of its broader uptrend. This decisive move highlights strengthening bullish sentiment and suggests that buyers remain firmly in control. Momentum indicators continue to support the positive outlook, with the weekly RSI comfortably holding above the 60 level, reflecting healthy trend strength and indicating potential for further upside.

The derivatives landscape also aligns with the bullish technical setup. Nearly 80% of the near out-of-the-money (OTM) Put strikes witnessed fresh short build-up, while a similar proportion of near OTM Call strikes saw long additions, signalling expectations of higher prices ahead.

Motilal Oswal predicts a gine rally, sees 18% upside



New Delhi: Motilal Oswal retained its ‘Buy’ rating on Grasim Industries with a target price of Rs 3,770, implying an upside of more than 18%. This is on the back of the high-growth Viscose Staple Fibre (VSF) segment, the efficient chemical category, the scaling paint business, and a few other factors. Motilal Oswal remains highly confident about Grasim Industries’ Viscose Staple Fibre (VSF) segment due to favourable global consumption trends and its status as the fastest-growing major fibre category. Globally, VSF registered a 4% CAGR between CY15-25, while in India, it grew by 9%, significantly outperforming stagnant cotton consumption. With VSF’s share in the global fibre mix rising to 7%, the market is projected to expand to 8.4 million tonnes by CY31, led by stable demand from the Asia-Pacific region. Grasim Industries is aggressively expanding its Lyocell capacity to 210ktpa by FY30, which will make it one of the largest global producers. Furthermore, strong pricing trends in China and the company’s backward integration into pulp and caustic soda help manage raw material volatility and enhance blended realisations.The chemical segment’s profitability is expected to improve significantly on the back of volume growth and increased operational efficiencies. The brokerage highlighted the company’s increasing chlorine integration to 70% by FY28, up from 64% in FY26, which will reduce transportation costs and increase the utilisation of caustic plants. Additionally, Grasim Industries aims to nearly double its renewable energy share to 45% by the end of FY27, structurally lowering power costs. The ramp-up of the 50ktpa Epoxy Chlorohydrin (ECH) unit is another critical milestone.

Ancillary stock trades cheaper than every major peer. A demerger could change

New Delhi: Most demergers we have covered in the Special Situations Alert AND in general follow a script: keep the steady, cash-generating business in the listed parent, and carve out the smaller, faster-growing “story” business into a new company so the market can finally see it.In 2008, Bajaj Auto spun its financial-services business into Bajaj Finserv. Reliance carved out Jio Financial Services in 2023. Raymond’s stock re-rated through 2024-25 on the back of its lifestyle-versus-realty split. The Greenply-Greenpanel separation of 2019 remains the textbook case. Basically, give a focused business its own identity and its own investor base, and value tends to surface.One caveat specific to Pricol, though, and worth stating up front: the classic demerger unlock is largest when the carved-out business is small in revenue but large in profit or scarcity value: a hidden 15%-of-revenue gem, for example. Pricol is not that. Here, both halves are material (roughly 60/40 by revenue), and the parent already trades a reasonable multiple. That changes the shape of the opportunity, as we’ll see in the Valuation section.

In 2022, Aarti Industries carved its pharma busi-

ness out into Aarti Pharmalabs and Rossell India split its fast-growing aerospace-and-defence arm, Rossell Techsys, from its cyclical Assam tea business in 2024.And just yesterday, Triveni Engineering declared the record date (22nd July 2026), bringing the demerger of its highly anticipated Power Transmission arm into Triveni Power Transmission Ltd (TPTL).In each case, the faster-growing piece got its own ticker AND more importantly its own multiple.Pricol is running that exact script, but with a twist. The faster growing, higher margin business is also the larger one. On 27 June 2026, Pricol’s board approved a scheme to demerge its Driver Information & Connected Vehicle Solutions (“DICVS”) business (instrument clusters, digital cockpits, telematics and battery-management electronics) into a new company called Pricol Autotech Limited. That business did ₹2,424.63 crore of revenue in FY26, or 61.17% of Pricol’s consolidated turnover. What stays behind in the listed parent, Pricol Limited, is the mechanical half: the Actuation, Control & Fluid Management Systems (“ACFMS”) business (pumps, disc brakes, throttles, fuel-pump mod-

ules) and the recently acquired Precision Products (“P3L”) polymer business from TVS group in 2025. Fund managers who want exposure to a fast-growing automotive-electronics story don’t necessarily want a fluid-management and plastics manufacturer attached. The analyst who models pumps and injection-moulded panels doesn’t know how to price a display-and-software franchise. The result is a single, blended multiple that flatters neither business. This is the conglomerate discount.A demerger forces the market to price each business independently. Separated entities attract sector-specific investors and analysts, management gets dedicated focus and its own capital-allocation framework, and each business pursues its own strategy without being dragged by the other’s cycle or capital intensity.India’s recent demerger wave illustrates the mechanism well. ITC demerged its hotels business in January 2025 (a division that consumed a large share of capital while contributing a small slice of profit), and ITC Hotels listed as an independent entity worth tens of thousands of crores, while ITC’s return ratios improved as a purer FMCG play.

2 IT stocks flashing early bullish signals

New Delhi: Quality stocks tend to rebound to levels where long-term investors have traditionally had confidence after a steep correction. These zones are not just price levels, but they are firm support, where buying demand has consistently overwhelmed selling pressure.When we see a stock bouncing off of such support and momentum indicators start turning positive as well, it makes for a potential high probability technical setup to follow.And this is what is happening in Persistent Systems and Mphasis.Both the mid cap IT stocks have corrected sharply from their highs and are showing positive signs of recovery. Most importantly, both have broken out of long-term support levels that have been respected in the past few years. The Relative Strength Index (RSI) is improving and the MACD is showing signs of a bullish momentum shift which adds to the optimism. The stock has tested this range three times in the one year. Buyers have always been aggressive enough to hold a deeper correction at bay. The stock has already rallied almost 8% on the weekly chart from the recent bounce, pointing to the strength in demand at these levels.Additionally, the 200WEMA (Weekly Exponential Moving Average) is adding a layer of long-term supportMomentum indicators are also supporting the rally. The weekly RSI has crossed above its moving average and trades around 48. The indicator is about to turn bullish above 50 but the recent strength suggests that buying momentum is gradually coming back.

Industree Foundation, NSRLM partner to scale women-led bamboo economy in Nagaland

Kohima: Industree Foundation has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Nagaland State Rural Livelihoods Mission (NSRLM) to integrate 30,000 smallholder women farmers into the bamboo value chain, marking a significant step towards expanding regenerative, women-led livelihoods in Nagaland. The collaboration, formalised in Kohima, forms part of the Bamboo Sub-Sector Initiative under the DAY-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) of the Ministry of Rural Development, which aims to empower one million rural women through bamboo-based enterprises over the next four to five years.Under the partnership, NSRLM and Industree Foundation will promote bamboo cultivation on fallow and underutilised land, establish women-led collective enterprises, strengthen processing infrastructure, develop new bamboo products and improve access to domestic and international markets. Speaking on the occasion, Industree Foundation CEO Neju George Abraham said Nagaland’s rich bamboo diversity offers immense commercial potential and added that the initiative will also focus on certified plantations, carbon credit accreditation



and building a traceable seed-to-market supply chain. The MoU was signed by Shri Moa Sangtam, Joint Secretary, Rural Development and Mission Director, NSRLM, in the presence of Additional Mission Director Shri Theose Thongtsar, COO Shri M Rollan Lotha, SPM Farm Dr. Sokishumo Kithan, and Industree Foundation representatives including Remya Devan. The foundation said bamboo cultivation can provide women farmers with stable incomes from the fourth year of harvest, with productivity extending beyond four decades, ensuring long-term livelihood security.In Kohima, the initiative is expected to stimulate investment in the state’s bamboo ecosystem by encouraging value-added manufacturing, local processing units and women-led enterprises. Im-

proved market linkages and globally recognised certification standards could enhance the competitiveness of Nagaland’s bamboo products, create employment opportunities and position Kohima as an emerging hub for sustainable bamboo-based businesses and green rural entrepreneurship.Headquartered in Bengaluru, Industree Foundation has undertaken similar bamboo livelihood partnerships with State Rural Livelihood Missions in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Telangana and Tripura. The organisation also recently secured India’s first FSC® Forest Management certification covering 6,671 women bamboo farmers in Karnataka and Maharashtra, opening new export opportunities through responsibly sourced and traceable bamboo products.

India’s Russian crude imports hit record even as revenues slip

Mumbai: India’s imports of Russian crude oil surged to a record high in June, rising 34 per cent from the previous month despite a decline in Russia’s overall oil export revenues, according to a report by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA).

European Union, Australia and the United States. An estimated EUR 369 million of those exports were refined from Russian crude, it added.The report noted that despite the European Union’s ban on imports of oil products made from Russian crude,

two shipments from Indian refineries using Russian crude were unloaded at EU ports in June. It also said the United Kingdom received its mately EUR 63 million, was unloaded at the ports of er 43 per cent was carried by G7-insured or owned vessels.

Nissan unveils TEKTON premium SUV in India, prices start at Rs 10.49 lakh

Aizawl: Nissan Motor India on Thursday unveiled the all-new TEKTON premium C-SUV at its world premiere in India, marking the company’s second product launch of 2026 and a key milestone in its strategy to strengthen its presence in the country’s fast-growing SUV market. Manufactured at Nissan’s Chennai plant, the TEKTON has been launched at an introductory price starting from Rs 10.49 lakh for the T160 manual variant, while the T280 range starts at Rs 14.99 lakh. Developed under Nissan’s “One Car, One World” philosophy, the SUV will also be exported to markets across the Middle East and Africa, reinforcing India’s role in Nissan’s global manufacturing and product strategy.Inspired by the legendary Nissan Patrol, the TEKTON



features a 100 per cent turbocharged engine lineup with Turbo T160 and Turbo T280 powertrains producing up to 163 PS and 280 Nm of torque. The SUV is available with six-speed manual and wet-clutch dual-clutch automatic transmission options. The C-SUV comes equipped with Google built-in connectivity, offering Google Maps, Google Assistant and access to more than 200 apps, alongside dual digital

displays, a panoramic sunroof, premium tri-tone interiors, class-leading 700-litre boot space and more than 55 connected features through the MyNISSAN app. Safety features include six airbags as standard, over 40 standard safety features and more than 17 Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS). Bookings for the TEKTON have opened across Nissan dealerships and digital platforms in India.

Johnson’s® Baby strengthens baby care portfolio with Milk & Rice range



Mumbai: Johnson’s® Baby has strengthened its position in India’s growing baby care market with the launch of its new Milk & Rice Range, complemented by the nationwide ‘Poshan Ka Pehla Sparsh’ campaign inspired by the traditional Indian Annaprashan, or Mukhe Bhaat, ceremony. The move reflects the company’s strategy of blending culturally relevant consumer engagement with product innovation to deepen its presence in the infant skincare segment.The new Johnson’s® Baby Milk & Rice Range is enriched with milk proteins, rice bran protein, Vitamin E, glycerin and a multivitamin complex to nourish and help protect a newborn’s delicate skin barrier while providing long-lasting moisturisation. The portfolio comprises Soap, Wash & Shampoo, Lotion, and Face & Body Cream. The company said the products are clinically proven mild, pH balanced and hypoallergenic,

while the Lotion and Face & Body Cream offer up to 24-hour moisturisation through lightweight, fast-absorbing formulations. Commenting on the launch, Peeyush Unikat, Group Product Manager – Johnson’s® Baby, said the range extends the trusted nourishment of milk and rice beyond a baby’s first foods to skincare from Day 1, reinforcing the brand’s commitment to gentle and effective infant care.The introduction of the Milk & Rice Range could help Johnson’s® Baby strengthen its competitive position in India’s expanding baby personal care market, where demand for clinically tested, ingredient-led and premium skincare products continues to rise. The integrated digital campaign, influencer partnerships and culturally rooted storytelling are expected to enhance consumer engagement and support the brand’s growth across urban as well as emerging markets.

June heatwave killed up to 440 people a day in England and Wales, data suggests

The heatwave that affected England and Wales in June killed about 440 people a day during its three-day peak, scientists have estimated. Across the whole of the June heatwave, plus the one in May, about 2,700 people lost their lives prematurely.

The data starkly illustrates the danger of extreme heat, which is being supercharged by the climate crisis. More than 40% of the people affected would not have died without the 1.4C of human-caused global heating to date, according to the analysis. For comparison, about four people die each day as a result of road traffic collisions and about 35 a day because of alcohol and drug use, according to government statistics.

Extreme temperatures will worsen as continued fossil fuel burning pumps pollution into the atmosphere, making cuts in emissions and measures to protect people from global heating urgent, say experts.

“These are big numbers and we don’t want to see this many people dying,” said Dr Clair Barnes, at Imperial College London, who led the analysis. “We’ve reached the point where the heat is so extreme that we can’t help but acknowledge the impacts it has.”

The June heatwave peak resulted in an unprecedented three successive days of red warnings from the UK Health Security Agency and the Met Office, warning of danger to life for all, though the young, old and those with underlying illnesses are most at risk from high temperatures and humidity. The UKHSA previously found that more than 10,000 people died in Britain because of summer heatwaves between 2020 and 2024. The Climate Change Committee has warned for more than a decade that the UK’s plans to protect people from rapidly worsening extreme weather are inadequate.

The June heatwave was the widest and most intense ever recorded in Europe and is estimated to have cost more than 20,000 lives. In Germany, where a record high of 41.7C was set, almost 5,500 people are thought to have died, according to preliminary government data. Schools, hospitals and transport have also been seriously affected.

“Hopefully just the sheer size of the numbers is really illustrating to people that this is something we need to be worrying about and preparing for,” said Barnes. “We can stop making it worse by transitioning towards net zero, because that is not a political target, it’s a physics-based target. If we stop adding greenhouse gases, we stop adding warming and we stop making these heatwaves worse.”

Dr Mark McCarthy, at the Met Office and part of the analysis team, said 2026 had been “exceptional for the two early-season heatwaves in May and June – these smashed records”. A high of 35.1C was recorded in west London during the May heatwave and three consecutive days of record-breaking June temperatures ended with a recording of above 37C in East Anglia. Climate change added 3C to 4C, the researchers said.

“We know that human-induced climate change is making heatwaves more frequent and more intense, both globally and here in the



UK,” McCarthy said. “Extreme high temperatures in the UK are also warming at a much faster rate than the average temperature.” Next summer may well be even worse due to a major El Niño event.

Denis Fernando, at Friends of the Earth, said: “It’s a national scandal that the UK remains so dangerously unprepared.” Prof Emma Howard Boyd, at the London School of Economics and the chair of the Heat Risk Commission, said: “Particularly alarming is that these figures, covering just the first half of the summer, are already approaching the reported toll from the record-breaking heat of 2022 ... Government cannot afford to treat these figures as an anomaly – they are a warning of the climate we now live in.”

The analysis estimated 550 people died because of heat-related causes during the May heatwave period, 21-29 May 2026. Almost

60% were the result of the extra heat baked in by the climate crisis.

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And about 2,200 heat deaths occurred between 18 and 28 June, a period encompassing the peak 24-26 June period, the study indicated. About 38% were attributed to global heating, the result of the extra heat baked in by the climate crisis.

“The proportion is lower for June,” said Barnes, “primarily because the temperatures were so extreme that

even without the extra boost from human-caused warming, the heat-related excess mortality would have been very high.” The analysis used peer-reviewed methods to analyse weather data and climate models to determine the impact of the climate crisis on the heatwaves. They then used published research that quantifies the link between heat and daily mortality in detail across England and Wales.

This enabled estimates of heat deaths in today’s heated world and how many would have been avoided in a hypothetical cooler world without global heating. The estimated deaths from previous research has aligned closely with official data which takes months to compile from death certificates.

The fatalities counted are “excess deaths” from all causes, ie the additional deaths occurring above the normal level for the time of year, and will include heart attacks and other medical emergencies provoked by the heat. Focusing on heat being recorded as a direct cause of death “would just be the tip of the iceberg”, said Dr Ross Thompson at the UKHSA. “It really underestimates the total burden of heat.”

The UK has kept detailed data of deaths and climate for many years, making it possible to assess heat fatalities. But such analyses are not possible in many countries, including those hardest hit by rising temperatures. Nonetheless, a conservative attempt to estimate global heat deaths by medical experts in 2025 concluded that rising heat kills one person a minute around the world on average.

Iran Targets U.S. Military Bases in Bahrain as Gulf Tensions Escalate After American Strikes



Manama: Iran launched attacks on U.S. military installations in Bahrain on Sunday following the latest American strikes on Iranian territory, further escalating tensions across West Asia amid the ongoing confrontation over the Strait of Hormuz. Air raid sirens sounded across Bahrain, prompting authorities to urge residents to seek shelter. According to Bahrain’s Ministry of Interior, citizens were advised for the second consecutive day to move to the nearest safe location after warning sirens were activated.

According to reports by

CNN, Al Jazeera, IRNA and Fars News Agency, Bahrain’s Ministry of Interior posted on X on Sunday morning (local time), urging citizens and residents to remain calm and proceed to the nearest safe shelter. Meanwhile, Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) announced on Telegram that it had launched missile and drone attacks against U.S. military positions in allied countries following the recent strikes on central and southern Iran.

The IRGC claimed responsibility for attacks on U.S. military facilities in Bahrain, stating that, in retaliation for Washington’s strikes, its Aerospace Force targeted helicopter maintenance and repair facilities, hangars housing P-8 Poseidon aircraft, and a drone command-and-control center at the U.S. air base in Sheikh Isa. Bahrain’s Ministry of Interior said no damage had been reported so far.

The U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) stated on X that its latest military operation against Iran struck dozens of targets at multiple locations using precision-guided weapons. CENTCOM said the opera-

tion marked the first use of fighter aircraft, naval vessels, one-way attack aerial drones, and one-way attack sea drones in the campaign. The strikes targeted Iran’s air defence systems, coastal radar installations, missile and drone capabilities, as well as fast attack boats. CENTCOM added that U.S. forces had struck nearly 140 Iranian military sites a day earlier, following which Tehran launched retaliatory attacks against Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Jordan.

Powerful explosions were also reported in the Iranian port cities of Bandar Ab-

Iran Warns of Reciprocal Response as Tensions With US



Tehran: Iran on Saturday issued a fresh warning to the United States, saying any violation of commitments by Washington would be met with a “reciprocal response,” underscoring the fragile state of relations between the two countries despite renewed diplomatic engagement through regional mediators.

Speaking to Iranian state media, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei rejected claims by US President Donald Trump that Tehran had sought the continuation of direct negotiations with Washington. He clarified that Iran had not requested talks with the United States but had agreed to receive a delegation from Qatar, which has been acting as a mediator between the two sides.

The remarks came after President Trump declared that the previous understanding between Washington and Tehran was effectively “over,” raising fresh uncertainty over efforts to reduce tensions following weeks of military confrontation.

Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said the country remained committed to defending its sovereignty and national interests. He stressed that while the international community sought an end to the conflict, Iran would not accept surrender under pressure.

Ghalibaf also revealed that during previous discussions with US Vice

President JD Vance, he had made it clear that Tehran did not trust Washington. He argued that meaningful negotiations could only take place from a position of strength, saying preparedness for conflict was essential to successful diplomacy.

Adding to the hardline messaging, Ali Khomeini, grandson of the founder of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, said negotiations with the United States should not be viewed as a path to reconciliation. He maintained that Iran’s ideological position remained firmly opposed to compromise with the US and described diplomacy as another form of strategic confrontation rather than a peace process.

The latest statements fol-

low renewed instability in US-Iran relations after a ceasefire arrangement reached last month came under strain. Although hostilities temporarily subsided during the week-long funeral ceremonies for Iran’s late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, tensions resurfaced soon afterward when explosions were reported inside Iran. The United States denied any involvement in those incidents.

Despite the sharp rhetoric from both sides, diplomatic contacts have not completely ceased. A Qatari delegation arrived in Tehran on Friday to continue mediation efforts aimed at preventing further escalation and encouraging dialogue between Washington and Tehran.

Prepare this traditional Rajasthani dish at home using only three ingredients



Rajasthani cuisine is renowned for its robust flavors, rustic appeal, and the ability to turn basic pantry ingredients into remarkable dishes. Although meals such as dal baati churma frequently take center stage, Marwar boasts another lesser-known treasure that is just as delightful and surprisingly simple to prepare—Dahi Mirchi Pyaz, a soothing mixture of yogurt,

onions, green chilies, and garlic. Popular across the Marwar region, this humble dish has long been a staple in Rajasthani households. Despite its rich, spicy, and tangy flavour, it doesn’t require expensive ingredients or hours in the kitchen. In fact, the recipe revolves around just three main ingredients—curd, onions, and green chillies—with a handful of everyday spices that most Indian kitchens

already have. **How To Make It** Start by roughly chopping the onions and green chillies. Traditionally, the onions, chillies, and garlic are coarsely crushed using a mortar and pestle, giving the dish its signature rustic texture and flavour. You can also pulse them briefly in a mixer without making a smooth paste. Heat oil in a pan and prepare a tempering with mustard seeds, cumin seeds, and hing. Once they

begin to crackle, add the crushed onion, chilli, and garlic mixture. Sauté well over medium heat until the raw smell disappears and the onions soften. Meanwhile, whisk the curd until smooth and mix in the red chilli powder, turmeric, coriander powder, cumin powder, and salt. Once the onion mixture is cooked, lower the heat and gradually stir in the seasoned curd. Cook on low to medium heat, stirring continuously to pre-

vent the curd from splitting. Continue cooking until the mixture thickens and the oil begins to separate from the sides of the pan. **Present it in the traditional manner.** Adorn with fresh coriander leaves and serve it hot alongside roti, bajra roti, or parathas. The combination of creamy curd, spicy green chillies, and fragrant garlic results in a robust, comforting dish that is rich in authentic Rajasthani flavors.

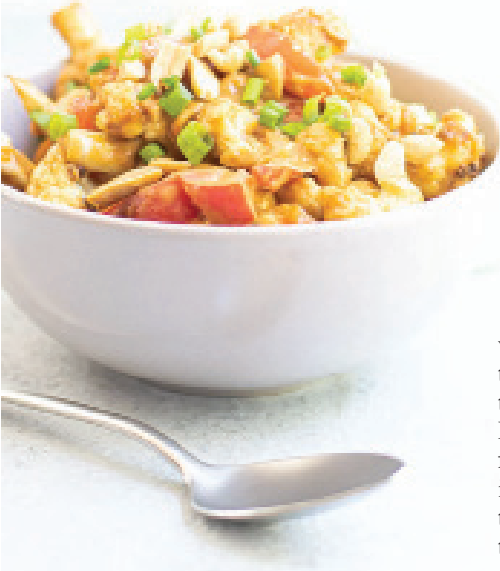
Saucy BBQ Chicken Sammies Recipe

Effortlessly prepare dinner by poaching chicken breast in a savory blend of chicken stock and beer, then shredding it and mixing it with a straightforward homemade sauce for satisfying sandwiches that the entire family will appreciate. Bring liquids to a simmer in a small to medium skillet and slide in the chicken breast meat. Gently poach the chicken 10 minutes, turning once about after 5 minutes. While chicken poaches, heat a second medium skillet over medium low heat. To hot skillet, add extra-virgin olive oil and garlic and onion and gently saute until chicken is ready to come out of



poaching liquids. Combine the next 5 ingredients in a medium bowl and reserve. When the chicken has cooked through, add 2 ladles of the cooking liquid to the bowl, combining with the sauces, spices, brown sugar and tomato paste. Once the liquids and seasonings are combined, remove chicken, slice it, and transfer to the medium bowl. Using 2 forks, shred the chicken and combine with the liquids. Add the shredded chicken to the onions and garlic and combine well. Simmer together 5 to 10 minutes, using extra cooking liquids to make your chicken as saucy as you like. Combine sour and sweet pickles in a small bowl. Split rolls and fill with scoops of shredded chicken. Top with pickle relish and serve.

Cauliflower Stir-Fry with Toasted Peanuts



This vegan dinner is quick to prepare yet remains quite filling. Toasting the peanuts in oil enhances the flavor of the oil and gives the nuts a delightful toastiness and crunch. Broiling the cauliflower prior to adding it to the skillet helps to evaporate some of the moisture from the

vegetable, ensuring that the stir-fry maintains a pleasing crisp-tender texture. Preheat the broiler. Prepare the rice according to the instructions on the package. In the meantime, combine the cauliflower with 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil and a substantial amount of salt and pepper; then, arrange it on a rimmed baking sheet. Broil the mixture, stirring occasionally, until

it is lightly charred and tender, which should take approximately 10 minutes. Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon vegetable oil in a large nonstick skillet over high heat. Add the peanuts and cook, stirring, until lightly toasted, about 1 minute. Remove to a small bowl with a slotted spoon and season with salt and pepper. Add the snow peas, bell pepper and ginger

to the skillet. Cook, stirring occasionally, until crisp-tender, 1 to 2 minutes. Add the scallions (white and green parts) and cauliflower; toss. Add the chili sauce and soy sauce and continue to cook, stirring often, until the vegetables are glazed, about 2 minutes. Fluff the rice with a fork; top each serving with the stir-fry, toasted peanuts and cilantro.

FOOD

Spinach and Artichoke Chicken Casseroles



Instructions In a spacious skillet set over medium-high heat, melt the butter. Incorporate the onion along with a pinch of kosher salt and sauté, stirring occasionally, until the onion becomes tender, which should take approximately 10 minutes. Introduce the garlic and continue to cook for an additional minute. Stir in the flour to evenly distribute. Add 1 cup milk, stirring continuously until thickened; repeat with

the remaining 1 cup. Stir in the chicken soup bouillon, then add the chicken, thyme and a few turns of black pepper and simmer, stirring often, until the chicken is cooked through and no longer pink, 10 to 15 minutes. Add the artichokes, spinach, cream cheese, parsley, a pinch of crushed red pepper and a few turns of black pepper. Stir until the cream cheese is melted. Taste and adjust as desired. Divide the spinach, artichoke and chicken mixture into eight 5-inch aluminum pans or

a 9-by-13-inch casserole pan. Separate the biscuits, then top the casseroles with them. Brush them with the egg wash and sprinkle with the flaky salt and some black pepper. If baking immediately, preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Bake until the biscuits are golden brown, about 15 minutes. If freezing, allow the casseroles to cool to room temperature, then cover tightly with foil and freeze. To reheat, bake at 400 degrees F for 30 minutes.

How To Make Thecha Pulao At Home



Thecha Pulao is a spicy and flavourful rice dish that can be prepared in a little time. **Ingredients:** 2 cups cooked rice, 2 tablespoons green chilli thecha, 1 chopped onion, 1 chopped tomato, 1 small potato (diced), ½ cup paneer cubes, 2 tablespoons peanuts, 1 tablespoon oil or ghee, 1 tea-

spoon mustard seeds, curry leaves, salt, fresh coriander. **Method** **Step 1:** Add mustard seeds, curry leaves, and peanuts to a pan of heated oil. Allow them to crunch and crackle. **Step 2:** Add the chopped potatoes, tomatoes, and onions. Vegetables should be sautéed until they are tender and slightly brown.

Step 3: Lightly fry the paneer cubes for one minute. Next, include the green chilli thecha so that the flavours complement the paneer and vegetables. **Step 4:** Gently stir in the cooked rice until the masala uniformly coated each grain without shattering it. Turn off the heat and add some fresh coriander as a garnish. Serve hot, along by papad or curd.

Ahmed Khan confirms new multi-starrer starring Tiger Shroff and Shanaya Kapoor

Mumbai : Ahmed Khan’s Welcome To The Jungle starring Akshay Kumar is inching towards minting Rs 125 crore at the domestic box office. Globally, it stands at Rs 180 crore. But the director is in mood to rest on his laurels. At present, he’s busy with the pre-production of three big-ticket films, including a zombie comedy featuring Tiger Shroff and Shanaya Kapoor as leads.

Speaking exclusively to News18, Ahmed finally confirms the project and spills the beans on it. “Yes, that film is in the pipeline. It’s definitely happening. We’ve already done the photoshoot. The only thing remaining is locking the rest of the cast. It’s also going to be a multi-starrer ensemble film. The production will begin very soon,” he tells us. Apart from this film, he reveals that he’s also dabbling in another multi-starrer of



the scale of Welcome To The Jungle. “There’s another multi-starrer film that’s I’m doing. It will have less than 34 actors like we had in Welcome To The Jungle. This time, we’ll have 33 actors (laughs). It will be a big film, not in terms of cost but in terms of its size,” Ahmed remarks. After a very short break, he’ll also be resuming work on the film, which will mark the debut of his son, Azaan Khan. Ahmed will be directing the film himself and it’s touted to be a romantic revenge drama.

Currently, Azaan is undergoing intense physical training and dance sessions for the same. And in Ahmed’s words, he isn’t treating his son differently any other actor he had launched. “I’ll be taking a gap of a month. I’ll be launching my elder son, Azaan. He’s 25. I’m not a parent who thinks that my child is going to be a superstar. I’m a very strict teacher as I’ve been a dance guru, who has launched many actors in the past. So, I’m taking the same route and the pace when it comes to

Azaan,” says the Baaghi 2 and Heropanti 2 director.

As for Welcome To The Jungle, it may have recovered its Rs 125 crore budget even before its release, but shooting for it was no cakewalk, particularly bringing so many actors under one roof at the same time. Eventually, it took two years to wrap the film. Talking about it, Ahmed had told us, “It was tough to get the dates of Johnny Lever, Paresh Rawal, Arshad Warsi and Akshay Kumar.” “What Akshay does is give his dates in bulk and finishes a film. But it wasn’t possible in this case. We couldn’t finish the film in the dates Akshay had given us, so we asked him for more time. We took his dates thrice and he gave us that willingly. He told me, ‘Ahmed, tu bina koi tension liye film bana.’ He was a strong pillar of support and a true friend,” Ahmed had added.

25 Years Later: Aamir Khan and Lagaan Co-Star Rachel Shelley Reunite in London

London : Aamir Khan starrer Lagaan, directed by Ashutosh Gowariker, completed 25 years on June 15, and the entire cast of the film came together to celebrate the special milestone. While British actress Rachel Shelley couldn’t make it to the reunion in Mumbai, she has now reunited with Aamir Khan in London! Rachel, who played Elizabeth Russell in Lagaan, shared several photos as she met Aamir at the London Indian Film Festival 2026.

On Sunday, Rachel Shelley took to her Instagram to share several photos with Aamir Khan as the two actors reunited at London Indian Film Festival to celebrate 25 years of Lagaan. “#lagaan25years Thank you @aamirkhanproductions for a glorious Sunday morning celebration @bfilmmacademy @imaxuk #IndianFilmFestivalLondon,” she wrote. The actress looked elegant in a white dress, while Aamir Khan kept it casual in a navy blue T-shirt paired with denim jeans. One of the pictures also captures Aamir during the question-and-answer session following the film’s screening at the London Indian Film Festival. Check out the post below!

Needless to say, fans were thrilled



to see the Lagaan co-stars together. “Lovely to see you both celebrating Lagaan’s 25 years. You are always a wonderful part of the Hindi movie industry, and a wonderful part of our childhood memory. Would love to see you again in an Indian movie,” wrote one fan, while another one commented, “The iconic cast reunited! It would be cool to see you guys recreate some iconic scenes from Lagaan.” A third comment read, “Finally, they meet again.” Since Lagaan, Rachel Shelley has built a diverse international career. She gained widespread recognition for her role as Helena Peabody in the

acclaimed series The L Word. More recently, she returned to Indian storytelling with the Netflix crime drama Kohrra.

Set in 1893, during the late Victorian period of British colonial rule in India, the film follows the inhabitants of a village in Central India, who, burdened by high taxes and several years of drought, are challenged by an arrogant British Indian Army officer to a game of cricket as a wager to avoid paying the taxes they owe. The villagers face the arduous task of learning a game that is alien to them and playing for a victory.

Alpha box office: Alia Bhatt’s action film fights on, eyeing the ₹100 crore milestone globally

Mumbai : Alia Bhatt and Sharvati lead Alpha that hit theatres on July 3, 2026. However, the film received a mixed kind of response from fans and faced a lot of trolling. Despite that, Alpha’s opening day collection was decent and it even saw a rise in its numbers over the first weekend. Post that, it started slowing down.

After collecting Rs. 47.45 crore net in India during its

first week, Alpha needed a strong jump at the box office in its second weekend. However, that didn’t happen. According to Sacnilk, the film earned Rs. 1.65 crore on its second Friday, followed by Rs. 2.25 crore each on its ninth and 10th day. This took its second weekend collection to Rs. 6.15 crore net, with its 10-day total now standing at Rs. 53.60 crore net in India. At the worldwide box office, the

Alpha has been made on a massive budget of around Rs. 100-130 crore. Going by its current earnings and report-



ed production cost, the Shiv

Rawail directorial is currently

on track to emerge as a box office flop.

There are loopholes and the story remains largely predictable. But even with its imperfections, this one is a trailblazer. It sets a powerful precedent for women-led action films in mainstream Hindi cinema, proving that female protagonists can command scale, spectacle and star power just as convincingly as men. And sometimes, that shift in itself

is bigger than narrative perfection. Alpha may stumble but it pushes the genre forward.” Alpha is an action thriller film directed by Shiv Rawail in his feature film debut. It produced by Aditya Chopra under Yash Raj Films and the script is written by Soumil Shukla, Shridhar Raghavan and Ishita Moitra and Uday Chopra. It is the seventh installment in the YRF Spy Universe. The film stars Alia Bhatt, Sharvati,

Anil Kapoor and Bobby Deol in the lead roles.

Alpha follows a highly trained assassin who was raised in isolation and turned into a deadly super-soldier by a rogue commander. After uncovering the truth about her family and the childhood that was stolen from her, she joins forces with her long-lost sister to bring down the man who created her and dismantle his illegal military program.

Vijay Sethupathi and Director Mysskin team up for action-packed ‘Train’ teaser

Chennai : After spending years in production limbo, Mysskin’s much-awaited Train has finally picked up steam. The makers unveiled the film’s teaser at its audio launch on Sunday, offering audiences their first substantial look at the Vijay Sethupathi-led action thriller. While the teaser stops short of revealing the central conflict, it packs enough intrigue and adrenaline to build anticipation for what appears to be one of the director’s most ambitious films in recent years.

Set almost entirely aboard a moving train, the teaser opens with Vijay Sethupathi’s character navigating a dangerous situation involving heavily armed men. Explosive gunfights, hand-to-hand combat, and frantic movement through the train’s compartments suggest a tense rescue mission where every second counts. The confined setting immediately gives the film a



distinct visual identity while hinting at the claustrophobic tension that has often defined Mysskin’s best work.

Shruti Haasan, whose role has largely remained under wraps until now, appears only briefly, but one particular shot has already sparked speculation. Seen picking up a firearm before another sequence shows a woman holding Vijay Sethupathi at gunpoint, the teaser leaves viewers wondering whether her character is friend, foe,

or something in between. Narain, meanwhile, appears to play a police officer coordinating the unfolding crisis from outside, while Sampath Raj also makes a striking appearance among the ensemble. Beyond its action, Train carries the unmistakable stamp of a Mysskin film. The teaser favours mood over exposition, revealing just enough to create intrigue without giving away its larger mysteries. The combination of

stylised violence, unusual framing, and atmospheric tension recalls Hollywood train-set thrillers such as The Taking of Pelham 123 and Snowpiercer, while retaining Mysskin’s signature storytelling style.

The supporting cast includes Nasser, Yugi Sethu, KS Ravikumar, Kalaiyarasan, Ira Dayanand, Ajay Ratnam, Vincent Ashokan, Babloo Prithiveeraj, Thirugun Arun, Ganesh Venkatraman, Preethy Karan, Singampuli, Suresh Chandra Menon, Shaji, Selvaah Chandrasekhar, GR Aathithyaa, Rohan, Kaniha, Janany, Diya Sharma, and Komagan. On the technical front, Mysskin has composed the film’s music in addition to writing and directing it. Cinematography is by Fowzia Fathima, editing by Sri Watson, and art direction by Mohana Mahendran. The film is produced by Kalaipuli S Thanu under the V Creations banner.

Filmmaker Imtiaz Ali’s daughter Ida Ali is engaged; stunning proposal photos go viral

Mumbai : Filmmaker Imtiaz Ali’s daughter, Ida Ali, has gotten engaged to her longtime boyfriend, Krish Agarwal. The proposal took place during the couple’s recent trip to Norway and Ida gave fans a glimpse of the special moment by sharing heartwarming photos and videos on social media.

The photos she shared showed Krish down on one knee as he asked Ida to marry him. She captioned the carousel, “Yes”. In another video, Ida is seen proudly flaunting her sparkling diamond engagement ring. The camera then pans to her, showing her excited face. In the same clip, Krish cutely rests his head on hers, making the moment even more romantic.

The comments section was soon flooded with congratulatory messages from friends and members of the film fraternity. Khushi Kapoor wrote, “SO CUTE,” while Vedang Raina added, “Congratulations you both.” Mihir Ahuja commented, “Congratulations Ida,” and Medha Shankar wrote, “Aww Idaaa Congratulations.” Aliyah Kashyap, Sharvari, Sanjana Sanghi, Anjini Dhawan, and more congratulated the couple. Ida has been carving her own path in the film industry. Following in her father’s foot-



steps, she is a filmmaker and writer who directed the short film Lift at the age of 17 and later wrote Uljhe Hue, starring Sanjana Sanghi and Abhay Verma. She has also been pursuing filmmaking studies in California.

Ida Ali is Imtiaz Ali and Preety Ali’s daughter. The couple got married in 1995 and welcomed their daughter in 2001. While they parted ways and got

divorced in 2012, the couple eventually reconnected in 2020, and they continue to collaborate professionally.

On the work front, Imtiaz Ali recently directed Main Vaapas Aaunga, a love story in the backdrop of partition and migration. It starred Naseeruddin Shah, Diljit Dosanjh, Vedang Raina and Sharvari in key roles.

Rashmika Mandanna eagerly awaits Ranabaali release



Hyderabad : Vijay Deverakonda and Rashmika Mandanna are teaming up for the ambitious pan-India period drama Ranabaali, directed by Rahul Sankrityan. Set in the 19th century,

Ranabaali is inspired by real historical incidents that took place during British rule between 1854 and 1878. With high expectations surrounding the project, the film is gearing up for a worldwide

theatrical release on September 11.

As the film enters its final stages of production, Rashmika Mandanna has sparked excitement by sharing an intriguing working still from the sets. The image features Vijay Deverakonda in an intense avatar and has quickly grabbed the attention of fans on social media. Sharing the still on Instagram, Rashmika wrote, “I’m not sure if I’m even allowed to share this still yet. I hope they don’t ask me to delete this post like they have a few times before. But the Ranabaali team is creating something truly spectacular. I can’t wait to experience that world on the big screen.”

Her candid post has further heightened curiosity about the film, with fans praising the glimpse and eagerly awaiting the trailer. Rashmika plays Jayamma, the female lead opposite Vijay Deverakonda’s character Ranabaali. The film is expected to blend history, action and drama on a grand cinematic canvas.

Ajay Devgn’s ‘Dhamaal 4’ rules the box office: ₹65 cr in India, eyeing global ₹100 cr mark

Mumbai : Dhamaal 4 is slowly and steadily gaining its hold at the box office. The film was theatrically released in India on July 10, 2026, with mixed reviews due to which it had a slow start. On its first day, Dhamaal 4 had earned a total of Rs 14 crore. On Saturday, Day 2, it saw a slight rise in its numbers as it collected Rs 22.50 crore.

On Day 3, which was Sunday, Dhamaal 4 saw more number of people flocking to theatres given that it was a holiday for many. The film minted Rs 28.50 crore. This takes the three-day total to Rs 65 crore net in India. Talking about the domestic gross collection, it stands at Rs 78 crore. At the international box office, Dhamaal 4 has collected Rs 14 crore gross in three days. This



takes the worldwide gross total to Rs 92 crore.

Dhamaal 4 marks the return of one of Bollywood’s most loved comedy franchises after Total Dhamaal. Ajay Devgn plays Guddu, while Riteish Deshmukh stars as Lallan. Arshad Warsi and Jaaved Jaaferi are back as the iconic duo Adi and Manav. The film also features Ravi Kishan as Adhoora, Sanjay Mishra as

Johnny, along with Anjali Anand, Sanjeeda Shaikh, Vijay Patkar and Upendra Limaye in key roles. The story follows Guddu, Lallan, Paaro, Adi, Manav, Rosy and Adhoora as they set off on a hilarious hunt for Shaitaan Singh’s hidden treasure. The film has been jointly produced by T-Series Films, Panorama Studios, Devgn Films, Maruti International and Anand Pandit Motion

Pictures. On the music front, Rohansh Pandit and Abeer Pandit have composed the soundtrack, with lyrics by Kumar, Anvita Dutt, Kausar Munir, Rohansh and Abeer Pandit. Amar Mohile has composed the background score. The album features tracks like Chatni, Qeher and Saree, the latter being a recreated version inspired by Sanju Rathod’s 2024 hit Gulabi Sadi. The first half is marked with long, elaborate sequences of ghosts and of people falling, drowning and hanging from the most impossible of places. And then comes the second half. The entire sequence of the gang discovering wealth inside the cave is so gruelling and so endless that it starts to test your patience. And then comes the problematic ‘gags’.”

“We’ll Put Lionel Messi To Bed”: Former England Star Issues World Cup Semifinal Warning to Argentina



England: Former England winger Joe Cole believes the Three Lions will put ‘Messi to bed’ in the FIFA World Cup 2026 semifinal match at Atlanta Stadium, where Thomas Tuchel’s team will face Argentina for the first time in 21 years. Thursday’s (IST) match will be the

latest installment in the England-Argentina World Cup rivalry, with the two nations having previously clashed five times on the world stage in 1962, 1966, 1986, 1998, and 2002, with England winning the last meeting in Japan thanks to David Beckham’s penalty. Argentina are the reigning

World Champions having triumphed in Qatar four years ago, which was their third World Cup triumph and first in 36 years. But, Cole believes that the South American side will be thwarted by England attacking strength. “We will have to put Lionel Messi to bed. We’re going to put him

to bed,” Cole said on The Rest is Football podcast. Like England, Argentina progressed to the semi-finals of the World Cup in extra time. After a 1-1 draw with Switzerland in 90 minutes, Julian Alvarez curled in a spectacular second for the South American side, and Lautaro Martinez sealed the 3-1 win. In the Round of 16, they pulled off a dramatic World Cup comeback to battle from 2-0 down to beat Egypt 3-2. They were trailing by two goals in the 79th minute, with their three goals coming within 13 minutes of each other. Before that, they were surprisingly taken to extra time by World Cup debutants Cape Verde in the Round of 32, before an own goal eventually saw Scaloni’s side advance with a 3-2 victory. In the group stages, they beat Algeria, Austria and Jordan, and are the only side in the tournament alongside France with a 100% record (including extra time).

Jannik Sinner: The Quiet Man of Tennis Moving Up The Ladder Of Greatness

London: Jannik Sinner, the quiet man of tennis, has made a lot of noise after winning his second Wimbledon title in a succession and his fifth Grand Slam victory. The Italian overcame French Open winner Alexander Zverev in four sets on Sunday, bringing him within two Grand Slam titles of his great nemesis Carlos Alcaraz. The pair are the dominant forces in men’s tennis, however Alcaraz has missed the last two Grand Slams due to injuries. While Alcaraz is the game’s flashy showman, beloved by fans for his high-risk, high-reward tennis, Sinner remains ice-cold on the court and mild-mannered away from it. His game is based on relentless power and accuracy from the baseline. The Italian is used to life at the top, and showed it with a brilliant performance in his seventh major final, saving the one break point he faced and dispatching the in-form Zverev in typically efficient fashion. Sinner says he does not follow a strict routine unlike many other players and is aware there is no guarantee his dominance will continue. “I am very relaxed. Look, I don’t have anything that I’m doing the same over and over again,” he said. “I also enjoy the moment, because I know how rare these days are. Grand Slam finals, they are tough to achieve and to arrive.” He has spent 79 weeks as world number one, 13 more than Alcaraz, and earlier this year became only the second player in history after Novak Djokovic to complete a career clean sweep of all nine Masters 1000 titles. Sinner has won six consecutive Masters tournaments and 34 straight matches at the level just below the Grand Slams. But until arriving at Wimbledon last week, his form this year at the majors had fallen below his high standards. A five-set semi-final loss to Djokovic at the Australian Open was followed by a shock second-round defeat by Juan Manuel Cerundolo at the French Open. He banished those memories in style at the All England Club, though, growing into the tournament before producing a clinical display in Sunday’s final to see off Zverev for a 10th consecutive time. Last year, he successfully defended his Australian Open title in January and bounced back from an agonising loss to Alcaraz in the French Open final by defeating the Spaniard in the Wimbledon showpiece match.

The Election Commission requires parents’ SIR information for new voters in Bihar

New Delhi, July 13: According to Election Commission officials, existing voters who were not covered in prior Special Intensive Revision (SIR) must submit their parents’ SIR information in order to remain on the electoral rolls, as well as new applications seeking inclusion on the voter list. The Election Commission (EC) has issued guidelines requiring new voters to attach SIR data of their parents while filling out Form 6 for entry in the electoral rolls. The announcement was included in the Bihar Special Information Report, which was released in June of last year. New voters were required to file the statement with Form 6. “Daily SIR bulletins of Bihar showed the form filled along with declarations,” an Election Commission functionary said.

The functionary underlined that the declaration was added through instructions and Form 6 has not been amended. “It helps in mapping electors and reduces the documents new voters need to submit along



with the application,” the official added. If a person fills Form 6 online, he or she cannot proceed further till the declaration is filled. Separately, the poll authority has defended the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, rejecting concerns raised by UN rapporteurs and asserting that the process is transparent, constitutional and endorsed by the Supreme Court. Election Commission officials said the SIR aims to include all eligible Indian citizens

while removing duplicate, deceased, shifted, absent and foreign voters from electoral rolls. Responding to allegations of large-scale deletion of minority voters, including in Nandigram, West Bengal, Election Commission officials said voters had adequate opportunities to challenge exclusions and denied any bias. In a recent letter to the government, UN Special Rapporteurs have raised concerns over the SIR, alleging that the process lacks transparency.

Five legendary France against Spain clashes before the World Cup semi-final



Paris: France and Spain will face off in a heavyweight World Cup semi-final on Tuesday, with Les Bleus looking for a third consecutive final and La Roja still hoping to repeat their Euro 2024 victory by winning the biggest prize of all. Ahead to the game, let’s take a look at five of the finest previous clashes between the nations: The first competitive match between the European neighbours occurred in Paris in the Euro 84 final, where a France team led by Michel Platini won their first major international trophy. The game at the Parc des Princes hinged on a Platini free-kick just before the hour mark which Spain goalkeeper Luis Arconada let squirm through his grasp and in to give France the lead. It was Platini’s ninth goal in five games at the tournament, and set them on the way to victory. They had Yvon Le Roux sent off late on but Bruno Bellone then sealed their triumph. France were European champions, and Spain would not reach another tournament final until they won Euro 2008. The only meeting of the teams at a World Cup before this year came in Germany in 2006, as they faced off in the last 16

in Hanover. A strong Spain team topped their group with three wins out of three, while France laboured through as runners-up in their section after being held by Switzerland and South Korea. Spain went ahead through a David Villa penalty, but Franck Ribery equalised before half-time. Patrick Vieira then put France in front as extra time loomed, and Zinedine Zidane clinched the victory. Raymond Domenech’s France ended up losing the final on penalties to Italy, while Spain were left bruised by another major tournament in which they fell short of their potential – they bounced back to win the 2010 World Cup, though, in between back-to-back Euro triumphs in 2008 and 2012. There have been a series of meetings between the teams in a tournament context in recent years, beginning with the 2021 Nations League final in Milan. In front of a restricted crowd due to the Covid pandemic, Mikel Oyarzabal gave Luis Enrique’s Spain the lead just after the hour mark. Karim Benzema, the Real Madrid striker who had recently been brought back into the international fold after over five years in the wilder-

ness, equalised from Kylian Mbappe’s assist. Mbappe then grabbed the winner as France won the second title of Didier Deschamps’ reign as coach, after the 2018 World Cup. The France team at Euro 2024 was different to the side that has lit up this World Cup. They reached the last four by scoring three goals in five games -- one was a penalty, the other two were own goals. Randal Kolo Muani became the first France player to score in open play at the tournament when he gave them the lead early in the semi-final against Spain in Munich. But Lamine Yamal equalised with a wonderful strike, four days before his 17th birthday. Dani Olmo then got what proved to be the winner a few minutes later, and Spain went on to defeat England in the final. France had started their transformation into a much more exciting team when the sides last met, in the Nations League semi-finals in June last year in Stuttgart. Spain were 4-0 up early in the second half thanks to goals by Nico Williams, Mikel Merino, a Lamine Yamal penalty, and Pedri. Kylian Mbappe pulled one back from the spot but Yamal got Spain’s fifth, before France rallied and strikes by Rayan Cherki and Randal Kolo Muani either side of a Dani Vivian own goal made the scoreline more respectable. Spain went on to lose the final on penalties to Portugal. Spain also won 5-3 in the gold medal match at the 2024 Olympics -- Manu Kone, Michael Olise, Jean-Philippe Mateta, Desire Doue, Rayan Cherki, Pau Cubarsi and Alex Baena all played in that game, and are in line to feature this time too.

Konkan Railway Staff Pulls Passenger to Safety Seconds Before Disaster; Receives Rs 10,000 Award



New Delhi, July 13: A Konkan Railway pointsman has been hailed as a hero for saving a 22-year-old passenger from a near-fatal tragedy at Murdeshwar Railway Station in Karnataka. The dramatic rescue, filmed on CCTV, has gone viral on social media, with many people praising the train employee’s fast thinking. Ganapathi Naik, a Konkan Railway pointsman, spotted a passenger attempting to get off train No. 16312 while it was still in motion. The passenger, who

was going from Kochuveli in Kerala to Sri Ganganagar in Rajasthan, lost his balance while attempting to depart from the moving train and came dangerously near to plunging down the tracks. Naik reacted quickly, rushing towards the passenger, grabbing him, and pulling him away from the space between the train and the platform. The CCTV clip reveals the quick response that most likely saved the young man’s life. Konkan Railway later published the footage on social

media, complimenting Naik’s attentiveness and mental clarity. “Alertness saved a life.” Shri Ganapati Naik, Pointsman/Murdeshwar, shown extraordinary mental fortitude by saving a passenger attempting to exit from moving Train No. 16312, averting a terrible disaster,” they stated. The railway authority also announced a cash reward of Rs 10,000, presented by the Chairman and Managing Director of Konkan Railway Corporation Limited (KRCL), in recognition of his exemplary courage and prompt action.

The video quickly attracted thousands of views and comments, with many users applauding Naik for his dedication and bravery. Several described him as a true hero who put duty before personal safety. At the same time, many users criticised the passenger for attempting to alight from a moving train despite repeated railway warnings. Some argued that such reckless behaviour not only endangers the individual but also puts railway staff and fellow passengers at risk. One user suggested that passengers attempting to disembark moving trains should face hefty fines to discourage such dangerous acts.

Dempo Goa Challengers Defeat Ahmedabad APL Pipers

Goa: Sixteen-year-old Syndrela Das produced one of the biggest upsets in Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT), stunning World No. 52 and Indian stalwart Manika Batra in straight games as two-time champions Dempo Goa Challengers defeated Ahmedabad APL Pipers 8-7 on Sunday at the Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium.

The teenager’s statement victory proved decisive as Goa overcame a valiant Ahmedabad comeback to win for the second time in Season 7. Earlier, French Olympian and UTT debutant Prithika Pavade produced a powerhouse performance as PBG Pune Jaguars defeated UP Prometheans 9-6. Pavade capped a memorable outing by toppling two-time UTT MVP Yangzi Liu in the deciding Women’s Singles, recovering from a game down before producing a superb display in the decider to seal one of the standout wins of the season so far.

“We got carried away by media hype”: Ex-India star on Vaibhav Sooryavanshi’s international debut

England: In India’s fifth and final T20I against England on Saturday, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi was replaced by Sanju Samson, continuing the musical chairs theme. Samson started the series but was benched for the second match to make room for the 15-year-old wonderkid. Sooryavanshi returned with scores of 14, 13, and 15 in three games, prompting the Indian team management to withdraw him from Samson’s last game.

In response to the alteration, former India batter Wasim Jaffer remarked that Team India gave the youngster an early debut by getting carried away by the excitement around him. “I think we rushed Vaibhav’s inclusion. There was a lot of media hype around him, and the public was very emotional about seeing him play. Otherwise, I had already said that India should have continued with Sanju Samson. They shouldn’t have changed that combination. Vaibhav had to wait for his opportunity, and when that opportunity came, he could have taken it. He’s still very young, and he can learn a lot just



by being around the team and watching cricket from the outside,” said Jaffer in a video on his YouTube channel. “It felt like we got carried away by the media hype. Every time Vaibhav didn’t play, there was a lot of discussion about it. I just thought he should have been made to wait. If you were absolutely convinced that Sanju wasn’t in good form or wasn’t playing well, then you could have taken that decision. But eventually, it felt like you rushed Vaibhav into the team,” he added. India play a three-match series against Zimbabwe in their next T20I assignment. Interestingly, Samson is not a part of the squad while

Sooryavanshi has been included. Jaffer opined that the wicketkeeper-batter should have been given more chances. “After handing Sooryavanshi three bouts, you brought Sanju back. Sanju played only one match and has been dropped out of the Zimbabwe tour. Dropping him off the Zimbabwe trip sounded weird to me, as I’m sure he would have wanted to play. As it stands, he only plays one format for India. He should have regular opportunity. Sanju Samson, as a match-winner, will undoubtedly be included in the preparations for the next World Cup. “The way things unfolded surprised me,” Jaffer said.

A man was killed after a speeding SUV hit him in Delhi, and the driver has been arrested



New Delhi, July 13: A 45-year-old man was killed by a speeding SUV as he went home from work with a buddy on the roadside in Rajouri Garden, and police detained the driver and impounded the car, authorities said on Sunday. Police

claimed the collision happened on Saturday in West Delhi, and they apprehended the fleeing motorist on Sunday.

The deceased was identified as Uday Kumar, also known as Uday Mahato, a Khyala native who worked

at a private store in Rajouri Garden. According to police, Uday was walking home with his friend, Subhash Kumar, a resident of Raghbir Nagar, after finishing work, when a speeding Scorpio hit him and fled the scene.

“The speeding SUV struck Uday, while his friend narrowly escaped,” an eyewitness told police during the investigation. Subhash rushed the injured man to Guru Gobind Singh Hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead. Police said after they received information about the accident through a hospital notification, a team reached the hospital and started an enquiry.

“Process Should Be Fair”: The Supreme Court Protects Declared Foreigners In Assam

New Delhi, July 13: The procedure of assessing citizenship or designating someone a foreigner should be fair, the Supreme Court said Monday in an important case involving the citizenship status of 27 people labeled as ‘foreigners’ by Assam tribunals. “Citizenship and foreigner status occupy a field of high constitutional and legal significance,” the court noted. The court recognized the Indian government’s interest in preventing illegal citizenship claims, stating, “The State has a legitimate and com-

PELLING interest in ensuring that persons who are not legally entitled to claim Indian citizenship do not secure such status by misuse of process, by false claim, or by delays...” However, in the final analysis, the court said that interest cannot override judicial fairness. The top court then set aside judgements passed down by the Gauhati High Court and the tribunals, and stressed that no coercive action could be taken against the 27 individuals who had been labelled ‘foreigners’ until another hearing is held by the tribunals.

Stephen Fleming Ends 17-Year Stint as Chennai Super Kings Head Coach in IPL

New Delhi: The most enduring and successful coaching tenure in the history of the Indian Premier League has drawn to a close. Chennai Super Kings on Monday announced they have mutually parted ways with head coach Stephen Fleming, ending an extraordinary 18-year association that defined the league's benchmark for stability and tactical excellence. The decision was finalised following what the franchise described as a series of "open and honest discussions" between the former New Zealand captain and the Super Kings management. The announcement follows a disastrous campaign for the Texas Super Kings – Chennai's sister franchise in Major League Cricket – who finished bottom of the six-team US league. Fleming, who also oversees the Dallas-based outfit, managed just three wins from 10 outings as the franchise collected its first wooden spoon. "While our journey together on the field comes to a close, he will always remain an integral part of the team's legacy," CSK owner Rupa Gurunath said. Fleming will not continue as the head coach of the Super Kings' franchises in the USA and South Africa. Fleming's association with Chennai began as a player during the tournament's inaugural season in 2008, before he tran-



sitioned into the head coach's role in 2009. Over the subsequent 17 years at the helm, he constructed a modern cricketing dynasty. Under his stewardship, Chennai Super Kings secured five IPL titles, two Champions League Twenty20 crowns, and achieved a record 12 play-offs and 10 appearances in the final. At the core of this unprecedented success was the telepathic captain-coach relationship forged between Fleming and MS Dhoni. Backed by a franchise management that famously granted the duo absolute autonomy, they cultivated a dressing-room culture insulated from the volatile pressures typical of franchise cricket. However, the weight of recent results

ultimately made a structural overhaul inevitable. While the franchise long prided itself on an almost permanent presence in the tournament's knock-out stages, the post-2023 cycle has proved severely challenging. Following their fifth title triumph three years ago, Chennai have failed to qualify for the playoffs in three consecutive seasons. The nadir arrived in 2025 when the side finished bottom of the table to collect the wooden spoon for the first time, followed by a disappointing eighth-place finish in the 10-team tournament earlier this year. Reflecting on his departure, Fleming expressed pride in the institution he helped build from its absolute foundation.

Bazball Ends After McCullum Sacked Following Stokes' Test Retirement

New Delhi: Brendon McCullum's four-year stint as England's Test head coach came to an abrupt end following Ben Stokes' retirement from international cricket, bringing the curtain down on the Bazball era that transformed the side's approach to red-ball cricket. While the England and Wales Cricket Board's (ECB) official statement said that McCullum would step down, the former New Zealand captain appeared to suggest that he had been sacked after saying that he respected the board's decision. McCullum, however, will continue to oversee England's ODI and T20I sides. The New Zealander, who took charge in 2022 after England's disastrous Ashes campaign in Australia, oversaw a remarkable turnaround alongside Stokes. Appointed on a four-year contract, McCullum inherited a side that had won just one of its previous 17 Tests and helped reshape its identity with an ultra-aggressive brand of cricket that came to be known as "Bazball". An emotional McCullum admitted that he was "gutted" not to continue as Test coach. "Of course, I'm gutted not to be continuing, but I respect the decision. My focus now is on giving everything I've got to the White Ball teams and helping England keep moving forward." The former New Zealand captain thanked the players, support staff and fans for backing the team throughout its journey and insisted that his focus would now shift entirely to England's white-ball setup. "I wish the Test team nothing but success," McCullum said. "There's a hell of a lot of talent in that dressing room and they're a special bunch of lads." McCullum's tenure began in spectacular fashion. England won 10 of their first 11 Tests under his leadership, sweeping New Zealand and Pakistan and chasing down improbable targets with unprecedented intent. The partnership between McCullum and Stokes revitalised England's red-ball fortunes and



captured the imagination of fans around the world. However, results dipped in recent months. England slumped to eight defeats in their last 12 Tests, while series defeats against New Zealand and disappointing performances in major assignments raised questions over the sustainability of the Bazball philosophy. McCullum's departure also follows Stokes' decision to retire from international cricket, marking the end of the duo that had spearheaded England's revival. Despite the Test setback, McCullum's stock remains high within English cricket. Earlier this year, his white-ball side reached the semi-finals of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup and recently climbed to the top of the ICC T20 rankings after a commanding series win over India. England men's managing director Rob Key described McCullum's contribution as invaluable, crediting him with changing the mentality of the dressing room and nurturing a new generation of players.

Conor McGregor's UFC 329 Comeback Ends in Devastating Injury Heartbreak



New Delhi: Conor McGregor's highly anticipated return to the octagon after a five-year hiatus ended in immediate heartbreak at UFC 329, with a severe leg injury forcing a first-round stoppage against Max Holloway. The Irish superstar, making his first competitive appearance since breaking his tibia and fibula against Dustin Poirier in July 2021, suffered what appeared to be a catastrophic knee or lower-leg injury just seconds into the main event at the T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada, United States.

The official stoppage came at just one minute and nine seconds of the very first round, leaving the capacity crowd in Las Vegas stunned

and casting serious doubt over the 37-year-old's future in mixed martial arts. The contest, a rematch 13 years in the making following McGregor's unanimous decision victory over Holloway in 2013, began with characteristic theatre. Sporting a new Mohawk and walking out to a wall of smoke, McGregor looked physically imposing and full of his trademark confidence. However, the bravado dissolved almost instantly upon the opening horn.

Seeking to make an aggressive statement, McGregor rushed across the canvas and unleashed a leaping lead kick. As his right foot slapped against his opponent, the former two-division champion landed awkwardly, with his

knee visibly buckling beneath his weight. Refusing to back down, McGregor attempted a second strike moments later, only to collapse instantly onto the canvas. Holloway, capitalising on the sudden opening, closed the distance and landed a flurry of heavy right hands while standing over his compromised rival. Showing immense sportsmanship, the veteran featherweight momentarily backed away, visibly looking towards the official as it became clear McGregor could no longer stand. McGregor courageously managed to struggle back to his feet, but his right leg collapsed once more under the slightest pressure. Realising the fighter could no longer defend himself, referee Mike Beltran stepped in to wave off the contest, awarding Holloway a technical knockout victory. Early medical assessments from the arena suggest a potential ligament tear, a devastating blow for a fighter who spent years in grueling rehabilitation to recover from his previous bone fractures.

Satwik-Chirag Return to Lead India's Charge at Japan Open Badminton Tournament

Tokyo: Fresh from ending a two-year title drought and returning after a brief injury layoff, India's top men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will spearhead the country's campaign at the USD 950,000 Japan Open Super 750 badminton tournament beginning here on Tuesday. The third-seeded duo, who pulled out of the Indonesia Open last month after Satwik aggravated a recurring shoulder injury, will be eager to resume from where they left off after ending a two-year title drought with the Singapore Open crown.

They begin their campaign against Denmark's Daniel Lundgaard and Mads Vestergaard. India's singles challenge will once again rest on Lakshya Sen, P V Sindhu and the rapidly rising Ayush Shetty, while several doubles combinations will look to make deep runs at one of the biggest events on the BWF World



Tour. Lakshya, a finalist at the All England Championships earlier this year, will open his campaign against Japan's Koki Watanabe. The world No. 14 has enjoyed a steady season with multiple quarterfinal appearances, though his early exit at the Indonesia Open came as a surprise. Ayush, who has emerged as one of India's brightest prospects, faces a stern opening test against second seed and former

world champion Kunlavut Vitidsarn of Thailand. The 20-year-old has continued his upward trajectory after winning the US Open Super 300 last year and finishing runner-up at the Badminton Asia Championships this season.

Two-time Olympic medalist Sindhu will take on Malaysia's Wong Ling Ching in the women's singles, while teenage talent Unnati Hooda will face

Chinese Taipei's Huang Yu-Hsun in her opener. Sindhu has consistently featured in the latter stages of tournaments this season but is still searching for her first title since lifting the Syed Modi International crown in 2024. Unnati, meanwhile, will hope to translate her promise into results after struggling to progress beyond the opening round at higher-tier events despite winning the Polish Open earlier this year. In men's doubles, Hariharan Amsakarunan and M R Arjun, who were part of India's bronze medal winning team at the Thomas Cup earlier this year, will face Chinese Taipei's Lee Jhe-Huei and Yang Po-Hsuan in the opening round. Mixed doubles pairs of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto, and Rohan Kapoor and Ruthvika Shivani Gadde, also have contrasting opening assignments. While Dhruv and Tanisha meet Scot-

land's Alexander Dunn and Julie Macpherson, Rohan and Ruthvika will face a daunting challenge against top seeds Feng Yan Zhe and Huang Dong Ping of China. Lakshya erased the deficit after the interval and edged ahead 14-13, but the contest turned into a tight slugfest with both players locked at 19-19 before Li produced two decisive points to take the opening game. The second game was one-way traffic as Lakshya raced to 5-0 and then 11-2, aided by a string of unforced errors from Li. The Indian maintained relentless pressure to force a decider. In the third game, Lakshya trailed 1-4 but recovered to 7-7. However, Li opened up a cushion at the interval after forcing errors from the Indian. Lakshya briefly threatened at 10-12 after winning a long rally with a precise cross-court return, but repeated errors on his smashes allowed Li to regain control.

Haaland Thanks Fans After Norway's Memorable World Cup Journey Ends



Florida: Norway striker Erling Haaland thanked fans for their support after his side's FIFA World Cup 2026 campaign came to an end with a 2-1 defeat to England in the quarter-finals. Taking to X, the Manchester City forward reflected on Norway's memorable run in the tournament and expressed his gratitude to supporters. "It's been quite a ride, thank you for making it so special," Haaland wrote on X.

Norway's historic World Cup journey ended after England secured a 2-1 victory to book a place in the semi-finals, where they will face defending champions Argentina, who defeated Switzerland 3-1. Norway had taken the lead in Miami through

Andreas Schjelderup after a bright opening spell in which Erling Haaland also tested Jordan Pickford. However, Bellingham struck in first-half stoppage time to restore parity before scoring again in extra time after goalkeeper Orjan Nyland spilt a Morgan Rogers effort into his path. England eventually secured a 2-1 victory to book a semi-final clash against defending champions Argentina, bringing an end to Norway's best-ever FIFA World Cup campaign.

The quarter-final marked a historic milestone for Norway, which reached the last eight for the first time in tournament history after returning to the World Cup for the first time since 1998.

Rahul Dravid Among Contenders for England's Test Coach Role: Report

London: Former India batter Rahul Dravid has emerged as one of the contenders to succeed Brendon McCullum as England's Test coach after the New Zealander was removed following the team's disappointing run in the longest format. According to a report in the Daily Telegraph, Dravid features among a list of potential candidates including former England coach Andy Flower and ex-England spinner Richard Dawson. McCullum's four-year tenure as Test coach ended after England's 1-2 home series defeat to New Zealand, with the England and Wales Cricket Board deciding that "the time is right to make a change" ahead of next year's Ashes. He will remain in charge of the ODI and T20I sides. The 53-year-old Dravid, who guided India to the 2024 T20 World Cup title and the 2023 World Test Championship final, is seen as an attractive candidate because of his "meticulous" approach and deep understanding of the game.

However, the newspaper did point out that Dravid has "no desire" to coach full-time. "Dravid has no desire to coach full-time, but the England Test job would allow him extended periods at home and the chance to help keep alive his favourite format of the game. England, at the very least, should gauge his interest," according to the report. Among the leading candidates is Zimbabwe great Andy Flower, England's most successful coach in the modern era, having led the side to three Ashes series victories and the No. 1 Test ranking. Flower has also enjoyed considerable success in franchise cricket



et, including consecutive IPL titles with Royal Challengers Bengaluru. Dawson, currently head coach of Glamorgan, is also viewed as a serious option after impressing with his tactical acumen and coaching credentials at both county and international levels. Other names mentioned in the report include Sri Lanka legend Kumar Sangakkara, England Lions coach Andrew Flintoff, Pakistan head coach Mike Hesson and former Australia coach Justin Langer. Former India head coach Rahul Dravid has reportedly emerged as one of the leading contenders to become England's next Test coach following Brendon McCullum's removal from the role after a disappointing red-ball campaign. According to a report in The Daily Telegraph, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) is exploring several experienced candidates as it looks to rebuild the Test side ahead of the 2027 Ashes. McCullum's four-year stint as England's Test coach came to an end after the team's 2-1 home series defeat to New Zealand. While the former New Zealand captain will continue as England's white-ball coach, the ECB has decided.

Harry Kane Presents David Beckham With England Legacy Cap During Miami World Cup Ceremony

Florida: Former England captain David Beckham was presented with a legacy cap by current skipper Harry Kane in recognition of his 115 international appearances before England's FIFA World Cup 2026 quarter-final victory over Norway. The presentation took place at Inter Miami's training complex in Fort Lauderdale, where England held their final training session ahead of a 2-1 win over Norway, which helped them to reach the semi-final. Beckham, who is co-owner of the Major League Soccer club, welcomed head coach Thomas Tuchel, Kane and the rest of the England squad to the state-of-the-art facility. Beckham represented England 115 times over a 13-year international career, featuring in five major tournaments and serving as captain of the national team. In a special moment during the visit, Kane presented Beckham with his legacy cap in recognition of his contribution to English football. Kane, who surpassed Beckham's tally of England appearances during the ongoing FIFA World Cup, is now among the country's most-capped players. Only Peter Shilton and Wayne Rooney



have represented England more times than Beckham. Beckham and Kane also share roots in Chingford, East London. Both attended Chingford Foundation School and began their football journeys with local club Ridgeway Rovers before going on to captain the England national team.

England went on to defeat Norway 2-1 in the quarter-finals to book their place in the FIFA World Cup 2026 semi-finals. The official England football team handle shared a picture of Beckham alongside Three Lions players and wrote on X, "Sir David Beckham." England head into the contest after a dramatic 3-2 victory over co-

hosts Mexico in the Round of 16 despite playing much of the second half with 10 men. Jude Bellingham scored twice before Kane converted the decisive penalty as Thomas Tuchel's side reached the World Cup quarter-finals for the 11th time. Norway, meanwhile, created history by defeating five-time champions Brazil 2-1 to reach the last eight for the first time, with Haaland scoring both goals in a memorable victory. During the match against Brazil, Haaland's tally went to seven goals after a brace, making him the player with the joint-most goals in his debut World Cup since Poland's Grzegorz Lato scored seven in 1974.