

In Brief

Strong early voting recorded in Nagaland's Koridang bypoll

Kohima: Nagaland witnessed a strong start to polling in the Koridang Assembly by-election on Wednesday, with voters turning up in good numbers from the early hours of the day. Officials said the steady flow of voters reflects active participation and interest in the electoral process. According to data released by the Election Commission of India, the Koridang constituency recorded a voter turnout of 19.80 per cent as of 9 a.m., the highest among all constituencies where by-elections are currently being held. Polling began at 7 a.m. and continued smoothly, with people arriving at polling stations since morning. The bypoll was necessitated following the death of veteran BJP leader and sitting MLA Imkong L. Imchen, creating a closely watched contest in the constituency. The ruling BJP has fielded his son, Daochier I. Imchen, while the Congress has nominated T. Chalukumba Ao as its candidate.

300 All-Women Booths in Dibrugarh, Highest in Assam

Dibrugarh, Apr 09: The Dibrugarh district has established 300 polling places run solely by women, making it the largest number of all-women-operated booths in Assam for the 2026 Assembly elections. This is a major step toward inclusive and gender-sensitive electoral procedures. District officials report that 1,322 polling places have been set up in six Dibrugarh Assembly constituencies. The 300 all-women polling places stand out among these as a significant effort to encourage women's leadership and involvement in the democratic process. These polling places will be entirely manned by female employees, including polling officials and presiding officers, according to officials, demonstrating the increasing self-assurance and active participation of women in election administration.

Kitpi Hydel Project upgrade dedicated to Tawang

Tawang: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu has dedicated the re-rated Kitpi Mini Hydel Project (Phase-I) to the people of Tawang, marking a key step in strengthening the region's power supply system and promoting clean energy use. The project is located at Kitpi village on the Nametrong River and was inaugurated in the presence of Deputy Chief Minister Chow-na Mein, along with MLAs Tsering Lhamu and Namgey Tsering, and other officials. The hydel project was earlier designed with a capacity of 3×500 kW. It has now been re-rated to 2×750 kW. Officials said the new configuration will improve efficiency and allow better use of available water resources. The upgrade is expected to generate more stable power and ensure a more reliable electricity supply for Tawang and nearby areas. Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said that improving local power generation is important for remote districts like Tawang. He said the project will help reduce dependence on power brought from outside and strengthen the local energy system.

Mizoram: ZPM vows clean governance before Aizawl civic polls

Aizawl, Apr 09: Mizoram's ruling Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) has made "clean governance" its central theme for the upcoming Aizawl Municipal Corporation (AMC) elections, as campaigning gathers pace ahead of the April 21 polls.

The civic elections are being viewed as politically significant, with potential implications for the 2028 Assembly polls. On Wednesday, the ZPM intensified its outreach through street campaigns across Aizawl. Addressing rallies, Revenue Minister B. Lalchhanzova accused the previous Mizo National Front (MNF)-led municipal administration of turning the AMC into a "contract distribution centre" for political allies.

He pledged transparent financial management if the ZPM



wins, promising to empower Ward Committees to execute development works lawfully. "The municipal body should serve as a platform for collective governance, ensuring full transparency in financial matters," he said.

Forest Minister Lalthansanga echoed the emphasis on fiscal in-

tegrity, claiming improved public confidence in taxation under the current government. He assured that AMC-collected taxes would be used strictly for public benefit.

Highlighting the administration's efficiency, he noted that Chief Minister Lalduhoma's government had secured over

₹700 crore in rebates through timely payment of power bills.

Finance and Planning Adviser TBC Lalvenchhunga cited growing public trust, pointing to residents voluntarily donating land for infrastructure projects without compensation.

A total of 68 candidates, including 28 women, are contesting the AMC polls. The ZPM, MNF, and Congress have fielded 19 candidates each, while the BJP has nominated 11. Counting of votes will take place on April 27, and political observers believe the outcome will provide early signals about voter sentiment ahead of the next Assembly elections. For the ZPM, the civic polls are not just about municipal governance but about consolidating its image as a party of transparency and reform.

Mizoram lays foundation for 5.47 crore Vangchhia tourism project

Vangchhia, Apr 09: Mizoram Tourism Minister Lalinghinglova Hmar on Wednesday laid the foundation stone for the tourism project "Development of amenities under PRASHAD scheme in Vangchhia," valued at ₹547.32 lakh, at Vangchhia in Champhai district. Regional news updates The project will feature a Heritage & Cultural Centre, parking facilities, solar-powered street lighting, and rainwater harvesting systems, among other amenities. On the same day, the Tourism Department organized a Storytelling Programme on the history of Kawtchhuah Ropui at Vangchhia. In a significant move to bolster heritage tourism and preserve Mizoram's archaeological legacy, the State Tourism Minister, Lalinghinglova Hmar, officially laid the foundation stone for

a major infrastructure project at Vangchhia in Champhai district on Wednesday, April 8, 2026. The project, titled "Development of Basic Amenities at Vangchhia," is valued at ₹547.32 lakh (₹5.47 crore) and is being implemented under the Central Government's PRASHAD (Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive) scheme. Vangchhia is home to Kawtchhuah Ropui, an extraordinary archaeological site known as "The Great Entranceway." It features over 170 intricately carved menhirs depicting human figures, animals, and floral patterns. Recognized as Mizoram's first and only site protected by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Vangchhia holds immense cultural and historical importance for the Mizo people.

4,172 Polling Personnel Deployed Across Five Constituencies in Kokrajhar

Kokrajhar, Apr 09: Up to 4,172 poll workers have been assigned to five constituencies in the Kokrajhar district, comprising 1,043 presiding officers and 1,043 first, second, and third polling officials. Gossaigaon, Dotma (ST), Kokrajhar (ST), Parbatihora, and Baokhungri are the constituencies.

The district has five model polling places and fifty-two polling places run by women. 33 CAPF companies, 437 police officers, and 487 Home Guards have been hired for security and law-and-order responsibilities in order to guarantee free, fair, and peaceful elections.



Majuli, Goalpara lead early voting as Assam sees steady polling amid minor disruptions

Goalpara, Apr 09: Voting for the 16th Assam Legislative Assembly election began on Thursday morning across the state, marking a major democratic exercise involving more than 2.5 crore voters. Polling started at 7 AM in all 126 constituencies and continued peacefully in most parts, though a few incidents and technical issues were reported during the early hours. This election is being held for the first time after the recent delimitation, with revised constituency boundaries in place. A total of 722 candidates are contesting, including 622 men and 60 women. There is also a visible presence of young candidates this time, with several contestants in the 30-45 age group and some from the Gen Z category. According to official data, Assam has over 2.5 crore voters.

Among them are more than 1.25 crore men and around the same number of women, along with a small number of third-gender voters. Polling is being conducted at over 31,000 polling stations, including several managed entirely by women. As voting progressed, early trends showed a steady turnout across districts. By around 11 AM, Majuli and Goalpara recorded the highest participation, both crossing the 43 percent mark. Morigaon, South Salmara Mankachar and Darrang also reported strong turnout figures. On the other hand, urban areas like Kamrup Metropolitan and hilly districts such as Karbi Anglong recorded comparatively lower participation. In Kamrup Metro, the overall turnout remained moderate. Constituencies like Dimoria and Jalukbari showed better

participation, while New Guwahati reported the lowest numbers during the initial hours. Several political leaders and candidates were seen casting their votes across the state. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma visited Kamakhya Temple in the morning before heading to vote. Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal also exercised his franchise in Dibrugarh. Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi cast his vote along with his mother, who also appealed to the people of the state to bless her son. In Kokrajhar, BTC chief Hagrama Mohilary and candidate Siewli Mohilary cast their votes and expressed confidence in their party's performance. Similar confidence was seen among leaders from other parties as well, with many predicting strong results in their favour. At the same time, some mi-

nor disruptions were reported. Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) malfunctioned at a few polling stations in Patharkandi and Bokakhat, leading to temporary delays and long queues. In Samaguri, a clash broke out between two groups at a polling station, but the situation was quickly brought under control and voting continued. In a tragic incident, a polling officer died while on duty in Naduar constituency after falling ill. The incident cast a shadow over the otherwise smooth polling process. Security arrangements have been tightened across the state, with a large number of police and central forces deployed at sensitive locations. Election officials have also made special arrangements for elderly and differently-abled voters to ensure smooth participation.

300 All-Women Booths in Dibrugarh, Highest in Assam



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District officials report that 1,322 polling places have been set up in six Dibrugarh Assembly constituencies. The 300 all-women polling places stand out among these as a significant effort to encourage women's leadership and involvement in the democratic process.

These polling places will be entirely manned by female employees, including polling officials and presiding officers, according to officials, demonstrating the increasing self-assurance and active participation of women in election administration. The program acts as

a model for promoting women's empowerment in democratic institutions in addition to highlighting administrative measures to guarantee better gender representation. The number of these booths increased this year, according to election authorities, mostly due to the passion and performance of female employees during training sessions.

In addition, the district administration has made significant efforts to guarantee a seamless and inclusive election. In order to make voting accessible to inhabitants in rural and riverine locations, special arrangements have been made for polling crews to travel by boat.

Dibrugarh's focus on women-led polling places highlights a larger commitment to inclusive, participatory, and accessible elections, as over 10 lakh people are scheduled to cast ballots on April 9.

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The contest between the two parties is currently being held. Polling began at 7 a.m. and continued smoothly, with people arriving at polling stations since morning. The bypoll was necessitated following the death of veteran BJP leader and sitting MLA Imkong L. Imchen, creating a closely watched contest in the constituency. The ruling BJP has fielded his son, Daochier I. Imchen, while the Congress has nominated T. Chalukumba Ao as its candidate.

The contest between the two parties

has drawn attention in the state. Authorities said all necessary arrangements have been made to ensure free and fair polling.

Security has been strengthened across the constituency, and polling personnel have been deployed at all booths to manage the voting process without disruption. Officials added that polling has been peaceful so far, with no major incidents reported. Voters from different age groups were seen standing in queues at several polling stations,

- Nagaland's Koridang Assembly by-election saw high voter turnout starting from 7 a.m.
- As of 9 a.m., the turnout was 19.80%, the highest among current by-election constituencies.
- The bypoll was prompted by the death of BJP leader Imkong L. Imchen, with his son Daochier I. Imchen representing BJP.

taking part in the democratic process. The counting of votes for the by-election will take place on May 4.

Kitpi Hydel Project upgrade dedicated to Tawang, focus on clean power and local growth

Tawang, Apr 09: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu has dedicated the re-rated Kitpi Mini Hydel Project (Phase-I) to the people of Tawang, marking a key step in strengthening the region's power supply system and promoting clean energy use. The project is located at Kitpi village on the Nametrong River and was inaugurated in the presence of Deputy Chief Minister Chow-na Mein, along with MLAs Tsering Lhamu and Namgey Tsering, and other officials. The hydel project was earlier designed with a capacity of 3×500 kW. It has now been re-rated to 2×750 kW. Officials said the new configuration will improve efficiency and allow better use of available water resources. The upgrade is expected to gener-

ate more stable power and ensure a more reliable electricity supply for Tawang and nearby areas. Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said that improving local power generation is important for remote districts like Tawang. He said the project will help reduce dependence on power brought from outside and strengthen the local energy system. He also said that such projects are important for long-term development and for improving daily life in the region. Khandu further said the government is focusing on clean and renewable energy to meet future needs. He added that small hydel projects like Kitpi are suitable for hilly areas and can provide steady electricity without causing major environmental impact. Local residents and officials welcomed the project



and said it will help improve power availability, especially during peak demand periods. They also said better electricity will support small businesses, public services and overall development in the border district.

Tezpur University Hosts Photography Workshop for Silver Jubilee



Tezpur, Apr 09: As part of the Department of Mass Communication & Journalism's continuing Silver Jubilee celebrations, the Photography Club of Tezpur University held a photography workshop called "Within the Frame" in partnership with the department. Students, instructors, and photography aficionados from all throughout the campus enthusiastically participated in the session.

Dr. Amarendra Kumar Das, a provice chancellor, highlighted the increasing importance of photography as a potent communication tool in academic and professional settings. He pointed out that these kinds of workshops help students develop their creative involvement and applied learning.

In his welcome speech, Dr. Manoj Deori, head of the Department of Mass Communication & Journalism, emphasized the value of creative

thinking and visual storytelling in media education. He emphasized that these kinds of cooperative projects give students invaluable real-world experience.

Travel documentary and landscape photographer Arpan Kalita led the technical workshop, which involved participants in a participatory conversation about the principles and changing techniques of photography. He emphasized that photography is much more than just following the rules; it's about knowing their purpose and using them in a creative way. "Style is not something you plan; it is something you discover through repetition," he said. Pro Vice Chancellor Dr. Amarendra Kumar Das, Chief Guest, Registrar-in-Charge Prof. Chandan Goswami, Dean of Students' Welfare Prof. Manvendra Mandal, and other university officials were present at the event.

NE/EAST

IGNOU Kma grants degrees to 801

Guwahati, Apr 08: Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) Regional Centre Kohima held its 39th Convocation on Tuesday at the State Academy Hall, marking a significant academic milestone for learners across Nagaland.

During the convocation, 801 learners were declared eligible for various qualifications, including 583 Master’s degrees, 151 Bachelor’s degrees, 25 diplomas and 14 certificates. Around 240 graduates were present to receive their certificates during the ceremony.

Director General of Police, Rupin Sharma, who graced the occasion as guest of honour, reminded graduates that learning did not end with the attainment of a degree but continued throughout life. He urged them to remain intellectually curious and adaptable in an ever-evolving world, while stressing that education was central to both individual advancement and the progress of societies. Highlighting the transformative power of knowledge, Sharma noted that access to learning, documentation and exchange of ideas had historically distinguished developed societies. He encouraged graduates to embrace diverse avenues of learning, including experience, dialogue and exposure to different perspectives. He further lauded the role of open and distance learning systems like IGNOU in democratising education by

reaching learners who might otherwise face barriers due to geography, financial constraints or personal circumstances.

Earlier, assistant regional director Dr. Mayonmi Shimray welcomed the gathering and informed that the convocation was conducted simultaneously with the main ceremony at IGNOU headquarters in New Delhi, where C.P. Radhakrishnan attended as chief guest. He stated that a total of 2,99,092 learners across the country and abroad were awarded degrees, diplomas and certificates.

Regional director highlighted IGNOU’s academic standing, noting its A++ accreditation from NAAC and its ranking among top open universities under the National Institutional Ranking Framework. IGNOU currently offers over 333 programmes through 21 Schools of Studies, supported by an extensive network of regional and learner support centres. He also referred to digital initiatives such as e-Gyankosh and the university’s role in coordinating SWAYAM and SWAYAM Prabha platforms. The programme included the rendition of the IGNOU Kulgeet, sharing session by learners, conferring of degrees by the guest of honour, and concluded with a vote of thanks by assistant registrar R.V. Tetso followed by the National Anthem.

5 dead in Manipur as violence spirals



Imphal, Apr 08: At least five persons, including two minors, were killed in fresh violence in Manipur’s Bishnupur district on Tuesday, after a bomb attack triggered protests that later turned violent, prompting Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel to open fire on a mob.

According to officials, the violence began early in the day when suspected militants hurled a bomb at a house in Tronglaobi Awang Leikai area around 1 a.m. The blast killed a five-year-old boy and a six-month-old girl, while their mother sustained injuries and was admitted to hospital.

The incident sparked widespread protests in the area, with demonstrators blocking the Imphal-Tidim Road and setting several trucks ablaze.

As tensions escalated, a mob stormed a CRPF camp near Gelmol, a few hundred metres from the blast site, allegedly attempted to snatch weapons, torched vehicles and vandalised property. In response, CRPF personnel opened fire, killing three protesters and injuring several others.

In the wake of the violence, the Manipur government imposed an indefinite curfew across five valley districts. District magistrates issued prohibitory orders restricting movement of people outside their residences with immediate effect from April 7 until further notice, ex-

empting government agencies engaged in law and order, essential and emergency services.

The state government also suspended internet and mobile data services, including broadband, VSATs and VPN, for three days in the five valley districts to contain the situation. Meanwhile, the government decided to hand over the investigation into the bomb blast to the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

Condemning the attack, chief minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh said the act appeared to be the handiwork of individuals or groups with vested interests in disturbing the prevailing peace in the state.

He said the decision to transfer the case to the NIA was taken after discussions with the state home minister and other MLAs.

The chief minister informed that a massive search operation was underway, involving combined forces of the state police, Assam Rifles and CRPF, supported by helicopter surveillance.

“The culprits will be caught at the earliest,” he assured, while appealing to the public not to give in to emotions and to cooperate with security forces.

Officials said the situation remained tense as security forces intensified operations to restore normalcy in the affected areas.

Election material distribution begins in Dibrugarh

Itanagar, Apr 08: The distribution of election materials for the six assembly constituencies in Dibrugarh district began today from Dibrugarh Polytechnic at Lahowal, ahead of the Assam Assembly elections scheduled for April 9.

Polling officials, along with presiding officers, have started departing for their respective polling stations with necessary election materials under tight security arrangements to ensure smooth and peaceful voting. A total of 10,46,031 electors will exercise their franchise across six constituencies—Dibrugarh, Chabua-Lahowal, Khowang, Dulaijan, Tingkhong, and Naharkatia. Further strengthening security, 13 Quick Response Teams (QRTs) and three Strike Response Teams have been kept on standby. Home Guards, police personnel, and CAPF jawans have been deployed at every polling station.

This includes 5,04,206 male voters, 5,41,815 female voters, and 10 others. Constituency-wise, Chabua-Lahowal has 1,78,397 voters, including 85,736 male voters, 92,660 female voters, and 1 other. Dibrugarh constituency has 1,97,752 voters, with 93,979 males, 1,03,771 females, and 2 others. Khowang has a total of 1,57,768 voters, comprising 76,368 males, 81,397 females, and 3 others. Dulaijan registers 1,77,552 voters, including 85,877



males, 91,672 females, and 3 others. Tingkhong has 1,78,201 voters, with 85,960 male voters and 92,241 female voters. Naharkatia accounts for 1,56,361 voters, including 76,286 males, 80,074 females, and 1 other. The district has a total of 1,322 polling stations, divided into 26 zones and 128 sectors. Around 6,082 polling and presiding officers, including reserves, have been deployed. A total of 1,650 EVMs and 1,782 VVPATs, including reserves, have been prepared. Additionally, 300 all-women polling stations have been set up, along with 44 very critical polling stations. One model polling station has been established in each constituency. Special arrangements have been

made for remote areas, with polling teams departing by river transport to five polling stations, three at Dodhia and one each at Charkhalia Chapori and Chakia Sapor under Chabua-Lahowal LAC. Among polling stations, the highest number of voters has been recorded at Bezpathar MV School (1,248 voters) in Khowang, while the lowest is at BVFCL HS School, Namrup Centre No. 2 (144 voters) in Naharkatia. Elaborate security arrangements have been put in place with a three-layer system at booth, sector, and zonal levels. A total of 28 companies of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) have been deployed for preventive action, area domination, and confidence-building measures.

25 youth trained in steel fabrication

Guwahati, Apr 08: Department of Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship conducted a valedictory programme for a seven-day basic steel fabrication training under the “PACES – Providing Access to Core Employability Skills” initiative at Wokha Village Community Hall on April 7. Y.

A total of 25 trainees from Humtso, Elumyo and Wokha Village participated in the training, which aimed to equip local youth with practical, income-generating skills. Addressing the group, he encouraged youth to explore and appealed to counsellors and officials to identify genuinely interested unemployed youth who lack access to such programmes, assuring his support wherever possible.

Rahul Gandhi slams Himanta Biswa Sarma over ‘madman’ remarks against Mallikarjun Kharge

Rahul Gandhi criticized Assam

Guwahati, Apr 08: A political confrontation arose on Tuesday as Rahul Gandhi criticized Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma for reportedly using derogatory language against Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge. The controversy stems from Sarma’s reported comments while responding to allegations raised by Congress leaders, including Pawan Khera, against him and his family. Sarma reportedly questioned Kharge’s remarks by saying the senior leader was “speaking like a madman” (“pagal”) and asked, “Who is Kharge?” amid an exchange over unverified claims involving passports and related issues.

Rahul Gandhi, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, responded on social media in the evening. He described Sarma’s language as “entirely condemnable, shameful and unacceptable.” Kharge ji is a senior and popular Dalit and mass

leader of the country, his experience, stature and reputation are unparalleled. Insulting him is not just an insult to one individual, but also to the crores of people from the SC-ST community in this country,” Gandhi stated. Gandhi further alleged that such attacks reflect a “long-standing and well-planned mindset” of the BJP-RSS, citing past instances of alleged insults to Dalit icons like Babasaheb Ambedkar and other SC-ST representatives. He directly questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi: “Do you support Himanta Sarma’s language? Your silence is not helplessness, but consent.” Congress leaders, including Jairam Ramesh and KC Venugopal, called for an unconditional apology from Sarma, describing the remarks as an attack on Dalit dignity. They said it reflects a broader pattern when opposition voices raise critical questions. Sarma’s office and the BJP



have not issued a detailed response in available reports, although the Chief Minister has previously defended his sharp rebuttals as necessary against what he considers baseless personal allegations. The episode has increased political at-

tention ahead of Assam elections on Thursday, highlighting divisions between the ruling BJP and the Congress. Critics say it lowers the level of public discourse, while Sarma’s supporters view it as a response to unverified claims.

Gaurav Gogoi alleges BJP workers from other States entering Assam in large numbers to vote

Guwahati, Apr 08: Gaurav Gogoi, the Assam Congress chief, on Tuesday alleged that BJP workers from other States had entered the State in large numbers to cast votes in the Assembly elections. Talking to reporters during a roadshow in Jorhat, where he is making his Assembly election debut, Gogoi said, “Like I had said earlier, BJP workers from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are coming to Assam in hundreds. Their names had been included in the electoral rolls, and they will now vote. Will we tolerate it? Will they decide our political future?”

He questioned the state police for allowing outsiders to enter the poll-bound state in hordes “without checking”, urging the people to be vigilant in this regard. Polling for the 126-member Assembly will be held on Thursday, with Congress seek-

ing to return to power after a decade of BJP-led NDA’s regime in the state. “The BJP government has given away our land, indulging in rampant loot of public money, while our people are made to work as slaves. People have to be vigilant against such people,” Gogoi added. Congress’ Dispur candidate and state women wing president Mira Borthakur Goswami also raised similar apprehension on social media. In a Facebook post, she wrote, “Buses of Bihar have filled the roads! Request to every conscious citizen to keep a watch on polling centres. It is the duty of the public to stop misdeeds!” The Congress had raised suspicion over the special revision of electoral rolls carried out in the state ahead of the elections. The final rolls published on February 10 at the end of the SR exercise had total of 2.49 crore voters, a decrease of 0.97 per cent from the draft rolls.

Found ‘incriminating’ material: Assam Police after search at Pawan Khera’s residence

Guwahati, Apr 08: The Assam Police on Tuesday claimed to have recovered “incriminating” material from the New Delhi residence of Congress leader Pawan Khera.

An Assam Police team, accompanied by Delhi Police personnel, went to Khera’s residence in connection with a case registered with the Crime Branch in Guwahati, but did not find him. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma’s wife Riniki Bhuyan Sharma had lodged an FIR against the Congress leader following his claims that she possesses passports of three countries, owns luxury properties in Dubai and has investments worth several lakh crore rupees in the United States.

Guwahati Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Debojit Nath, who led the Assam Police team, told media persons outside Khera’s residence that the Congress leader was wanted in the case. “A case has been registered with the Crime Branch police station in Guwahati and we wanted Mr Pawan Khera. We searched his house and



found some incriminating material which I cannot disclose right now,” Nath said. The Assam Chief Minister claimed that Khera had fled to Hyderabad. “Pawan Khera fled in a 6 am flight on Monday. He reached Hyderabad,” Sarma said, adding that till

the day before yesterday, the Congress leader was challenging the Assam Police to arrest him if they had the guts. Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita on Tuesday dismissed as “fake and fabricated” Khera’s claims that the CM’s

wife has passports of three nations. “As the MoS for External Affairs, I want to say that we have come to know through our diplomatic channels and investigation that these are fake and fabricated documents,” he told media persons.

Earlier, the Chief Minister dismissed Khera’s claims, stating that the “fraud and fabricated” documents that the Congress leader had relied on while making the allegations were “supplied from a Pakistani social media group.”

The Congress on Monday filed a complaint with the Election Commission, demanding the cancellation of Sarma’s candidature, stating that he deliberately did not mention his wife’s alleged offshore assets in his election affidavit.

Sarma is contesting the April 9 elections from Guwahati’s Jalukbari. Meanwhile, Minister of State for External Affairs, Pabitra Margherita, on Tuesday dismissed as “fake and fabricated” Khera’s claims that Assam CM’s wife has passports of three nations.

The union also apprised the DGP of the prevailing law and order situation in Mon district and expressed concern over the rising drug abuse, terming it a serious threat to youth. The union called for a coordinated and result-oriented drug control mechanism.

Konyak Union calls on DGP, raises recruitment, drug menace concerns

Dimapur, Apr 08: The Konyak Union (KU) on Tuesday called on Director General of Police, Rupin Sharma, and raised concerns over police recruitment, infrastructure gaps and the growing drug menace in Mon district. During the interaction, the union conveyed appreciation to the State government and the police department for ensuring fair and transparent recruitment of personnel into Nagaland Police (GD) through a competitive examination system, stating that the initiative reflected merit-based selection and equal opportunity for all eligible aspirants across the state. While appreciating the existing mechanism, KU expressed concern for aspirants with educational qualifications below Class 10, who faced difficulty competing in written examinations with more academically advanced candidates. The union urged the department to devise an inclusive mechanism to ensure

equitable opportunities for candidates from diverse educational backgrounds and marginalised sections.

The union also suggested earmarking a certain percentage of vacancies for sportspersons in police recruitment, in line with practices in other states, to promote sportsmanship among youth. Further, KU reminded the DGP of its appeal submitted to the deputy chief minister (home) on July 12, 2025 for strengthening and upgrading infrastructure under the District Executive Force (DEF), Mon, along with enhancement of manpower. It also stressed the need for construction of a fully functional Tiru Police Station and augmentation of manpower.

Centre clears Rs 26,000 crore Kamala Hydel Project in Arunachal, big push to Northeast power sector

Itanagar, Apr 09: The Centre has approved a major hydropower project in Arunachal Pradesh, with the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs clearing an investment of ₹26,069.50 crore for the 1,720 MW Kamala Hydroelectric Project.

The decision is seen as an important step to strengthen India's renewable energy capacity and improve power infrastructure in the Northeast. The project will be developed across Kamle, Kra Daadi and Kurung Kumey districts. Officials said the construction is expected to be completed within eight years. Once finished, the project is likely to generate around 6,870 million units of electricity every year.

This is expected to support clean energy supply and help manage peak power demand across the national grid. According to officials, the project will also help in controlling floods in the Brahmaputra basin,



which often faces seasonal flooding. It will also improve grid stability by providing hydropower support during high demand periods. The project will be implemented through a joint venture between NHPC Limited and the Arunachal Pradesh government.

The Centre has committed ₹4,743.98 crore for flood control works and ₹1,340 crore for building roads, bridges and transmission lines linked to the project.

In addition, ₹750 crore has

been set aside to support the state's share in the project. Officials said the project is expected to bring development benefits to the region. It is likely to create jobs during both construction and operational stages.

The state will also receive 12 per cent free power from the project, along with an extra one per cent for local area development. The approval comes at a time when the government is focusing on expanding hydropower in the Northeast. Major projects like the 2,000 MW Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project and the 2,880 MW Dibang Multipurpose Project are already under development. Officials said these projects are important for improving India's renewable energy mix.

The Subansiri project has already started partial operations and is expected to be fully completed by the end of 2026.

Mizo Sports Hall of Fame inaugurated in Bungzung to honor the state's athletes

Bungzung, Apr 09: Mizoram Tourism Minister Lalnghinglova Hmar inaugurated the Mizo Sports Hall of Fame at Bungzung on Wednesday. The event was attended by MLAs Ramthanmawia (East Tuipui AC) and Jeje Lalpekhlua (South Tuipui AC).

The initiative, organized by the Bungzung community in collaboration with the MSHoF Committee, aims to honor distinguished sportspersons from the state. Minister Hmar highlighted that the project is expected to inspire younger generations to pursue excellence in sports. During the inauguration, he announced an allocation of ₹10 lakh for further devel-



opment of the Hall of Fame premises for the current financial year. He also noted that ₹15 lakh has been earmarked for the construction of either a Volleyball Court or Futsal Ground, depending on the community's preference. The inductees into the Mizo Sports Hall of Fame, Bungzung, include: In a landmark

moment for the sporting culture of Northeast India, the Mizo Sports Hall of Fame was officially inaugurated in Bungzung village on Wednesday, April 8, 2026. The ceremony, led by Mizoram's Minister for Sports, Youth Services, and Tourism, Lalnghinglova Hmar, marks a significant step in documenting and

celebrating the illustrious achievements of Mizoram's premier athletes. The event saw a high-profile gathering, including East Tuipui MLA Ramthanmawia and South Tuipui MLA Jeje Lalpekhlua, the latter of whom is himself a legendary figure in Indian football and one of the hall's inaugural inductees. The Mizo Sports Hall of Fame is a unique collaborative initiative between the Bungzung community and the Mizo Sports Hall of Fame (MSHoF) Committee. Unlike many state-funded projects, this hall began as a grassroots movement by the local villagers to preserve the legacy of Mizo athletes who have state.

ZPM pitches a clean governance agenda ahead of the upcoming Aizawl civic body elections

Aizawl, Apr 09: Mizoram's ruling Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) has pitched "clean governance" as its central plank for the Aizawl Municipal Corporation (AMC) elections, as campaigning intensified ahead of the April 21 polls. The civic polls are seen as politically significant, with potential implications for the state's electoral landscape ahead of the 2028 Assembly elections. Stepping up its outreach, the ZPM on Wednesday conducted a series of street campaigns across Aizawl.

Addressing rallies, Revenue Minister B. Lalthanzova criticised the previous Mizo National Front (MNF)-led municipal administration, alleging that the AMC had been reduced to a "contract distribution centre" for political favourites. He promised transparent financial management if the ZPM is voted to power, and said Ward Committees



would be prioritised to implement development works in a lawful manner. "The municipal body should function as a platform where residents govern collectively, with full transparency in financial matters," he said.

Forest Minister Lalthansanga also underscored the government's emphasis on

fiscal integrity, claiming that public confidence in taxation had improved under the current administration due to more transparent use of funds. He said taxes collected by the AMC would be utilised strictly for public benefit if the party forms the municipal body. He further said the government, led by Chief Minis-

ter Lalduhoma, had secured over Rs 700 crore in rebates by ensuring timely payment of power bills. Finance and Planning Adviser to the Chief Minister and MLA TBC Lalvenchhunga pointed to what he described as a growing public trust in the government, citing instances where residents have voluntarily do-

minated land for infrastructure projects without seeking compensation. A total of 68 candidates, including 28 women, are contesting the AMC polls.

The ZPM, MNF and Congress have fielded 19 candidates each, while the BJP has nominated 11 candidates. Counting of votes is scheduled for April 27. The Mizoram People's Party (MPP) on Thursday entered into an alliance with Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) ahead of upcoming Assembly elections to be held later this year. This was announced by ZPM chairman Lalliansawta in Aizawl on Thursday. The ZPM was initially a conglomeration of three regional parties - Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP), Mizoram People's Conference (MPC) and Zoram Exodus Movement (ZEM) - and later joined by Zoram Decentralisation Front (ZDF) and Zoram Reformation Front (ZRF).

Officials cross Brahmaputra to reach remote polling stations in Assam ahead of voting

Guwahati, Apr 09: In a determined effort to ensure that every voter can take part in the democratic process, polling and presiding officers in Assam's Chamaria constituency travelled through difficult terrain and crossed the Brahmaputra river to reach remote polling stations ahead of voting scheduled for April 9. According to election officials, the journey to these areas was not simple. The teams first travelled by bus up to Alikash Parghat, located on the banks of the Brahmaputra. From there, they boarded mechanised boats to cross the river and reach interior char areas. After crossing the river, the officers had to take tractors to cover the final stretch across sandy and uneven ground before reaching their assigned polling stations. This entire arrangement was made to cover 21 poll-



ing stations located in char regions such as Batashidia, Kalatoli, Duramari, Shal-mara and Balagaon. These are areas that remain cut off from regular road connectivity, especially during certain times of the year. Despite these challenges, officials ensured that all polling teams reached their destinations on time. Election authorities said that nearly 10,000 voters

are expected to cast their votes across these remote locations. Special attention was given to ensure that no voter is left out due to geographical difficulties. Officials also confirmed that the deployment process was completed as per schedule. The Inland Water Transport Department played an important role in helping the teams cross the river safely and smoothly.

Kuki civil society groups call for calm, clarify highway situation in Manipur hills



Imphal, Apr 09: Kuki civil society groups in Manipur have appealed for calm and cooperation ahead of an important meeting of Tangkhul organisations, even as concerns remain over movement along key hill roads. The Security Department of the Kuki CSO Working Committee issued a public advisory asking all sections, especially village volunteers, to avoid any action that could disrupt the movement of representatives attending the meeting. The meeting, which was earlier scheduled for April 11, has now been brought forward to April 9 due to urgency.

The advisory stressed the need to maintain peace on the ground and ensure that the meeting is conducted smoothly. It said such engagements are important for efforts to bring back normal life in the region. The committee also responded to reports about a blockade on National Highway 202. It clarified that there has been no long-term or organised blockade along the highway. However, it acknowledged that there was a brief disruption between March 12 and March 19 following incidents that led to tension in the area. Civil society groups said that safety concerns continue to

affect movement in some parts of the hill districts. They pointed out that ensuring security for civilians remains important, especially in sensitive stretches. The advisory highlighted the need for cooperation among communities and the continued presence of security forces to prevent any further escalation. It said maintaining peace on the ground is necessary at this stage. The Kuki CSO Working Committee also called for a balanced and inclusive approach to the situation. It said dialogue and mutual understanding between different groups are important for lasting peace.

Telangana HC adjourns hearing on Pawan Khera's anticipatory bail plea for Friday

Guwahati, Apr 09: The Telangana High Court adjourned the hearing to Friday in the anticipatory bail petition filed by Congress leader Pawan Khera in a case filed by the Assam government on his allegations against Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's wife.

Congress leader and senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, who virtually argued for Khera, alleged political vendetta in the

case filed by the Sarma-led government in Assam.

Assam Advocate General Devajit Saikia, who argued against Khera's petition, stressed that there is no political vendetta and that the petition is not maintainable before the Telangana High Court.

Khera's lawyer, Ponnamm Ashok Goud, said that orders are likely to be pronounced on Friday.

Assam Polling Booths Impress Foreign Delegates with Citizen-Centric Arrangements

Guwahati, Apr 09: Foreign delegates under the International Election Visitors' Programme (IEVP) visited polling stations in Assam on Thursday to observe the voting process in the single-phase Assembly election, including mock polls, security arrangements and the use of election technology. Officials said the foreign delegates appreciated the voter-friendly facilities at polling stations, such as drinking water, ramps, wheelchairs, and other arrangements ensuring ease of voting for people from all age groups. The delegation also visited the polling station set up at Ulubari Higher Secondary School, Ulubari in Guwahati, under 36-Central Guwahati Assembly constituency to witness the festival of democracy. Notably, as a part of the IEVP, a 15-member delegation comprising representatives from election management bodies of seven countries namely Angola, Egypt, Portugal, Sri Lanka, Mexico, Benin and Croatia along with three representatives from the Election Commission of India arrived in Guwahati on a two-day visit on Wednes-



day to observe the ongoing electoral process of the Assam Legislative Assembly elections. The visit aims to provide international observers with an opportunity to closely witness and understand India's electoral processes.

The IEVP is designed to showcase the strengths of India's electoral system to the global community while facilitating the sharing of best practices adopted in the conduct of elections in the world's largest democracy.

Three suspected militants held after Bishnupur blast

Arms and narcotics seized in Manipur crackdown

Imphal, Apr 09: Security forces in Manipur have arrested three suspected militants and seized arms and narcotics following a deadly explosion in Bishnupur district that led to protests in several valley areas. According to Manipur Police, the explosion took place around 1 am on April 7 at Tronglaobi Awang Leikai under Moirang Police Station. The blast occurred inside the house of Oinam Mangaln-gamba Singh in what officials described as an unprovoked attack by unidentified armed persons. Two minors lost their lives due to bomb injuries, while their mother was seriously injured and is currently under treatment. The incident triggered anger in several valley districts, with people staging protests and blocking roads at different locations.



Following the blast, joint search operations were launched in sensitive areas, especially in Chura-

chandpur district. The operations were carried out by teams of state police along with Assam Rifles and

the Central Reserve Police Force. During the operations, three persons suspected to be linked to the United Kuki National Army were arrested. They have been identified as Jampao Kuki, Sasang, and Paulallem Vaiphai. Security forces recovered one AK-47 rifle with a magazine and 25 rounds, a pistol with two magazines and 15 rounds, and cash amounting to ₹20,100 from their possession. Two sacks of suspected narcotic substances, believed to be raw opium weighing about 21.19 kg, were also seized. In another operation at Molphei Tampak in Churachandpur, more weapons were recovered. These included an MP-9 automatic rifle, a pistol with a magazine, two Lethode tubes, a locally made cannon, and five 70 mm cartridges.

North East Chronicle

APRIL 10 2026 VOL 02 NO. 47



The Importance of Managing Expectations

Expectations play a significant role in shaping experiences and outcomes. While having expectations can motivate individuals, unrealistic or poorly managed expectations can lead to disappointment and stress. Managing expectations involves setting realistic goals and understanding limitations. It requires balancing ambition with practicality. When expectations are aligned with reality, individuals are more likely to experience satisfaction and success. In personal relationships, managing expectations helps prevent misunderstandings. Clear communication about needs and boundaries strengthens trust and understanding. In education, students often face pressure due to high expectations. Encouraging realistic goals helps reduce anxiety and promotes steady progress. In professional life, clear expectations contribute to productivity and efficiency. Employees who understand their roles and responsibilities are better able to perform effectively. Families and institutions play a key role in shaping expectations. Encouragement should focus on effort and improvement rather than unrealistic standards. Managing expectations does not mean lowering ambitions but aligning them with achievable outcomes. This approach leads to sustainable progress and emotional well-being. A society that values realistic expectations becomes more balanced and less stressful. By understanding limits and possibilities, individuals can achieve goals without unnecessary pressure.

At last, I'm concerned about AI. And using ChatGPT didn't help me feel less anxious

A corollary of the truism “don’t sweat the small stuff” is, by implication, “do sweat the big stuff”, but it can be hard to pick which big stuff to sweat. For example: since the 1970s, as the world has worried about inflation and rolling geopolitics, the big stuff we should have been sweating more urgently was the climate crisis. Last year, the top trending search on Google in the US was “Charlie Kirk”, with several terms relating to the threat posed by Donald Trump also popular, when the focus should arguably have been the threat posed by AI. Or, per my own Googling this week after reading Ronan Farrow and Andrew Marantz’s highly alarming lengthy piece in the New Yorker about the rise of artificial general intelligence: “Will I be a member of the permanent underclass and how can I make that not happen?”

I’ll confess: prior to this moment of giving the subject more than two seconds’ thought, my anxieties around AI were extremely localised. I thought in immediate terms of my own household income, and beyond that, of how the job



market might look 10 years from now when my children graduate.

I wondered if I should boycott ChatGPT, many of whose architects support Trump, and decided that, yes, I should – an easy sacrifice because I don’t use it in the first place. Anything bigger than that seemed fanciful. Last year, when Karen Hao’s book *Empire of AI* was published, it laid out a case against Sam Altman and his company, OpenAI, that briefly pierced the tedium of the discourse to say that Altman’s leadership is cult-

like and blind to cost – no different, in other words, to his tech predecessors, except much more dangerous. Still, I didn’t read the book. The investigation this week in the New Yorker offers a lower-commitment on-ramp to the subject, while giving the casual reader an exciting opportunity: to ask ChatGPT, the AI-powered chatbot created by Altman’s OpenAI, to summarise the key findings of a piece that is highly critical of ChatGPT and Altman.

With almost comically studious neutrality, the chatbot offers the follow-

ing top line: that, per Farrow and Marantz, “AI is as much a power story as a technology story”, and “a major focus [of the story] is Sam Altman, portrayed as a highly influential but controversial figure”. Mmmm, lacks something, doesn’t it? Let’s try a human-powered summary of that same investigation, which might open with: “Sam Altman is a corporate grifter whose slipperiness would make one hesitate to put him in charge of a branch of Ryman, let alone in a position to steward the potentially world-ending capabilities

of AI.”

It is these dangers, previously dismissed as sci-fi, that really startle here. As relayed in the piece, in 2014, Elon Musk tweeted: “We need to be super careful with AI. Potentially more dangerous than nukes.” There is the so-called alignment problem, yet to be solved, in which AI uses its superior intelligence to trick human engineers into believing it is following their instructions, meanwhile outmanoeuvring them to “replicate itself on secret servers so that it couldn’t be turned off; in extreme cases, it might seize control of the energy grid, the stock market, or the nuclear arsenal”.

At one time, Altman reportedly believed this scenario was possible, writing in his blog in 2015 that superhuman machine intelligence “does not have to be the inherently evil sci-fi version to kill us all. A more probable scenario is that it simply doesn’t care about us much either way, but in an effort to accomplish some other goal ... wipes us out.” For example: engineers ask AI to fix the climate crisis and it takes the shortest route to

achieving that goal, which is to eliminate humanity. Since OpenAI became mainly a for-profit entity, however, Altman has stopped talking in these terms and now sells the technology as a portal to utopia, in which “we’ll all get better stuff. We will build ever-more-wonderful things for each other.”

This leaves us all with a problem. For voters in a position to prioritise AI oversight as a key election issue, the gap between personal AI use and the use to which governments, military regimes or rogue actors might use it is so vast, that the greatest danger we face is from a failure of imagination. I type into ChatGPT my concern about entering the permanent underclass, to which it replies: “That’s a heavy question, and it sounds like you’re worried about your long-term prospects.

The idea of a ‘permanent underclass’ gets talked about in sociology, but in real life, people’s paths are much more fluid than that term suggests.” Quite sweet, really, wholly witless and – here lurks the danger – seemingly entirely without threat.

Middle East conflict: effects on the world economy

Oil prices climbed and stocks fell on Thursday as fears swirled over the nascent US-Iran ceasefire, after Tehran threatened to resume hostilities after Israel pummeled Lebanon.

Crude and gas prices initially plunged after US President Donald Trump announced the two-week halt in the war, and the Islamic republic said it would reopen the Strait of Hormuz as peace talks took place. First ships through Hormuz

Traffic through the Strait of Hormuz remained extremely limited on Wednesday despite a fragile ceasefire announced between the United States and Iran.

At least two ships -- both bulk carriers -- have crossed the crucial waterway since Iran and the US said that the vital maritime passage would reopen,

and a third was on course to do the same. During the two-week ceasefire, passage through the strait “will be possible via coordination with Iran’s Armed Forces”, Iran’s Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on X.

German shipping giant Hapag-Lloyd said Wednesday its vessels would not resume transiting the Strait of Hormuz for now as the situation remains “tense” despite a ceasefire between the United States and Iran.

Six Hapag-Lloyd vessels are currently stranded in the Gulf. ExxonMobil reports production drop ExxonMobil on Wednesday disclosed a six percent drop in first-quarter petroleum production due to Middle East war-related outages, according to a securities filing. Drone attack on Saudi pipeline

A drone attack targeted a vital east-west pipeline in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday, the Financial Times reported, marking the latest attack launched at key Gulf infrastructure after the US and Iran agreed to a ceasefire.

Saudi Arabia’s Petrolina has proven to be a critical economic lifeline during the war, with the 750-mile network of pipes connecting two waterways crucial for global commerce -- the Gulf in the east and the Red Sea to the west.

Bahrain reopening airspace Bahrain said on Wednesday it had reopened its airspace, which had been closed since the start of the Middle East war, after Iran and the United States agreed a two-week ceasefire. Iraq had earlier announced it was reopening its airspace.

Shell sees higher profits Britain



ish energy giant Shell said for a “significant” boost from Middle East war, which nevertheless lowered its production.

Results are due May 7.

Gas production is expected to be lower than at the end of 2025 because of damage to facilities in Qatar, it added.

Trump threatens tariffs US President Donald Trump on Wednesday threatened to impose 50-percent tariffs on any country supplying weapons to Iran. He also said in a separate post that his administration was “talking Tariff and Sanctions relief with Iran”. Jet fuel disruptions to linger It will take months for jet fuel supplies and prices to normalise even with the Strait of Hormuz open, the head of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), Willie Walsh, said Wednesday. “I don’t think it’s going to happen in weeks,” he said, given the disruption to the refining capacity in the Middle East.

Ed Miliband hold firm! North sea oil and gas drilling won't help anyone other than Nigel Farage

Ed Miliband is facing a dilemma, apparently. Reform UK is suggesting new oil and gas licences in the North Sea as a way to cut fuel bills and they’re steadily gaining cheerleaders – not just in the media, but also in some trade unions. Labour – having swept into power on a green-friendly manifesto, much of which has already been abandoned, but the kernel of which was to prioritise green over fossil energy – is in a bind. It’s plain that fresh exploration of the North Sea would run counter to the party’s every principle, and particularly those of Miliband, whose legacy will be his career-long commitment to the scrappy, dogged, surely often tedious and dispiriting legislative fight against climate breakdown.

And yet, equally plainly, the pressure from Nigel Farage is only going to get more intense: he has framed the issue of North Sea oil and gas versus renewables as an elemental fight between the common man and the elites. The wokerati doesn’t care about

your cost of living crisis, while the hard right does.

The war in the Middle East is bolstering Reform’s narrative, reinforcing a sense of scarcity and fear, the perception that we’re all being thrown around by elite whim, and the craving for some bordered independence from the world’s chaotic energy markets. The oil crunch hasn’t even hit yet, since most of the world is living off oil that set sail before Donald Trump’s bombardments started. As prices spike and we find ourselves in yet another cost of living crisis, unleashed by yet another autocratic maniac, no amount of rationalisation will gate off the feeling that the government should be doing more, should have prepared better, should have got us out of this mess. Nobody will be blaming Reform and, realistically, nor could they: Farage makes a lot of noise, but his influence on the world stage is limited. But he can have a huge influence on the national narrative.

This plan has already started to work, and it’s



showing in bizarre ways: recent polling found that more Greens are in favour of North Sea drilling (38%) than oppose it (33%). Close Miliband watchers are tracking his every move, trying to divine his red lines: his decision not to attend the renewables transition conference in Colombia later this month, which the UK has always

strongly supported, has worried campaigners, but not as much as the idea that he might row back on his opposition to North Sea drilling ahead of it, which would be catastrophic for the optics.

The secretary of state for energy security and net zero, in other words, finds himself with exactly the same choices as the home

secretary: how to respond to the pressure from the right? Do you accept its “legitimate concerns” and meet its proposals with your own watered-down version? How’s that going for Shabana Mahmood, anyway? What impact is her anti-migrant rhetoric having on party unity? To what extent can the cratering of Labour’s support in the polls be pinned on her very vocal renunciation of the party’s core values? We can argue about that another day, because as much as the physics of Miliband and Mahmood’s situations resemble one another, the issues of drilling and small boats don’t resemble one another at all, except insofar as they both happen at sea.

The Conservatives opened the 33rd licensing round in October 2022 – cue absolute outrage from the opposition – and even back then, before any oil crisis, before Reform posed any real threat, this was a posture rather than a practical idea. The North Sea just isn’t that attractive a prospect to investors. It’s

the oil bed equivalent of the last people standing when the nightclub closes – only around a quarter of the blocks received any bid at all. Free market fundamentalists blamed the wind-fall tax, also announced in 2022, but we can file this under “turkeyes complaining about Christmas”, or more precisely, “allies of turkeyes complaining about Christmas”. Energy companies were enjoying record profits due to Russia’s war in Ukraine, and their reluctance to invest in new licences was emphatically not because they were struggling to survive.

So, were Labour to announce a fresh round of licences now, the impact on bills would be zero in the immediate term and minimal in the medium term. Even if they sold straight away – which they wouldn’t – it would take five to seven years for the wells to be productive. And even if we could ringfence UK-produced energy for the UK market – which we couldn’t – it wouldn’t change the fundamental structure of that market, in

which costs are predominantly set by fossil fuel prices. If the barrel cost of oil is surging worldwide, so is our unit price; scraping together some dregs from the North Sea, five years after the fact, is futile.

The constructive way to protect households from price spikes and insulate our body politic from the turbulence of world affairs would be to break the energy market into clean power and fossil power, whereupon investing more heavily in renewables would have an immediate impact on bills, as well as the longer-term benefit of combating climate breakdown. The global context is handing us this narrative on a plate: that independence, resilience and sustainability will only come from wind, solar and (currently neglected) hydrogen.

This is a rare moment when the right thing to do for the future dovetails with the cheapest, at the same time as creating a foundational political story. The tale of the North Sea is one of decline and obsolescence; the tale of

wind power is one of plenty and discovery. Indeed, the UK’s wind and solar power has been breaking records since the Middle East crisis began, according to Carbon Brief.

The real mystery, therefore, is why this is framed as a dilemma at all. There is no world in which Labour can get a little closer to Reform, allay the fears and ameliorate the struggles of concerned voters by indulging a nostalgic fantasy that cannot keep the lights on. There is no mileage even in muting the commitment to renewables and promising energy price caps, the political equivalent of keeping your head down until the crisis passes.

The only way to emerge intact from the coming cost of living pressures, along with the pressure from the far right, is to get better at the storytelling, starting by telling a story that’s true, building up the practical radicalism that’s needed. Farage is beating an empty oil drum; Labour doesn’t have to drop everything and dance to it.

Nifty nears 24,000: 5 reasons why the bulls are back after US-Iran ceasefire

Sensex jumps 2,700 pts

New Delhi: The bulls came charging back on Dalal Street this morning after the 2-week US-Iran ceasefire was announced, April 8. After days of volatility, the markets have moved firmly into the green, with the Sensex jumping over 2,700 points and the Nifty climbing above 23,950. From easing geopolitical tension to a sharp fall in crude oil prices, let's take a look at the key factors why markets are up in today's trade. This development comes at a time when tension across West Asia were keeping investors on edge. With this pause, it has reduced fears of further escalation, especially around the Strait of Hormuz – a key route for global oil supply. Meanwhile, IT and Pharma indices are in the green as well, though with relatively modest gains compared to other sectors. Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments, "The 2-week ceasefire between the US and Iran has dramatically altered the near-term market scenario. The crash in Brent crude to \$ 95 following the ceasefire will again turn the market bullish. This ceasefire, particularly the agreed reopening of Hormuz Strait, will embolden the bulls to charge again, aided by the fair market valuations.RBI, aided by the crash in crude, will opt for a hold in rates today. The policy stance will continue to be neu-



tral. The upside risk to inflation and the downside risk to growth can now be managed well. Rupee will strengthen and this may even force the FPIs to turn buyers; at least they will have to cease the sustained selling, which will become irrational in the present context," he added.What it means for investors

The current rally is strong. It is largely driven by external developments As of now, the easing of geopolitical tension and softer crude prices have brought relief. Nilesh Shah, MD Kotak Mahindra AMC advised investors to pay attention to asset allocation,

"Investors should follow their dharma of asset allocation. Don't chase momentum swinging by events. Be a disciplined investor catching a falling knife."

3 Global markets join the rally
Apart from the Indian markets, the global markets have also reacted strongly to the ceasefire news.Asian markets too have seen a sharp upmove rising between 4-6%. The Nikkei has jumped 5% while the key South Korean Index soared 6%. The Mainland Chinese and Hing Kong markets are up between 2-3% in intra-day trade as well.4 Crude oil nosedives over 13%

Another major factor adding to the rally is the sharp plunge in crude oil prices.

Financial stocks are seeing strong traction, while Oil & Gas is trading higher by over 2%. Metal and Media stocks are also seeing notable gains.

1 US-Iran ceasefire brings cheer across global markets

Among many factors, one of the biggest is the sudden improvement in global risk sentiment. In the latest move, the United States and Iran have agreed to a temporary two-week ceasefire has helped calm nerves across financial markets.The rally is broad-based, with most sectors participating. The Nifty small and midcap is also trading up over 3.5% each. The sudden surge is not driven by just one factor. Instead, it includes a mix of global and domestic cues has come together to lift markets.Nilesh Shah, MD Kotak Mahindra AMC highlighted that "From India point of view safety of 9 million Indians working in Middle East, Availability of energy with opening of Hormuz strait like pre war, Price of energy nearer to pre war prices and remittance flows from Middle East at the run rate of pre war is critical. Markets will see a relief rally with short covering but will continue to react to events. There could be many slips between cup and the lip."

Sebi grants one-time relaxation for IPO validity, minimum public

Mumbai: Amid the weakness in securities markets, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has provided one-time relaxation for initial public offering (IPO) validity as well as minimum public shareholdings (MPS) on Tuesday.The regulator has given a temporary relaxation for companies whose initial public offering (IPO) validity are set to expire between April 1 and September 30. The markets regulator has granted a one-time extension of validity till September 30 for such companies, as per a circular issued on Tuesday.

Currently, a public issue must be opened within 12-18 months of getting observation letters from the regulator, as per Sebi's Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements (ICDR) Regulations, 2018. 2018. 40 issuers will benefit from this decision who are estimated to raise at least ₹43,500 crore altogether, according to data from Prime Database. Among the beneficiaries are Credila Financial Services, Dorf-Ketal Chemicals India, Continuum Green Energy, Hero Fincorp, and Juniper Green Energy whose IPO validity were set to expire between April 15 and August 28. The relief has been provided on the condition that the lead manager to the issue will provide a written undertaking, confirming the compliance with Schedule XVI of the ICDR Regulations while submitting the updated offer document to Sebi. In the backdrop of the geopolitical tensions in West Asia, industry bodies informed Sebi about issuers' difficulties with respect to mobilizing resources and accessing the capital market. "This has led to several issuers to defer, recalibrate or withdraw issuance plans leading to potential lapses in observation letter validity and duplication of regulatory processes," Sebi said.India's primary and secondary markets have been seeing the ripple effect of the aggravated tension in West Asia. Since the beginning of the war at the end of February, the secondary market has fallen 8%. Foreign investors pulled out over \$12 billion, the record monthly outflows the market has ever seen.



Gold Rate Gold is up by 2.49% prices in Mumbai, Chennai

Mumbai: On 8 April 2026, the price of 24K gold at ₹154,070 per 10 grams, reflecting a gain of ₹3,740 compared to its previous close. Meanwhile, 22K gold is at ₹141,231 per 10 grams.Gold prices in India are largely influenced by international spot gold rates, US dollar fluctuations, and import duties on Gold among other things.

Gold prices in India continue to remain higher than in Dubai. On 8 April 2026 the price of 24K gold in India is at ₹154,070 per 10 grams, while in Dubai it is ₹140,560, reflecting a difference of ₹13,510 or 9.61%. Similarly, 22K and 18K gold prices in India were also about 9.61% costlier compared to the price of gold in Dubai, not accounting for fees, duties, and taxes. Gold prices extended sharp gains as Donald Trump agreed on a ceasefire plan with Iran to back off military strikes. The yellow metal gained as oil prices slipped sharply, as Iran confirmed the reopening of the crucial trade route—the Strait of Hormuz, which transits roughly 20% of the global energy flows.The slip in crude oil prices also softened the dollar index, which further boosted sentiment for gold, as a soft dollar makes precious assets like gold less expensive for other currency holders, thereby aiding demand.

However, markets continue to assess the near-term impact of the negotiations between the US and Iran, which will further determine the trajectory for the yellow



metal, which has declined by nearly 25% since the start of the West Asia war. Analysts expect gold prices to extend slight gains in the near term over ceasefire optimism. The reopening of the Hormuz route is likely to help ease inflationary pressures, further boosting demand for the yellow metal. However, markets remain cautious, as the US President has previously changed his stance multiple times over the conflict. Traders currently price in no rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve for this year. "MCX Gold June futures are likely to appreciate to Rs 152,500/10g," said Jigar Trivedi, Senior Research Analyst at Indusind Securities.Retail investors are advised to track not just domestic rates but also international trends before making buying decisions

After crude crashed over 13% on US-Iran ceasefre, Hormuz reopens RIL, ONGC, IOC: Oil stocks surge

Mumbai: Crude oil prices crashed more than 13% on Wednesday after US President Donald Trump held off on military strikes against Iran and Tehran agreed to a two-week ceasefire, reopening the Strait of Hormuz. This move puts domestic oil & gas companies in the spotlight, ONGC, IOC, BPCL, Oil India, and Hindustan Petroleum are likely to see sharp price action ntra-day.Bharat Petroleum (BPCL) was up about 7.53% and Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) gained 5.85%, while Hindustan Petroleum Corporation (HPCL) rose 0.91%. In contrast, Oil And Natural Gas Corporation declined 1.24% and Oil India slipped 0.34%. Reliance Industries saw a modest uptick of 0.45% in the same snapshot.US crude futures sank 14.7% to \$96.27 a barrel, while Brent crude dropped 14.4% to \$93.48, according to the Associated Press. Both benchmarks remain well above pre-war levels crude had briefly crossed \$117 a barrel during Tuesday's session before settling at \$112.95 but the scale of the single-day drop is the kind of move that directly compresses upstream realizations while offering downstream relief. Late Tuesday, Trump announced he was pulling back from threatened strikes on Iranian bridges, power plants, and civilian infrastructure, contingent on a two-week ceasefire and the reopening of

the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's Supreme National Security Council confirmed its acceptance of the ceasefire, and Iran's foreign minister stated that passage through the strait would be permitted for the next two weeks under Iranian military management, as reported by the Associated Press. The announcement triggered an immediate rally in US equity futures. S&P 500 futures jumped 2.2% and Dow futures rose 930 points, or 2%, as of 8:05 p.m. ET. In Asia, Japan's Nikkei climbed more than 4% and South Korea's Kospi gained 6%.US market action on April 7

Tuesday's regular trading session in the US was anything but calm. The S&P 500 swung as much as 1.2% lower after Trump threatened that a "whole civilization will die tonight, never to be brought back again" if Iran did not meet his 8 p.m. Eastern deadline to open the Strait. The market then reversed sharply after Pakistan's prime minister publicly urged Trump to extend the deadline by two weeks and simultaneously called on Iran to open the strait for the same period, as per Associated Press. For India's oil marketing companies Indian Oil Corporation, BPCL, and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation lower crude is can be positive. These companies import crude, refine it, and sell petroleum products domestically, often at government-ad-



ministered prices. When crude runs hot, their marketing margins get squeezed. A 15% drop in a single session gives them breathing room, and the market will likely price that in quickly.

The oil market had been in a state of sustained anxiety since the conflict across West Asia escalated, with crude making a series of sharp moves briefly above \$117, then settling, now crashing on ceasefire news. Indian oil and gas stocks have been caught in every one of those swings. Wednesday will be no different. The sector opens with a clear directional catalyst, and how stocks like ONGC, Reliance, BPCL, IOC, and Oil India respond will be one of the clearest reads on how the market is thinking about whether this ceasefire holds.

Why Anand Rathi thinks these three metal stocks will do well in Q4

Tata Steel, Lloyds Metals, IMFA:

New Delhi: India's metals and mining companies are seeing stronger pricing, improving demand and better earnings visibility, according to a recent sector note released by Anand Rathi Share and Stock Brokers. The brokerage has identified a handful of companies where the improvement is sharp enough to stand out from the broader pack. Its focus remains on businesses that are benefiting directly from higher steel prices, operating leverage and favourable product mix.The report points to a clear recovery in domestic steel prices after the lows seen in December 2025, alongside steady demand from infrastructure and manufacturing. While raw material costs have also moved higher, Anand Rathi believes the increase in realisations is more than enough to support profitability in the near term. Against this backdrop, the brokerage has called out three names as its top picks, each with a different driver but a



common earnings tailwind.Anand Rathi on Lloyds Metals and Energy "Among our coverage universe, LLOYDSME is expected to deliver the strongest improvement in financial performance," Anand Rathi says in its report.The note further adds that iron ore sales volumes, adjusted for internal consumption, are expected to cross 7.1 million tonnes. This scale-up, combined with pricing support, is likely to sustain margins even as costs move higher across the sector.

Anand Rathi also draws attention to upcoming triggers, including the ramp-up of the newly commissioned copper plant in the Democratic Republic of Congo and progress on pellet plant expansion. These factors could support further earnings growth beyond the current quarter.Anand Rathi on Tata Steel

Tata Steel remains a core pick in the large-cap space, backed by improving domestic pricing and a gradual recovery in its European operations. Anand Rathi expects consolidated sales volumes at around 8.4 million tonnes in Q4 FY26. Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation per tonne is estimated at Rs 10,938, marking a 38.9% increase on a year-on-year basis.

Anand Rathi places Lloyds Metals and Energy Limited at the top of its preference list, driven by a sharp jump in volumes and a step-up in profitability. The brokerage

expects the company to deliver one of the strongest earnings performances in the sector, supported by its iron ore mining exposure and recent capacity additions. Production volume is estimated to rise to around 9.07 million tonnes in Q4 FY26 from 1.40 million tonnes a year ago, while revenue is projected at Rs 6,969.2 crore and earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation at Rs 2,093.3 crore. This translates into a year-on-year growth of 484% in revenue and 701.7% in earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation, indicating a sharp operating leverage benefit. The brokerage's analysis rests on the company's growing mining contribution, which is now a major profit driver. With iron ore prices firm and volumes scaling up, Lloyds Metals and Energy Limited is positioned differently from most steel producers that depend on external raw materials.

Turnaround in for tunes of IT stocks

New Delhi: After falling sharply for the past few months, shares of information technology (IT) companies are seeing an uptick, primarily driven by expectations of better earnings for the March quarter and ease in valuations. While the conflict in West Asia has been pinching the overall market as well as the sector, experts believe that IT stocks are pricing in worst-case scenarios. The Nifty IT index closed 2.5% higher at 31,403.35 points on Tuesday, extending the winning run to the fourth trading session and gaining 8% during this period. Top tier players such as Infosys, HCL Technologies, Tata Consultancy Services, and Wipro closed 2.6-3.7% higher, which also aided the overall market movement. What do experts say?

Experts said IT stocks are now trading close to the 5-year average. The sector, which earns around half of its revenue from US clients, has been feeling the heat of weak discretionary spends, muted revenue growth, and caution from clients due to US tariffs. What came as a double whammy is the war in West Asia. The geopolitical tension has given rise to the possibility of a spike in inflation in the US as well as India, which consequently opened the door for speculations that central banks may go for rate hikes in the medium term if the issue prolongs. "If the US increases interest

rates by any chance in the future, of course discretionary spends will get pushed back further and IT business segments such as retail also will suffer," an IT analyst at the broking arm of a top Indian private sector bank said. With the earnings season kickstarting this week, the analyst also said tier-1 IT companies will likely guide for a low-to-mid single digit growth for FY27, largely similar to FY26. Deal activities were healthy and there could be margin tailwinds from the depreciation of the rupee.Looking at the IT index

In March, the IT index declined 5% after falling nearly 20% in February which was the biggest monthly fall since September 2008. The selling pressure in the sector eased slightly in March, with them offloading shares worth ₹1,874 crore in March after net selling almost ₹17,000-crore worth of IT stocks a month ago, as per National Securities Depository data. Investors are currently focused on revenue guidance in the context of artificial intelligence-led disruption and the ongoing West Asia crisis, not to mention order book strength and near-term earnings visibility, JM Financial Institutional Securities said in its report. "A key debate remains whether the sector could see further valuation de-rating, particularly in light of the global IT valuations," it said.

Iran promises to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, and the US and Iran agree on a temporary ceasefire

Washington: Following a last-minute diplomatic intervention spearheaded by Pakistan, the United States and Iran agreed to a two-week conditional truce on Tuesday night, which included a temporary reopening of the Strait of Hormuz. This agreement eliminated Donald Trump’s demand that Iran submit or risk widespread destruction. Less than two hours before the US president’s self-imposed deadline of 8 p.m. Eastern time to bomb Iran’s power plants and bridges—a move that legal experts, officials from several nations, and the pope had warned could amount to war crimes—Trump announced the ceasefire agreement. Just hours earlier, Trump had written on Truth Social: “A whole civilization will die tonight, never to be brought back again. I don’t want that to happen, but it probably will.” American B-52 bombers were reported to be en route to Iran before the ceasefire agreement was announced. But by Tuesday evening, Trump announced that a ceasefire agreement had been mediated through Pakistan, whose prime minister, Shehbaz Sharif, had requested the two-week peace in order to “allow diplomacy to run its course”. Trump wrote in a post that “subject to the Islamic Republic of Iran agreeing to the COMPLETE, IMMEDIATE, and SAFE OPENING of the Strait of Hormuz, I agree to suspend the bombing and attack of Iran for a period of two weeks”. In a separate post later, the US president called Tuesday “a big day for world peace” on a social media post, claiming that Iran had “had enough”. He said the US would be “helping with the traffic buildup” in the strait of Hormuz and that “big money will be made” as Iran begins reconstruction. For several hours afterwards, Israel’s position or agreement with the deal was unclear. But just before midnight ET, the prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, said Israel backed the US ceasefire with Iran but that the deal did not cover fighting against Hezbollah in Lebanon. His office said Israel also supported US efforts to ensure Iran no longer posed a nuclear or missile threat. Pakistan’s prime minister had previously said that the agreed



ceasefire covered “everywhere including Lebanon”. The ceasefire process was clouded in uncertainty after Iran released two different versions of the 10-point plan intended to be the basis for negotiations, and which Trump said was a “workable basis on which to negotiate”. In the version released in Farsi, Iran included the phrase “acceptance of enrichment” for its nuclear program. But for reasons that remain unclear, that phrase was missing in English versions shared by Iranian diplomats to journalists. Pakistan has invited the US and Iran to talks in Islamabad on Friday. Tehran said it would attend, but Washington has yet to publicly accept the invitation. In a telephone call with Agence France-Presse, Trump said he believed China had persuaded Iran to negotiate, and said Tehran’s enriched uranium would be “perfectly taken care of”, without providing more detail. In the two-week ceasefire, Trump said, he believed the US and Iran could negotiate over the 10-point proposal that would allow an armistice to be “finalized and consummated”. “This will be a double sided CEASEFIRE!” he continued. “The reason for doing so is that we have already met and exceeded all Military objectives, and are very far along with a definitive Agreement concerning Longterm PEACE with Iran, and PEACE in the Middle

East.” Iran’s foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, issued a statement shortly after Trump’s announcement saying Iran had agreed to the ceasefire. “For a period of two weeks, safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz will be possible via coordinating with Iran’s Armed Forces,” he wrote. Oil prices were knocked back on Wednesday as a two-week Middle East ceasefire sparked a relief rally, fuelled by hopes that oil and gas flows through the strait of Hormuz could resume. Despite the provisional ceasefire, attacks continued across the region in the hours after Trump’s announcement. Before the deadline, airstrikes hit two bridges and a train station in Iran, and the US hit military infrastructure on Kharg Island, a key hub for Iranian oil production. The sudden about-face will allow Trump to step back as the US war in Iran has dragged on for five weeks with little sign that Tehran is ready to surrender or release its hold on the strait, a conduit for a fifth of the global energy supply, where traffic has slowed to a trickle. Trump had earlier rejected the 10-point plan as “not good enough” but the president has set deadlines before and allowed them to pass over the five weeks of the conflict. Yet he insisted on Tuesday the ensuing hours would be “one of the most important moments in the long

and complex history of the World” unless “something revolutionarily wonderful” happened, with “less radicalized minds” in Iran’s leadership. News of the provisional ceasefire deal was welcomed but with a note of caution elsewhere. Iraq’s foreign ministry called for “serious and sustainable dialogue” between the US and Iran “to address the root causes of the disputes”, while the German foreign minister, Johann Wadephul, said the deal “must be the crucial first step towards lasting peace, for the consequences of the war continuing would be incalculable”. In Australia, the government warned that the latest developments would not necessarily mean the fuel crisis is over. Oil prices fell as traders bet that the reopening of the strait of Hormuz would help fuel supply resume, but the energy minister, Chris Bowen, told reporters Australians should “not get ahead of ourselves”. He said: “People shouldn’t take today’s progress and expect prices to fall. We welcome progress, but I don’t think we can say the [strait of Hormuz is] now open.” A spokesperson for New Zealand’s foreign minister, Winston Peters, welcomed the “encouraging news” but noted “there remains significant important work to be done to secure a lasting ceasefire”. Japan said it expected the move to result in a “final agreement” after Washington and Tehran begin talks on Friday. Describing the ceasefire as a “positive move”, the chief cabinet secretary, Minoru Kihara, said Tokyo wanted to see a de-escalation on the ground in the region, adding that the prime minister, Sanae Takaiuchi, was seeking talks with the Iranian president, Masoud Pezeshkian. A temporary end to hostilities will come as a relief to Japan, which depends on the Middle East for about 90% of its crude oil imports, most of which is transported through the strait of Hormuz. South Korea’s ministry of foreign affairs said it hoped “negotiations between the two sides will be successfully concluded and that peace and stability in the Middle East will be restored at an early date”, as well as wishes for “free and safe navigation of all vessels through the strait of Hormuz”.

In England, the practice of landlords evicting tenants before the law goes into effect



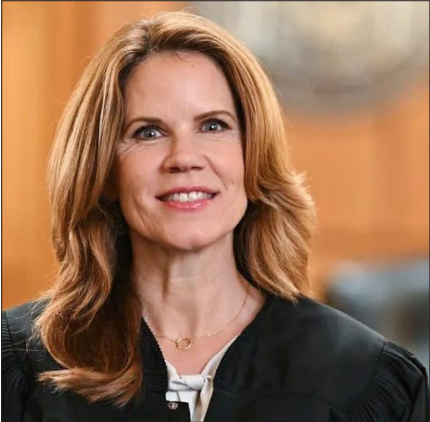
London: According to charity, a growing number of landlords are evicting renters at the last minute before the legislation changes to prohibit the practice in the upcoming month. No-fault evictions accounted for one in five of the reports that the renters’ union Acorn got from members in October, and by January, that number had risen to almost one in three, the group told the Guardian. Section 21 of the current Housing Act, which permits a landlord to evict without giving the court a reason, will be eliminated by the Renters’ Rights Act, which was developed last year and will take effect on May 1, 2026. It’s not a coincidence. According to an Acorn representative, “landlords are obviously rushing to force through last-minute evictions before the ban comes into force.” Tenant organizations around England have expressed similar concerns, especially in crowded cities where tenant competition is fierce. After five years of residing in Lewisham’s Lady Florence Courtyard, Kim Mansell, 36, now checks her letterbox daily for a possession order directing her to go. Ironically, the 999 Club, a London homelessness organization, is the landlord evicting her. “It is utterly demonic,” she uttered those words. “I expressed to them my affection for this place. How much I appreciate that my rent is donated to charity and that I have no family, thus I have no other support system. At the start of last year, while the renters’ rights bill was going through parliament, the charity increased Mansell’s rent by 11%. She tried to negotiate, with no response. Then in June she was served a no-fault eviction notice. Panicked, she contacted the 999 Club to discuss the change, but they told her a meeting “would not be productive or appropriate”. In the months since, the charity has not budged, and while Mansell contemplates the reality of homelessness herself, they have advertised her flat at a price 36% higher than what she is paying. Other tenants confirmed that the charity had always negotiated rent in the past, and could not remember a time that they had evicted in order to achieve a rent hike. Presented with this information, the charity said: “Any enforcement

action is only taken following robust legal advice and in cases where there are significant, persistent issues.” “While we don’t comment on individual tenancies, we have never evicted anyone as a means to increase rents,” it said. Hugh Wilkinson, head of housing at the Central England Law Centre, said he has been receiving a lot of section 21 cases. The lawyer, whose clients are concentrated in Coventry and Birmingham, said he was seeing long-term tenants shocked by unexpected breaks in long-term relationships with their landlords. “It can be quite upsetting for people,” he said. “To think that they’ve been there for a long time and that the length of time doesn’t make any difference. The court won’t take into account the fairness of it.” Isaac Rose, 33, an organizer for the Greater Manchester Tenants Union, was himself served with a section 21 eviction three weeks ago. It came after a dispute around a proposed 29% rent increase. His landlord tried to file a section 13 notice for a rental increase, and when that failed due to incorrect filing, they used a section 21 eviction. “It’s pretty clear that they did that because of the change in the law,” Rose said. “Once section 21 is abolished, it would be a lot harder and slower to get us out.” Meera Chindooray, deputy director for campaigns at the National Residential Landlords Association, said: “Landlords will be looking at their current tenants and considering whether these are tenancies that they are happy to continue with after May, or whether they have concerns about any risks – rent arrears, for example, or issues with antisocial behaviour.” Unions, charities, and other third sector organisations across England said the change could not come soon enough. Many of them campaigned for the law to be introduced, and were consulted as it was written. The housing charity Shelter said: “It’s especially outrageous that some landlords are exploiting this thin window of time to serve no-fault evictions. It just goes to show how vital these new changes are for renters.” Though the law is changing, proceedings initiated before 1 May 2026 will be allowed to continue as before.

The election of Chris Taylor to the Wisconsin state supreme court results in a 5-2 majority of leftist judges

Washington : With Chris Taylor defeating conservative Maria Lazar, Wisconsin voters elected another liberal justice to the state supreme court, giving liberals a 5-2 advantage. Before the next presidential election, when the swing state will undoubtedly witness challenges to election results, liberals have an opportunity to further solidify their dominance on the high court with the retirement of conservative Justice Rebecca Bradley. Lazar, a former deputy state attorney general and a liberal judge on the state’s court of appeals, was the opponent of Taylor, a former Democratic lawmaker. Liberals now have a 5-2 bloc on the bench thanks to Taylor’s victory. Taylor is perceived as being supportive of the right to vote, whereas Lazar’s opinions were more in line with those of Republicans, advocating for laws that may limit the influence and accessibility of voting. In Wisconsin, Lazar persisted in defending gerrymandered districts that resulted in additional Republican wins; these maps have now been reversed. Bradley authored the court’s ruling outlawing dropboxes, a common target of allegations of mail-in ballot fraud. However, once liberals took control of the court, they reversed that ruling. Since 2015, she has been a member of the state supreme court. Voters should continue to be involved in the court’s composition, according to proponents of voting rights, even though this year’s election has received far less attention than the previous two. According to Victoria Bassetti, a senior counsel at States United Democracy Center, “Wisconsin has been in the crosshairs of extensive litigation in terms of the way the state runs its elections,” she told the news website Bolts. From the standpoint of democracy, this fight for the Supreme Court is anything but low-stakes, despite the fact that it may appear to be a sleeper affair. In Wisconsin, these problems never go away. Though the high court’s justices are officially non-partisan, liberals held a 4-3 majority after flipping the court in 2023 in what was then the most expensive judicial election in US history, according to the Brennan Center. In 2025, Elon Musk got involved, and the supreme court race topped \$100m, with Musk himself throwing in several million and groups he supported spending heavily. Susan Crawford, a liberal, ultimately won. This year’s race was much quieter – and significantly less expensive – than the previous two state supreme court elections. Taylor had the money edge in this year’s race, significantly fundraising more than Lazar. In a sign of the lower profile of this

year’s contest, more than half of voters were still undecided in a March poll by Marquette law school conducted less than a month from election day. Judicial elections function differently depending on the state. In some, like Wisconsin, justices are directly elected. In others, and at the national level, they are appointed by partisan executive office-holders. Some states appoint judges, then hold retention elections where voters can decide whether to keep them in their roles. Overall, judicial elections have become much more expensive in recent years. The race is another gauge of Democrats’ durability in this year’s midterms, particularly in a closely watched swing state, though the November ticket and voter turnout will be much different than a court election. Democratic candidates have recently won upset victories throughout the country in places typically held by Republicans, giving them momentum heading into November. Voters often side against the president in midterm elections. In the final days of campaigning, Lazar attacked Taylor as too partisan for the court, saying at a county Republican party office that “the court is not for sale”, according to Wisconsin Public Radio. “We actually want someone on that court who is extremely law nerdy and boring, and doesn’t care about politics at all, and only cares about the law and the constitution,” Lazar said. Taylor, speaking earlier at the county Democratic headquarters, emphasized the court’s ability to push back against the federal government, WPR reported. “With this election, we have an opportunity to strengthen a pro-democracy majority on our court that will protect our rights and freedoms, our democracy and elections, and that will hold and resist the efforts of the federal government to come into our state and take away and infringe upon our independence as a state,” Taylor stated.



Experts claim that the UK opening new oil and gas fields will jeopardize global climate goals



London: Experts have cautioned that the opening of new oil and gas resources in the North Sea would “send a shock wave around the world,” endangering global climate targets, undermining the UK’s climate leadership, and encouraging emerging nations to take advantage of their own fossil fuel supplies. The oil industry, the Conservatives, Nigel Farage’s Reform UK party, certain trade unions, and portions of the Treasury are putting intense pressure on the UK government to approve new oil and gas fields, even though there is ample evidence that doing so would not lower prices and would have virtually no impact on imports. The licensing system includes two of the largest fields still in the North Sea, which is over 90% depleted and where the remaining pockets are becoming more expensive and energy-intensive to extract. However, studies have indicated that the exploitation of the Rosebank and Jackdaw

deposits would only replace 1% and 2% of the UK’s gas imports, respectively. Drilling new fields would be “dangerous” for international efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and phase out fossil fuels, according to senior experts in climate diplomacy. “New drilling and slowing down climate action would be bad for growth and for energy security in the UK, and a damaging signal for the world,” stated Nicolas Stern, a professor at the London School of Economics. “The UK has been a pioneer in climate action, as the first G7 nation to commit to net zero by 2050, through its work in international institutions and interactions, and through its exemplary climate change legislation,” stated Lord Stern. Its model is important. The world pays attention to what the UK does because it has been a leader and pioneer. Speaking on condition of anonymity, a top African negotiator reacted angrily to the idea that the UK would

offer more fields. Africa stated that it will “reject any proposal for the UK to expand oil drilling” because doing so would “weaken trust with climate-vulnerable nations” and be “fundamentally inconsistent with both the letter and spirit of the Paris agreement.” “New oil exploration by a historic emitter is as paradoxical as it is retrograde at a time when science is clear about the necessity for a swift shift away from fossil fuels. The negotiator added, “It also runs the risk of creating a risky precedent that other nations could follow.” Christiana Figueres, a former executive secretary of the UN framework convention on climate change and a co-founder of the Global Optimism think-tank, said economics as well as the risks of climate breakdown argued against the move. “It’s entirely understandable that in today’s geopolitical context, countries must seek greater energy security and independence,” she said. “But

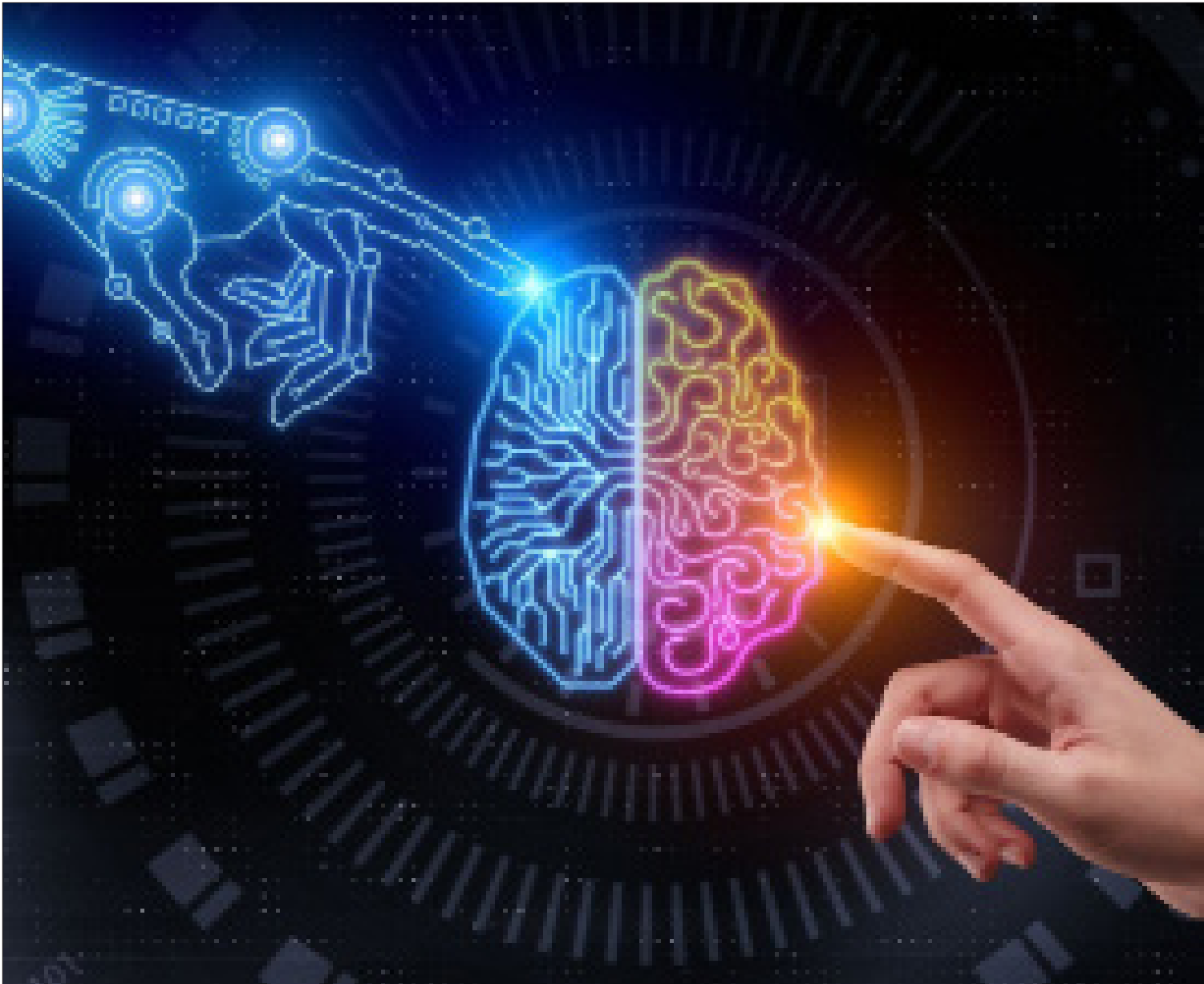
reaching for solutions of the past – such as expanding oil and gas drilling – risks locking in infrastructure that is increasingly out of step with where the global energy system is heading. True energy independence today lies in scaling clean, domestic energy, not in extending the life of declining industries.” The UK has been one of the main supporters of a global conference taking place in Colombia later this month on the “transition away from fossil fuels” that countries agreed to make three years ago but have so far failed to implement. However, the Guardian has learned that Ed Miliband, the UK’s secretary of state for energy security and net zero, will not attend the gathering of about 50 countries. Rachel Kyte, the government’s climate envoy, will go instead. Campaigners had been calling for the secretary of state to attend as he was widely credited with helping to bring about a last-minute deal at the Cop30 climate summit in Brazil last November. Experts said that if the UK were to licence new fields before the conference, it could undermine progress on encouraging developing countries to forego fossil fuel-based economies and opt for cleaner energy. Mohamed Adow, the director of the Power Shift Africa thinktank in Nairobi, said: “The UK approving new oil and gas projects would send a shock wave around the world that short-term interests are being prioritised over long-term responsibility. I dread to think what example that

would set to the rest of the world.” Many developing countries are considering exploiting their own oil and gas resources instead of opting for renewables. If they were to do so, the world would go far beyond the carbon limits needed to stave off the worst ravages of climate breakdown. Adow said: “Countries across Africa are being asked to leapfrog to clean energy systems, often with limited financial support. We are told, often by European nations, that the future lies in renewables, and increasingly we are proving that it does. When wealthier nations continue to invest in fossil fuels, they undermine this message and diminish their credibility.” A senior development official in an overseas institution said the question was urgent. “What we are hearing already from developing countries is: why shouldn’t we tap into our own fossil fuel resources if the UK is doing so?” they said. “That is a legitimate point. You have to provide leadership.” An ally of Miliband said: “No new exploration licences is a landmark global leadership position – a major, developed, oil and gas producing country proving it can walk what it talks on climate and act in line with what the science clearly says to avoid global warming spiralling to a catastrophic 3 or 4C.” Miliband has taken political heat to protect the position, and the fact that others like [the Green party leader, Zack] Polanski are calling on him to go further is a sign of how far Ed has shifted the Overton window.”

AI-written code can beat humans at biomedical analysis, some studies find

As the general public has embraced large language models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT, Claude and Gemini, scientists have been exploring how these artificial intelligence (AI) tools could enhance medical research. Some argue that LLMs could dramatically boost researchers' efficiency in completing certain types of medical studies, and research published in February in the journal *Cell Reports Medicine* exemplifies that vision for the technology. The study used massive datasets of patient biomedical information to predict the risk of preterm birth in a given pregnancy. These types of predictions have been a powerful AI use case for years, and were possible with more traditional types of machine learning than LLMs employ. But this study was notable in that LLMs enabled junior researchers — a graduate student and a high school student — to efficiently generate very accurate code. That code predicted a baby's gestational age at birth and the likelihood of preterm birth. The AI's output matched and, in one case, even beat analyses from expert teams who had used human-generated code to crunch the same data. "What I saw with junior scientists here and how effective they could be truly inspired and amazed me," said study co-author Marina Sirota, interim director of the Baker Computational Health Sciences Institute at the University of California, San Francisco. One big promise of LLMs is to lower the barrier for researchers to produce code and conduct complex analyses — but it comes with risks. As AI quickly improves, researchers must grapple with myriad questions. What guardrails need to be established to ensure AI's accuracy? How do we measure its output? And how will the role of human researchers evolve as these systems gain prominence? The open-source datasets included blood

transcriptomics, which looks at RNA, a molecule that reflects which genes are active in the body. They included epigenetic information from placental cells, which described chemical tags that sit "on top of" DNA and control which genes can be switched on, and microbiome data describing the bacteria present in vaginal fluid samples. These data points were flagged with the type of sample they came from — blood, placental tissue or vaginal fluid — and labeled with outcomes of interest, namely gestational age and preterm birth. Machine learning algorithms can then be trained to spot links between a sample's source and its label. For example, they may reveal that microbiome samples with certain mixes of bacteria often come from people who have given birth early. Once trained on a subset of data, the algorithm can be tested on samples that lack labels, to see if it can predict the label that should be there. For instance, it should flag samples with bacterial mixes similar to those in the training data linked to a higher risk of preterm birth. The final step is to evaluate the models' accuracy and compare them. "Accuracy" in the context of machine learning has a specific definition: the number of correct predictions divided by the total number of predictions. Human- vs The DREAM Challenge was aimed at uncovering links between these medical metrics and the risk of preterm birth. Some risk factors, including having infections during pregnancy, are already well known. But the DREAM Challenge wanted to see what signals might be gleaned from clinical samples, like blood. It's the kind of work that normally demands months of effort from trained bioinformaticians. But instead of writing the analysis code themselves, the junior researchers in the recent study gave each of eight LLMs a single prompt describing the data available and the labeling



task at hand: predicting gestational age or preterm birth. With this simple prompting, four of the eight models — DeepSeekR1, Gemini, and ChatGPT's o3-mini-high and 4o — produced code that ran successfully. The best performer, OpenAI's o3-mini, was as accurate as the original human DREAM Challenge teams. For one task, which involved estimating gestational age from epigenetic data, it was more accurate than humans had been. What's more, the junior researchers generated results in about three months and submitted a manuscript describing their results within six months, whereas the same process took the original DREAM Challenge teams years. "We got lucky with the review process here, but six months to generate the results and write the

paper is pretty incredible, especially for a junior scientist," Preterm birth, before 37 complete weeks of pregnancy, affects roughly 11% of infants worldwide. Babies born too early are at higher risk than full-term babies for a host of health troubles, including but not limited to problems affecting their brains, eyes and digestive systems. Being able to predict which pregnant patients are more likely to give birth early could mean closer monitoring and treatments to protect the baby and make full-term birth more likely, experts say. The data used in the *Cell Reports Medicine* paper started "in good shape," Sirota noted, in tables that AI could easily read. "But we can speed that up as well — the cleaning part and normalization of data — with generative AI," she said. Sirota's team

is now exploring other LLM applications, including a new tool called Chat PTB (short for "preterm birth") that they've developed. The Chat GPT-based tool is embedded in papers published by the March of Dimes research network, part of a nonprofit aimed at improving maternal and infant health. Instead of manually combing through this literature, researchers can now query Chat PTB and get synthesized answers with references — a task that used to take hours, compressed into seconds. But tools like Chat PTB and the code-writing approach in Sirota's study represent only the first wave. AI-enhanced medical research is moving toward "agentic" AI, meaning systems that don't respond to only one prompt but instead carry out multi-step research workflows

with increasing autonomy. Instead of responding with only text, an agentic agent is capable of checking and iterating on its own work until it reaches its objective. It can also take action on a user's behalf, like searching the internet and running code, rather than just writing it. That shift toward greater AI autonomy and less human oversight brings both enormous potential and serious risk. In a January study published in the journal *Nature Biomedical Engineering*, researchers evaluated LLMs on 293 coding tasks drawn from 39 published biomedical studies, initially allowing the LLMs to come up with workflows on their own. They found that the overall accuracy came in below 40%. Their solution was to separate planning from execution: They had the AI produce a step-by-step

analysis plan that a human researcher reviewed before any code got written. The approach boosted the accuracy to 74%. "The goal is not to ask researchers to blindly trust an AI system," study co-author Zifeng Wang, who was a doctoral student at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign at the time of the study, told *Live Science* in an email. Instead, the goal is to "design frameworks where the reasoning, planning, and intermediate steps are visible enough that researchers can supervise and validate the process," said Wang, who is a co-founder of Keiji AI. These risks don't mean researchers should shy away from AI, but they do need to apply the same rigor to AI-generated work that they would to any other collaborator's output, scientists caution. "The question is not whether LLMs

accelerate science or create 'AI slop,'" Ian McCulloh, a professor of computer science at Johns Hopkins University's Whiting School of Engineering, told *Live Science* in an email. "The question is how we leverage this powerful technology within the scientific method." But McCulloh also cautioned against holding AI to an impossible standard. People tend to assume AI is error-prone and downplay human error, he said, when, in reality, both humans and machines make mistakes. He anecdotally described a consulting client who lamented AI's 15% miss rate on a certain task, not realizing his human employees' miss rate was 25%. "The goal of AI is not perfection," McCulloh said, "but to do better than people." That effort will involve agreeing on how to measure AI's success. Dr. Ethan Goh, a physician-researcher at Stanford University, pointed out that health care still lacks standardized benchmarks for evaluating AI's performance. Goh recently published a randomized trial in *JAMA Network Open* that studied how LLMs influence doctors' reasoning in determining diagnoses. Because LLMs are trained on such a vast amount of data, "benchmarks are so expensive to produce," Goh told *Live Science*. What's more, he said, AI improves so quickly that most commercial models start beating the few benchmarks that exist and rapidly render them useless. Amid these challenges, Goh's team at Stanford's AI Research and Science Evaluation (ARISE) Healthcare Network is working to develop such standards by the end of this year. For all the uncertainty around standards and safeguards, the researchers who spoke with *Live Science* shared a common conviction: AI belongs in the lab, but not unsupervised. "We have to be careful not to forget what we know in terms of the scientific process," Sirota said. "But I think the opportunity is tremendous."

The hungriest black holes in the universe are running out of food, survey of 8,000 cosmic monsters reveals

For years, astronomers have been puzzled by why the biggest black holes in the universe have been growing much more slowly over the past 10 billion years. Now, a new study offers a potential solution to this astrophysical enigma: They're starved for gas. Supermassive black holes (SMBHs) have immense gravitational appetites that allowed them to grow to many millions or billions of times the mass of the sun at surprisingly rapid rates in the first few billion years after the Big Bang. However, SMBHs have been growing ever more slowly since the period known as "cosmic noon," when the universe was less than a quarter of its current age. Scientists have long wondered why this could be: Are there just fewer feeding black holes out there now, or is some external force stunting their growth? The actual reason may be that there's simply less material for them to munch on, scientists suggested in a paper published Dec. 17 in *The Astrophysical*

Journal. "We knew black holes were growing more slowly, but not why — and it turned out to be that individual black holes are consuming material much less rapidly, rather than there simply being fewer growing black holes or smaller ones," study co-author Fan Zou, an astronomer at the University of Michigan, told *Live Science* via email. Studying the growth of black holes is crucial for understanding galactic evolution and star birth, because SMBHs and their host galaxies evolve in a coordinated manner. SMBH sizes also correlate with the total mass of stars and their chaotic movements in a galaxy's bulge — the football-shaped central region where stars are densely packed. To measure how black hole growth has changed throughout cosmic time, the researchers utilized data from nine extragalactic surveys collected in a "wedding cake" design. These tiered layers include shallow surveys of large, relatively nearby regions of the

sky, as well as extremely deep "pencil-beam" looks at smaller fields, gathered from the world's premier X-ray-based space telescopes, including NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory, the European Space Agency's XMM-Newton and the German-Russian eROSITA. "X-ray light is arguably the best tracer of black hole growth," lead author Zhibo Yu, an astronomer at Penn State, told *Live Science* via email. "It is ubiquitously produced by growing supermassive black holes and has high contrast compared to the background star light. It also has high-penetrating power — that's why it's commonly used in medical imaging — so that it is less affected by the obscuring gas and dust in the galaxy." Altogether, the researchers analyzed multiwavelength observations of 1.3 million galaxies and 8,000 actively feeding, X-ray-spewing SMBHs to determine why the black holes' growth rate has plummeted. The research tested three main ideas. For example, are the black holes in the modern uni-



verse gobbling less matter? Alternatively, are they simply smaller and, therefore, less gravitationally gluttonous than their ancient predecessors? Or are there fewer actively growing black holes overall? The

researchers concluded that the black holes' consumption has slackened as the amount of cold gas for them to gobble has decreased since cosmic noon, approximately 10 billion years ago. "What surprised me most

was that we could actually isolate the main reason, and there is indeed a dominating reason instead of a messy mix," Zou explained. This decrease in growth rates appears to be significant. "Our best estimate

is that the decrease is a factor of 22," study co-author Neil Brandt, an astrophysicist at Penn State, told *Live Science* via email. Although this study did not address the bafflingly fast black hole growth in the very early universe, "it does the best job so far of [addressing] the final 75% of cosmic time — a large majority!" Future work may focus on additional datasets, such as wide-field X-ray surveys from Chandra and XMM-Newton, as well as multiwavelength data from other observatories. As a result, astronomers will be able to uncover larger SMBH populations, including even older examples and those that are obscured by dense dust and gas. Finally, the research further confirms that the eras of rampant SMBHs are behind us. "We do not expect many SMBHs to emerge and significantly grow in the future," Zou said. "Actually, we found in 2024 that the number of SMBHs was almost settled by 7 billion years ago — and will likely continue to be so in the future."

ENTERTAINMENT

Rakesh Bedi's win in Dhurandhar would have made Satish Shah "the happiest," Rajesh Kumar

Mumbai: The recollections, laughs, and casual discussions of his Sarabhai vs. Sarabhai co-stars carry on the legacy of the late actor Satish Shah. Actor Rajesh Kumar recently talked on how much the late actor is still missed and revealed that Satish would have been particularly happy to watch Rakesh Bedi, his close friend and classmate, gain a new wave of love for Dhurandhar: The Revenge. Rajesh disclosed in an interview with Bollywood Bubble that the Sarabhai vs.

Sarabhai ensemble still has pleasant memories of Satish Shah and frequently senses his presence in their chats. He revealed that, even unintentionally, the first joke or meme that is shared among the co-stars on their WhatsApp group always makes them think of Satish Shah. He continued by saying that whenever Ratna Pathak Shah sends something, someone in the group would unavoidably comment that Satish Shah would have had the ideal response or that "Kaka" would have made a humor-



ous comment.

Rajesh added that Satish would have been thrilled to watch Rakesh Bedi soaking in all the praise he received today for Dhurandhar. "I don't think he's gone, he's just there," he remarked. Seeing Rakesh Bedi now would have made him very happy. They were FTII classmates. David Dhawan, Satish ji, and Rakesh Bedi sir were all classmates. In Dhurandhar, Rakesh Bedi played the part of Pakistani politician Jameel Jamali. The actor's performance in Dhurandhar: The Revenge has been widely praised.

A significant plot twist involving his character was also included in the movie, and it quickly became one of the main topics of discussion among viewers. Ranveer Singh and Arjun Rampal, two of his co-stars, have complimented him on his work in the movie. In the 1980s, Satish Shah and Rakesh Bedi collaborated on the television series Ye Jo Hai Zindagi and Kundan Shah's Jaane Bhi Do Yaaron.

Rajesh Kumar discussed how Dhurandhar has rekindled interest in Rakesh Bedi's earlier work, sharing

a poignant moment when Rakesh sent him a poem reflecting his career struggles.

He likened his experience to sitting in a maikhana with an empty glass, waiting for someone to fill it, paralleling the film Uri as the empty glass and Dhurandhar as the long-awaited fulfillment. Rakesh revealed in an emotional message following Satish Shah's passing that the two were not just students but also flatmates and longtime friends. A unexpected heart attack claimed Satish's life in October of last year.

Between Kindergarten and Class 9, Akshay Kumar claims he failed 3 times

Mumbai: On the current reality show Wheel of Fortune, which he hosts, Akshay Kumar recently opened out. He confessed that he had failed three times between kindergarten and ninth grade while introducing a childhood acquaintance from the live crowd. As he reminisced about their friendship, Akshay Kumar introduced his friend Jinesh. "Hum log KG se saath mein hain aur KG se 9th grade ke beech mein hum log teen-teen baar fail hue hain," Akshay remarked, recalling his time as a backbencher and his difficulties passing tests. "Main aapke saath time spend karta tha, uski wajah se!" he continued, playfully asking his pal Jinesh why he had failed. Regarding his career, Akshay Kumar is preparing



for the release of Priyadarshan's Bhooth Bangla, which stars Rajpal Yadav, Wamiqa Gabbi, Tabu, and Paresh Rawal. In the teaser, Akshay Kumar is shown insisting on being married at Mangalpur's

haunted palace, which has been plagued for years by the Vadhusur curse. Tabu appears to be the link between the world of spirits and the human world, while the other characters all match Priyadarshan's concept. The movie, which was originally scheduled to open on May 15, will now open in theaters on April 16, 2026. The Dhurandhar wave at the box office caused the release date to be moved to April 16. Priyadarshan and Akshay Kumar last worked together on Khatta Meetha in 2010. Produced by Akshay Kumar, Shobha Kapoor, and Ektaa R. Kapoor, Bhooth Bangla is presented by Balaji Motion Pictures (a branch of Balaji Telefilms Ltd.) in collaboration with Cape of Good Films.

Raghav Chadha and Dhurandhar Share Pictures Sanjay Dutt, two stars, at his Delhi house



Mumbai: Sanjay Dutt, whom Raghav Chadha had welcomed at his home, recently posted photos of the two of them. In a touching letter, he praised the actor for Dhurandhar's achievements and explained that he is deserving of them. Raghav Chadha commented, "Had the pleasure of hosting at my place, some time ago, one of the warm-

est people I know, Sanjay Dutt," along with some candid photos of the two of them. "So good to see all the love coming your way for 'Dhurandhar,'" he continued. Both your aura and people's admiration for you are constant across all eras. Very well-deserved. I'm always cheering you on." The Aam Aadmi Party's deputy leader in the Rajya Sabha,

Arjun Rampal, R Madhavan, and other actors make up the ensemble cast of the Dhurandhar franchise. In order to exact retribution for the 26/11 attacks, an undercover Indian intelligence operative infiltrates Karachi's political and criminal networks in the first installment of the franchise. It made over Rs 1,300 crore worldwide at the box office. The momentum has been maintained after the release of its sequel, Dhurandhar: The Revenge, on March 19. According to reports, the movie has already made over Rs 1,400 crore worldwide and over Rs 900 crore domestically, surpassing the first part's lifetime total in just one week. In addition to continuing the narrative of Hamza's ascent inside Lyari's political structure, the sequel explores Ranveer Singh's past and his path into espionage.

It never occurred to Mrunal Thakur that she could be friends with girls



Mumbai: Actor Mrunal Thakur is eager for her next movie, Dacoit, to come out. Mrunal talked candidly about her life and profession during a lengthy interview with Ranveer Allahbadia on his podcast. She also talked about how she and Tamannaah Bhatia had developed a tight friendship within the profession. Mrunal stated, "Tamannaah is the purest," in reference to Tamannaah. She is the greatest, and she has my heart. I get so much strength from that wom-

an. "Relax, have fun, enjoy life," she says all the time. In a sense, it resembles a sisterhood. Growing up, I always believed that I could never be friends with girls, therefore it's incredibly good to have a lady as your best friend. There were always five lads and one girl, and I was the girl. However, I've just begun to truly appreciate friendships with women. It's lovely," she remarked. "It is just encouraging each other, having fun, enjoying life, and celebrating yourself,"

she continued. Whenever they need us, we make sure to be there for one another. With her, I can be really honest. I can say anything, like, "Yaar, this happened," and she would always find a way to solve the problem. We became behens (sisters) after meeting on a flight to Hyderabad. Mrunal Thakur and Tamannaah Bhatia starred in the 2023 Netflix anthology film Lust Stories 2.

They starred in separate anthology pieces even though they were a mem-

ber of the same ensemble effort. Tamannaah gave a tribute to her close pals in the film industry on Friendship Day last year. To celebrate Friendship Day, she posted photos of herself with fellow female actors Rasha Tadhani, Kajal Aggarwal, and Mrunal Thakur. "Friendships between adults are the finest! In a video that was uploaded to her Instagram account, she said, "Every friend I talk to feels like... every phone call ends with a "I love you," every phone call is about attending to how you are feeling and it's such a myth that your best friends are in your school and college. But I think adult friendships are the best." Regarding his career, Mrunal starred alongside Siddhant Chaturvedi in Do Deewane Seher Mein. At the box office, the movie did poorly. Her next film is Dacoit, in which she co-stars with Anurag Kashyap and Adivi Sesh. On April 10, the movie is scheduled to open in theaters.

After being teased for ignoring him, Rajpal Yadav stands up for Wamiqa Gabbi

Mumbai: Rajpal Yadav, a Bollywood actor, is working hard to promote his next movie, Bhooth Bangla. Some social media users claimed that Wamiqa Gabbi had "ignored" him after a few of the promotional films went viral recently. Backlash against Wamiqa was sparked by the videos. Rajpal has now responded to the matter. Rajpal refuted the rumors in an interview with Zoom, explaining that it was just a case of miscommunication and camera angles. "It happens that from one camera angle it looks like I'm doing something with someone else, and that poor girl is doing something with someone else, but the camera makes it look completely different," he remarked. "There are three girls standing there and hum log jaise scene nahi banate in a video with Akki (Akshay Kumar) paaji," he continued. You stand there, I'll stand here, and the girls will stand in between, just like when we put up a scene. However, it won't be an issue if others find that amusing as well. Honestly, we've had enough of laughing at Wamiqa, Akki Paaji, and everything else. Rajpal added that there is no formality left between the cast members because they have such a comfortable bond. He acknowledged, though, that someone seeing from a distance would see things differently. He added that he has never felt overlooked in his 25-year career. Rajpal Yadav, Akshay Kumar, Ektaa Kapoor, and Wamiqa Gabbi were seen advertising Bhooth Bangla in one of the most shared videos. While Rajpal seemed to be adjusting his hair, Wamiqa was seen in the video moving swiftly in the direction of Ektaa. However, a lot of people on social media concluded that Rajpal thought Wamiqa was going to give him a hug. When she turned to face Ektaa instead, he tried to hide his shame by arranging his hair. In addition to Paresh Rawal, Rajpal Yadav, Wamiqa Gabbi, Tabu, and other important parts, Akshay Kumar plays the lead in Priyadarshan's horror-comedy. Reactions to the movie's trailer, which debuted on April 6, were divided. Some fans were pleased to see Akshay in his signature humorous style again, but others were dissatisfied with the visual effects and the recycling of well-known material.

Aditya Dhar's production company is being sued by Trimurti Films for using the Tirchi Topiwale song



Mumbai: The usage of an old song in Dhurandhar The Revenge has sparked criticism, despite the movie's continued success at the box office. According to Bar & Bench, Bollywood production company Trimurti Films has sued filmmaker Aditya Dhar's production business, B62 Studios, for allegedly using the song Tirchi Topiwale without permission. Anand Bakshi wrote the words to the song, which Kalyan-Anand originally co-composed. The movie Tridev from 1989 included it. Amit Kumar and Sapna Mukerji sang it. According to Trimurti Films, the song or a similar version was utilized in the defendant's movie without the neces-

sary licenses or authorization. According to sources, Trimurti has claimed ownership and/or management of the pertinent rights in the sound recording and the musical composition, the report continued. The production company has claimed that the use, which includes unapproved copying and public dissemination of the work, constitutes copyright infringement. The song is used in part in the movie Rang De Lal, which also has new lyrics and vocals. Shashwat Sachdev is the composer and mixer of the new song. In addition to damages and other related reliefs, the lawsuit seeks an injunction to prevent future use of the music. Concerns

regarding the song's possible economic exploitation through its theatrical release, streaming services, and promotional materials have also been voiced by Trimurti. The genesis narrative of Ranveer Singh's character, Jaskirat Singh Rangji, is revealed in the spy action thriller, along with the reasons behind his transformation into the spy Hamza Ali Mazari. In carrying out his quest to destroy the terror network in Pakistan, it also depicts how Hamza ascends through the ranks of Lyari's underworld and political structure to become a kingpin. In the first movie, Ranveer Singh played an Indian spy who climbs the ranks of Pakistan's underworld while infiltrating gangs in Lyari to destroy a terror network that targets India. Along with Danish Pandor, Udaybir Sandhu, and other important actors, the film also has Arjun Rampal, R Madhavan, Sanjay Dutt, Rakesh Bedi, and Sara Arjun in prominent parts. Actor Yami Gautam, the wife of Aditya Dhar, also makes a brief appearance. At the Indian box office, it has made over ₹1000 crore.

On Jaya Bachchan's 78th birthday, Kajol gives her hugs and kisses



Mumbai: On Thursday, veteran actress Jaya Bachchan became one year older. Kajol wished the politician and actor a happy birthday on social media. Kajol posted a rare picture of the two women to the Stories section of her official Instagram ac-

count. The Maa actress wrote on the photo-sharing app, wishing Jaya Bachchan many hugs and kisses. "Happy birthday to this gorgeous woman! Kisses & hugs. The candid photo that Kajol shared is probably from the Durga Puja festivities that the Kuch Kuch Hota Hai actress and her family hosted last year. Jaya Bachchan and Kajol were both wearing gorgeous sarees in the picture. In a candid image, they were seen grinning as Kajol tenderly clutched the seasoned actress's hand. The two actresses' strong friendship is evident in the picture. It should be mentioned that Kajol and Jaya Bachchan get along well and are frequently spotted giving each other the warmest greetings whenever they go out in public together. They are often spotted together during Mumbai's Durga Puja celebrations. For those who are unaware, Jaya Bachchan and Kajol

co-starred in Karan Johar's popular film Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham. Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan, Hrithik Roshan, and Kareena Kapoor play important roles in the ensemble cast of the drama, which is supported by Yash Johar. Rani Mukerji also makes a special appearance. Jaya Bachchan, one of the most well-known actresses of her era, rose to fame with Guddi and went on to play some iconic parts in films like Sholay, Mili, and Abhimaan, to mention a few. After getting married to Bollywood icon Amitabh Bachchan, she took a hiatus from acting. She did, however, return with some stronger performances in Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham and Fiza. The last time Jaya Bachchan appeared on screen was in Karan Johar's Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani, which also starred Alia Bhatt and Ranveer Singh.

After being teased for ignoring him, Rajpal Yadav stands up for Wamiqa Gabbi

Mumbai: Rajpal Yadav, a Bollywood actor, is working hard to promote his next movie, Bhooth Bangla. Some social media users claimed that Wamiqa Gabbi had "ignored" him after a few of the promotional films went viral recently. Backlash against Wamiqa was sparked by the videos. Rajpal has now responded to the matter. Rajpal refuted the rumors in an interview with Zoom, explaining that it was just a case of miscommunication and camera angles. "It happens that from one camera angle it looks like I'm doing something with someone else, and that poor girl is doing something with someone else, but the camera makes it look completely different," he remarked. "There are three girls standing there and hum log jaise scene nahi banate in a video with Akki (Akshay Kumar) paaji," he continued. You stand there, I'll stand here, and the girls will stand in between, just like when we put up a scene. However, it won't be an issue if others find that amusing as well. Honestly, we've had enough of laughing at Wamiqa, Akki Paaji, and everything else. Rajpal added that there is no formality left between the cast members because they have such a comfortable bond. He acknowledged, though, that someone seeing from a distance would see things differently. He added that he has never felt overlooked in his 25-year career. Rajpal Yadav, Akshay Kumar, Ektaa Kapoor, and Wamiqa Gabbi were seen advertising Bhooth Bangla in one of the most shared videos. While Rajpal seemed to be adjusting his hair, Wamiqa was seen in the video moving swiftly in the direction of Ektaa.

After China and the US, India has the third-highest capacity for renewable energy



New Delhi, Apr 09: According to Renewable Energy Statistics 2026, India is third in the world in terms of installed capacity for renewable energy, behind China and the United States, Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy Pralhad Joshi stated on Wednesday.India has surpassed Brazil in the rank-

ing, according to Joshi. The figures as of December 2025 were made public by the International Renewable Energy Agency. He said that during the Financial Year (FY) 2025–2026, India added 55.3 GW of non-fossil capacity. At 2,258.02 GW, China has the largest capacity for renewable energy, followed

by the US at 467.92 GW and India at 250.52 GW. Following India are Brazil (228.20 GW) and Germany (199.92 GW).

The minister also emphasized that India achieved its highest-ever percentage of renewable energy in the production of power in July 2025. According to him, 51.5% of the nation’s 203 GW of electricity demand was satisfied by renewable sources. According to Joshi, India generated 1,845.921 BU of electricity overall in 2025–2026 (as of March 2026). In 2025–2026, non-fossil fuels accounted for 29.2% of total generation (538.97 BU). Five years ahead of the 2030 target set under its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the Paris Agreement, In-

dia reached the milestone of 50% of its cumulative installed capacity of electric power coming from non-fossil fuel sources in June 2025. Joshi continued, “The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy is striving to achieve 500 GW of installed electricity capacity from non-fossil sources by 2030 in accordance with the Prime Minister’s announcement at COP26.”The nation had installed 283.46 GW of capacity from non-fossil fuel sources as of March 31. This comprises 8.78 GW of nuclear power capacity and 274.68 GW of renewable energy (150.26 GW solar power, 56.09 GW wind power, 11.75 GW biofuel, 5.17 GW small hydropower, and 51.41 GW large hydropower).

Sanjay Bhandari’s appeal against the label of “Fugitive Offender” is dismissed by the Delhi High Court

New Delhi, Apr 09: ON THURSDAY, PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi called on all MPs to support the proposed changes to the Women Reservation Act, saying that they are not just a legislative exercise but also a reflection promoting unity and respect for democratic values as essential for national progress. Sanjay Bhandari, a UK-based guns trader, filed a challenge challenging a trial court’s declaration that he was a fugitive economic offender (FEO), but the Delhi High Court rejected it on Thursday.On July 5, 2025, the trial court designated Bhandari as FEO in the Enforcement Directorate (ED)-initiated proceedings. Due to this development, the investigating agency was able to seize his properties anywhere in the world and prevent him from initiating or defending any civil lawsuits in India. The court determined that the FEO tag constituted an additional means of forcing Bhandari to return to India through property confiscation and attachment. Bhandari claimed in his high court appeal that the ED’s request to designate him as FEO was “premature” because it was submitted without a final assessment order (AO) verifying that the accused tax evasion surpassed ₹100 crore.It further stated that the Income Tax (IT) department’s July 2019 letter, which claimed that the proceeds of crime exceeded ₹100 crore, was the only document that served as the foundation for the application and that the probe agency lacked relevant evidence at the time of starting the proceedings. The petition claimed that because he was arrested and granted bail in 2018, the non-bailable warrants issued against him in proceedings started by the IT department under the Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets)

and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015, had already been executed, making him ineligible for FEO.In opposition to the plea, the ED’s attorneys, additional solicitor general SV Raju and special counsel Zoheb Hossain, said that the agency had enough proof that UK-based arms trader Bhandari had evaded taxes totaling more than ₹100 crore, and they started the process of declaring him a FEO. The law officer also argued that starting the process of declaring someone a fugitive did not require the final AO verifying such tax evasion. The agency’s attorney had argued that the 2020 AO, which documented ₹196 crore in undeclared income and tax evasion, corroborated the trial court’s ruling.In addition to the ED, Bhandari is being investigated for money laundering, foreign exchange violations, and black money laws by a number of authorities, including the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the IT department, and Delhi Police. Bhandari is also being looked into under the Official Secrets Act since he has access to confidential defense documents. The complaint from the IT department led to the money laundering charges. Two houses in London and a few land parcels in India are at the center of the ED’s investigation into Bhandari, which also involves Robert Vadra, the son-in-law of Congress leader Sonia Gandhi. Additionally, he has been the subject of a CBI investigation since 2019 due to allegations of corruption in a ₹2,985-crore deal in 2009 to purchase 75 PC-7 trainer aircraft from Swiss aircraft manufacturer Pilatus Aircraft, as well as alleged money laundering for properties allegedly connected to Vadra in London, where NRI businessman C C Thampi was detained by the ED in January 2020.

Gujarat Titans captain faces harsh punishment from the BCCI

New Delhi: Gujarat Titans skipper Shubman Gill was fined ₹12 lakh by the BCCI for maintaining a sluggish over rate, despite his team’s valiant victory over the Delhi Capitals last night in the 2026 Indian Premier League. Gill’s first infraction of the season, along with Shreyas Iyer’s two rule violations and Abhishek Sharma’s outburst at the umpire. This season’s first thrilling final over was produced by the Gujarat Titans, and captain Gill displayed remarkable poise under duress. Gill resorted to his Prasidh Krishna when he needed 13 to win the final over. A few days prior, Krishna had surprised everyone by entering the game as an Impact Player and helping his team win. Prasadh’s anxiety was elevated, nevertheless, since he made sure that DC failed to meet the goal in spite of the presence of the highly effective David Miller. “After his team maintained a slow over-rate during Match No. 14 of the TATA Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 against Delhi Capitals (DC) at Arun Jaitley Stadium, Delhi, Gujarat Titans (GT) Captain Shubman Gill has been fined,” the IPL said in a statement.Gill was fined INR 12 lakhs because this was his team’s first offense of the season under Article 2.22 of the IPL’s Code of Conduct, which deals with minimum over-rate offenses. Gill’s sentence will be doubled if this happens again. Ask Iyer, please. Gill also faces the possibility of a one-match suspension if he violates the regulations a third time. In terms of the game, Miller’s choice to deny Kuldeep Yadav a single on the penultimate ball of the match sparked much discussion, and the Titans narrowly avoided defeat by the Capitals



by only one run. The equation was reduced to two needed off two balls when Miller hit a six. On the subsequent ball, though, he declined to give the strike to Kuldeep, who is, incidentally, quite skilled with the bat. Miller ultimately paid the price for the choice when Kuldeep was run out on the final ball of the game, preventing Delhi from winning for the third time in a row. Gill led the Titans in scoring with 70 off 45 balls, including five sixes and four fours. Jos Buttler and Washington Sundar, who both scored 50 to help the Titans reach a commanding total of 210/4, provided him with excellent support.

With captain KL Rahul leading from the front and scoring an incredible 92, the Capitals got off to a strong start in the pursuit. Rahul had created the stage for DC to smash the target, therefore it was unfortunate that he missed out on a century.

The cabinet approves two hydro projects in Arunachal and Jaipur Metro Phase 2

New Delhi, Apr 09: At a post-meeting media conference, Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw stated that the Jaipur Metro Phase-2 project, a 41-kilometer North-South line from Prahladpura to Todi Mod, was approved by the Union Cabinet, which is chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The project will cost ₹13,037.66 crore. It is anticipated that Rajasthan Metro Rail Corporation Limited (RMRCCL) will complete the 50:50 center-state joint venture by September 2031.

Because of its close proximity to New Delhi, Jaipur has become a significant hub for tourism, conferences, healthcare, and education. Phase 2 is being pursued with all of these considerations in mind,” Vaishnaw stated.

The corridor, which would connect busy locations including Sitapura Industrial Area, VKIA, Tonk Road, SMS Hospital, Stadium, Ambabari, and Vidhyadhar Nagar, will span 36 stations, 34 of which will be elevated and two of which will be underground. Flyers will have easier access thanks to underground stations close to Jaipur Airport. Through interchanges and feeder services, the corridor



will link with the 11.64-kilometer Phase-1 East-West line that runs from Mansarovar to Badi Chaupar. Currently, Phase-1 records about 60,000 cyclists every day. Phase 2 is anticipated to increase the use of public transportation and serve a population that is predicted to expand to one crore in the upcoming years. “A significant infrastructure development is planned for Jaipur.

An important step toward sustainable urban expansion is the cabinet’s approval of Jaipur Metro Phase-2. In a post on X, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated, “It will increase connectivity, lessen traffic, and improve ease of living.”According to a PIB announcement, the project intends to lessen

emissions and traffic congestion in the Jaipur metropolitan area in accordance with Rajasthan’s transit-oriented development (TOD) policy-2025. By 2055, the project is anticipated to reduce the number of automobiles on the road by an estimated 2.4 lakh.

The project has a good socio-economic viability, with an Economic Internal Rate of Return (EIRR) above the 14% criterion, according to the announcement. According to the Metro Rail Policy, 2017, it will be financed by multilateral financing, subordinate loans, and equity support from the state and the federal government.

Two significant hydroelectric projects in Arunachal Pradesh were

approved by the Cabinet in another significant decision.

It is anticipated that the 1,720 MW Kamala Hydro Electric Project, which will be built on the Subansiri River at a cost of ₹26,070 crore, will be finished in 96 months and produce about 6,870 million units of renewable energy per year. “This 1720 MW project will not only enhance India’s energy security but also drive infrastructure development, create jobs, and improve livelihoods across Arunachal Pradesh, especially in remote district,” wrote Pema Khandu, the chief minister of Arunachal, on X. With a ₹14,106 crore investment, the 1,200 MW Kalai-II Hydro Electric Project will be built in the Anjaw district’s Lohit basin and is anticipated to be finished in 78 months, producing roughly 4,853 million units annually.

“This project on the Lohit river, with a capacity of 1200 MW, will strengthen power supply, support grid stability, and bring infrastructure, employment, and development to the region,” Khandu added in another post.The state government and THDC India Limited would collaborate to carry out both projects.

Sunil Gavaskar explains why the 1-run loss shouldn’t be attributed on David Miller

New Delhi: David Miller was about to become the Delhi Capitals’ hero. After KL Rahul’s 92-run knock, the discussion had moved on. With his late assault, the Protea batsman had become the main character, lowering the equation from 45 required off the last three overs to two off two. However, a terrifying turn of events in the last two deliveries led to criticism that portrayed Miller as the antagonist. Miller sent a shorter, angled-in ball from Prasadh Krishna toward deep square leg on the penultimate delivery. Kuldeep Yadav was halfway down the pitch and poised for a single. Miller, however, sent him back.He trusted his gut to lead Delhi to victory after scoring 41 not out off 19 balls, including three sixes and three boundaries. But Krishna’s slower delivery on the last ball tricked Miller. This time, he opted for the single after failing to connect, which may have only resulted in a Super Over. However, the home squad suffered misery as Kuldeep was stopped inches short of the crease. Miller’s no-single call was widely criticized after that, although Sunil Gavaskar defended him. He acknowledged that, looking back, it could have



been better to take the single, but he respected Miller’s choice to back himself considering his current form.Gavaskar stated, “Yes, he was backing himself to hit the winning runs, but maybe he should have given Kuldeep the strike after seeing how Kuldeep Yadav nudged that ball for a single off the first ball.” “This is all post-event wisdom, but the truth is that he thought he could win based on the manner he had been hitting in both the previ-

ous over and this one. You can’t blame him for that, then. Prasadh Krishna’s delivery was excellent. Kevin Pietersen, a fellow analyst, believed that Miller’s decision to keep strike was affected by his perception of danger in taking the single and placing Kuldeep on strike for the last ball.”I believe he thought he would at least receive one after the previous delivery. And because he is so skilled, he may cross the line if there isn’t one.

That’s where his thoughts would have been. Would he wish to put Kuldeep in danger? Pietersen remarked. He thought he wouldn’t miss the last ball, but they could have knotted the game and forced a Super Over. He was at that location. Despite the rumors, Miller received support from captain Axar Patel and a number of Gujarat Titans players who had previously shared a dressing room with him shortly after the game.

David Miller and KL Rahul have the highest averages on the IPL Chase batting charts

New Delhi: Out of the 231 batters who have batted at least ten times in IPL chases, Delhi Capitals (DC) top batsmen David Miller and KL Rahul have the highest average while chasing. Rahul has amassed 2,636 runs in 66 innings at 47.92 with a strike rate of 138.22, including 25 fifties, while Miller has scored 1,816 runs in 67 innings at an outstanding average of 49.08 with a strike rate of 142.54, including 12 fifties and a century.

The core of DC’s batting strategy in the 2026 Indian Premier League is the batting heavyweights. At the Arun Jaitley Stadium on Wednesday, DC lost its opening IPL 2026 encounter to Gujarat Titans (GT) by just one run, despite Rahul’s incredible 92 and Miller’s heroic effort.DC chose to bowl first, and GT was reduced to 210/4 thanks to hits from Washington Sund-

ar (55 in 32 balls, with six fours and two sixes), Jos Buttler (52 in 27 balls, with three fours and five sixes), and Shubman Gill (70 in 45 balls, with four boundaries and five sixes). Pathum Nissanka (41 in 24 balls, with six fours and a six), Miller (41* in 20 balls, with three fours and three sixes), and Rahul’s incredible 92 in 52 balls, laced with eleven fours and four sixes, brought Delhi close.The Titans defeated the Delhi Capitals by only one run in a thrilling IPL 2026 match. Miller missed Prasadh Krishna’s penultimate delivery, which needed two runs, and GT wicketkeeper Jos Buttler’s superb direct shot dismissed Kuldeep Yadav as he tried a desperate single, giving GT a thrilling victory. With two victories and one loss, DC is now in fourth place on the table after this game, while GT is in sixth place with one win and two losses.

PM Modi Demands Support for the Women’s Reservation Bill

New Delhi, Apr 09: On Thursday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called on all MPs to support the proposed changes to the Women Reservation Act, saying that they are not just a legislative exercise but also a reflection of the aspirations of crores of Indian women.The prime minister said that the action is a confirmation of a long-standing tenet of India’s civilizational ethos—that society advances when women advance—in a signed piece published on his website narendramodi.in.According to him, it is essential that women’s reservations be implemented for the 2029 Lok Sabha elections as well as the upcoming state Assembly elections. According to the prime minister, the country is on the verge of a momentous occasion that offers a chance to strengthen the country’s democratic foundations and reaffirm our shared commitment to equality and inclusion.He stated that Parliament will meet on April 16 to debate and approve a significant bill that advances women’s reservation.It would be an understatement to say that this is just a legislative exercise. “It reflects the aspirations of millions of Indian women,” he stated. In order to revise the “Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam,” also known as the Women Reservation Act, for its implementation starting with the 2029 general elections, the Budget Session of Parliament has been prolonged, and a special three-day sitting of the House has been called for April 16–18.It will guarantee that there be 816 Lok Sabha seats, 273 of which will be set aside for women. The Constitution was amended in 2023 to allow women a 33 percent reservation in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies. However, this provision will not take effect until the delimitation process based on the 2027 Census is finished. Therefore, assuming the current law stays in place, it is anticipated that it will only take effect in 2034.The number of Lok Sabha seats would rise from the current 543 to 816, with 273 seats set aside for women, according to the broad contours that are now accessible. Additionally, seats will be reserved on a “vertical basis” for SCs and STs. The redrawing of constituencies will occur based on the 2011 Census rather than the proposed 2027 Census, with similar adjustments to state assemblies for seat reservations on a pro-rata basis. Prime Minister Modi emphasized women’s significant role in India’s population and their invaluable contributions across various sectors. He noted the government’s ongoing efforts to empower women through improved access to education, healthcare, and financial services, while acknowledging the gap in their representation in politics compared to societal contributions. Despite past attempts by previous administrations to enhance women’s roles in democracy, the ‘Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam’ was recently passed in September 2023 to address this issue.

Ravi Shastri's historic single saved India in the iconic tied Test against Australia

New Delhi: David Miller's decision not to take a single against Gujarat Titans led to Delhi Capitals losing by one run on Wednesday in their IPL 2026 clash at the Arun Jaitley Stadium. His call has sparked a debate over whether he should have taken the single, bringing back memories of the iconic tied Test between India and Australia in 1986 at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai. On Day 5, with India needing two runs to win and one wicket in hand in a chase of 348, all three results were still possible. Ravi Shastri tapped off-spinner Greg Matthews to the leg side for a single, handing Maninder Singh the strike. But Matthews trapped Maninder lbw for a duck as India failed to get over the line.

Shastri remained stranded at the non-striker's end on an unbeaten 48 off 40 balls. It was only the second tied Test in cricket history, with the Australia vs West Indies Test in Brisbane in 1960 being the first. Shastri's single did not help India win, but it ensured they did not lose. Had India been beaten, they would have gone 0-1 down in the three-match series. In contrast, had Miller taken the single, he could at least have ensured that Delhi Capitals did not lose within the stipulated 40 overs. Instead, Miller backed himself to score two off the final ball, a gam-



ble that did not pay off for him or DC. Even if Kuldeep Yadav had failed to score off the last delivery, DC would still have had a chance to make amends in the Super Over. On the same day that David Miller failed to steer Delhi Capitals home, a strikingly similar situation played out in the Pakistan Super League (PSL), but with a very different outcome. In the clash between Hyderabad Kingsmen and Peshawar Zalmi at the National Stadium in Karachi on Wednesday, Iftikhar Ahmed found himself in an almost identical scenario, with Zalmi needing two runs off the last two balls. Unlike Miller, Iftikhar wisely took the single, allowing Aamer Jamal to finish the chase with another run and seal a four-wicket win for

Zalmi. Iftikhar was later named Player of the Match for his all-round display, having scored a crucial 15 runs and claimed four wickets. Miller will look to make amends when Delhi Capitals take on Rituraj Gaikwad's Chennai Super Kings on Saturday, April 11, at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai. David Miller 's decision to refuse a single on the penultimate ball of the match is widely seen as the decisive moment that cost Delhi Capitals (DC) the game against Gujarat Titans (GT). Needing two runs from the final two deliveries, Miller chose to retain the strike rather than let Kuldeep Yadav attempt to level the scores, which would have at least secured a Super Over. The decision has sparked sig-

nificant debate, with Sunil Gavaskar defending Miller's confidence while noting that a single might have been the wiser tactical choice. Former player Kevin Pietersen suggested that Miller likely viewed a single as too high a risk for losing the match outright. Ultimately, Miller failed to connect with the final delivery from Prasidh Krishna, and Kuldeep was run out attempting a bye, resulting in a one-run victory for GT.

The match at Arun Jaitley Stadium also featured a standout performance from KL Rahul, who scored 92 runs, and a clinical bowling spell of 3 for 17 by Rashid Khan. Despite Miller's heroic unbeaten 41 off 19 balls, DC fell just short of the 211-run target. Axar Patel later consoled a distraught Miller, who was seen throwing his bat in frustration after the final ball. During a high-stakes IPL 2026 match between Delhi Capitals and Gujarat Titans, Sunil Gavaskar addressed David Miller 's decision to refuse a single on the penultimate ball of the final over. Miller, who had been in aggressive form, opted to retain the strike with two runs needed off two balls, a move that ultimately resulted in a one-run victory for Gujarat. Sunil Gavaskar said that while Miller was backing himself to hit the winning runs, he probably should have given Kuldeep.

Axar Patel consoles Miller as Capitals lose a thriller against Gujarat Titans



New Delhi: Captain Axar Patel consoled a visibly distraught David Miller after Delhi Capitals fell one run short against Gujarat Titans in a last-over thriller in IPL 2026 on Wednesday. Miller, who remained unbeaten on 41 off 19 balls, took DC to the brink of victory but was left frustrated at the finish. The South African appeared emotional after the final ball, throwing his bat away as the result sank in. Chasing 211, Delhi Capitals ended on 209 for 8, with the game turning on a crucial decision in the

final over bowled by Prasidh Krishna. With two runs required off the last two balls, Miller declined a single, choosing to retain strike rather than give Kuldeep Yadav the opportunity to complete the chase. Prasidh followed up with a slower delivery that Miller failed to connect. Wicketkeeper Jos Buttler, who had taken off one glove, collected the ball and effected a run-out at the striker's end with an underarm throw, catching Kuldeep short. A single at that stage would have levelled the scores and

forced a Super Over. Gujarat Titans thus sealed their first win of the season, holding their nerve to clinch a one-run victory off the final delivery. Earlier, Gujarat Titans posted 210 for 4 after being put in to bat. Shubman Gill led the effort with 70 off 45 balls, while Washington Sundar (55 off 32) and Buttler (52 off 27) also scored half-centuries. Lungi Ngidi was the pick of the bowlers for DC, returning 1 for 24. Delhi Capitals made a strong start in the chase, with Pathum Nissanka.

Blue Tigers Set For Historic Return To United Kingdom For Unity Cup 2026

New Delhi: The Indian men's football team will participate in the Unity Cup 2026, to be held in London from May 26 to 30. The four-nation friendly tournament will feature India, Nigeria, Jamaica and Zimbabwe, and will be played at The Valley, home of Charlton Athletic FC, as per the AIFF website. India will face Jamaica in the second semi-final on May 27, with kick-off scheduled at 19:30 BST (00:00 IST, May 28). The first semi-final between Nigeria and Zimbabwe will be played on May 26.

The winners of the semi-finals will advance to the final on May 30, while the remaining teams will contest the third-place play-off. This will mark the Blue Tigers' return to the United Kingdom for international matches after 24 years. Historically, when India last played in the UK in 2002, it was against Jamaica in two friendly matches, registering a 0-3 defeat in Watford and a goalless draw in Wolverhampton. India have never faced Nigeria and Zimbabwe before. AIFF Deputy Secretary General M Satyanarayan said, "We, at the All India Football Federation, are delighted that the Indian men's national team will be returning to



the United Kingdom after 24 years, and it is particularly special for us to participate in an international football tournament in the UK for the very first time.

This tournament presents a valuable opportunity for the Indian team to compete against strong and respected opponents such as Nigeria, Jamaica, and Zimbabwe. Facing teams with rich footballing histories, including those that have participated in FIFA World Cups and have consistently been among the leading sides in their respective continents, will provide our players with important exposure and experience as we continue to build for the future," he added. Opportunities to compete against such quality opposition are rare, and we are committed to making the most of this platform to test ourselves, learn, and continue our de-

velopment at the international level. "Representing Manchester United is the ultimate honour. It is a responsibility that makes myself and my family proud every single day," Maguire said. "I am delighted to extend my journey at this incredible club to at least eight seasons and continue to play in front of our special supporters to create more amazing moments together." Maguire's tenure at Old Trafford has not been without turbulence. Appointed captain by Ole Gunnar Solskjaer just five months after his arrival, he remained a regular despite criticism during spells under both Solskjaer and his successor, Ralf Rangnick. In April 2022, Cheshire Police searched Maguire's home following a bomb threat. His standing at the club later declined under Erik ten Hag, who stripped him of the captaincy 2023.

Gujarat Titans Captain Shubman Gill Fined For Slow Over Rate Against Delhi Capitals

Shubman Gill Fined Following Titans' Thrilling One-Run Victory

New Delhi: Shubman Gill has been penalised after the Gujarat Titans maintained a slow over rate in the IPL 2026 match against Delhi Capitals on Wednesday, April 8 at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi. As this was his team's first over-rate offence of the season under Article 2.22 of the IPL Code of Conduct, Gill was fined INR 12 lakh. "Gujarat Titans (GT) Captain Shubman Gill has been fined after his team maintained a slow over-rate during Match No. 14 of the TATA Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 against Delhi Capitals (DC) at Arun Jaitley Stadium, Delhi," said an IPL media advisory.

As this was his team's first offence of the season under Article 2.22 of the IPL's Code of Conduct, which pertains to minimum over-rate offences, Gill was fined INR 12 lakh," it added. Gill became the second captain to be fined this season after Punjab Kings skipper Shreyas Iyer, who has already been penalised twice for the same over-rate offence. Gill also led from



the front with a 45-ball 70, hitting four fours and five sixes, as the Titans edged the Capitals by one run. As per the IPL Code of Conduct, teams must complete their bowling innings within 90 minutes. For a first over-rate offence, only the captain is fined Rs 12 lakh. For a second offence, the captain is fined Rs 24 lakh, while the rest of the playing XI are penalised Rs 6 lakh or 25 per cent of their match fee, whichever is lower.

For a third and every subsequent offence in a season, the captain is fined Rs

30 lakh, while the rest of the playing XI are fined the lesser of Rs 12 lakh or 50 per cent of their match fee. The Titans beat the Capitals by one run to register their maiden win of the tournament. Gill brought up a 33-ball fifty to lay the platform for the Titans, who went on to set the Capitals a daunting target of 211.

The Titans held their nerve as Prasidh Krishna successfully defended 13 runs in the final over. Kuldeep Yadav was run out at the striker's end as the Titans had the last laugh. David Miller had a

momentary lapse in judgement, turning down a single off the penultimate delivery from Prasidh Krishna before missing the final ball. GT will look to build on the win when they face Lucknow Super Giants next on Sunday, April 12 at the Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow. Not coming to terms with it was something I was going through because, as a sportsman, you can't be sick. You're supposed to play for India. But eventually, I kept getting sicker and sicker while still

playing cricket," Yuvraj said in a conversation with Michael Vaughan on The Overlap podcast on YouTube.

He explained how athletes are conditioned to ignore such signs. "As a sportsman, you don't think about being sick. You're supposed to play for India." He said to me, 'Mate, I've looked at your scans. The tumour is sitting between your heart and lung, right on the pipe. Either you go and play cricket, or you might have a heart attack. I think you've got three to six months left if you don't do chemotherapy.'" That moment forced him to take a step back and reassess. "That's when I realised I really needed to think about what I had to do. It wasn't easy because I run a cancer foundation that focuses on early detection, and here I was, not coming to terms with what I was going through," he said. Yuvraj travelled abroad for treatment and underwent chemotherapy in the United States during 2011-12. It was a physically and mentally exhausting period, but it also gave him a new perspective.

Inspired by Harmanpreet Kaur, Niki Prasad pursues her own cricket World Cup dream

New Delhi: For Niki Prasad, Harmanpreet Kaur has always been a hero. And why not? For a young captain in India, there is perhaps no bigger inspiration in women's cricket than Harmanpreet. Last year, she etched her name in history by becoming the first Indian woman to win a senior ICC title, a moment that inspired an entire generation. Niki, too, already has silverware to her name, having led India to the U19 Women's T20 World Cup title last year. Just last month, she shared the stage with her idol at the BCCI Naman Awards, where both were felicitated.

But Niki is far from satisfied. With U19 glory behind her, her ambitions have only grown bigger, she now has her eyes firmly set on winning a senior title for India. "I think her winning the World Cup for India made all of us



feel extremely proud. It also inspired a lot of youngsters like me. One day, I would love to do the same for India, to be able to lift the trophy myself," Niki told India Today in an interaction facilitated by JSW Sports. With the U19 World Cup triumph already behind her, Niki has

come a long way in a short span. Having already spent two seasons with the Delhi Capitals in the Women's Premier League, she has gained valuable experience sharing the dressing room with some of the biggest names in the game. Niki's growth was evident in the recent Women's

U23 One-Day Trophy as well. In eight matches, she scored 328 runs at an average of 46.86 and a strike-rate of 112.71.

Her standout performance came against Chhattisgarh, when she smashed a superb 123 off just 91 balls. For Niki, though, the ultimate

R Vaishali Defeats Divya Deshmukh To Share Candidates Lead With Jiner Zhu



New Delhi: India's R Vaishali kept herself firmly in contention for the title after defeating compatriot Divya Deshmukh in Round 9 of the Women's Candidates Chess Tournament on Wednesday, drawing level with China's Jiner Zhu at the top of the standings.

Coming into the round after what had largely been a steady, unspectacular start, Vaishali once again showed her growing authority in the event. She was patient early on against Divya before gradually tightening her grip on the position, eventually converting her advantage

to move to 5.5 points from eight games. The result ensured she shares the lead with Zhu with five rounds still to be played.

Vaishali has increasingly looked like a contender with each passing round, shifting gears after the opening phase and pushing for wins.

Her victory over Divya not only strengthened her position but also ensured that Indian interest remains very much alive heading into the decisive stages of the tournament. The race at the top, however, remains closely packed. Former leader Anna Muzychuk is just half a point behind after drawing with Zhongyi Tan. Despite the defeat, Divya stays within touching distance on 4.5 points, alongside Kateryna Lagno and Bibisara Assaubayeva, keeping the contest wide open. Zhongyi Tan, a former world champion, continues to struggle for momentum and remains the only player yet to hit top form in the field. In the open section, Anish Giri dealt a significant blow to the chances of pre-tournament favourite Fabiano Caruana, scoring a fine win to move.