

Arunachal Government Outlines Connectivity, Power and Conservation Plans In 2026–27 Budget



Itanagar, Mar 10: The Arunachal Pradesh government has outlined multiple initiatives related to infrastructure development, power generation, mining and environmental conservation in the Budget 2026–27. Breaking News Alerts In

services around the airport. A convention centre along with a 100–150 room hotel has also been proposed at Hollongi. In addition, ₹500 crore has been allocated under the Chief Minister’s State Rural Roads Development Programme to construct rural roads in areas not covered under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). The budget also proposes the creation of a feasibility fund to examine innovative transport solutions. In the power sector, the government has outlined plans to expand hydropower generation in the state. According to the budget, 19 gigawatts of hydropower capacity is planned to be commissioned with investments estimated at ₹1.9 lakh crore.

Construction of three hydropower projects is scheduled to begin during the current financial year. The government has also proposed a power monetisation plan worth ₹4,520 crore for the period from 2025 to 2035. A revised Small Hydro Power Policy is expected to be introduced to attract additional investment in the sector. India Travel Packages Measures have also been proposed to improve electricity distribution and access. The budget aims to achieve 100 percent feeder metering under the Chief Minister’s Comprehensive State Power Development Programme. An allocation of ₹500 crore has been proposed to strengthen last-mile

power connectivity, while ₹70 crore has been earmarked for off-grid electrification in border areas and villages that remain without electricity. The budget further states that the state’s first commercial coal mine is expected to become operational at the Namchick–Namphek Central Coal Block. The project is expected to contribute to resource utilisation and employment generation. Environmental conservation measures have also been included in the budget proposals. The government has notified four new protected areas — Nidak Danyi Wildlife Sanctuary, Lipo Modi Wildlife Sanctuary, Braiduah Community Reserve and Tukpen Community Reserve.

The government also plans to strengthen wildlife protection through the use of GIS mapping, camera traps and drones. A Special Tiger Protection Force is proposed to be recruited for reserves including Pakke Tiger Reserve, Namdapha National Park and Kamlang Tiger Reserve during 2026–27. The budget also proposes to notify Bird and Butterfly Festivals as official calendar events and launch a five-year mission on medicinal and aromatic plants to promote traditional knowledge and develop related value chains. Measures to strengthen village-level biodiversity conservation through community participation and support under CAMPA have also been proposed.

In Brief

MLA Ranjit resigns as Deputy CLP leader

Imphal: In a major political development, senior Congress leader and Sugnu AC MLA K. Ranjit Singh has tendered his resignation from the post of Deputy Leader of the Congress Legislative Party (CLP) in the Manipur Legislative Assembly. Six-time legislator Ranjit formally submitted a resignation letter addressed to Mallikarjun Kharge, requesting to be relieved from the responsibilities of the Deputy CLP leader in the State Assembly. In the letter, Ranjit expressed gratitude to the party leadership for entrusting him with the responsibility.

NEC releases Rs 67.41 cr for projects in North East states

Aizawl, Mar 10: The North Eastern Council (NEC) has released a Rs 67.41 crore in February 2026 to support developmental initiatives across the Northeastern states as well as regional and other implementing agencies. The funding reflects NEC’s continued commitment to strengthening development in the North Eastern Region (NER) through targeted investments in infrastructure, livelihood generation, agricultural innovation, education, tourism promotion, research and cultural initiatives aimed at ensuring balanced regional growth. In addition to the state-specific allocations, NEC also released Rs 30.07 crore to regional institutions and other implementing agencies across the Northeast during the month.

One PREPAK (Pro) cadre nabbed

Imphal: Security forces arrested an active cadre of PREPAK (Pro), identified as Soyam Vicky Meitei alias Hitler alias Yangba (27) of Khurai Thongam Leikai from his residence under Porompat Police Station in Imphal East district. On the other hand, a Ghanian national, namely Konu Mendy Junior (26) was detained at Imphal International Airport along with an expired visa. From his possession, one PAN Card, one Aadhaar Card, one mobile phone, and one passport of the Republic of Ghana were seized. An FIR has been registered for further investigation under the relevant sections of the Foreigners Act. Meanwhile, a total of 115 Nakas/Check points were installed in different districts, both in the hills and the valley, however none was detained.

MLA Ranjit resigns as Deputy CLP leader



Imphal, Mar 10: In a major political development, senior Congress leader and Sugnu AC MLA K. Ranjit Singh has tendered his resignation from the post of Deputy Leader of the Congress Legislative Party (CLP) in the Manipur Legislative Assembly. Six-time legislator Ranjit formally submitted a resignation letter addressed to Mallikarjun Kharge, requesting to be relieved from the responsibilities of the Deputy CLP leader in the State Assembly. In the letter, Ranjit expressed gratitude to the party leadership for entrusting him with the responsibility. “It has been an honour to serve the party and uphold its principles and responsibilities. I am sincerely grateful for the trust and opportunity given to me. I request you to kindly accept my resignation,” he stated. The Congress party had appointed former Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh as its Manipur unit chief, replacing K. Meghachandra. The party appointed Keishampat Meghachandra as the new Congress Legislature Party Leader (CLP) with K. Ranjit Singh as his deputy. Ibobi Singh was the CLP leader. Victor Keishing and Manga Vaiphei have been appointed working presidents. Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge had appointed the president, working presidents, treasurer, leader and deputy leader of the CLP and chairpersons of the election and campaign committee of the Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee. While Md. Fajur Rahim was named treasurer, Th. Lokeshwar Singh was appointed the chairperson of the campaign committee. Moirangthem Okendro was appointed chairperson of the Election Committee. Notably, K Ranjit wa first elected to the 7th Manipur Legislative Assembly on BJP ticket in 2000 and served as Minister of State (Health and Family Welfare and (GAD).

Ex-union minister Biren Sing Engti passes away

Guwahati, Mar 10: Former Union Minister and veteran leader from Karbi Anglong, Biren Sing Engti passed away at a private hospital in Guwahati on Tuesday morning.

A distinguished parliamentarian, 81-year-old Engti had represented the people in the Lok Sabha for five terms, winning elections in 1977, 1984, 2009. He was also a former Chief Executive Member of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC)

In a condolence message, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said, “The passing away of Shri Biren Singh Engti, veteran leader from Karbi Anglong and former Union Minister,



is a great loss for Assam.”

“His years of service to the people and efforts for the development of the hill regions will always be remembered. My heartfelt condolences to him and his family,” Sarma stated.

Beyond his roles in Parliament and the Union Government, Engti’s contribution to the political landscape of Karbi Anglong was profound. “He played an important role in shaping the region’s political discourse and strengthening democratic participation in the hill districts. For many years, he remained one of the most prominent leaders representing the aspirations and identity of the Karbi people,” KAAC

CEM Tuliram Ronghang stated in his condolence message.

“An educated and thoughtful leader, he held a Master’s degree in Political Science and a Law degree from Gauhati University, after completing his undergraduate studies at Nowgong College,” Ronghang stated.

“His passing is a great loss not only to Karbi Anglong but to the wider political life of Assam. His legacy of dedication, service and leadership will continue to inspire future generations. My heartfelt condolences to his family, loved ones, and all those who mourn his loss,” the KAAC CEM stated.

One PREPAK (Pro) cadre nabbed, Ghanian national detained

Imphal, Mar 10: Security forces arrested an active cadre of PREPAK (Pro), identified as Soyam Vicky Meitei alias Hitler alias Yangba (27) of Khurai Thongam Leikai from his residence under Porompat Police Station in Imphal East district. On the other hand, a Ghanian national, namely Konu Mendy Junior (26) was detained at Imphal International Airport along with an expired visa. From his possession, one PAN Card, one Aadhaar Card, one mobile phone, and one passport of the Republic of Ghana were seized. An FIR has been registered for further investigation under the relevant sections of the Foreigners Act. Meanwhile, a total of 115 Nakas/Check points were installed in different districts, both in the hills and the valley,



however none was detained. Movement of 218 vehicles carrying essential items along NH-37 was ensured. Strict security measures were taken up in all vulnerable locations and security convoy was provided in sensitive stretches in order to ensure free and safe movement of the vehicles

Assam’s first Science City inaugurated in Guwahati



Guwahati, Mar 10: Assam today got its first Science City, which promises to be a major educational and entertainment hub.

The ambitious project was inaugurated at Sonapur on the outskirts of Guwahati by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma in the presence of Minister of Science and Technology, Assam, Keshab Mahanta, CEO, of Science City Guwahati Dr Jaideep Baruah, and other dignitaries.

Spread over 82 acres of land, the project has been built at a cost of Rs 300 crore and has features like Eureka and Space Odyssey, among others. “More features like Science Innovation and Science Park will also come up shortly on the premises which will draw more young minds towards scientific thinking,” the Chief Minister said. “It will be one of the best in the country, and is bigger than Kolkata’s Science City,” Sarma added.

Assamese Muslims ‘Have Set Their Mood Politically’, Says Himanta Biswa Sarma

Guwahati, Mar 10: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday said that Assamese Muslims have “set their mood” politically, claiming that many members of the community are now extending support to him and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Addressing the media, Sarma said several people from the Assamese Muslim community have expressed their support by contributing amounts ranging from ₹200 to ₹11,000. According to him, these gestures reflect their growing confidence in his leadership.

The Chief Minister also claimed that Assamese Muslims consider themselves a distinct ethnic community and cultur-

ally different from what he referred to as “Miya Muslims”. He said members of the Assamese Muslim community have spoken about these distinctions in television programmes and public discussions.

Sarma further stated that in the past a large section of Assamese Muslims had supported the Indian National Congress, while many had also voted for the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) during and after the Assam Movement.

However, he claimed that the political inclination of the community has been gradually changing over the years and that the BJP is now gaining their support.

“As far as Assamese Muslims are concerned, they have already set their mood.



Earlier many of them supported the Congress — around 50–60 per cent were there — but now they are moving towards the BJP,” Sarma said.

NEC releases Rs 67.41 cr for projects in North East states in Feb

Aizawl, Mar 10: The North Eastern Council (NEC) has released a Rs 67.41 crore in February 2026 to support developmental initiatives across the Northeastern states as well as regional and other implementing agencies. The funding reflects NEC’s continued commitment to strengthening development in the North Eastern Region (NER) through targeted investments in infrastructure, livelihood generation, agricultural innovation, education, tourism promotion, research and cultural initiatives aimed at ensuring balanced regional growth.

In addition to the state-specific allocations, NEC also released Rs 30.07 crore to regional institutions and other implementing agencies across the Northeast during the month.

Major project interventions include initiatives in sustainable agriculture, entrepreneurship development including AI-based farming, infrastructure creation, sports facilities, tourism promotion, research and innovation, and livelihood enhancement.

The projects are being implemented through leading institutions such as Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati, Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Shillong, North Eastern Space Applications Centre (NESAC), North East Handicrafts and Handlooms Development Corporation (NEHDC), and North East Region Community Resource Management Society (NERCORMS), along with other regional universities and specialized organisations.

NE/EAST

Girijananda Chowdhury University’s EUPHUISM ’26 to feature Joi Barua, cultivators and street stories

Guwahati, Mar 10: Girijananda Chowdhury University will host its Annual Varsity Week EUPHUISM ’26 at its Azara campus in Guwahati from March 11 to 14, bringing together students from across the region for a four-day celebration of culture, music, technology and sports.Centered on the theme “Roots and Resilience,” the festival will feature performances by several prominent artists, including internationally acclaimed Assamese musician Joi Barua, folk-fusion band The Cultivators, and Meghalaya-based indie-punk group Street Stories. Russian DJ DJ Holy C will perform at the grand finale. According to the university, the festival aims to blend traditional heritage with the vibrancy of contemporary youth culture through a range of inter-university competitions in arts, technology and gaming. The event will also include a



special tribute segment dedicated to Assamese music icon Zubeen Garg, recognising his contribution to the region’s musical landscape and his influence on younger artists. The university has announced a prize pool of over Rs 1.15 lakh for various competitions open

to universities and schools. Key events include the “Loud & Live” battle of bands, “Rhythm of Roots” group folk dance competition and “Theatrica”, a platform for socially themed drama performances. Technical events will include the “Prajukti” hackathon, “Accele-

ron” robo race and “Circuitronics” circuit-making contest, while “Gameverse” will cater to e-sports enthusiasts. A March Past event for school participants will also be organised during the festival.The university said the event reflects its broader effort to combine academic learning with cultural engagement, encouraging students to balance professional ambitions with a strong connection to their cultural roots. Students interested in participating can register through the festival’s official website.A major highlight of the musical lineup will be Joi Barua, who has gained international recognition through collaborations with orchestras such as the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the London Symphony Orchestra at Abbey Road Studios. Barua has also received honours at the Cannes World Film Festival for his work in music.

NE witnessing connectivity development: Radhakrishnan



Agartala, Mar 10: Vice President C P Radhakrishnan on Sunday said the Northeast has been witnessing connectivity development over the past decade, boosting economic activities in the region.Addressing the convocation of Tripura Central University at Suryamaninagar in West Tripura, he said that in the past decade, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has relentlessly tapped the potential of the Northeast. “I hail from Chennai, and it was difficult to travel from Chennai to Agartala on the same day. Now, with better infrastructure in place, many long-distance trains connect Agartala. Today, we can travel from Kohima to Agartala on the same day, which is a symbol of a more connected India,” he said.Radhakrishnan said, “In the past decade, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has relentlessly tapped the potential of the Northeast. The economy is also circulating at a faster pace in the Northeast.” The Vice President also exhorted the university authorities to continue producing high-quality research papers for innovation.“The Tripura Central University has emerged as a vibrant centre of teaching, research and innovation. It has been making steady progress in high-quality research work. This should be continued with innovation, and the number of intellectual properties should increase. Participating in the national research platform is the signal of arrival on the national academic landscape,” he said.Emphasising proper time management to achieve success, he said, individuals meet several failures before becoming successful.

Highlighting the transformative role of technology, Radhakrishnan urged students to use it positively and responsibly, stating that “progress with purpose” is essential for the advancement of society and humanity.Quoting the renowned Tamil poet Subramania Bharathiyar, he said that every citizen of India is a guardian of the nation and that collective effort and unity will propel

the country towards greater achievements. He exhorted the students to double their efforts instead of being disheartened by failure to achieve success; success will be at their doorstep.

Governor N Indrasena Reddy, Chief Minister Manik Saha and Vice Chancellor Shyamal Kumar Das also addressed the event.

Radhakrishnan said the foundation stone for the Matabari tourist circuit was laid in January 2026 at Udaipur in Gomati district to boost tourism.

“I was told by the Collector of Gomati that the tourist footfall has increased from 3.5 lakh to 8.50 lakh (annually) at Maa Tripurasundari temple. It will surely add local employment. A stagnant economy will never grow until we push it for circulation,” he said.Radhakrishnan also mentioned the state’s move to launch the State Innovation Mission (SIM) under the Atal Innovation Mission for the first time by any state government.“I thanked Chief Minister Manik Saha and his team for launching the State Innovation Mission (SIM) under the Atal Innovation Mission. It is a significant step towards embedding innovation and entrepreneurship for a long-term development framework,” he said.Speaking at the interaction programme with the lakhpatis at Badharghat international fair ground, he said the government has been playing an important role in implementing the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to take the country ahead by ensuring equal opportunities for every citizen.On the occasion of International Women’s Day, the Vice President expressed gratitude to the lakhpatis and wished that they would become crorepati lakhpatis in the future. He also said that under the leadership of Chief Minister (Manik Saha), women in the state will move further towards self-empowerment.Before leaving the state, Radhakrishnan also paid tribute to martyrs at the Elbert Ekka war memorial at Lichubagan in West Tripura district.

Manipur government earmarksRs. 350 cr for conflict-hit women

Guwahati, Mar 10: Manipur chief minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh on Sunday announced that the Manipur government will earmark a budgetary provision of Rs. 350 crore to support around 3.5 lakh women affected by the recent unrest in the state. He made the announcement while addressing the state-level celebration of International Women’s Day 2026 at City Convention Centre, Imphal, organised by the social welfare department under the theme “Rights, Justice, Action for All Women and Girls.”The chief minister said women are pivotal to the development process and their meaningful participation across all sectors is essential for inclusive growth and sustainable development. He prayed that displaced families would soon be able to return home and acknowledged that women have endured immense challenges since the outbreak of violence, with many families facing severe financial strain. The financial provision, he said, would strengthen livelihoods and support women’s role in rebuilding communities.Recounting the courage of Manipuri women, Singh highlighted their historic contributions to the economy and society, from sustaining families during crises to strengthening the state’s resilience. He remarked that widows have nurtured children into successful individuals even by selling vegetables or engaging in handloom works, reiterating that Manipuri women have always been pillars of strength. Sagolschem Kebi Devi MLA, attending the celebration, urged women to be aware of government schemes and constitutional rights to protect themselves from discrimination and injus-



tice. State chief secretary Dr. Puneet Kumar Goel described women as enduring pillars of society, while ministers, MLAs, administrative secretaries and officials also attended the programme. An audio-visual presentation on Mission Shakti, focusing on women’s safety, security and empowerment, was screened.The chief minister felicitated Nameirakpam Kunjarani Devi, Padmashree awardee and weightlifter, and Mangka Mayanglambam, renowned Manipuri folk singer, for their achievements.Meanwhile, the Manipur State Commission for Women (MSCW) celebrated the occasion at Hotel Imphal under the theme “Give to Gain.” Addressing the gathering,

Dr SS Olish MLA described being born a woman as a blessing and urged women to contribute sincerely towards building harmonious families and communities. She appealed to women to nurture goodwill, unity and mutual understanding, expressing hope that such values would lead the state towards lasting peace and harmony.The programme also featured a documentary highlighting the roles and achievements of Manipuri women across various fields, with messages from prominent personalities. Celebrations across the state marked International Women’s Day, recognising the spirit, strength and resilience of women in Manipur.

Fresh attacks on NE people in Delhi

New Delhi, Mar 10: Two incidents of alleged assault targeting people from Northeast India were reported in Delhi, days after a case involving racial slurs against students from Arunachal Pradesh surfaced in the national capital.

According to reports, two students from the Northeast were allegedly attacked near the Saket District Court Complex on Sunday evening. The incident reportedly occurred when a girl and her friend were taking a walk and a group of men allegedly passed lewd and derogatory remarks at them.

When one of the girls objected to the comments, the accused allegedly assaulted her with belts. She sustained minor injuries and was taken to Safdarjung Hospital for medical examination and treatment. Her condition was reported to be stable. Police have apprehended one juvenile in connection with the incident.

In another similar incident, a girl from Manipur and a transgender person from

Assam were allegedly assaulted in a park in Malviya Nagar after racial and derogatory remarks were directed at them. One of the victims sustained injuries and was taken to hospital for treatment.

Reacting to the incident, the Meitei Heritage Society stated in a post on X that the victims were punched and beaten with belts by a group of boys following racial and derogatory remarks, which led to the altercation.

The organisation urged Delhi Police and leaders including Khemchand Yumnam, Himanta Biswa Sarma, Conrad K Sangma and Union Minister Kiren Rijiju to take immediate action to prevent repeated harassment and insults against people from the Northeast.

The incidents come just days after a Delhi resident, Harsh Singh, was booked for allegedly racially abusing three women from Arunachal Pradesh following a dispute over repair work at their rented apartment.

Would move 40L Orunodoi households in a record-breaking single day

Guwahati, Mar 10: Aiming to extend financial relief to lakhs of families, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, on Sunday, announced that financial assistance of Rs 9,000 will be provided to around 40 lakh beneficiary families under the Orunodoi scheme on March 10.

The announcement was made during a live interaction on social media before the Chief Minister began the seventh day of the “Jana Ashirwad Yatra” in Margherita. Speaking during the interaction, Sarma said the financial assistance will be distributed to beneficiaries across the state through special meetings organised at the local level. “On March 10 at 10:30 am, 40 lakh Orunodoi families will receive Rs 9,000. On this occasion, meetings will be organised in panchayats across Assam, including the MSE areas of Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao, as well as in the VC-DC



areas of the Bodoland Territorial Region and ward areas,” the Chief Minister said.

Sarma added that beneficiaries

will receive the financial assistance during these meetings and urged all eligible families to be present at the designated venues. “I invite all

beneficiaries to attend the meetings. In Assam, there are about 40 lakh Orunodoi beneficiary families, and the total amount to be disbursed will be around Rs 3,600 crore,” Sarma said, noting that the initiative marks one of the largest financial assistance programmes in the state.

The Chief Minister further said such initiatives are possible due to the support and encouragement of the people of Assam.

Earlier, while announcing the DBT disbursement post a cabinet meeting on February 26, Sarma had said that this will be the highest single-day transfer of funds to beneficiaries in the history of Assam. “Meetings will be held across every panchayat, municipal ward and autonomous council area to mark the distribution. The central programme will take place at Jyoti Bishnu Kala Kendra in Khanapara,” Sarma said.

Nagaland CM Neiphiu Rio calls for settlement of Dimapur railway station land dispute

Dimapur, Mar 10: Nagaland chief minister Neiphiu Rio on Monday stressed the need for an amicable settlement of land issues surrounding the historic Dimapur railway station, emphasising that the state cannot afford to lose the opportunity to develop and expand the crucial rail hub. At that time, he noted, certain constitutional provisions relating to land ownership in the state did not exist, and railway authorities had occupied and measured the land for railway purposes long before the state came into be-

ing. He stressed that constructive dialogue between the state government and Indian Railways is necessary to find an amicable solution, particularly regarding compensation or other arrangements for landowners.However, he cautioned that compensation demands should not be at excessively high rates.While railway expansion projects toward Kohima and other areas are underway, Rio said those stations would be comparatively smaller and Dimapur would continue to serve as the main railway station

for the state.Initiating the discussion, MLA Nuklutoshi said there had been negligence from various stakeholders and questioned why sion of the 14th Nagaland Assembly, Rio said the station, inaugurated in 1903, is over 120 years old and predates the formation of Nagaland as a state in 1963.the Northeast Frontier Railway remained silent for many years without lodging any complaint when illegal constructions while railway authorities remained largely silent, encroachments gradually increased.

Biren Singh Engti, a former Union Minister from Assam, dies

Dimapur, Mar 10: Senior Congress leader and former Union Minister Biren Singh Engti passed away on Tuesday morning at the age of 90. He breathed his last at around 7.46 a.m. at Health City Hospital in Guwahati, where he had been undergoing treatment.A prominent political leader from Diphu, Engti represented the Diphu Lok Sabha constituency seven times and was regarded as one of the most influential voices from the hill

districts of Assam. During his long political career, he also served as a Union Minister of State in the Government of India According to family sources, Engti had fallen unconscious at his residence in Diphu on Monday after reportedly suffering a pressure-related health complication. He was immediately taken to Guwahati for medical treatment but the doctors could not save him.Engti was widely respected for his decades-long polit-

ical career and his efforts to represent the interests of people from the hill areas of Assam. A senior leader of the Indian National Congress, he remained closely associated with the party for most of his public life. He is survived by two sons and a daughter.

Family members said his mortal remains will be brought from Guwahati to his residence in Diphu, where it will be kept for three days to allow people to pay their last respects.

Assam Government Approves ₹30 Daily Wage Increase For Tea Garden Workers From April 1

Guwahati, Mar 10: The Assam government has approved a ₹30 increase in the daily wages of tea plantation workers, according to an official notification issued on March 7. The revised wage will come into effect from April 1, 2026. Breaking News Alerts THE increase will apply to workers employed in both estate tea gardens and small tea gardens across the state, one of India's largest tea-producing regions. The decision follows a recommendation made by the state's Minimum Wages Advisory Board during its meeting held on February 26. The



notification stated that the interim wage increase has been sanc-

tioned by the Governor of Assam. The revised wage will be imple-

mented across tea plantations in the state starting April 1.

Sikkim CM Prem Singh Tamang Chairs Mukhyamantri Jan Sambadh Programme In Gangtok

Gangtok, Mar 10: Prem Singh Tamang chaired the Mukhyamantri Jan Sambadh Programme under the “Connect to CM” platform at Samman Bhawan on Tuesday, where assistance under multiple welfare schemes was extended to beneficiaries from DESME BPL and economically weaker sections. Breaking News Alerts The programme connected 34 Block Administrative Centres (BACs) across the state through video conferencing, enabling interaction with Block Development Officers and beneficiaries from different districts. During the programme, beneficiaries received support under several government schemes, including the Chief Minister's Medical Assistance Scheme (CMMAS), Chief Minister's Discretionary Grant (CMDG), Chief Minister's Self-Employment Assistance Scheme (CMSEAS), Sikkim Garib Awas Yojana, allotment of land to landless families, and the Chief Minister Education Assistance Scheme (CMEAS) for students from economically weaker backgrounds. Opportunities related to government employment were also announced for eligible beneficiaries. The Chief Minister stated that



beneficiaries were selected following a verification process to ensure that assistance reaches eligible individuals.

He informed beneficiaries that official orders and related benefits would be delivered at their respective BACs within a week so that they do not need to travel to government offices. During the interaction, the Chief Minister said the government would continue to extend support to BPL families and economically disadvantaged sections. He also stated that the Mukhyamantri Jan Sambadh programme aims to improve

access to government services at the grassroots level. According to the Chief Minister, the programme will be organised once every two months. Distribution of benefits will also be facilitated at the respective BACs. The “Connect to CM” platform, launched on October 14, 2025, functions as a channel for citizens to raise grievances, seek assistance and communicate with the government. Officials stated that the platform has been used to address several complaints related to administrative issues through direct intervention and follow-up.

Assam Governor emphasises women's participation in nation building

Guwahati, Mar 10: Assam Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya on Monday emphasised the importance of women's participation in nation-building, stating that empowering women is essential for national progress.

Attending the Women Achievers' Award 2026 ceremony, organised by the FICCI Ladies Organisation (FICCI FLO), Northeast Chapter, in Guwahati, Acharya said that both the central government and the state government have undertaken several initiatives to strengthen women's empowerment through various welfare and development schemes.

The Governor said that following the celebration of International Women's Day, the award ceremony was a meaningful continuation of recognising the strength and contributions of women in society.

Five outstanding women achievers from different fields across Northeast were honoured during the awards ceremony. They include Dhananda Pathak of Assam, an exponent of



Kamrupi Lok Geet, Kmoir Wahlang of Meghalaya, a marathon runner; Zomawii Khiangte of Mizoram, a social entrepreneur; Ratna Dey of Tripura, an entrepreneur and exporter; and K. Chokhone of Manipur, founder and CEO of Dianthe Private Limited.

The Governor congratulated the awardees and lauded their dedica-

tion, perseverance and achievements, which have made them role models in their respective fields.

“Assam and other states of the Northeast have a rich tradition of honouring women's courage and contributions,” Acharya said, while recalling legendary figures such as Sati Joymoti and Kanaklata Barua as symbols of bravery and sacrifice.

IIT Guwahati leads NE region-Japan collaboration with letter of intent signing at symposium

Guwahati, Mar 10: The Indian Institute of Technology-Guwahati (IIT-G) conducted the two-day Japan-NER Academia-Industry Cooperation Symposium 2026 (JNTCS 2026) jointly with Gifu University, Japan with an aim to strengthen North East India's academic, research and industry collaboration with Japan. The event provided a platform for academic, research and business organisations across the Northeast region to interact with their counterparts from Japan with a vision to come together to solve global problems such as food security, healthcare, environment, sustainable energy, and clean water. Additionally, the initiative paved the way for global exposure and education for students and researchers in the Northeast. This will include multilateral collaborations in numerous disciplines spanning across science, technology and medicine. As Japan

has designated Northeast India as a strategic priority since 2022 (MEXT Inter-University Exchange Project), this joint exercise will facilitate 5,000 students from Northeast Indian institutions visiting Japanese universities, and an equal number coming to India within the next five years. Speaking during the inaugural event, IIT-G director Prof. Devendra Jalihal said, “Today marks a new beginning, as institutions across states unite to form a unique consortium that brings together engineers, medical professionals, scientists, and policymakers—groups who rarely have the chance to interact. We believe such collaborations will accelerate the region's growth and drive its industrial transformation.” A key milestone of the symposium was the signing of a Letter of Intent (LoI) for participation in the North East Region-Japan International Academic and Research Consortium. This LoI



will serve as a gateway for India's Act East Policy towards ASEAN and East Asia, and establish a platform for Northeast Indian institutions to collaborate with Japanese institutions to explore academic and research partnerships. A total of 22 institutions from the Northeast region signed this LoI. Under this collaboration, IIT Guwahati will be the nodal institution on the Indian side, and Gifu University

will be the coordinating institution on the Japanese side. Speaking during the event, Prof. Kazuhiro Yoshida, President, Gifu University, said, “The four pillars of an academic institution - education, research, technology transfer, and societal service - define our core commitments. I am confident that this consortium will help us advance each of these goals in a meaningful and collaborative way.”

Awareness programme on SALT held in Chandel

Imphal, Mar 10: The Centre for Women and Girls (CWG), in collaboration with Assam Rifles, successfully organised an awareness programme on Slope Agricultural Land Techniques (SALT) for the residents of Longja Village in Chandel District. The initiative was aimed at equipping farmers in hilly regions with practical knowledge to enhance productivity while safeguarding the environment. The session was conducted by David Gandhi, a distinguished agricultural expert from Pune, who shared valuable insights on sustainable farming practices suited to sloped terrains. He elaborated on methods to prevent soil erosion, maintain soil fertility and improve crop yields through judicious use of fertilisers and eco-friendly techniques. Gandhi also addressed the challenges posed by changing weather patterns and emphasised the importance of adopting adaptive strategies to ensure long-term agricultural sustainability. The programme witnessed enthusias-



tic participation from villagers and local farmers, who engaged actively in discussions and sought guidance on applying these techniques to their local conditions. Gandhi's interaction with the participants encouraged them to embrace modern yet sustainable methods that can strengthen their livelihoods, said a press release of IGAR(S).

ED attaches immovable properties worth Rs 5.64 cr of former excise secretary of Assam

Guwahati, Mar 10: Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Guwahati Zonal Office has provisionally attached six immovable properties amounting to Rs. 5.64 crore under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 in an investigation related to a disproportionate assets case against Indreswar Kalita, the then Secretary to the Assam Excise Department. ED initiated investigation on the basis of FIR registered by Assam CM's Special Vigilance Cell (CMSVC) against Indreswar Kalita under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 for possession of assets disproportionate to his known sources of income. The chargesheet filed by CMSVC disclosed that during the check period from March 1, 2000 to December 31, 2018, Indreswar Kalita possessed assets disproportionate to his known sources of income to

the tune of Rs. 5.64 Crore, constituting 131.12 per cent of his known income during the check period.

PMLA investigation by ED revealed that Indreswar Kalita acquired several immovable properties, either in his own name or in the names of his wife and other family members who did not have corresponding income sources. This was done to obscure the true beneficial ownership and origin of funds. The said properties were purchased by deliberately understating the consideration amounts in registered sale deeds to conceal the actual cash deployment.

ED investigation further revealed that Indreswar Kalita constructed a G+4 commercial-cum-residential building, through a sham partnership firm with his wife and a relative (a mere namesake partner bearing no financial risk or income) as partners, during the period 2015–2018, at a cost of Rs.

4.46 crore, thereby legitimising the proceeds of crime through the construction project. Post construction, the said property has been generating substantial rental income every month, which has been utilised for repaying the bank loans, thereby integrating the laundered funds and the fruits thereof back into the legitimate economy, ED stated.

Further, analysis of the individual bank account statements by ED revealed large cash deposits amounting to Rs 15,24,000 in the account of Indreswar Kalita during the period 2006 to 2018 and Rs 16,92,000 in the account of his wife during the period 2012 to 2018. These deposits were made during the service period of Indreswar Kalita and remain unexplained by any satisfactory or legitimate sources, thereby indicating the utilisation and layering of the proceeds of crime, the investigating agency said.

Varsity holds youth interaction on Act East policy Assam's emerging role

Guwahati, Mar 10: The Assam Royal Global University (RGU) has held a Quiz and a Debate Competition on “Youth Interaction on Act East Policy and Assam's Emerging Role” in Guwahati on Tuesday.

The event was organised by the Department of Economics and the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), RGU, in collaboration with the Act East Policy Affairs Department, Government of Assam.

The programme brought together students from colleges across Assam, and officials from the Act East Policy Affairs Department for a meaningful exchange of ideas on the growing strategic significance of Assam and the Northeast in India's foreign policy framework.

Delivering the keynote address, Rajiv Bora, former Additional Chief Secretary of Assam and APSC chairman, reflected on the relevance of the Act East Policy in the contemporary global context.

Emphasising that the Act East Policy is a crucial pillar of the Government of India's foreign policy,



he highlighted the Northeast's geographical and strategic position as a natural bridge between India and Southeast Asia.

Bora observed that the region, endowed with abundant natural and cultural resources, can serve as the fulcrum of India's engagement with neighbouring countries under the Act East Policy.

However, he cautioned that the effective implementation of the policy depends largely on achieving a minimum threshold of development in the Northeast, particularly in terms of infrastructure. He also stressed the importance of enhancing people-to-people contacts and cultural exchanges with neighbouring countries to strengthen regional coopera-

tion. Manavendra Pratap Singh, Secretary to the Government of Assam, Act East Policy Affairs Department, spoke about the government's efforts to leverage the Act East Policy for the socio-economic transformation of the region. He pointed out that many cultural practices in Northeast India have historical connections with Southeast Asia, illustrating long-standing civilisational linkages. He further highlighted major developments that could strengthen Assam's global connectivity, including the anticipated growth of Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport in Guwahati as a major regional hub in the coming years.

Referring to the upcoming semi-conductor project at Jagir Road, he said such initiatives would open new economic opportunities and place Assam more prominently on the global map. He also envisioned Guwahati emerging as a key centre linking cities across Southeast Asia.

Earlier in the inaugural session, Prof Shiela Bora delivered the welcome address, noting that the spirit

of the Act East Policy is not entirely new to the Northeast.

She observed that the region historically maintained vibrant trade and cultural exchanges across borders since ancient times.

Addressing the gathering, Prof A.K. Buragohain, Vice Chancellor of RGU, emphasised that universities play a vital role in facilitating such engagements. He remarked that academic research and intellectual discourse can significantly contribute to the effective understanding and implementation of important national policies such as the Act East Policy.

Prof Dhrubajyoti Borah, Advisor to the Chancellor and Author-in-Residence at RGU, spoke on the historical significance of the Southern Silk Route, describing it as a vibrant trade corridor that once passed through regions such as present-day Biswanath Chariali in Assam. He pointed out that these ancient routes were not merely channels for trade in goods but also pathways for the exchange of ideas, cultures, and knowledge.

Four factors cause the rupee to drop below 92 per dollar once more, reaching a record

Mumbai: Crude spiking above \$115/bbl has sent global markets on a tizzy. Be it equities, currency or the commodity space, all asset classes are seeing a domino impact. The rupee is no exception. It has slumped to a record low of 92.33 against the US dollar. This marks the currency’s second breach past the 92-level mark in less than 7 days. According to Reuters, the Indian central bank (RBI) stepped into the foreign exchange market today to limit the domestic currency’s decline. Here are four major factors weighing on the Indian Rupee: The Sensex crashed over 2,000 points while the Nifty tumbled to 23,700 levels as crude oil spiked past the \$115 per barrel mark on the continued escalation of conflict across West Asia. Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments pointed out that, “Brent crude has spiked above \$115 delivering a big oil shock to economies and markets. Big oil importers like India will be hit hard if the West Asian conflict lingers long and crude price remains high. The market will price-in the economic consequences of this oil shock. Inflation will certainly move up whether the oil price hike is passed on to consumers or not. #3 Fall in Asian equities “Europe’s heavy reliance on Middle Eastern energy has made the euro vulnerable during the recent oil surge. “CR Forex Advisors MD Amit Pabari said,” He added that the euro has already fallen more than 2% this month, and since it carries nearly 57% weight in the dollar index, its weakness has automatically pushed the dollar higher.Foreign Institutional Investors were net sellers of domestic equities worth Rs 6,030 crore as of March 6, according to data available on NSE.A stronger US Dollar makes currencies like the Indian rupee less appealing for investors, thereby aiding capital outflows.Outlook for

RupeeGoing forward, what’s the outlook for the rupee now? Should it be bracing for a few more tough days ahead? Well experts predict that it may continue to trade near 91-92/ mark against the US dollar “For the coming days, 91.40–91.50 is likely to act as a strong support zone, and if these base holds, the pair could gradually move toward the 92.50-93.00 levels,” Pabari added.These heightened geopolitical tensions have also impacted investor sentiment across Asian equity markets. Asian stock markets tumbled in Monday’s early trade as crude oil prices shot up. Japan’s benchmark index, Nikkei 225, suffered one of the region’s steepest declines, dropping more than 6% in early trading. The Topix was down 5.27%. South Korea’s Kospi was down 6.5%, triggering a temporary trading halt for the Kospi 200 futures. Hong Kong’s Hang Seng index futures were at 25,328, below the index’s last close of 25,757.29.Falling Asian equities generate capital outflows and create strong demand for the US dollar, which extends the decline for emerging market currencies like the Indian rupee.#4 Rise in Dollar IndexThe dollar index, which measures the strength of the US Dollar against a basket of six major currencies, climbed to a record high nearing the 100 mark as the surge in oil prices drove demand for the greenback.first time since 2022, as the US-Israel conflict with Iran has disrupted shipping through the Strait of Hormuz — one of the world’s most important routes for Middle Eastern oil Brent crude, the global benchmark for oil, is currently trading near the \$116 per barrel mark in the market, marking a jump of nearly 25% since Friday’s close of \$93 per barrel. Meanwhile, the US benchmark, West Texas Intermediate, has also rallied, as it is trading near the \$115 per barrel mark.

Sensex stocks: 52-week lows were reached by TCS, Asian Paints, IndiGo, and Trent

Mumbai: Private sector lending giant HDFC Bank, and information technology major Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), along with Asian Paints, InterGlobe Aviation (IndiGo), and Trent were the top Sensex stocks that hit their respective 52-week lows on the BSE in Monday’s intra-day trade. The benchmark index slipped over 3 per cent as the conflict in West Asia entered its tenth day, driving crude oil prices higher. Kuwait, for instance, has announced precautionary production cuts while major oil supply remains curtailed due to uncertainty in the Strait of Hormuz. Brent crude prices have increased from \$66/barrel to \$108.5/barrel in one week due to the uncertainty in West Asia, marking a steep rise of more than 50 per cent, ICICI Securities said in a note. “With a sharp surge in brent crude prices as well as rise in logistics costs due to disruption around the key shipping routes, tyre players, paint players, oil marketing companies, gulf heavy capital good players, tile companies, chemical space and 2W export players are under pressure,” the brokerage said. Crude-linked derivatives are one of the key inputs in paints, which constitutes to around 20-25 per cent of the overall input cost of the paint companies, and 10-15 per cent for the fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies. If the crude price remains above \$100/barrel for more than a month, it will add significant pressure to the margins of paint as well as FMCG companies. Global brokerage Nomura, too, has warned against rising commodity prices, saying that the persistent tensions in West Asia could drag the margins of FMCG companies in theMeanwhile, Ambuja Cements, DLF, Dixon Technologies, Gail (India), Indian Hotels Company, Shree Cement, REC, Tata Motors Pas-



senger Vehicles, Wipro, Suzlon Energy, Coforge and Info Edge (India) were the notable stocks from the BSE 100 index that also hit their respective 52-week lows. Further, nearly one-fifth or 96 stocks from the BSE 500 index hit their respective 52-week lows on the BSE in the intraday trade today as these stocks fell by up to 7 per cent. The BSE 500 index stocks accounts 90 per cent of the total market capitalisation of the BSE listed companies. Indian equity markets fell on Monday as the conflict in West Asia, triggered

by the ongoing US and Israeli attacks on Iran, expanded to regions including Cyprus, Sri Lanka, Turkey, and Azerbaijan. Market sentiment has further weakened by the continued surge in crude oil prices amid the intense military operations across the Gulf region, forcing oil producers to cut their oil production due to pile up of inventories. Oil prices eclipsed \$100 per barrel for the first time in more than three-and-a-half years on Sunday as the Iran war hindered production and shipping in the West Asia.

Nifty headed a bear phase Analyst warns 19,000-mark

Mumbai: The NSE Nifty 50 index cracked over 3 per cent or 753 points in Monday’s intra-day trade to a low of 23,697 following a sharp spike in Crude oil prices owing to the on-going Israel-US-Iran war. “Breach of 23,535 should see multi-leg downslides on the Nifty initially aiming for the March 2025 low near 22,000, followed by November 2023 low near 19,000,” fears the analyst from Geojit Investments. For the sentiment to turn positive, James reckons that the Nifty will need to float above 24,000 levels.

In case of Sensex, Tailor expects support for the BSE benchmark around 75,200–75,500 zone. On the upside, he expects 77,500 to act as an immediate resistance level. “Breach of 23,535 should see multi-leg downslides on the Nifty initially aiming for the March 2025 low near 22,000, followed by November 2023 low near 19,000,” fears the analyst from Geojit Investments. For the sentiment to turn positive, James reckons that the Nifty will need to float above 24,000

The analyst from Choice Broking advises that unless geopolitical tensions ease and stability returns to global markets, traders should maintain a cautious approach and avoid aggressive fresh buying at current levels.

WTI Crude Oil futures soared over 10 per cent to \$119.43 per barrel in today’s trading session, and have surged over 78 per cent since the start of the month. Brent oil prices quoted at \$118 per barrel as against the February close of \$72.43.

“Brent crude has spiked above \$115 delivering a big oil shock to economies and markets. Big oil importers like India will be hit hard if the West Asian conflict lingers long and crude price remains high. The market will price-in the economic consequences of this oil shock. Inflation will certainly move up whether the oil price hike is passed on to consumers or not,” said Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited in a note.The unknown factor now is how long the conflict will last. This uncertainty will also weigh on FIIs who have again turned aggressive sellers in India after the short bout ofbuying in February, the analyst cautions.At current levels, the Nifty 50 has crashed nearly 6 per cent (1,482 points) since the start of the Iran war; and despite registering a new all-time high at 26,373 in January, the index has now shed 9.3 per cent so far in 2026. In the process, the Nifty is quoting below the key moving averages on the daily chart. The Nifty fell below the 200-day moving average (200-DMA) on the first trading session of this month, and now quotes around 6.5 per cent lower compared to the 200-DMA (25,338)Technical outlook



on Nifty Hitesh Tailor, Technical Research Analyst at Choice Broking highlights that the Nifty has broken decisively below the 24,050 zone, which coincides with the 100-week exponential moving average (EMA), a level that historically acted as a strong reversal area. “The breakdown signals deterioration in the broader technical structure and reflects increasing downside pressure. Momentum indicators also remain weak, with the weekly RSI facing rejection near the 50-mark and trending lower, indicating that a clear reversal signal is still absent,” explains Tailor.In the near term, the analyst sees 23,200–22,900 range as a crucial support zone for the Nifty. For India, a nation heavily reliant on oil imports (nearly 85%), this price surge poses significant economic challenges. Historically, such oil shocks have pressured the Indian Rupee, inflated the import bill, and exerted upward pressure on inflation [2, 21]. While the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) projects modest CPI inflation Meanwhile, Anand James, Chief Market Strategist at Geojit Investments warns that the Nifty could enter a phase of prolonged downtrend, and see steeper losses as it quotes near a crucial support level.Technically, a plunge to 23,535 is awaited, and that would complete a 61.8 retracement of the up move since March 2025, says Anand James. The escalating conflict in the Middle East has unleashed a severe “oil shock” across global markets, with WTI crude futures breaching \$119.43 per barrel and Brent crude trading near \$118. This represents a dramatic increase, with WTI futures surging over 10% and Brent crude prices more than doubling from their February closing levels of \$72.43. The immediate impact on Monday’s trading saw the NSE Nifty 50 index plummet over 3%, or 753 points, to a low of 23,697. This broad-based decline mirrors a wider regional downturn, with Asian equities heading for their worst weekly performance in six years amid spiking energy costs and geopolitical uncertainty [4, 8, 9, 11].

3 reasons why Crude surging past \$115/bbl



Mumbai: The conflict involving Iran, Israel and the United States continues to escalate, and this has led to a sharp spike in oil prices. Crude oil has shot up to 2022 highs well over the \$115/bbl mark on concerns over prolonged disruptions to oil production and shipping and its impact on supply.This is not at all good news for India, which is a key importer of oil. Nilesh Shah, MD Kotak Mahindra AMC pointed out that, “every 10 % jump in Oil prices adversely impacts our CPI inflation by 20 bps in primary effect, 10 bps in GDP Growth and 10 bps in Current Account Deficit on a back of envelope calculation.”He added that, “If we take both primary and secondary effects the hit will almost double. This puts pressure on rupee, rates and equity markets.” SBI Research estimated that every \$10 per barrel increase in oil prices could widen India’s current account deficit by 36 basis points in FY27. Brent crude oil has risen sharply from \$58.92 per barrel in December 2025 and has now crossed around \$115.78 per barrel. SBI Research warned that if the oil reaches \$130, Indian economy will be significantly

impacted. “As oil prices increase from \$90 to \$130 per bbl, the current account deficit widens, inflation rises, and GDP growth declines.” 2. Oil at \$130 could drag India’s GDP growth to 6% in FY27: SBI ResearchIf crude prices climb further to around \$130 per barrel, India’s GDP growth could fall to about 6%, assuming a base growth estimate of 7% for FY27.3. Rupee slides below 92 against US dollar amid Middle East tensionEconomists expect increasing crude oil prices to put pressure on the Rupee as well. Rupee has crossed the 92 mark against US dollar amid Middle East tension. Today, Indian Rupee plummets 43 paise to 92.25 against US dollar in early trade. Brokerage firm J highlighting tension in the Middle East.SBI research highlighted that the six member GCC countries including, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain accounted for 13.06% of India’s total exports and 16.18% of its total imports during April–December FY26.Other West Asian countries contributed 2.03% to India’s exports and 3.94% to imports during the same period.

Petrol, diesel prices Check rates today in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru

Mumbai: Petrol and diesel prices remained unchanged in major Indian cities on Monday, March 9, even as global crude oil prices crossed the \$100 per barrel mark for the first time since 2022. The surge in oil prices comes as the ongoing conflict in the Middle East continues to disrupt global energy markets and raise concerns over oil supply. Meanwhile, West Texas Intermediate (WTI), the main crude oil produced in the United States, was also trading at around \$114 per barrel. This represents a 25% jump from its Friday closing price of \$90.90. The conflict also led to fresh damage to civilian infrastructure early on Monday. Bahrain accused Iran of attacking a desalination plant that plays a crucial role in supplying drinking water. At the same time, oil depots in Tehran were seen burning after overnight strikes by Israel. Market anxiety also increased after Kuwait started shutting down production at some oilfields due to storage limitations, which added pressure to already tight global supply. Petrol and diesel prices in India have remained unchanged since May 2022, after the central government and several states reduced taxes on fuel. If Brent crude remains above \$100 per barrel for several weeks, experts believe petrol and diesel prices in India could gradually start increasing, according to a report by JM Financials.The government is also considering increasing crude imports from countries such as Russia and Brazil to reduce dependence on Gulf supplies and avoid disruptions through the Strait of Hormuz.Oil Marketing Companies update fuel prices every day at 6 am based on changes in global crude prices. Although fuel rates are linked to international markets, they are also influenced by government taxes, pricing structures and unofficial price controls.Global crude oil rates play a major role in determining fuel prices because petrol and diesel are made from crude oil. India imports most of its crude oil. This means the value of the rupee against the US dollar has a big impact on fuel costs. A weaker rupee usually



leads to higher prices.Impact of the Israel-US war with Iran on global oil pricesThe war has affected global oil markets in different ways. One of the biggest factors has been the disruption around the Strait of Hormuz and attacks on Iranian energy infrastructure. Oil prices started rising sharply after US-Israeli military strikes on Iran began in late February.Why are oil prices going up today?Concerns over fuel prices are rising mainly because global crude oil rates have surged due to fears of supply disruptions caused by the war. One of the biggest worries is that energy exports from the Gulf region could be affected if the situation worsens, Reuters reported.The

increase is largely linked to the war involving the United States, Israel and Iran, which has started affecting one of the world’s most important oil shipping routes. Global oil prices jumped sharply on Monday (March 9), crossing \$114 per barrel for the first time since 2022 as the war involving Iran escalated and raised concerns about oil production and shipping routes in West Asia. The price of Brent crude, the international benchmark, climbed above \$114 after trading resumed on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. This marked a sharp 23% increase compared with its Friday (March 6) closing price of \$92.69.

Four factors cause the rupee to drop below 92 per dollar once more, reaching a record

Mumbai: Crude spiking above \$115/bbl has sent global markets on a tizzy. Be it equities, currency or the commodity space, all asset classes are seeing a domino impact. The rupee is no exception. It has slumped to a record low of 92.33 against the US dollar. This marks the currency’s second breach past the 92-level mark in less than 7 days. According to Reuters, the Indian central bank (RBI) stepped into the foreign exchange market today to limit the domestic currency’s decline. Here are four major factors weighing on the Indian Rupee: The Sensex crashed over 2,000 points while the Nifty tumbled to 23,700 levels as crude oil spiked past the \$115 per barrel mark on the continued escalation of conflict across West Asia. Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments pointed out that, “Brent crude has spiked above \$115 delivering a big oil shock to economies and markets. Big oil importers like India will be hit hard if the West Asian conflict lingers long and crude price remains high. The market will price-in the economic consequences of this oil shock. Inflation will certainly move up whether the oil price hike is passed on to consumers or not. #3 Fall in Asian equities “Europe’s heavy reliance on Middle Eastern energy has made the euro vulnerable during the recent oil surge. “CR Forex Advisors MD Amit Pabari said,” He added that the euro has already fallen more than 2% this month, and since it carries nearly 57% weight in the dollar index, its weakness has automatically pushed the dollar higher.Foreign Institutional Investors were net sellers of domestic equities worth Rs 6,030 crore as of March 6, according to data available on NSE.A stronger US Dollar makes currencies like the Indian rupee less appealing for investors, thereby aiding capital outflows.Outlook for

RupeeGoing forward, what’s the outlook for the rupee now? Should it be bracing for a few more tough days ahead? Well experts predict that it may continue to trade near 91-92/ mark against the US dollar “For the coming days, 91.40–91.50 is likely to act as a strong support zone, and if these base holds, the pair could gradually move toward the 92.50-93.00 levels,” Pabari added.These heightened geopolitical tensions have also impacted investor sentiment across Asian equity markets. Asian stock markets tumbled in Monday’s early trade as crude oil prices shot up. Japan’s benchmark index, Nikkei 225, suffered one of the region’s steepest declines, dropping more than 6% in early trading. The Topix was down 5.27%. South Korea’s Kospi was down 6.5%, triggering a temporary trading halt for the Kospi 200 futures. Hong Kong’s Hang Seng index futures were at 25,328, below the index’s last close of 25,757.29.Falling Asian equities generate capital outflows and create strong demand for the US dollar, which extends the decline for emerging market currencies like the Indian rupee.#4 Rise in Dollar IndexThe dollar index, which measures the strength of the US Dollar against a basket of six major currencies, climbed to a record high nearing the 100 mark as the surge in oil prices drove demand for the greenback.first time since 2022, as the US-Israel conflict with Iran has disrupted shipping through the Strait of Hormuz — one of the world’s most important routes for Middle Eastern oil Brent crude, the global benchmark for oil, is currently trading near the \$116 per barrel mark in the market, marking a jump of nearly 25% since Friday’s close of \$93 per barrel. Meanwhile, the US benchmark, West Texas Intermediate, has also rallied, as it is trading near the \$115 per barrel mark.

Sensex stocks: 52-week lows were reached by TCS, Asian Paints, IndiGo, and Trent

Mumbai: Private sector lending giant HDFC Bank, and information technology major Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), along with Asian Paints, InterGlobe Aviation (IndiGo), and Trent were the top Sensex stocks that hit their respective 52-week lows on the BSE in Monday’s intra-day trade. The benchmark index slipped over 3 per cent as the conflict in West Asia entered its tenth day, driving crude oil prices higher. Kuwait, for instance, has announced precautionary production cuts while major oil supply remains curtailed due to uncertainty in the Strait of Hormuz. Brent crude prices have increased from \$66/barrel to \$108.5/barrel in one week due to the uncertainty in West Asia, marking a steep rise of more than 50 per cent, ICICI Securities said in a note. “With a sharp surge in brent crude prices as well as rise in logistics costs due to disruption around the key shipping routes, tyre players, paint players, oil marketing companies, gulf heavy capital good players, tile companies, chemical space and 2W export players are under pressure,” the brokerage said. Crude-linked derivatives are one of the key inputs in paints, which constitutes to around 20-25 per cent of the overall input cost of the paint companies, and 10-15 per cent for the fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies. If the crude price remains above \$100/barrel for more than a month, it will add significant pressure to the margins of paint as well as FMCG companies. Global brokerage Nomura, too, has warned against rising commodity prices, saying that the persistent tensions in West Asia could drag the margins of FMCG companies in theMeanwhile, Ambuja Cements, DLF, Dixon Technologies, Gail (India), Indian Hotels Company, Shree Cement, REC, Tata Motors Pas-



senger Vehicles, Wipro, Suzlon Energy, Coforge and Info Edge (India) were the notable stocks from the BSE 100 index that also hit their respective 52-week lows. Further, nearly one-fifth or 96 stocks from the BSE 500 index hit their respective 52-week lows on the BSE in the intraday trade today as these stocks fell by up to 7 per cent. The BSE 500 index stocks accounts 90 per cent of the total market capitalisation of the BSE listed companies. Indian equity markets fell on Monday as the conflict in West Asia, triggered

by the ongoing US and Israeli attacks on Iran, expanded to regions including Cyprus, Sri Lanka, Turkey, and Azerbaijan. Market sentiment has further weakened by the continued surge in crude oil prices amid the intense military operations across the Gulf region, forcing oil producers to cut their oil production due to pile up of inventories. Oil prices eclipsed \$100 per barrel for the first time in more than three-and-a-half years on Sunday as the Iran war hindered production and shipping in the West Asia.

3 reasons why Crude surging past \$115/bbl



Mumbai: The conflict involving Iran, Israel and the United States continues to escalate, and this has led to a sharp spike in oil prices. Crude oil has shot up to 2022 highs well over the \$115/bbl mark on concerns over prolonged disruptions to oil production and shipping and its impact on supply.This is not at all good news for India, which is a key importer of oil. Nilesh Shah, MD Kotak Mahindra AMC pointed out that, “every 10 % jump in Oil prices adversely impacts our CPI inflation by 20 bps in primary effect, 10 bps in GDP Growth and 10 bps in Current Account Deficit on a back of envelope calculation.”He added that, “If we take both primary and secondary effects the hit will almost double. This puts pressure on rupee, rates and equity markets.” SBI Research estimated that every \$10 per barrel increase in oil prices could widen India’s current account deficit by 36 basis points in FY27. Brent crude oil has risen sharply from \$58.92 per barrel in December 2025 and has now crossed around \$115.78 per barrel. SBI Research warned that if the oil reaches \$130, Indian economy will be significantly

impacted. “As oil prices increase from \$90 to \$130 per bbl, the current account deficit widens, inflation rises, and GDP growth declines.” 2. Oil at \$130 could drag India’s GDP growth to 6% in FY27: SBI ResearchIf crude prices climb further to around \$130 per barrel, India’s GDP growth could fall to about 6%, assuming a base growth estimate of 7% for FY27.3. Rupee slides below 92 against US dollar amid Middle East tensionEconomists expect increasing crude oil prices to put pressure on the Rupee as well. Rupee has crossed the 92 mark against US dollar amid Middle East tension. Today, Indian Rupee plummets 43 paise to 92.25 against US dollar in early trade. Brokerage firm J heightening tension in the Middle East.SBI research highlighted that the six member GCC countries including, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain accounted for 13.06% of India’s total exports and 16.18% of its total imports during April–December FY26.Other West Asian countries contributed 2.03% to India’s exports and 3.94% to imports during the same period.

Petrol, diesel prices Check rates today in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru

Mumbai: Petrol and diesel prices remained unchanged in major Indian cities on Monday, March 9, even as global crude oil prices crossed the \$100 per barrel mark for the first time since 2022. The surge in oil prices comes as the ongoing conflict in the Middle East continues to disrupt global energy markets and raise concerns over oil supply. Meanwhile, West Texas Intermediate (WTI), the main crude oil produced in the United States, was also trading at around \$114 per barrel. This represents a 25% jump from its Friday closing price of \$90.90. The conflict also led to fresh damage to civilian infrastructure early on Monday. Bahrain accused Iran of attacking a desalination plant that plays a crucial role in supplying drinking water. At the same time, oil depots in Tehran were seen burning after overnight strikes by Israel. Market anxiety also increased after Kuwait started shutting down production at some oilfields due to storage limitations, which added pressure to already tight global supply. Petrol and diesel prices in India have remained unchanged since May 2022, after the central government and several states reduced taxes on fuel. If Brent crude remains above \$100 per barrel for several weeks, experts believe petrol and diesel prices in India could gradually start increasing, according to a report by JM Financials.The government is also considering increasing crude imports from countries such as Russia and Brazil to reduce dependence on Gulf supplies and avoid disruptions through the Strait of Hormuz.Oil Marketing Companies update fuel prices every day at 6 am based on changes in global crude prices. Although fuel rates are linked to international markets, they are also influenced by government taxes, pricing structures and unofficial price controls.Global crude oil rates play a major role in determining fuel prices because petrol and diesel are made from crude oil. India imports most of its crude oil. This means the value of the rupee against the US dollar has a big impact on fuel costs. A weaker rupee usually



leads to higher prices.Impact of the Israel-US war with Iran on global oil pricesThe war has affected global oil markets in different ways. One of the biggest factors has been the disruption around the Strait of Hormuz and attacks on Iranian energy infrastructure. Oil prices started rising sharply after US-Israeli military strikes on Iran began in late February.Why are oil prices going up today?Concerns over fuel prices are rising mainly because global crude oil rates have surged due to fears of supply disruptions caused by the war. One of the biggest worries is that energy exports from the Gulf region could be affected if the situation worsens, Reuters reported.The

increase is largely linked to the war involving the United States, Israel and Iran, which has started affecting one of the world’s most important oil shipping routes. Global oil prices jumped sharply on Monday (March 9), crossing \$114 per barrel for the first time since 2022 as the war involving Iran escalated and raised concerns about oil production and shipping routes in West Asia. The price of Brent crude, the international benchmark, climbed above \$114 after trading resumed on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. This marked a sharp 23% increase compared with its Friday (March 6) closing price of \$92.69.

Nifty headed a bear phase Analyst warns 19,000-mark

Mumbai: The NSE Nifty 50 index cracked over 3 per cent or 753 points in Monday’s intra-day trade to a low of 23,697 following a sharp spike in Crude oil prices owing to the on-going Israel-US-Iran war. “Breach of 23,535 should see multi-leg downsides on the Nifty initially aiming for the March 2025 low near 22,000, followed by November 2023 low near 19,000,” fears the analyst from Geojit Investments. For the sentiment to turn positive, James reckons that the Nifty will need to float above 24,000 levels.

In case of Sensex, Tailor expects support for the BSE benchmark around 75,200–75,500 zone. On the upside, he expects 77,500 to act as an immediate resistance level. “Breach of 23,535 should see multi-leg downsides on the Nifty initially aiming for the March 2025 low near 22,000, followed by November 2023 low near 19,000,” fears the analyst from Geojit Investments. For the sentiment to turn positive, James reckons that the Nifty will need to float above 24,000

The analyst from Choice Broking advises that unless geopolitical tensions ease and stability returns to global markets, traders should maintain a cautious approach and avoid aggressive fresh buying at current levels.

WTI Crude Oil futures soared over 10 per cent to \$119.43 per barrel in today’s trading session, and have surged over 78 per cent since the start of the month. Brent oil prices quoted at \$118 per barrel as against the February close of \$72.43.

“Brent crude has spiked above \$115 delivering a big oil shock to economies and markets. Big oil importers like India will be hit hard if the West Asian conflict lingers long and crude price remains high. The market will price-in the economic consequences of this oil shock. Inflation will certainly move up whether the oil price hike is passed on to consumers or not,” said Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited in a note.The unknown factor now is how long the conflict will last. This uncertainty will also weigh on FIIs who have again turned aggressive sellers in India after the short bout offbuying in February, the analyst cautions.At current levels, the Nifty 50 has crashed nearly 6 per cent (1,482 points) since the start of the Iran war; and despite registering a new all-time high at 26,373 in January, the index has now shed 9.3 per cent so far in 2026. In the process, the Nifty is quoting below the key moving averages on the daily chart. The Nifty fell below the 200-day moving average (200-DMA) on the first trading session of this month, and now quotes around 6.5 per cent lower compared to the 200-DMA (25,338)Technical outlook



on Nifty Hitesh Tailor, Technical Research Analyst at Choice Broking highlights that the Nifty has broken decisively below the 24,050 zone, which coincides with the 100-week exponential moving average (EMA), a level that historically acted as a strong reversal area. “The breakdown signals deterioration in the broader technical structure and reflects increasing downside pressure. Momentum indicators also remain weak, with the weekly RSI facing rejection near the 50-mark and trending lower, indicating that a clear reversal signal is still absent,” explains Tailor.In the near term, the analyst sees 23,200–22,900 range as a crucial support zone for the Nifty. For India, a nation heavily reliant on oil imports (nearly 85%), this price surge poses significant economic challenges. Historically, such oil shocks have pressured the Indian Rupee, inflated the import bill, and exerted upward pressure on inflation [2, 21]. While the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) projects modest CPI inflation Meanwhile, Anand James, Chief Market Strategist at Geojit Investments warns that the Nifty could enter a phase of prolonged downtrend, and see steeper losses as it quotes near a crucial support level.Technically, a plunge to 23,535 is awaited, and that would complete a 61.8 retracement of the up move since March 2025, says Anand James. The escalating conflict in the Middle East has unleashed a severe “oil shock” across global markets, with WTI crude futures breaching \$119.43 per barrel and Brent crude trading near \$118. This represents a dramatic increase, with WTI futures surging over 10% and Brent crude prices more than doubling from their February closing levels of \$72.43. The immediate impact on Monday’s trading saw the NSE Nifty 50 index plummet over 3%, or 753 points, to a low of 23,697. This broad-based decline mirrors a wider regional downturn, with Asian equities heading for their worst weekly performance in six years amid spiking energy costs and geopolitical uncertainty [4, 8, 9, 11].

The mayor of Istanbul is put on trial alongside 400 other people in an attempt “to remove him from politics”

Turkey: In a massive corruption case, a mass trial of 400 persons, including the imprisoned mayor of Istanbul, Ekrem İmamoğlu, has begun in Turkey. Critics claim this is a politically motivated attempt to ruin his chances of running against Recep Tayyip Erdoğan for the president. More than 106 individuals who are now incarcerated are among the hundreds of current and former Istanbul municipality workers scheduled to testify. They are all charged with being part of an extensive network of organized crime and corruption that revolves around İmamoğlu’s office. İmamoğlu, the mayor of Turkey’s largest city, was arrested last year during a raid on his home, shortly after announcing his intention to run for president on behalf of the country’s largest opposition party, the Republican People’s party (CHP). As all protests banned within a 1km radius of the courtroom have been banned, supporters gathered at a distance, waving images of İmamoğlu and more than a dozen other CHP detained mayors, according to an Agence France-Presse reporter. After his election in 2019, İmamoğlu quickly rose to become Erdoğan’s nemesis, occupying a position the president once held and rising in political stature to challenge him on the national stage. After declaring his intention to run for president, Istanbul University annulled İmamoğlu’s diploma, a requirement to run for Turkey’s highest office. His arrest sent shockwaves through Turkish society, sparking

nightly mass protests around the municipality building that contained his office where hundreds were detained. The CHP vowed to fight the arrest, holding a symbolic vote to name İmamoğlu as their candidate for president in an election expected to take place next year. Thousands of pages of accusations were prepared by prosecutors, who claimed that İmamoğlu’s corrupt actions began in 2014, years before he upset Erdoğan’s governing party and was elected mayor. Akın Gürlek, a former Istanbul prosecutor, said late last year that İmamoğlu’s corrupt network cost the Turkish government 160 billion lira (£2.85 billion) over ten years.

The mayor of Istanbul and presidential contender may spend more than 1,900 years behind bars if found guilty of all accusations. The use of hidden witnesses and a broad attempt to imprison mayors from opposition parties, especially the CHP, throughout Turkey have led observers and human rights organizations to label the trial as politically motivated. Human Rights Watch said the trial represented “the culmination a 17-month campaign by the Turkish authorities against the main opposition party through criminal investigations, detentions, and other lawsuits targeting İmamoğlu, other elected officials, and the party leadership, pointing to a concerted effort to remove İmamoğlu from politics and discredit his party in ways that undermine democracy”.



Romanian municipalities have the authority to outlaw “toxic” betting establishments

Gambling In the largest tightening of the gambling sector the nation has ever seen, Romania’s government changed gambling laws by issuing an emergency decree that permits towns to limit or outright prohibit betting establishments and slot machine halls. In order to open a gaming establishment, licensed operators now need to secure both a national permission and municipal authorization, which gives mayors and local councils a powerful veto authority. More than 200 communities may seek complete bans, according to officials. Romania’s gambling sector has grown quickly, with tens of thousands of slot machines and bookmakers operating all throughout the country, particularly in Bucharest, the country’s capital. Up until recently, gaming establishments were authorized centrally without the consent of the city, rendering towns helpless even when venues sprung up close to residential areas and schools. “Local authorities



can now clearly say ‘yes’ or ‘no,’” stated Diana Stoica, the legislative campaign’s leader and MP for the Save Romania Union party. “If they accept, they have the authority to determine precisely where and under what circumstances these venues may operate.”

At least nine localities have already indicated that they intend to pursue complete prohibitions. Among these is

Slatina in southern Romania, where Mario De Mezzo, the mayor, has promised to close all gaming establishments when their current licenses expire. Eliminating these companies completely from the city was the easiest way to solve the problem. They are poisonous to society, according to De Mezzo. The Romanian gambling sector is a multibillion-euro market,

generating close to €1bn in state taxes in 2025 despite official audits identifying several million euros in uncollected revenue.

For years, the fiscal benefit has been one of the main justifications for not imposing restrictions despite public pressure, but advocates for the regulation argue the economic benefits come at a great social cost.

As oil soars, STI, Malaysia, and Indonesia equities decline at lunchtime

Singapore: Following a sharp increase in oil prices, broader Asian markets fell on Monday, March 9, with South Korean and Japanese indexes leading losses. As of 10.05 am, the Straits Times Index (STI) has dropped as much as 3.1%, falling below 4,700 points. Later, it recovered some of its losses, and by midday, it was down 2.7%. All of the local banks’ counters fell, with DBS: D05 -1.25% down 2%, OCBC: O39 -1.73% down 2.6%, and UOB: U11 -1.55% down 2.2%. With West Texas Intermediate crude oil up 29% at more than US\$117, oil prices surged beyond US\$100 a barrel, the highest in almost four years. Brent crude had its largest increase in over six years, rising as high as 28% to US\$118.73. Energy companies like RH PetroGas: T13 +28.57% gained 28.6% and Rex International: 5WH +6.63% was up 10.5% at lunchtime. Geo Energy Resources: RE4 -2.17% was down 1.1% by lunchtime after opening 5.4% higher. At lunchtime, Shanghai’s CSI 300 fell 1.7%, while Hong Kong’s Hang Seng Index fell 2.6%. In Thailand, the SET50 index was 3.8 per cent lower in the afternoon. The Kuala Lumpur Composite Index and the Jakarta Stock Exchange



Composite Index fell 2.6 per cent and 3.3 per cent, respectively, as at 12.42 pm. Japan’s Nikkei 225 was down 6.5 per cent at midday, while the Topix dropped 4.8 per cent.

South Korea’s Kospi slumped 8 per cent, and Australia’s ASX 200 was 3.2 per cent lower. Research firm BMI on Friday gave Malaysia the fifth-lowest risk score when measuring the impact of the US-Israel-Iran conflict on 24 emerging markets. Its research ex-

amined factors such as each market’s trade disruption due to the effectively shut Strait of Hormuz, terms of trade and external position. Mainland China clocked in at 10th, followed by Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia in 12th, 13th and 14th, respectively. Thailand was flagged as one of the markets with the greatest impact, owing to the country having an energy deficit as large as 4 per cent of its gross domestic product.

As unrest erupts throughout occupied Palestine, Israelis murder three people in a community in the West Bank



Israel: Three Palestinians were slain by Israeli settlers and troops in their hamlet close to Ramallah on Saturday night. This was the third fatal incident in a week of escalating Israeli violence throughout the occupied West Bank. In the short time since Israel and the US began a new war on Iran at the end of February, Israeli settlers have shot and killed five people during invasions of Palestinian communities, grazing land, and olive groves. After breathing in military-grade tear gas sprayed by the Israeli army, a sixth victim passed away on Saturday. The Israeli rights organization B’tselem stated this week that “the cooperation between the military and Israeli settler militias is deepening the ethnic cleansing of the West Bank under the cover of war.” “Settlers steal livestock, destroy crops and food storage, vandalize solar panels and

water tanks, and purposefully graze livestock in Palestinians’ farmed fields.” Additionally, settlers have taken over privately held Palestinian property by razing it with bulldozers. The most recent killings came on Saturday night after Palestinians from Abu Falah tried to stop a group of masked Israelis vandalising olive trees outside the town.

Dozens of armed settlers later descended on the town, relatives and neighbours of the dead told the Guardian, and killed Thaer Faruq Hamayel, 30, and Fara Jawdat Hamayel, 57. Both men had been shot in the head. Israeli security forces who arrived later to the confrontation fired military-grade tear gas into the narrow streets of Abu Falah. Muhammad Hassan, a 54-year-old father of four, died after inhaling it. “What is happening now is extremely dan-

gerous. The world is preoccupied with the war with Iran, while settlers, protected by the Israeli army, continue to attack innocent civilians,” said Amin Shuman, a member of the local council in Abu Falah. “No one is being held accountable.” Settler attacks had intensified over the last week and on Saturday they arrived armed with sticks, slingshots, pistols, and M16 rifles, said Hamid Hamayel, a cousin of Thaer. “Their goal is to confiscate the land and force us to leave. Such attacks would not happen without the close cooperation between the settlers and the Israeli army.”

The Israeli military commander for the occupied West Bank, Maj Gen Avi Bluth, described the shootings in Abu Falah as an “unacceptable incident”. There would be “zero tolerance for civilians who take the law into their own hand”, he added, and said those responsible would be brought to justice. Bluth has not commented directly on two deadly shootings carried out earlier in the week by Israeli settler reservists wearing army uniforms, in which three Palestinians were killed and a fourth critically injured. On Monday two brothers were killed when they tried to prevent settlers damaging olive trees in Qaryut, a small Palestinian village in the northern West Bank. Muhammad Taha Muammar, 52, was shot in the head, and Fahim Taha Muammar, 48, was shot in his lower body. When the Israeli military arrived they arrested more than 20 Palestinians from the village and road closures prevented ambulances from reaching the wounded for more than an hour, B’tselem said.

A court fears that Belgium might turn into a “narco-state”



Drugs trade: Following his colleague’s warning that Belgium was becoming into “a narco-state” where mafia organizations were creating “a parallel force” in society, a top judge stated that international drug criminality presents a threat to societal stability in Belgium. The president of the Antwerp Court of Appeal, Bart Willoex, stated that Belgium was susceptible to criminal activity from drug smuggling via the city’s sizable port, which serves as one of the primary entrance sites

for cocaine smugglers into Europe. In an interview at his court, he told the Guardian, “The amount of money that is involved—to influence people, to corrupt people, and to bribe—is so big that it is really a danger for the stability of our society.” Last October the Antwerp court took the unusual step of publishing an open letter from an anonymous investigative judge, who warned that Belgium was evolving into a narco-state. Extensive mafia structures had taken hold, the anonymous judge

wrote, “becoming a parallel force that challenges not only the police, but the judiciary”. Willoex said Belgium was working to avoid becoming a narco-state: “But it is an evolution and it is a pressure – it is a threat.”

Speaking alongside him, Guido Vermeiren, prosecutor general for the Antwerp and Limburg regions, said he agreed with the anonymous judge. “We are becoming a state with a lot of corruption, with a lot of threats,” he said.

Despite flawed immigration laws, Haitians in Mexico say, “I am trying to live”

America: Jean Baptiste Gensley had a little rucksack and the expectation that his adventure was finally done when he got off a bus in Tapachula, a city in southern Mexico near the Guatemalan border, a year ago. Gensley, 37, was a social worker and radio journalist in his home Haiti, where he examined the consequences of gang violence in some of the most hazardous areas of Port-au-Prince. He eventually attracted the attention of the city’s gangs as his study resulted in police action. Gang members broke into Gensley’s property in November 2024, during a time of increasing violence in the capital of Haiti. In an interview in Tapachula, he stated, “They burned the radio station, my home, and many other things in the area.” It was time to get out. After escaping Haiti and leaving his wife and 11-year-old son in the neighboring Dominican Republic for safety, Gensley continued by himself, fleeing on rural back roads deep into the countryside. He paid a local agency to take him to Punta Cana, a resort town on the eastern shores of the island. From Punta Cana, he flew to Quito, Ecuador’s capital – then took a plane to El Salvador. On buses, in cars and on the back of motorcycle taxis, Gensley made his way hundreds of miles north.

Finally, he crossed into Mexico. He said: “I had no money left. All my funds were spent during the journey.” Gensley had the US in his sights but decided it was more feasible to choose Mexico as his final destination. Like many fleeing Haiti in recent years, he had initially thought the US should be his goal, with better prospects. But a hardening of attitudes and restrictions under Joe Biden and an extreme crackdown on immigration and asylum by Donald Trump ultimately convinced him that Mexico would be a much safer bet. Four days after his arrival in Tapachula, Gensley checked in at the Mexican commission for refugee assistance (Comar), where the agency told him he could get a work permit and right of residence. He was encouraged, but, in fact, months slipped by without any further news from Comar, leaving the Haitian journalist in a restless limbo. Days blended into one another and a settled future felt painfully out of reach. Many of the thousands of additional Haitians that arrived in Tapachula, the primary entry point for migrants heading north via Central America, were caught in a maze of unfriendly or broken immigration processes including the United States, Mexico, and the United Nations. Whether they want to live there or

go to the US or central or northern Mexico, there aren’t many easy routes ahead. In addition to defunding foreign programs, including those that impact Mexico, and excluding migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers from the US-Mexico border, Trump has frequently expressed animosity toward Haiti. Since 2010, Haitians in the US had been eligible for temporary protected status (TPS) after the devastating 2010 earthquake and, later, escalating violence and instability, including the 2021 assassination of the Haitian president Jovenel Moïse that prompted multiple extensions of the program. But the Trump administration is trying to terminate TPS for Haitians. In early February, a lawsuit temporarily blocked the administration’s attempt to end Haitians’ eligibility for TPS, which would have left up to 350,000 Haitians stranded without legal status. Even so, ongoing uncertainty, including a drastic cut to the numbers of people accepted as refugees each year, has made it increasingly difficult for Haitians to reach or stay in the US. Mexico is increasingly becoming a destination for many fleeing war, oppression, crushing poverty, gang violence or combinations of those problems.

Review of Penguin safari trip by Quark Expeditions



Travelling to Antarctica is a unique experience due to the challenges posed by its distance, climate, and cost. For many, it is a once-in-a-lifetime journey. When I decided to visit this region, there were many uncertainties. My main motivation was to witness the penguin colonies in South Georgia, which led me to choose the Quark Expeditions tour and their World Explorer ship. It is important to note that every expedition is subject to unpredictable weather conditions. Therefore, I would like to share my personal experience and review of the South Georgia and Antarctic Peninsula: Penguin Safari trip offered by Quark Expeditions, to provide a better understanding of what to expect during your Antarctica adventure. Still, your tour might

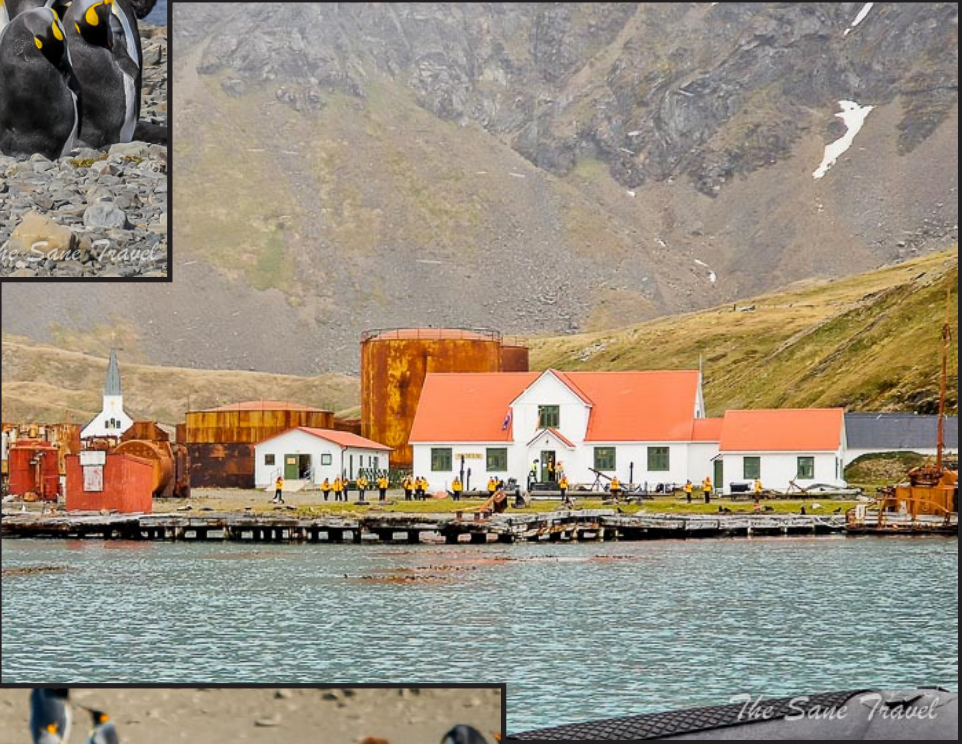
differ from mine a lot.

Day 1. Arrival to Ushuaia

Upon arrival in Ushuaia, I stayed at the Albatros hotel as it was included in the price of the trip. Unfortunately, my experience at the Albatros Hotel was not particularly impressive. The room itself but it appeared that the hotel heavily relied on Antarctic exp-guaranteed occupancy, leading to a lack of focus on providing a or reliable Wi-Fi connection. Since I did not choose this hotel my-not recommend it for early arrivals. However, I did appreciate the attend a pre-expedition meeting, where I was offered a tour of Fuego National Park for an additional fee of \$40, which was not

Day 2. Morning tour and embarking on a ship

You are required to check out of the hotel at 10 a.m., so the tour



was average, dition ships for good breakfast self, I would opportunity to the Tierra del an issue.

to Tierra del Fuego Nation-al Park was convenient because it al-



lowed us to spend the morning nicely before embarking on the ship in the late afternoon. However, I was surprised that we had to take buses to board the ship, even though the distance was short. They explained this was for security reasons. During the boarding process, you have to scan your luggage and have your picture taken. It is important to note that alcoholic beverages are not allowed to bring on the ship. You receive a personal ship card that you will use throughout the journey. Afterwards, you are invited to enjoy a welcome drink before checking into your cabin. I had a comfortable veranda cabin, which was spacious enough and had a nice bathroom with L'occitane toilet-eries.

Due to the weather conditions, I didn't use the veranda much, but I'm unsure what other cabin options are available. One concern I had was about the food, but I must say that there was no reason to worry. The first dinner, as well as all the other meals in the restaurant, were delicious.

Day 3, 4, 5. Heading to South Georgia

We were heading towards South Georgia, and although the ship is fairly speedy, cruising at around 20 kilometres per hour, the distance of slightly over 2000 kilometres still requires considerable time. During these days, I have been attending informative presentations on various subjects related to Antarctica, delivered by knowledgeable speakers. Topics covered include whales, seabirds specific to Antarctica, the history of Terra del Fuego, photography in Polar Regions, and more. Additionally, I have been enjoying delicious meals throughout the journey.



Day 6. Arrival to South Georgia and two landings

Grytviken, located in King Edward Cove at the head of Cumberland Bay, was established in 1904 by Carl Anton Larsen as the first permanent whaling station in South Georgia. Initially, the abundance of humpback whales in the bay allowed the whalers to fulfil their catch without venturing further. Over the years, more than 54,000 whales were processed at Grytviken until the whaling operations ceased in 1964 and the station was abandoned. Despite this, visitors can still gain insight into the early days of the Southern Ocean whale industry during their visit to Grytviken. The historic site also houses the original church, resident cemetery, and the South Georgia Museum, which was added in 1992. Additionally, Grytviken holds significance as the final resting place of explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton, who passed away from a heart attack aboard his ship Quest in Grytviken harbour on January 5, 1922. It is customary for visitors to pay their respects at his grave, with guides leading the group in a toast to 'the Boss'.

Day 7. Hercules Bay and St. Andrews Bay

Due to the avian flu restrictions, we were only able to was quite disappointing for me. Our first cruise took us who emerge from the sea and make their way up the rocky cliffs also provide a suitable habitat for various other bird As it is a fjord, there was no opportunity for us to land Hercules Bay is through a zodiac cruise, where we can On the other hand, St. Andrews Bay is regarded as one of the restrictions. It boasts a magnificent beach with stun-is that it is home to the largest king penguin colony in the

Day 8. Gold Harbour and Cooper Bay

No landings of this day as well. In the morning, a zodiac This location in South Georgia boasts a beach teeming suspended glaciers. Many visitors consider a visit to this day, a zodiac cruise was embarked upon Cooper Bay.

Days 9 and 10. Heading to Antarctica

We embarked on a journey to Antarctica where our sched-as Antarctica's seal population, the art of mobile phone Since this trip was the most expensive one I have ever travels, if I missed something or wasn't satisfied, I always case this time. However, I lacked sufficient information Additionally, I can't compare this trip to others since it not being able to land in South Georgia more frequently

Planning your Croatia holidays? Make sure to in-things to do in Zadar to explore its historic heri-begin with some insights into the history of Za-history. It was a part of the Roman Empire until Byzantine rule. From the 15th to the end of the 18th cen-Republic of Venice. Then Zadar was ruled by Austrians

After World War II it was annexed to Croatia in the Federation of Yugoslavia. Following the Republic of Croatia's declaration of independence and subsequent Serbian aggression, Zadar and its surroundings were attacked in 1991 with a destructive force that had never been seen before. The city was repeatedly targeted and the cultural heritage of Zadar was heavily damaged. Today Zadar is a preserved monument of various historical times and cultures. In 2017, the defensive system of Zadar was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List thanks to its three kilometre long defensive walls that the Venetian Republic built in the 16th century for protection against the Turks. So here are things to do in Zadar in a day during your trip to Croatia.



have zodiac cruises in the morning and afternoon without any landings, which to Hercules Bay, a beautiful protected bay known for its Macaroni Penguins cliffs to their colony on the tussock covered slope overlooking the bay. The high species that breed in the area, such as gulls, Terns, and Light-Mantled Albatross. due to the sheer cliffs along the coastline. Therefore, the best way to experience enjoy the breathtaking sights.

the top landing spots in South Georgia. Still, we had not landed there because ning mountains in the background. And what makes it even more remarkable world.

cruise was made to Gold Harbour, which is known for its breathtaking scenery. with king penguins and elephant seals, all enclosed by magnificent cliffs and place during the tranquil dawn hours to be a memorable experience. Later in the

ule was occupied by a series of informative talks covering diverse subjects such photography, the behaviour of penguins, geological discussions, and more. taken, I had high expectations given the amount of money I paid. In my previous had the option to revisit those places. Unfortunately, that doesn't seem to be the and experience to ensure that everything would go perfectly on the first try. was my only one. Overall, I am satisfied with my experience, although I regret not having an extra day to explore Antarctica in greater depth.

clude Zadar on the Dalmatian coast in your Croatia itinerary. There are many tage and current developments and of course, watch an awesome sunset. Let's dar. Zadar is one of the oldest cities in Croatia with a three thousand years long the 5th century; later Zadar became the administrative centre of Dalmatia under tury it was an important trading port and the largest city-fortress in the entire until 1918 and became part of Italy between the two World wars.

After World War II it was annexed to Croatia in the Federation of Yugoslavia. Following the Republic of Croatia's declaration of independence and subsequent Serbian aggression, Zadar and its surroundings were attacked in 1991 with a destructive force that had never been seen before. The city was repeatedly targeted and the cultural heritage of Zadar was heavily damaged. Today Zadar is a preserved monument of various historical times and cultures. In 2017, the defensive system of Zadar was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List thanks to its three kilometre long defensive walls that the Venetian Republic built in the 16th century for protection against the Turks. So here are things to do in Zadar in a day during your trip to Croatia.

Admire Zadar city walls and city gates

Some sections of the defensive walls were built during the Middle Ages, and some were built by the Venetians much later as a fortification against the Turks, who mounted relentless attacks on the city. Today, only portions of the walls and a few gates remain. The Land Gate, built by Venetian architect Michele Sanmicheli in the 16th century is the best known of all the gates. The gate is known for its ornate renaissance design and comprises three triumphal arches adorned with allegorical statues. It is decorated with Zadar's main patron saint St. Chrysogonus on his horse, and the Shield of St. Mark, the coat of arms of the Republic of Venice. Between the ferry port and the Church of St. Chrysogonus is the Sea Gate, also known as St. Chrysogonus' Gate, because of its proximity to the church of the same name. Above the Roman cornice on the gate's land-facing side, there is a great renaissance panel depicting the naval battle at Lepanto and a fine relief of St. Chrysogonus above it. The gate is adorned with a relief of St. Mark's lion on the side facing the sea.

ENTERTAINMENT

In the Madhubala biopic, Aneet Padda takes Kiara Advani’s position after Shakti Shalini?



Mumbai: Ahaan Panday and Aneet Padda became instant celebrities following the release of their first movie, Saiyaara (2025). The two young performers captured the hearts of the internet, which eagerly anticipated their comeback to the big screen. Aneet was formally revealed as the star of Maddock Horror Comedy Universe’s upcoming



movie Shakti Shalini, while Ahaan inked his next contract with Ali Abbas Zafar. Prior to Aneet, there were rumors that Kiara Advani will star in the female-focused horror comedy. The biopic of Madhubala, one of the best actors in Indian movie history, is reportedly Aneet’s next project, which was previously thought to be Kiara’s next. Actor

Kiara Advani has been in the headlines for the past few weeks due to her casting in Madhubala’s biography, which is being directed by Jasmeet K. Reen of Darlings (2022). Additionally, it was implied that the project has the support of filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali. But a few days ago, Hindustan Times refuted the rumor that Kiara would be cast as Madhubala. According to a recent report published by Filmfare, Aneet Padda, star of Saiyaara, has reportedly been signed to star in Madhubala’s biopic, which will soon start filming. According to the source, the casting may be revealed shortly. The internet already has a lot to say while we wait for confirmation.

Some internet users are happy that Aneet has been cast as Madhubala rather than Kiara. One such fan claimed, “Far better than kiara,” whereas another gushed, “perfect choice . She resembles her and has

the ability to act. However, some people think Aneet isn’t the right person for this endeavor. While some fans think Triptii Dimri would be a suitable choice for Madhubala’s biopic, others commented, “Noooo, please such a Misfit As much as I love that girl and her face card, it’s just not for her.” One commenter said, “Terrible terrible casting. Looks absolutely nothing like her.” “From the new lot only one I can see maybe pulling this off is Triptii maybe...she has that innocence and acting in her,” said one Reddit user. “Feel like she can - Triptii can act with her eyes and hold the frame even in silence,” said another. I believe that portraying Madhubala requires eye acting, which is uncommon. It’s all in the eyes and the joy, sorrow, and feelings they contain when it comes to Madhubala. “No, not Aneet, but Tripti Dimri would be perfect for Madhubala biopic,” was another comment.

In response to Arijit Singh’s decision to stop playback singing, Madhubanti Bagchi



Mumbai: The country was shocked when singer Arijit Singh announced earlier this year that he was retiring from playback singing. Singer Madhubanti Bagchi, who became well-known for songs like Aaaj ki Raat and the more recent Shararat, has now made comments on the subject, questioning how singers are classified in the playback singing profession. Rohini Madhubanti stated, “The system is basically

putting you in the box and not letting you,” when the subject was brought up at a roundtable discussion. In essence, you work in the service sector. You serve a specific purpose, and you don’t serve that role if you wish to pursue your own interests, which is discouraged. Usme paisa nahi dalenge (they won’t pay for things you do in your own space). Woh aise gaane gawayenge bhi jisme paisa nahi dalenge. Promote

nahi karenge uss gaane ko (They will force you to sing songs without providing financial support or any kind of promotion). Since it doesn’t accomplish the goal, one gets labeled as the XYZ vocalist. “That was how it has always been, for someone like Arijit Singh, or Sunidhi Chauhan, or a Shreya Ghoshal,” she continued. Just think of the variety of their artistic abilities. The voice range is unimaginable. However, has the industry—more especially, the playback industry—helped them realize their full potential? No. They’ve been divided into segments. The quantity of passionate and tearful songs that Arijit has performed... He needed some time to get to a Binte Dil. He is quite fortunate. Can I say the same thing about myself? I’m not sure whether I’ll ever hear a song like that.

Amid tensions in the Middle East, Urvashi Rautela leaves Kuwait and travels to Mumbai

Mumbai: As she left Kuwait amid growing tensions in the Middle East due to the confrontation between Iran and Israel, actor Urvashi Rautela gave an emotional update. The actor acknowledged that she became tearful when boarding her aircraft back to India, claiming that a sudden rush of terror had overtaken her, leaving her feeling exposed and uneasy.

In a video that she shared on her Instagram Stories, Urvashi showed signs of emotion, including wiping away tears. She encouraged her followers to pray for a safe return home and to keep her in their thoughts. She also expressed her emotions in a note on her Instagram Stories. Until she got on the plane, Urvashi acknowledged, she was alright. Then all of a sudden, she became afraid.”Until I sat on the plane, everything was fine. However, as soon as I settled in, a sudden wave of fear overcame me, and my heart began to race.” I’m not sure why, but I sudden-



ly became really afraid,” she wrote. “I just feel a little vulnerable and anxious right now, and I really need your prayers,” Urvashi continued. For a safe voyage, please keep me in your thoughts. To me, that would mean so lot. I apologize if this seems sentimental or if I caused you any concern. I simply felt compelled to express my feelings. Right now, your support and prayers mean the world to me.” It is thought that when the Middle East situation

worsened, Urvashi was in Kuwait for a work commitment. Urvashi has arrived in Mumbai in the meantime. By sharing a video from inside her automobile while driving through the city, she made a similar suggestion. Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran’s supreme leader, was killed in a combined missile assault by the US and Israel in February. Iran retaliated by attacking Israeli military targets and American bases throughout the Middle East. As a result, all foreign visitors

were evacuated and airspace throughout the Gulf was closed. Since the US and Israel unleashed strikes on Iran on February 28, war has spread across the region and casualties have been reported in countries across the Middle East. The conflict has impacted Gulf countries like the UAE, Qatar, and Jordan. Thirteen people, seven of them civilians, have been killed in countries around the Gulf since the war began, including an 11-year-old girl in Kuwait.

Salim Merchant Responds To AR Rahman’s “Communal” Comment

New Delhi: AR Rahman’s comment about communal bias was discussed by composer Salim Merchant. He made the point that it is hard to think that there is any communal bias at work if AR Rahman is writing the soundtrack for Ramayana, one of the largest movies about Indian mythology in history. Salim offered his opinion, saying, “I don’t think that is true. With all due respect, Rahman may be correct in his own opinion based on his personal experiences. That isn’t accurate, in my opinion. I don’t think there is a problem with any communal issue if the composer of the largest film in Indian cinema history, the Hindu epic Ramayana, is also the composer. However, that is my



perspective; he may have different motivations. AR Rahman previously discussed getting few job offers in Bollywood. “People who are not creative have the power to decide things now, and this might have been a communal thing also, but not in my face,” the Oscar-winning composer had stated. The

music company hired its five composers after they booked you, according to what I understand to be Chinese whispers. “Oh, that’s great—rest for me, I can relax with my family,” I exclaimed. AR Rahman posted a video explaining that he never meant to offend anyone after receiving significant

response. “Dear friends, music has always been a way for me to connect, celebrate, and honor a culture. India is my home, my inspiration, and my teacher. I am aware that intentions can occasionally be misinterpreted, but my goal has always been to uplift, honor, and serve through music.” “I hope my sincerity is felt, and I have never wished to cause pain,” he remarked. AR Rahman has recently written music for Bollywood’s Shikara, 99 Songs, Dil Bechara, Mimi, Atrangi Re, Heropanti 2, and Tere Ishk Mein; Malayankunju in Malayalam; and Ponninyin Selvan: I and II, Pathu Thala, Maamannan, Ayalan, Lal Salaam, Raayan, Kadhalikka Neramillai, and Thug Life in Tamil.

Sara Arjun puts a nice spin on her famous “boyfriend girlfriend” McDonald’s commercial

Mumbai: Many people remember actor Sara Arjun from the famous “boyfriend girlfriend” McDonald’s commercial. Arjun has been acting in advertisements and movies since she was very young. The actor is currently starring in a new McDonald’s commercial that features the same “boyfriend girlfriend” scenario, but with a cute twist! In the latest advertisement, Sara was shown informing the boy she wasn’t interested in the “boyfriend-girlfriend” scenario and making jokes about how high expectations are common in current relationships. All he wants, though, is the McAloo Tikki burger! Then Sara asks, “What would she do, stare at him while he eats?” The new Buddy Meal deal, which guarantees that the combo can be enjoyed



together, is then introduced in the advertisement. She says, “I’m loving it!” at the end. For those who don’t know, Sara played a young actor in the 2011 commercial who asked the boy if they were “boyfriend-girlfriend.” At that point, the lad shared the girl’s demand too much and refused. Sara had replied that she was just interested in the Tikki burger. Many

fans were nostalgic over this adorable tribute to the old commercial. One social media user referenced a dialogue in Dhurandhar and wrote, “Burger bachein!” “So cute!” exclaimed another. “She looks so gorgeous!” someone commented. Another user commented, “I loved this ad back then and love it even more now.” Regarding her career, Sara will next appear

in Dhurandhar: The Revenge, the follow-up to Dhurandhar. Yalina, played by Sara Arjun, had a brief but memorable appearance in the trailer, which was published a few days ago. Fans questioned whether she was targeting Ranveer Singh’s Hamza when she pointed the gun squarely at the screen. Ranveer Singh was portrayed in Dhurandhar as an Indian spy who climbs the ranks in Pakistan’s underworld while infiltrating gangs in Lyari to destroy a terror network that targets India. Arjun Rampal and Ranveer will engage in a fierce battle in the sequel. In addition to R Madhavan, Sara Arjun, Rakesh Bedi, Danish Pandor, and Sanjay Dutt, Dhurandhar 2 is slated to open in theaters on March 19 with paid preview screenings on March 18.

Firoz Nadiadwala Says There Will Be Multiple Villains in Welcome 4



New Delhi: Welcome 4 is officially in production,

confirmed by producer Firoz Nadiadwala. The script is nearing completion and will include large-scale music and action, featuring a multicultural soundtrack. Nadiadwala hinted at the return of popular characters like Uday Bhai, Majnu Bhai, and Dr Ghungroo, with multiple antagonists in play. He emphasized the film’s ambitious scale, likening it to a “10 on the Richter

scale,” as the team finalizes the cast while writing scenes tailored to specific actors. The original Welcome, directed by Anees Bazmee, was a major comedy success, and its sequel, Welcome Back, saw several actors reprise their roles. The upcoming installment, Welcome to the Jungle, directed by Ahmed Khan, includes a large ensemble cast and has faced speculation

regarding its release, which Nadiadwala has dismissed, asserting that filming is complete. He praised the cast, particularly Akshay Kumar and Paresh Rawal, for their contributions amidst logistical challenges, including scenes with numerous horses and army helicopters, and noted the use of cars valued around Rs 400 crore for a song filmed in Dubai.

Ekta Kapoor posts videos of herself watching cricket for the first time



Mumbai: The ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2026 final between India and New Zealand was the first cricket match that producer Ekta Kapoor has ever witnessed. She shared a number of videos on her Instagram Stories on Sunday. Her friends and coworkers joined her for the game. Actor Urvashi Dholakia and her teammates were spotted enjoying the match, and Ekta shared snapshots of the exciting evening. Later, her lover Arslan Goni and close friend Sussanne Khan, an interior designer, also joined the group. In an open video from the event, Ekta acknowl-

edged that she had never been particularly interested in cricket. She chose to try it, nonetheless, because she was surrounded by passionate supporters and the excitement of the championship game. The producer candidly admitted, laughing as she captured the incident, that it was her “very first time” participating in the sport. Additionally, the producer used a lighthearted occasion to advertise her well-liked television program, Naagin, by saying that fans might watch it during game breaks. “First time in my life I am watching cricket, because other people in this world like cricket, not me. Of course, we are hoping India wins. India should win. But agar break me tumlog ne Naagin bhi dekh liya toh maza aajega (If you watch Nagging during the break, then it will be fun),” she stated. India amassed 255 runs in the game, while New Zealand was eventually dismissed for 159. The Akshay Kumar-starring Bhooth Bangla, Ekta’s next project, is scheduled to open in theaters next month. On April 10, renowned director Priyadarshan’s horror comedy will be released. In collaboration with Akshay’s banner Cape of Good Films, Ekta’s production company, Balaji Motion Pictures, a branch of Balaji Telefilms Ltd., presents Bhooth Bangla. Wamiqa Gabbi, Paresh Rawal, Tabu, and Rajpal Yadav will also be featured in Bhooth Bangla. Veteran actor Asrani, who passed away in October 2025, will also make a postmortem cameo.

How long will it last and why is Mumbai now at forty degrees

Mumbai, Mar 10: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has raised the alert level from yellow to orange for Tuesday due to the intensifying summer heat in Mumbai and surrounding areas, with maximum temperatures rising well above seasonal norms. With clear skies and high temperatures reminiscent of early summer, residents faced yet another sweltering day. Heatwave-like circumstances with serious health hazards, particularly for extended outdoor exposure, are indicated by the new orange alert, a higher warning level than the previous yellow advisory. Parts of Mumbai, Thane, and Palghar are among the important urban and suburban areas covered by the advisory, where hot and muggy weather is predicted to last through the middle of the week. A senior meteorological official stated, “The IMD has issued an orange alert due to continued high temperatures and heat stress risk in the city and adjoining districts,” advising locals to avoid being outside between noon and early afternoon. In certain areas of the metropolitan area,



Tuesday’s maximum temperatures were close to 38 to 40 degrees Celsius, with several local stations reporting temperatures significantly higher than the March normal. Strong dry winds and weak sea breezes, according to meteorologists, have hindered coastal cooling, resulting in prolonged heat. Although such high readings this early in March are exceptional, seasonal forecasters note that they are consistent with a larger pattern of early heat surges in western India this year. “Daytime highs are significantly higher than long-term norms. This is because easterly winds from many other

regions, including the interior of Maharashtra, are being brought in by the anti-cyclonic system above Gujarat. These usually sink after crossing the Ghats. The temperature rises as a result. In a day or two, the city’s temperatures should decline, according to independent weather monitor Athreya Shetty. It is anticipated that the combination of high temperatures and increasing humidity would raise heat-index readings, or the felt temperature, making it feel hotter than the official numbers. Health professionals and hospital emergency services have reaffirmed the need for prudence.”During this phase, staying hydrated and avoiding the sun are crucial. Outdoor laborers, children, and the elderly are especially vulnerable. People with respiratory conditions are more vulnerable, and midday sun exposure must be restricted. In such intense heat, dehydration can quickly become a major worry, according to pulmonologist Lancelot Pinto of Mumbai. Residents and commuters on the street complained about the sudden increase in temperature. “There is hardly any air, and

it already seems like mid-May at lunchtime. Even going for a ten-minute stroll around noon is exhausting, according to Griha Joshi, a local Dadar trader.The city’s air quality index (AQI) displayed conflicting signals in addition to the heat; some monitoring stations reported bad to severe levels, while officials acknowledged modest improvements over the previous several days. Asthma and other respiratory issues can be made worse by poor air quality trapped under hot, stagnant air.

Authorities are calling for greater community awareness and modifications to everyday routines, such as avoiding intense outdoor activities during peak heat hours and staying hydrated, due to the unseasonal hot weather that is predicted over the next 48 to 72 hours.According to meteorologists, a minor drop in temperature may occur in a few days when wind patterns change, even if the orange signal indicates a considerable risk of heat stress. Mumbaikars are urged to prepare for persistently hot weather and heed official heat advisories until then.

Shahid Afridi on the specific cause of India’s victory in the 2026 T20 World Cup

New Delhi: India’s T20 World Cup 2026 campaign has been nearly perfect, with the exception of a defeat to South Africa. And the championship game was possibly their best encounter. India smashed 255 for 5 in 20 overs thanks to Sanju Samson’s third consecutive half century in the main event. Then, as New Zealand collapsed for 159, Jasprit Bumrah returned with figures of 4 for 15 in four overs.

Pakistanis have also expressed gratitude and admiration for India’s unprecedented second consecutive T20 World Cup victory.

Shahid Afridi made it quite clear. “The World Cup has concluded. India deserves the title, in my opinion. They make a fantastic team. The reserve players were just as talented as the starting eleven. For this reason, your bench must be sturdy. Due to the strength of their bench, India could have selected any player and placed them in the starting eleven. In a video on his X account, Afridi said, “They played the entire tournament as champions.” “Sanju Samson was exceptional. He was given the chance, and he made the most of it by building the innings and

hitting sensibly. Tonight, Abhishek Sharma also gave a strong performance. Similar to his performance against Pakistan, Ishan Kishan again gave a fantastic performance. The foundation of their bowling was Jasprit Bumrah, who has always supported India with his outstanding performances. He is one of the best bowlers, in my opinion, whether he is using the new ball, old ball, slower ball, or yorker,” he continued. Former captain Rashid Latif, meanwhile, claimed that India’s victory was not unexpected since their players were used to playing well under duress.”Players also become accustomed to winning when they consistently make it to the finals of major events,” he noted.

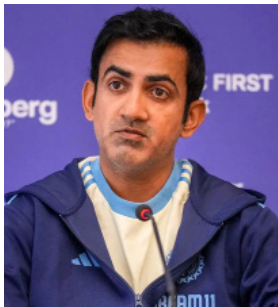
In contrast to Pakistan, where frequent changes and impatience have led to a number of issues, he added that the Indian cricket team’s success was largely due to continuity and stability.



Gautam Gambhir Reveals Plans for the 2027 ODI World Cup and Makes a Significant Declaration

New Delhi: Head coach Gautam Gambhir says that at the end of the IPL 2026 season, India will have the blueprint prepared for the ODI World Cup 2027. Gambhir’s remarks were made barely one day after India defeated New Zealand handily at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on Sunday to win the T20 World Cup 2026. The Suryakumar Yadav-led team had a fantastic campaign; they only dropped one match against South Africa and completely outclassed their rivals in both the semifinal and the championship game. Gambhir disclosed that after the competition, the coaching staff will recover before beginning to get ready for the ODI World Cup. Many bouncy grounds are anticipated for the World Cup, which will take place in South Africa, Namibia, and Zimbabwe. Gambhir stated that the team management will try to find players who are suitable for the cir-

cumstances and finalize their strategy and tactics before the end of the IPL 2026 season. ”After the IPL, preparations for the 2027 World Cup will begin. Between the IPL 2026 and the World Cup, there will be 25 to 30 ODIs. These days, this format is not frequently used. It will be better for us if we begin planning early,” he said to India Today.Playing cricket in South Africa is difficult. We must determine which players are appropriate for the situation and come up with combinations. That will be done by the coaches and the selectors. India would have a plan for the 2027 ODI World Cup by the end of the IPL 2026, Gambhir continued.A day after India’s victory in the T20 World Cup, Gambhir answered every question pertaining to team atmosphere. ”I have a straightforward philosophy: there is no need for me to remain in that dressing room if the majority of the squad members are not satisfied



with me. I’m doing a good job if most people are satisfied. If you report honestly, you will be aware of the team’s culture. The coach stated, “There is so much scrutiny, limelight, and media attention that the Indian team’s atmosphere can’t stay hidden from anybody.” ”Yeh sab bekaar ki cheezein hain jab bola jaata hai ki team ka mahaul accha nahi hai (It’s all rubbish when people say that the team atmosphere is bad).” The captain and I don’t need to speak. You may get a sense of the team’s vibe if you follow us closely, from player interviews to practice sessions to travel.”

IDFC First Bank settled fraud claims in Chandigarh for Rs 645 crore

New Delhi, Mar 10: IDFC First Bank announced on Tuesday that it had paid Rs 645 crore to resolve fraud accusations at a branch in Chandigarh and that it had not discovered any other irregularities.Last month, the private sector IDFC First Bank revealed that certain staff and others at a certain Chandigarh branch had perpetrated a fraud of Rs 590 crore in a particular set of Haryana state government accounts.The bank stated in a regulatory statement on Tuesday that it had received claims and paid the net principal amount of Rs 645 crore, which is Rs 55 crore more than the initial principal estimate of Rs 590 crore. ”These allegations are related to the same incident, not a new one, and are connected to the same branch. “There are no other outstanding claims,” IDFC First stated, adding that it would keep pursuing legal action against the offenders in order to get the money back.The bank added that it had finished reconciling all pertinent accounts and had found no more disparities.Since February 25, 2026, no additional claims from the aforementioned Chandigarh branch or from any other organization nationwide have been received,” it continued.As of February 28, 2026, the bank’s total deposit balance was Rs 2,92,381 crore, up from Rs 2,91,133 crore as of December 31, 2025, according to IDFC First.

The BCCI sets a new record by announcing a huge prize for the T20 World Cup winners



New Delhi: By offering a staggering INR 131 crore cash incentive for the Indian team winning the T20 World Cup 2026, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has smashed its own record. The Board announced a monetary reward of INR 125 crore when the Indian side, led by Rohit Sharma, won the 2024 T20 World Cup in Barbados. The BCCI announced an even bigger prize, surpassing its own record set two years prior, after Suryakumar Yadav’s side made

history in Ahmedabad by becoming the first team to successfully retain the title.

“The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced a cash reward of INR 131 crore for Team India following their triumphant campaign in the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2026,” the BCCI said in a statement. India became the first team in the history of the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup to successfully defend the title after defeating New Zealand in the final at the Narendra Modi Stadium in

Ahmedabad. With this triumph, India solidified their status as one of the most successful teams in the format’s history and became the first side to win the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup three times.Once again, the Board congratulates the players, support personnel, and selectors on this momentous accomplishment and wishes them further success.”The International Cricket Council (ICC) also awarded a large financial prize to Suryakumar Yadav’s team. The international governing body of the sport awarded the Indian side USD 3 million, or roughly INR 27.48 crore, for winning the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2026. A record-breaking tournament prize fund of USD 13.5 million, up 20% from the previous edition, included this award.

The squad got performance-based bonuses of about USD 31,154 (INR 28.6 lakh) for each match won during the group and Super 8 stages of the tournament, in addition to this lump sum for winning the final.

MS Dhoni and Rohit Sharma attended the T20 World Cup 2026 Final, but Virat Kohli did not

New Delhi: India defeated New Zealand by 96 runs on Sunday in the T20 World Cup 2026 final at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, fulfilling certain requirements. The presence of two of India’s previous captains, MS Dhoni and Rohit Sharma, who watched the game from the venue’s VIP box, was the icing on the cake, even if a number of records were broken on the occasion. Fans were overjoyed to see Rohit and Dhoni in the final, but many were sad that another legend of Indian cricket, Virat Kohli, was not there. While players like Rohit and Kohli continue to play in the ODI format, Dhoni has fully withdrawn from international cricket. However,



Women’s Reservation Center Planning Polls for 2029

New Delhi, Mar 10: According to sources, the Center is looking at ways to speed up the implementation of women’s reservations in state assemblies and Parliament, and a constitutional amendment may be introduced during the current session.The Modi administration wants to make sure the 33% quota is operational in time for the 2029 Lok Sabha elections, despite mounting worries about delays.The government is now thinking of decoupling these conditions, even though the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam of 2023 initially tied the reservation to the completion of the census and subsequent delimitation procedure. The two-phase digital census was just approved by the government in December 2025, therefore the implementation would probably take longer than 2029 due to the typical schedule for population

counts and the creation of a delimitation commission. According to current projections, the census might not be completed until March 2027, after which constituency boundaries would need to be redrawn for a number of years.The administration is investigating the potential of a legislative change that would let the reservation to go into force regardless of the delimitation status in order to avoid this timescale. While he could not disclose the specifics, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju has hinted at the presentation of a major law during the current session. Opposition parties have long criticized this action, claiming that linking the quota to the census was a strategic delay. In order to determine support for this updated strategy, the government is currently contacting different political groups.

Telangana CM opens a lake from the Nizam era following renovation

Hyderabad, Mar 10: The Bum-Rukh-ud-Dowla, a 256-year-old ancient body of water near Shivarampally in the old city of Hyderabad, was formally opened to the public on Sunday by Telangana chief minister A Revanth Reddy following an evening drive to repair the lake.The Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency (HYDRAA), a specialized organization established by the state government to recover public land and revitalize Hyderabad’s fast diminishing water bodies, completed the repair. The chief minister stated that restored lakes should serve as dynamic ecological and recreational areas in addition to serving as water storage systems at the opening of the lake campus, which features landscaped gardens and a greeting arch in the Persian style.He suggested creating “night economy hubs” next to these lakes by designating stores solely for women’s self-help groups (SHGs). The plan calls for SHG members to run these establishments until one in the morning, establishing secure public areas and providing women with employment opportunities. He claimed that if the encroaching lakes, ponds, and parks were not repaired, Hyderabad would lose its splendor. The historic lakes that had been encroached upon during the previous few decades are being restored. As part of creating a pollution-free environment, we have already begun construction on the Himayat Sagar Eco Park,” he stated.Bum-Rukn-ud-Dowla Lake has a history spanning over two centuries, according to Mohammad Safiullah, a historical conservationist from Hyderabad. The term “bum” refers to a “spring” or reservoir in Persian, specifically constructed around 1770 during the reign of Nawab Rukn-ud-Dowla. Initially over 100 acres, it served as a vital water source for irrigation and drinking. Due to urban expansion and encroachments, its area reduced to 4.12 acres. Restoration efforts initiated by the Revanth Reddy government have restored the lake to approximately 17 acres, enhancing its storage capacity and water circulation.

“LPG supply stopped”: Gurugram eateries are concerned; hotels in Bengaluru and Chennai may close

New Delhi, Mar 10: Days after home and commercial gas cylinder rates were raised nationwide, a number of hotel associations in India have reported a shortage of commercial LPG cylinders. Hotel organizations in Chennai and Bengaluru reported difficulties and warned that if the LPG supply was not restored, eateries in those cities could have to close on Tuesday, March 10.Due to the continuous confrontation between Iran and the United States, which has sparked upheaval throughout the Middle East, oil prices have increased globally. Given Iran’s targeting of the Strait of Hormuz, a vital shipping route that transports a fifth of the world’s oil, the scenario has raised fears of an additional surge in energy costs. On Monday, the Bangalore Hotels Association and the Chennai Hotels Association asserted that both cities’ commercial LPG sup-

ply to eateries has suffered greatly. “Since the gas supply has stopped, the hotels will be closed from tomorrow,” the Bengaluru association declared.Additionally, the body stated that regular people, students, and medical professionals who depend on the hotels for daily meals could be impacted by the disruption in operations. In a similar statement, the Chennai hoteliers group asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to get involved.

Cylinders are no longer supplied by commercial LPG distributors, who claim to be out of stock. Many restaurants are consequently compelled to close, the body tweeted.Additionally, it stated that the supply of food to IT parks and college dorms may be affected, as will current banquet reservations made by hotels. In addition to these hotel associations in Chennai and Bengaluru, the National Restaurant Association

of India (NRAI) warned of “catastrophic closure” of eateries and called for government involvement.”Commercial LPG is essential to the restaurant industry’s operations. As previously reported by HT, NRAI stated, “Any disruption therein will result in a catastrophic closure of the majority of restaurants.” The aforementioned southern cities are not the only ones whose hotel operations are severely disrupted.

Commercial LPG is apparently in short supply in restaurants in Gurugram and Mumbai, and some are reportedly looking into other options.”Commercial LPG deliveries have been temporarily halted, according to our vendor. Our backup cylinders have a three-day shelf life. We could have to switch to residential cylinders or cut back on menu items if the scenario persists,” said Rohit Arora, a Gurugram restaurant manager.

“More Motivation For Young Kids”: Ishan Kishan’s Significant Remark Upon Returning Home Following T20 World Cup Victory

New Delhi: Ishan Kishan, an Indian wicketkeeper who had a significant part in his country’s victory in the 2026 T20 World Cup, stated that he aims to motivate new players with his performance as he lands at the Patna Airport. With his father, Pranav Pandey, at his side, Kishan was greeted warmly by the supporters, who sang his name as they welcomed the champion player. Kishan, who made a powerful comeback to the Indian team shortly before the World Cup, believes that new players in this city can be inspired by his remarkable recovery. “Our team won, obviously, it is a very good thing, not only for us, but for the whole nation. We hope to continue playing cricket like this and keep winning,” Kishan said to the media at the airport. “It feels great because I believe the better I perform, the more motivation it will be for the young kids here who want to grow. I always try to ensure as many players as possible emerge



from every corner. Now that we’ve played the World Cup, it shows that with hard work, you can succeed from anywhere,” he added. Kishan, who became the second-highest run scorer for India in the T20 World Cup 2026 after hammering 317 runs in nine innings at

an average of 35.22 and a strike rate of over 193, with three fifties, including one in the finals, spoke about his plans for the future. “Nothing much, just keep scoring runs, keep playing, and keep winning,” he said. While his father, Pranav, said, “It feels very good. We have repeat-

ed history and also avenged the defeat. Now we will prepare for the 2027 World Cup.” Kishan will now take part in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026, where he will represent his team, Sunrisers Hyderabad, who have retained the batter ahead of the tournament.

Dango Ouattara’s penalty error propels West Ham to the FA Cup quarterfinals

New Delhi: With a 5-3 penalty shootout victory over Brentford, who suffered the consequences of Dango Ouattara’s spot-kick error on Monday, West Ham advanced to the FA Cup quarterfinals. In the 2-2 draw at the London Stadium, Nuno Espirito Santo’s team again lost the lead as Igor Thiago’s brace offset Jarrod Bowen’s treble, forcing extra time. However, Brentford winger Ouattara’s terrible attempt at a chipped “Panenka” penalty during the shootout went straight at West Ham goalkeeper Alphonse Areola. It was an awful mistake by the Burkina Faso international and West Ham took full advantage. Bowen, Valentin Castellanos, Callum Wilson, Tomas Soucek and Konstantinos Mavropanos all converted their spot-kicks, ensuring West Ham will host Leeds in April for a place in the semi-finals.

The east London club’s first FA Cup quarter-final for 10 years is welcome respite in a difficult season. They sit third bottom of the Premier League table, behind Nottingham Forest on goal difference, with nine games to save themselves from crashing into the Championship. “The fans deserve this moment of joy for the way they support the team through bad times,”



Nuno said. “I’m very proud. The players are delighted because it was a tough one. Brentford is an amazing team but we contained them and created a lot of chances.”

The boys are enjoying playing in the London Stadium, the atmosphere is good. “Seventh in the Premier League and in contention for European qualification, Brentford missed the chance to reach the quarter-finals for the first time since 1989. Defend-

ing Ouattara’s howler, Brentford boss Keith Andrews said: “When you miss a penalty it is a tough moment, but it is easier to not take a penalty than take a penalty.

“We’ve had it in the past when people have been persecuted and ridiculed for missing a penalty on the biggest stage and that’s ridiculous.” He practises that technique a lot and will have the utmost support from me and everyone around.”

Aleksandar Kovacevic is defeated by Novak Djokovic to go to the Indian Wells Round of 16



New Delhi: On Monday, Novak Djokovic defeated 72nd-ranked American Aleksandar Kovacevic 6-4, 1-6, 6-4 to go to Indian Wells’ fourth round for the first time since 2017. Playing in his first competition since losing to Carlos Alcaraz in the Australian Open final, Djokovic was overwhelmed by the 27-year-old New Yorker’s 16 aces. Djokovic won the first set with an early break stand-up, but

Kovacevic had rediscovered his rhythm and easily defeated a very irritated Djokovic in the second set. Djokovic regrouped in the third -- finally finding the break he needed in the final game. “I knew coming into the match that if he serves well and if he picks his spot in the box it’s going to be tough to break him,” Djokovic said. “I wasn’t maybe feeling my rhythm on that return very well today, but he was just making

my life very difficult, returning the serve. “He was just aching me all over, getting a lot of free points. “Today was really anybody’s game until the last couple of points. That last game in the third where he missed some first serves, gave me looks on the second and I used it. That’s pretty much it.” With five Indian Wells titles Djokovic is tied for the record with Swiss great Roger Federer. But the Serbian superstar hasn’t made

it to the quarter-finals in the California desert since his last title run in 2016 and now he’s had to come through a pair of three-setters to return to the last 16. He’ll face defending champion Jack Draper for a place in the quarter-finals after the Briton beat Argentina’s Francisco Cerundolo 6-1, 7-5. Draper’s victory here last year -- featuring a semi-final win over Carlos Alcaraz -- launched his rise to fourth in the world. But he then missed the better part of six months with an arm injury and arrived in California ranked 14th, his win over Cerundolo marking the first time since June that he’s posted back-to-back ATP victories. Cerundolo served for the second set at 5-4, but a few mistakes gave Draper an opening and the Briton broke back, saving a pair of break points in the next game before finishing it off on Cerundolo’s serve. A pair of top-10 seeds were sent packing as Britain’s Cameron Norrie ousted eighth-ranked Australian Alex de Minaur 6-4, 6-4 and Aussie qualifier Rinki Hijikata 10th-ranked Alexander Bublik 6-7 (3/7), 7-6 (7/3), 6-3. Hijikata, ranked 117th in the world, claimed his first win over a top-10 player to advance to a meeting with Norrie.

The Hero Indian Open is scheduled to begin on March 26 with a record prize purse



New Delhi: The 2026 Hero Indian Open, which will take place in Gurugram from March 26 to 29, will include a record prize fund and a top-tier field led by PGA Tour player Akshay Bhatia. The prize money for the tournament, which is approved by the Indian Golf Union (IGU) and DP World Tour, has been raised from USD 2.25 million to a record USD 2.55 million. The 24-year-old Indian-American Bhatia, who achieved unprecedented success by winning the renowned Arnold Palmer Invitational 2026 in Bay Hill, Orlando, USA, will be among the elite field. Now placed second on the FedEx Cup standings, Bhatia, who is Hero MotoCorp’s Global Brand Ambassador, will make his first trip to India with this tour. Another Hero MotoCorp Brand Ambassador, Rayhan Thomas, who has been on the Korn

Ferry Tour for last two years, is also confirmed for the field. The field will also include Italy’s Francesco Molinari, who is also a three-time PGA Tour winner. Molinari became the first player from Italy to win a Major Championship when he triumphed at the 147th Open Championship in 2018. The six-time DP World Tour winner has also represented Europe in three victorious Ryder Cup teams in 2010, 2012 and 2018 -- where he secured the winning point at Le Golf National in Paris. The current list of confirmed players also includes the reigning champion Eugenio Chacarra of Spain, and Thomas Detry of Belgium, winner of the Phoenix Open on the PGA Tour in 2025. Also, in the field are current season winners on DP World Tour - South African Casey Jarvis, who won two successive events on

the DP World Tour recently, Spain’s Nacho Elvira and Germany’s Freddy Schott amongst others. Former runner-up Veer Ahlawat, Yuvraj Sandhu, the 2025 India No. 1, Manu Gandas, along with Shaurya Bhattacharya, will be among the top Indian names in the field. Brijinder Singh, President, Indian Golf Union, said, “The Hero Indian Open remains the crown jewel in the calendar of the Indian Golf Union. This year’s tournament promises to be bigger than ever as we welcome a stellar field of leading international players along with India’s finest professionals. The association between Hero MotoCorp and the Indian Open has grown stronger with every passing year and today stands as a proud partnership spanning more than two decades,” said Sanjay Bhan, Executive Vice President, Hero MotoCorp.

Manu Bhaker Wins the National Trials Finals in the Women’s 10-meter Pistol Event

New Delhi: At the national selection trials T3 (Group A), which ended on Tuesday, Olympian Manu Bhaker won the women’s 10-meter pistol event final. In the eight-woman final, Sainyam, the winner of trial two, came in second, while Esha Singh took third.

Manu, the penultimate qualifier to make it to the finals, kept up her advantage from the conclusion of the second round to win first with a total score of 246.1, comfortably 4.2 points more than World Cup penultimate silver medallist Sainyam, who ended with 241.9. Asian Championship gold and World Championship bronze medallist Esha finished third with a score of 220.6. Asian Games champion Palak Gulia finished fourth after a



score of 200.2 followed by Anjali Choudhary, who hit 179.8. Surbhi Rao finished in sixth place with a score of 158.2 followed by Deaflympics medallist Pranjal Prashant Dhumal and Muskan, who scored 138.7 and 117.0 respectively, completing the top eight. Esha had qualified for

the final in top spot with a score of 580-21x followed by Surbhi Rao who shot 578-12x. Muskan qualified in third place after scoring 577-15x followed by Anjali Choudhary (575-19x), Sainyam (575-16x), Palak (574-14x) and Manu (574-11x).

Why, in contrast to Rohit Sharma and MS Dhoni, Virat Kohli did not attend the T20 World Cup 2026 Final

Ahmedabad: India defeated New Zealand by 96 runs on Sunday in the T20 World Cup 2026 final at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, fulfilling certain requirements. The presence of two of India’s previous captains, MS Dhoni and Rohit Sharma, who watched the game from the venue’s VIP box, was the icing on the cake, even if a number of records were broken on the occasion. Fans were overjoyed to see Rohit and Dhoni in the final, but many were sad that another legend of Indian cricket, Virat Kohli, was not there. While Dhoni has completely retired from international cricket, the likes of Rohit and Kohli are still active in the ODI



format. Yet, the fact that Dhoni and Rohit arrived at the venue and attended the complete game, Kohli’s

absence remained baffling for many. As fans flooded social media, asking for reasons behind Kohli’s

absence, there are two plausible explanations that surface. As past leaders of the T20 World Cup, MS

Dhoni and Rohit Sharma were present in an official role at the final. When India defeated South Africa in the final in Barbados in 2024, Rohit duplicated Dhoni’s victory in the first T20 World Cup in 2007. As captain, Kohli failed to win the T20 World Cup, in contrast to them. Therefore, the talismanic batter had no part to play in terms of formal participation in the tournament. Though Kohli hasn’t completely quit international cricket, he does get to spend a lot more time with his family, having left T20Is and Tests. In an interview in the past, the veteran batter revealed that once he retires, people would not get to see him for a while.