

Awareness programme on PM Vishwakarma scheme held in Mizoram’s Serchhip

Aizawl, Jan 20: An awareness programme on the PM Vishwakarma Scheme was held on Tuesday at Pisapui Hall located in the Deputy Commissioner’s Office in Serchhip. The programme was organised to inform local artisans and traditional craftspeople about the benefits and opportunities available under the scheme. Deputy Commissioner Pu Paul L. Khuma attended the event as the chief guest. Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner said that every individual is blessed with unique skills and talents.

He stated that the PM Vishwakarma Scheme has been introduced to help people earn a stable livelihood by using their traditional skills and craftsmanship. He noted that in recent times there has been a growing demand for locally made and culturally

rooted products, and this shift has opened up new opportunities for traditional artisans. He stressed the importance of becoming self-reliant and continuously improving skills to ensure long-term income security. Pu Paul L. Khuma also encouraged participants to share information about the scheme with others engaged in similar trades so that more people could benefit. He advised beneficiaries to be sincere in repaying loans taken under government schemes, warning that failure to repay on time could affect future loan opportunities, not only for individuals but for the community as a whole. The welcome address was delivered by Pu Samrat M. Jha, Assistant Director Grade-I (in-charge), Branch MSME, Mizoram State. He explained that the scheme is

aimed at supporting traditional artisans by helping them improve their livelihoods and overall socio-economic condition. Other speakers included Pu Lalnghawrlana, Lead District Manager; Pi Zirhangpuii, Do-main Expert for PM Vishwakarma in Serchhip district; Pu Lalmangaitluanga, District Level Resource Person from the District Commerce and Industries Office; and Pi Vanlalmawii, Executive of India Posts Payment Bank. The PM Vishwakarma Scheme is a Central Sector Scheme implemented under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and the Department of Financial Services. In Mizoram, the scheme is implemented by the Department of Commerce and Industries.



Drugs Worth Rs 4.65 Crore Seized in Assam, Manipur and Mizoram; Four Arrested

Aizawl, Jan 20: Security forces, in separate operations across Assam, Manipur and Mizoram, seized heroin worth Rs 4.65 crore and arrested four drug peddlers over the past 24 hours, officials said on Tuesday.

In Manipur, security forces arrested a drug peddler identified as Hriili Kaihrii (65) from the Phougakchao Ikhai Bazar checkpoint in Bishnupur district.

Around 94 grams of heroin, packed in eight soap cases, were recovered from his possession. In another operation, Manipur Police arrested Mohammad Ajmir Hussain (39) from Tengdongyan in Imphal West district and seized 310 grams of heroin.

The total value of the drugs recovered in Manipur, suspected to have been smuggled from Myanmar, has been estimated at Rs 2.26 crore, a police official said.

In Assam, acting on specific intelligence inputs, police conducted an anti-narcotics operation at Kachudaram in Cachar

district, leading to the recovery of 356 grams of heroin valued at approximately Rs 2 crore. One person, identified as Anwar Hussain, was arrested. Police said legal action has been initiated to ascertain both forward and backward linkages of the drug network. In Mizoram, Assam Rifles personnel launched a swift and well-coordinated operation in the Zote area of bordering Champai district on Monday evening following intelligence inputs on narcotics trafficking.

During the operation, troops intercepted a scooty and recovered 49.6 grams of heroin valued at around Rs 39 lakh. The contraband was being transported by an individual identified as K. Thangzalala.

The arrested individual, along with the seized drugs and the two-wheeler, was handed over to the Excise and Narcotics Department in Champai district for further investigation and legal action under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic

Solar power brings light to remote tribal villages, Tripura agency wins national award

Agartala, Jan 20: Electricity has finally reached some of the most remote and hard-to-access tribal villages of the North East, changing daily life for thousands of families who lived without power for decades. This major achievement has earned the Tripura Renewable Energy Development Agency (TREDA) a Silver Medal at the SKOCH Awards 2025, recognising its work in using solar energy to reach areas where regular power lines could not.

The award was presented at the 105th SKOCH Awards ceremony held in New Delhi. The honour was given by Sameer Kochhar, Chairman and Managing Director of the SKOCH Group. The award recognises TREDA’s efforts in bringing solar-powered microgrids to far-flung tribal habitations that remained outside the reach of conventional electricity networks for years. The project was implemented under the Centre’s PM-DEVINE scheme in partnership with the Government of Tripura. Under this initiative, electricity has been provided to 274 remote tribal villages through the installation of solar microgrids. These villages are spread across difficult terrain where extending the main electricity grid was either technically difficult or financially unviable. As part of the project, a total of 274 solar microgrids were set up, with capacities ranging from 2 kilowatt to 25 kilowatt. Together, these microgrids have created an installed solar capac-



ity of about 3 megawatts. The project has benefited 9,762 households across 247 habitations. The total cost of the initiative stood at Rs 81.02 crore. Each household covered under the scheme received four LED lights and a mobile phone charging point. In addition, solar-powered streetlights were installed along village roads, near community spaces and in other important public areas. For many families, this marked the first time they experienced reliable lighting inside their homes after sunset. Before the project, most of these villages depended on kerosene lamps for lighting. This not only provided poor illumination but also caused health problems due to smoke and fumes. With the introduction of solar power, the use of kerosene has

reduced sharply, improving indoor air quality and making homes safer, especially for children and elderly residents. Officials involved in the project said reaching these villages was a major challenge. Many settlements are located 15 to 20 kilometres away from the nearest motorable road. Transporting equipment to these locations required careful planning and strong coordination with local communities. In some areas, materials had to be carried manually over long distances. Even in villages where grid power existed earlier, electricity supply was often unreliable. Frequent power cuts, especially during the monsoon and pre-monsoon seasons, would leave homes without electricity for hours

or even days. This affected students, healthcare services and small businesses. The solar microgrids have now provided a steady and dependable source of power throughout the year. The impact of the project is already visible across the villages. Children are now able to study in the evenings under proper lighting, which has improved their ability to complete homework and prepare for exams. Teachers and parents say this has made a noticeable difference in learning outcomes. Access to mobile charging and television has also helped villagers stay connected with the outside world. People can now receive information about government schemes, weather updates, health advisories and other important announcements. This has reduced the sense of isolation that many remote communities earlier faced. Traditional occupations such as bamboo weaving, handloom work and other cottage industries have also benefited. Artisans can now continue their work after sunset, allowing them to increase production and earn higher incomes. Small village shops are staying open longer, leading to better availability of essential goods and improved local economies. The installation of solar streetlights has made night-time movement safer, particularly for women and elderly residents. Villagers say the fear of accidents and wildlife encounters after dark has reduced significantly.

19 detained in Kokrajhar mob lynching case; tension continues in Karigaon area



Kokrajhar, Jan 20: Police have detained 19 people in connection with the killing of a youth in a mob attack at Gouri Nagar under Kokrajhar Police Station on Monday evening. The incident, which took place on suspicion of cattle theft, has led to tension in parts of Kokrajhar district, especially in the Karigaon area. Superintendent of Police Akshad Garg said police have started a detailed investigation into the case. He confirmed that 19 individuals have been detained so far and are being questioned to establish their role in the incident. He added that the situation is being closely monitored. According to police sources, the incident occurred when a group of five people associated with a road construction project were returning to Kokrajhar after inspecting a work site in the Aoudang area. They were travelling in a Scorpio vehicle. When the vehicle reached the Gouri Nagar–Mashing Road stretch, some local villagers allegedly tried to stop it, suspecting the occupants to be cattle lifters. During the confrontation, the vehicle reportedly met with an accident. Soon after, a mob allegedly attacked the occupants of the vehicle. The Scorpio was also set on fire during the violence. One person died in the attack, while four others sustained serious injuries. The deceased has been identified as Sikhna Jwhlwao Bismrit, also known as Raja. He was the son-in-law of Moranda Basumatary, a well-known contractor engaged in the ongoing road construction work in the area. The injured persons were rushed to Kokrajhar Medical College and Hospital, where they are currently undergoing treatment. Hospital sources said their condition remains serious. On Tuesday, anger over the incident spilled onto the streets. Hundreds of people gathered on the National Highway at Karigaon and blocked traffic for several hours. The protesters demanded immediate arrest of all those involved in the killing and justice for the victim. As part of the protest, tyres were burnt on the road, causing disruption to vehicular movement.

Kuki-Zo Council calls for nationwide candlelight vigils to honour victim of Manipur violence

Imphal, Jan 20: The Kuki-Zo Council has appealed to all Kuki-Zo organisations and community groups across India to organise candlelight vigils in their respective cities and towns to honour the memory of Nengtinlhing Haokip, who died after suffering serious injuries linked to the ongoing violence in Manipur. In a notice and appeal issued on January 20, 2026, the council said it was deeply saddened by the un-

timely death of Haokip, who succumbed to her injuries on January 11 after undergoing prolonged medical treatment. The statement described her death as a tragic loss and said the incident reflected the severe human cost of the conflict that has continued to affect parts of the state. According to the council, the proposed candlelight vigils are intended to serve as a peaceful and collective expression of grief and solidari-

ty. The council urged members of the Kuki-Zo community to come together in a calm and dignified manner to remember the deceased and to stand with other victims who have suffered during the violence. The appeal asked participants to use the vigil to pay tribute to Haokip, express support for those affected by similar incidents, and reiterate demands for justice, dignity, and protection of life. It said

such gatherings would be a symbol of remembrance and unity at a time when many families continue to live with fear and uncertainty. The council also said that the vigils should remain solemn and respectful. It said the aim was not to inflame tensions but to highlight the pain endured by ordinary people and to remind authorities and the wider public of the need for peace and accountability.

Over 2,000 families face eviction as authorities reclaim irrigation land in Karbi Anglong

Karbi Anglong, Jan 20: More than 2,000 families are facing eviction after the district administration launched a large-scale drive to clear encroachments from government irrigation land in the Bakulia area of East Karbi Anglong district on Tuesday. The eviction operation, which began early in the morning, is being carried out on around 350 bighas of land that had been occupied over the years. According to official estimates, over 750 houses had come up on the land, which is officially recorded as irrigation property meant for public use. The drive is being supervised by the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council, with support from the district administration and police.



Officials said the operation has remained peaceful so far, largely because many residents had already vacated the land after receiving eviction notices earlier.

Authorities stated that eviction notices were served well in advance, giving families time to remove belongings and make alternate arrangements. As a result,

a large number of settlers cleared their structures on their own before the administration moved in, helping avoid confrontation. To ensure law and order, more than 500 police personnel have been deployed at the site. The force includes police from both Karbi Anglong and East Karbi Anglong districts, with senior officers, including the Superintendent of Police, present on the ground to monitor the situation. Officials described the exercise as one of the biggest land reclamation drives in recent years in the district. They said the aim is to restore government land reserved for irrigation and other public purposes and to prevent further illegal occupation.

Shamator offers skill development program



Dimapur, Jan 20: A Skill Development Training Programme was held at Shamator in collaboration with the Nagaland Skill & Employment Development Mission (NSEDMD), with AISECT as the training partner at Cultural Hall, Shamator on January 19.

According to a DIPR report, altogether, 200 participants registering for the 30-day training programme, of which 50 were women, reflecting inclusive participation and growing interest among women in skill-based livelihoods.

In his address, EAC Shamator, Kudazo Swuro highlighted the critical importance of skill development in the present socio-economic context. He emphasized that with the rapid expansion of civil construction works in Shamator district as well as in the neighbouring districts, there is a growing demand for skilled manpower in key trades such as Masonry, Tiling, Electrician, and Plumbing. He therefore urged the participants to recognize these trades not merely as livelihood options but as avenues for long-term economic growth. Swuro exhorted that civil works within the district should be undertaken by skilled local workers instead of depending on outside labour. He further encouraged the participants to aim beyond the district and explore opportunities in other districts by exporting skilled manpower, thereby strengthening the local economy. He also highlighted the vast opportunities available in the international construction sector, noting that skilled workers are in high demand in foreign countries, where they can earn substantially and contribute to the local economy through remittances. He informed that the district administration has set an ambitious target of skilling 3,000 youth across various trades and is aggressively working towards making Shamator the first 100 percent skilled district in the coming years. Swuro expressed his appreciation to AISECT for partnering with the district administration and for deploying competent and experienced trainers. He expressed hope that AISECT would continue its support in strengthening skill development initiatives in the district.

In exchange for votes, the Congress gave infiltrators land in Assam: Modi

Guwahati, Jan 20: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday slammed the Congress, accusing the party of handing over Assam's land to infiltrators for votes during its rule in the northeastern state. Modi, while addressing a rally here on the second day of his visit to poll-bound Assam, said infiltration "kept increasing" during the Congress rule in the state for decades, with illegal immigrants "encroaching upon forests, animal corridors and traditional institutions". "The BJP government is protecting Assam's identity and culture by evicting infiltrators who encroached land," he asserted.

"Infiltrators are disturbing the demographic balance, attacking culture, snatching jobs from the poor and youth, and fraudulently occupying land in tribal areas, posing a grave threat to both Assam and the nation's security," the PM said. He warned people to remain vigilant of the Congress, as its "only policy is to protect infiltrators and gain power". "The Congress and its allies are following this approach across the country, and during the Bihar polls, they organised marches and rallies to shield infiltrators, but people there completely rejected them. The people of Assam, too, will give a strong response to them," Modi asserted. The Prime Minister said that the Congress has lost the trust of people as it gives a "message of negative politics", and now, the BJP is the "first choice" of voters in the country. "Voters trust the BJP for good governance and development. In the Bihar polls, people gave the party record votes and seats even after 20 years in power," he said. In the Maharashtra civic polls, too, people voted for the BJP and even in Kerala, "we now have a mayor from the party", Modi said. "Just two days ago, the results of mayoral and councillor elections in major cities of Maharashtra were declared. Mumbai, one of the largest municipal corporations in the world, gave the BJP a record mandate for

the first time, while people in most cities of the state have given us an opportunity to serve," he said. "The recent election results across the country clearly show that voters want good governance and development, with focus on both progress and heritage," the PM said. These elections also send another message that the country is consistently rejecting the "negative politics" of the opposition party, he said. "The opposition lost the trust of the nation because it has no agenda for development, and such a party can never serve the interests of Assam or Kaziranga," he asserted. The PM said Kaziranga is not just a national park, but the "soul of Assam and a priceless jewel of India's biodiversity, recognised by the UNESCO as a World Heritage Site".

Modi was speaking at the rally in Nagaon district, after laying the foundation stone for the Rs 6,957-crore Kaziranga Elevated Corridor, and virtually flagging off two Amrit Bharat trains. Noting that Kaziranga is home to the one-horned rhinoceros, he said the wildlife faces challenges during floods when they seek higher ground and must cross the national highways, and often get trapped. "The government is committed to ensure smooth traffic while keeping the forest safe. After the completion of the elevated corridor, vehicles will pass above while wildlife movement below will remain unhindered, with the design prepared keeping in mind traditional movement routes of rhinos, elephants and tigers," Modi said. The corridor will also improve connectivity between Upper Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, and along with new rail services, will open fresh opportunities for the people.

Modi asserted that the BJP government's efforts ensured that no rhino was killed due to poaching at the Kaziranga National Park in 2025. There was a time when rhino poaching was a major concern, with dozens of



one-horned rhinos killed in 2013 and 2014, but the BJP government decided to strengthen security arrangements, provide modern resources to the forest department, enhance surveillance, and increase women's participation through 'Van Durga', he said. "India has shown to the world that both ecology and economy can march together," Modi said. The PM said when nature is protected, opportunities arise and Kaziranga has seen a steady rise in tourism in recent years, and local youth have found new sources of income through homestays, guide services, transport, handicrafts and small businesses. The northeast has for decades faced the pain of distance – both of hearts and location – with people believing that development was happening elsewhere and they were being left behind, which affected not only the economy but also trust, the PM said. "The BJP govern-

ments at the Centre and states have changed this sentiment by prioritising the development of the northeast, and we began simultaneously to connect Assam through roadways, railways, airways and waterways," he said.

Modi alleged that when the Congress was in power at the Centre, Assam received only about Rs 2,000 crore in the rail budget, but his government increased it more than five times to nearly Rs 10,000 crore annually.

"This enhanced investment has led to large-scale infrastructure development, with new rail lines, doubling and electrification boosting railway capacity and passenger facilities," he said.

Assam's development is opening up opportunities for the entire northeast, and the Act East Policy has got a new direction, which will take the region to new heights, the PM stated.

An important turning point in Assam's growth would be the Kaziranga Elevated Corridor: The Himanta

Guwahati, Jan 20: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday said the state had reached a historic milestone in its development journey with the foundation stone laying of the Kaziranga Elevated Corridor by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The project seeks to improve connectivity between Central and Upper Assam and ensure the protection of the rich biodiversity of the Kaziranga National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and home to the one-horned rhinoceros.

It was once unimaginable that a Prime Minister would approve funds of nearly Rs 7,000 crore to build a 35-km-long elevated corridor through Kaziranga solely to protect wildlife, the chief minister said in his address during the PM's visit here to launch development projects in Nagaon district. "This is an unprecedented gift, and the PM had personally come to Kaliabor to present it to the people of Assam. This will give a major boost to Assam's development while prioritising environmental conservation and wildlife protection," Sarma said. The PM on Sunday laid the foundation stone for the Kaziranga Elevated Corridor and four-laning of the Kaliabor–Numaligarh section of National Highway 715 along with virtually flagging off two Amrit Bharat Express trains. The initiative includes the construction of a 35-km-long elevated corridor through Kaziranga and upgradation of the Kaliabor–Numaligarh stretch of NH-715, with an estimated investment of around Rs 6,957 crore. Implemented in accordance with directions of the Supreme Court and recommendations of the Wildlife Institute of India, the project will ensure safe movement of wildlife and significantly reduce road accidents. Passing through Nagaon, Karbi Anglong and Golaghat districts, the corridor is expected to bring a transformative change in connectivity across Upper Assam and is expected to be completed within 36 months.

Sarma said the two Amrit Bharat Express trains virtually flagged off by the Prime Minister will significantly strengthen rail connectivity between the North-East and North India. The Dibrugarh-Gomti Nagar Amrit Bharat Express will cover a distance of 1,894 km in about 42 hours, improving connectivity between Assam, West Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The Kamakhya-Rohtak Amrit Bharat Express will cover 1,956 km in about 38 hours, benefiting rail passengers from Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Haryana with safer and faster travel. Sarma pointed out that according to legends, Lord Krishna had rested at Kaliabor while taking Rukmini of Assam to Dwarka in Gujarat. The PM's presence on the sacred land symbolised the reaffirmation of the historic bond between installation of a grand statue of Lachit Borphukan, marking the rise of a new and confident Assam," he said. The chief minister said the Kaziranga Elevated Corridor would reduce travel time between Upper Assam and Guwahati by at least one hour, strengthen connectivity and further reinforce the foundation of a stronger Assam. "Assam now dreams big, and these will be realised despite opposition and misinformation," he added. Referring to the flagging off of the country's first Vande Bharat sleeper train between Guwahati and Kolkata a day earlier, Sarma said that with the inauguration of two Amrit Bharat Express services, Assam had received three major rail services in just two days. The CM also noted that projects such as multiple bridges over the Brahmaputra, medical colleges in almost every district, new universities, the Numaligarh-Gohpur tunnel road, the Kaziranga elevated corridor, the Rs 22,000 crore Silchar-Guwahati corridor and the Guwahati Ring Road once seemed unimaginable. "Assam has now entered a new horizon of development and would never forget the Prime Minister's



contribution in steering the state on the path of progress and taking the Assamese language, Bihu, Jhumoir, Bagurumba and the State's cultural heritage to the world," he said. Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya, Union Minister for Ports, Union Ministers Sarbananda Sonowal and Pabitra Margherita, state ministers Atul Bora, Charan Boro, Krishnendu Paul and Keshab Mahanta and senior officials were present on the occasion

FNCC declines a lecture invitation from the Manipur government

Imphal, Jan 20: The The Foothills Naga Co-ordination Committee (FNCC) has declined the Manipur government's invitation for talks to resolve the ongoing indefinite bandh in Naga-inhabited areas, citing failure to honour past commitments and alleged inaction against militants involved in recent incidents.

The indefinite bandh, jointly imposed by Ireng (Liangmei Naga) village and the Joint Tribes Council (JTC), continues across Naga-dominated hill areas of Manipur, restricting the movement of Kuki commuters through Naga-inhabited regions. The agitation was launched following alleged intimidation, vandalism and threats to residents of Ireng village by cadres of Kuki National Front (KNF), a signatory to the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement, on the night of January 11.

Fully endorsing the bandh, FNCC, in a statement issued on January 15, warned that the agitation would be further intensified and extended to restrict Kuki movement across Foothills Naga areas, Old Cachar Road and NH-37 unless Manipur government implements the August 8, 2025 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in letter and spirit and ensures the safety and security of Naga villages.

In an apparent bid to defuse the situation, the Manipur commissioner (home) invited the convener and secretary of FNCC for discussions at his office chamber in Imphal on January 19. However, FNCC declined the invitation, citing



two primary reasons- the government's alleged failure to honour the three-point MoU signed on August 8, 2025, and absence of concrete legal action against KNF-P/UPF cadres allegedly involved in the Ireng incident.

In a letter addressed to the secretary (home), FNCC said the decision was taken after detailed deliberations with the JTC and its affiliated councils and executives. It alleged that instead of arresting and prosecuting KNF-P/UPF cadres

and their leader Thangboi Kipgen for alleged involvement in multiple illegal activities, including the January 11–12 Ireng incident, the government was "inviting the victims for negotiation."

FNCC further pointed out that KNF-P/UPF had issued direct threats against Ireng village on January 12. It also criticised the invitation letter, received via WhatsApp on January 18 evening, describing it as poorly drafted and containing factual errors.

Min focuses on combining formal education

Dimapur, Jan 20: Union Minister Jayant Chaudhary on Monday emphasised on the Central government's priority for development of the North East. The Minister of State (Independent charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship also stressed on integrating skilling with formal education to open new avenues for employment for the youth. He was speaking after inaugurating the IndiaSkills Regional Competition 2025–26 for the North East, where youth from all eight states of the region will be competing across 26 skills. Highlighting the prime minister's sustained focus on the North East, Chaudhary said this has created renewed confidence and opportunity for the region's youth. He maintained that initiatives such as IndiaSkills complement this vision by taking national platforms directly accessible to young talent in the region. "IndiaSkills is not merely a competition; it is a celebration of excellence, discipline and the dignity of work. The North East has immense talent and aspiration, and this platform reflects our confidence that youth from this region are ready to lead India's skilled workforce and contribute meaningfully to the nation's growth," Chaudhary said. He emphasised the growing importance of integrating skilling with formal education in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, noting that closer alignment between education and skill development expands pathways for employability, entrepreneurship and lifelong learning, while making young people future-ready for a

rapidly evolving economy. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Nani Gopal Mahanta, Vice-Chancellor, Gauhati University, Gyanendra Dev Tripathi, Principal Secretary to the Government of Assam, Skill, Employment and Entrepreneurship Department, and Hena Usman, Joint Secretary, MSDE, among others.

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), along with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) as its implementation partner, has brought the country's premier skilling championship to the North East region for the first time. Students from Directorate General of Training (DGT) institutions, including Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and The North East Regional Competition has drawn 162 competitors from all eight states. The competition spans a diverse range of contemporary and traditional skill areas including Automobile Technology, Cloud Computing, Mobile Applications Development, Software and Web Technologies, Fashion Technology, Bakery and Patisserie, and Visual Merchandising. The IndiaSkills competition follows a structured, multi-tier evaluation process designed to identify and nurture the best talent across the country. Top performers from the regional stage qualify for the IndiaSkills National Competition, where they are evaluated against national benchmarks, with select winners earning the opportunity to represent India.

Assembly polls: Cong to hold zonal conventions across Assam from Jan 21

Guwahati, Jan 20: The Opposition Congress will hold a series of key meetings across of Assam from January 21, in a bid to strengthen the party’s organisational structure and fine-tune its strategy for the upcoming Assembly elections.

Three special observers appointed by the All-India Congress Committee (AICC) for election management in Assam will oversee the meetings. The observers include Karnataka deputy chief minister D.K. Shivakumar, former Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Baghel and senior party leader Bandhu Tirkey.

In this regard, the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) has issued a directive to organise zonal party conventions for district Congress committees, block Congress commit-

tees, mandal Congress committees and booth committees.

The zonal conventions will be held as per the instructions of AICC general secretary and Assam in-charge Jitendra Singh and APCC president Gaurav Gogoi.

According to the directive, the zonal conventions will be organised in phases at different locations across the state from January 21 to January 28.

On January 21, a zonal convention will be held at Howraghat covering the districts of East Karbi Anglong, West Karbi Anglong, Dima Hasao, Hojai and Nagaon.

On January 22, a zonal convention will be organised at Moran for Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Charaideo, Sivasagar, Golaghat and Jorhat districts.

On January 23, a zonal convention

will be held at Bihpuria covering Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Biswanath and Majuli districts.

On January 24, a zonal convention will take place at Kamalpur for Kamrup (Rural), Kamrup (Metro), Nalbari, Darrang, Udalguri, Sonitpur and Tamulpur districts.

Thereafter, a zonal convention will be organised at Bongaigaon on January 27, covering Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Goalpara, Dhubri, Mankachar, Bajali, Kokrajhar, Chirang and Baksa districts.

Finally, on January 28, a zonal convention will be held at Katigorah, covering Silchar, Sribhumi (Karimganj) and Hailakandi districts.

Several senior leaders of the AICC and APCC are expected to be present at these zonal party conventions.

Illegal influx a serious concern in Mizoram’s Lawngtlai: DC

Aizawl, Jan 20: The increasing influx of illegal immigrants and unregulated trading activities in Lawngtlai the district have become matters of serious concern, said Deputy Commissioner Donny Lalruatsanga. Chairing a consultation meeting on the issues of illegal immigrants and trading, chaired the Deputy Commissioner said that the Mizoram Home Department has also issued instructions to take necessary steps in this regard.

He emphasized that addressing these issues requires not only administrative action but also coordinated efforts involving NGOs, village councils, police, and security forces, as the matter may have long-term implications for



the district and the state. While acknowledging humanitarian considerations, he cautioned that failure to take timely action could lead to greater difficulties in the future.

During the consultation, it was proposed to hold an Inter-District Joint Meeting and to conduct surprise

checks targeting undocumented illegal immigrants. To streamline enforcement measures, it was decided to constitute a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Drafting Committee under the chairmanship of the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Lawngtlai with the objective of finalizing the

■ The Deputy Commissioner of Lawngtlai, Donny Lalruatsanga, raised concerns over the rise of illegal immigration and unregulated trading in the district during a consultation meeting.

SOP by mid-February. Regarding trading and marketing issues, the Lai Autonomous District Council (LADC) authorities were urged to extend full cooperation to ensure the formulation of a comprehensive and effective SOP. The meeting was attended by representatives from the Police department, Assam Rifles (20th AR), Revenue department, LADC, Village Council Association, 3rd IR Battalion, among others.

Architects’ meet marks foundation day of MAF

Imphal, Jan 20: An Architects’ Meet was held on Monday at the City Convention Centre, Imphal, to mark the Foundation Day of the Manipur Architects’ Forum (MAF). The event was organised by the Manipur Architects’ Forum in association with the Town Planning Department. Ngangom Uttam Singh, Director, IPR attended the event as Chief Guest while N. Benju Singh, Chief Town Planner, Manipur; Dr. R.K. Nimai, Retd. IAS; and Thokchom Budhabir, Jury Head, Essay Writing Competition were present as Guests of Honour. Gitkumar Nepram, President, MAF, presided over the programme. Speaking at the occasion, Uttam Singh highlighted that the role of architects goes beyond aesthetics and includes ensuring legal compliance with building bye-laws, zoning reg-

ulations, and safety norms. He stressed the importance of consulting architects at the initial stage of construction to avoid future costs and legal issues. Emphasising climate change concerns, he called upon architects to design climate-responsive, green, and seismic-safe buildings, considering Manipur’s vulnerability to earthquakes and heavy rainfall. The Chief Guest also spoke on the Online Building Approval System, deemed approval mechanism, and the accountability of empanelled architects, urging strict adherence to norms. He appealed to architects to ensure accessibility in buildings as per the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act and Supreme Court directives. He further underscored the need to preserve and promote Manipur’s indigenous architectural identity, particularly in government buildings.

Denial of Kali Idol Immersion by BSF Sparks Tension in Assam’s Sribhumi

Sribhumi, Jan 20: Tension flared in Assam’s Sribhumi town after the Border Security Force (BSF) allegedly denied permission for the immersion of a Kali idol at a designated ghat on the Kushiara River late on Monday night, January 19, prompting public anger and criticism from local residents.

The incident occurred on the occasion of Mauni Amavasya at the immersion ghat along Kalibari Road, an area that also functions as a customs check-post facilitating

legal cross-border trade with Bangladesh. Locals said that despite established practice, BSF personnel did not allow the opening of the border gate, citing procedural requirements.

According to residents, the idol had been brought to the immersion site after completion of religious rituals, but in the absence of any alternative river or suitable immersion point nearby, the family was forced to return with the deity. Devotees described the situation as

distressing and avoidable.

Residents questioned the decision, pointing out that commercial consignments, including agricultural produce, routinely pass through the same route. They said the incident highlighted inconsistencies in the enforcement of security protocols, particularly in areas where civilian religious activities have traditionally coexisted with border regulations.

Videos and images of the stalled immersion circulated widely on

social media, triggering reactions from across the region. While several users criticised the handling of the situation and called for greater sensitivity towards religious practices, others urged the authorities to establish clear standard operating procedures to avoid similar incidents in the future. The incident has once again brought into focus the challenges of balancing border security with local cultural and religious traditions in Assam’s border towns.

Arunachal: NSCN-KYA cadre surrenders in Longding, marking crucial step towards peace, security, and regional stability

Dibrugarh, Jan 20: An NSCN-KYA cadre surrendered to security forces during a joint operation in Arunachal Pradesh’s Longding district on Monday. The surrendered cadre has been identified as Akha alias Khawang Wangsu (38), a resident of Longphong village in Longding district. An Assam Rifles official said that on January 19, intelligence inputs indicated the presence of an active insurgent in the Longding bazaar area. A joint operation was launched by personnel from Khonsa Battalion and Longding Battalion of Assam Rifles, in coordination with the Arunachal Pradesh Police. “Our ground sources made contact with the insurgent and persuaded him to surrender. After several

hours, he agreed to lay down arms,” the official said. He added that the individual was taken into custody by the joint team and later handed over to Longding police station for further legal proceedings. The official said the surrender highlighted the role of security forces in maintaining peace and normalcy in insurgency-affected areas through counter-insurgency operations and community engagement. Ahead of Republic Day, security forces have intensified operations in eastern Arunachal Pradesh to prevent any untoward incidents, the official added. Assam Rifles in a joint operation with the Arunachal Pradesh police nabbed two overground workers (OGW) of NSCN-KYA at Rusa vil-



lage in Arunachal Pradesh’s Longding district on Saturday. One pistol along with 17 rounds of ammunition

was recovered from the individual, an official statement

dated on Sunday. Based on intelligent inputs, the joint operation with Arunachal Police was carried out, the statement said. The joint team cordoned off the area and launched a thorough search at a hideout, which led to the apprehension of two OGWs of NSCN-KYA, it stated. The arrested persons along with the recovery items have been then handed over to the concerned police station in Arunachal Pradesh for further investigation. However, the identity of the arrested cadres has not been revealed. A similar joint operation was also launched and apprehended two active Overground workers (OGWs) of NSCN K (YA) in Khanu village in Tirap District of Arunachal Pradesh on the group.

1st AHPI Manipur community health camp benefits over 1400 patients

Imphal, Jan 20: The 1st AHPI Manipur Community Health Camp held on Sunday under the theme “Healthcare Without Borders,” successfully delivered outpatient healthcare services to a total of 1400 plus patients and facilitated more than 5,000 laboratory investigations through the collective participation of AHPI Manipur member hospitals and diagnostic establishments. In addition, beneficiaries accessed diagnostic tests and imaging services at subsidized rates, and several patients were identified and registered for surgical interventions following clinical evaluation during OPD consultations. The strong turnout and coordinated service delivery across specialties reflect

the shared commitment of member institutions to accessible, affordable, and patient-centric care. The camp served as a practical demonstration of collaborative healthcare, extending essential healthcare services to the community under one unified platform – AHPI Manipur. This community outreach initiative marked the first of many such programs planned by AHPI Manipur and also provided an important platform to highlight the presence and purpose of AHPI Manipur as a non-profit organisation dedicated to strengthening private healthcare delivery through cooperation, service, and social responsibility.

Jiribam observes 37th National Road Safety Month

Imphal, Jan 20: The District Administration Jiribam, in collaboration with the District Transport Office, observed the 37th National Road Safety Month, 2026, with the theme “Sadak Suraksha Abhiyan” “Road Safety, Safety to Life” at the Conference Hall of the Deputy Commissioner’s Office, Jiribam. Speaking at the occasion, Deputy Commissioner, Jiribam Krishna Kumar, IAS, announced a series of activities to promote road safety awareness in the district.

These activities include the distribution of helmets to bike riders, pamphlets, and stickers on traffic rules and signs to the general public across Jiribam district. A bike rally is also planned for January 22, to spread awareness on road safety. The Deputy Commissioner encour-

aged the District Transport Office to organise quiz competitions and poster campaign in collaboration with the district police, health department, schools, and colleges.

He also instructed the Public Works Department to draw road markings along the national highway and other important roads in the district. Krishna Kumar urged the general public to avail themselves of the services provided by the newly opened District Transport Office, which will facilitate the issuance of driving licenses, vehicle registration, and other transport-related services with ease. As part of the observance, the Deputy Commissioner took the Road Safety Pledge.

The event was attended by senior officials, including Superintendent of Police Prakhar Pandey, IPS, ADC Ji-

ribam Th. Manoranjan Singh, MCS, SDO Jiribam L. Tarajeet Singh, MCS, DTO Jiribam M. Vikash, and other officials from the DC Office, PWD, and Health Department. Earlier in the morning, a social service camp was organised at Jiribam Higher Secondary Playground, the venue for the 77th Republic Day Celebration for Jiribam District.

The Deputy Commissioner inspected the playground and instructed the departmental heads to coordinate among line departments to ensure a grand success of the Republic Day function. Officials from Jiribam Municipal Council and departmental heads of line departments and their staff participated in the social service camp. The event aimed to promote community service and prepare for the upcoming Republic Day celebrations.

One killed, four injured in violent clash in Assam’s Kokrajhar

Kokrajhar, Jan 20: One person was killed and four others were seriously injured after a violent clash broke out between two groups at Gaurinagar in the Karigaon area of Kokrajhar district on Monday evening, police said. The incident occurred at around 7.30 pm, leading to panic and tension in the locality. The deceased has been identified as Sikhna Jwhlwao Bismit. He was a resident of Bagaribari under Rupsi. According to preliminary

information, an altercation between two groups escalated rapidly, turning violent within a short period. Eyewitnesses and local residents said the situation worsened when miscreants set a Scorpio vehicle on fire during the clash. The burning vehicle caused fear among residents and drew a large crowd to the area, further complicating efforts to control the situation. Four people sustained serious injuries in the incident. They have been identified as Mahesh Murmu, Sunil



Murmu, and Jugiraj Brahma. All the injured were taken to Kokrajhar Medical College and Hospital, where they are undergoing treatment. Hospital sources said their condition is being closely monitored. Initial reports suggest that the clash may have been triggered by a road accident. It is suspected that

the Scorpio vehicle was involved in hitting two individuals, after which tensions rose and the situation spiralled out of control. However, police officials said the exact cause of the violence is yet to be confirmed. Police reached the spot soon after receiving information and brought the situation under control. Security has been tightened in and around the area, and an investigation has been launched to identify those involved.

RIMS inaugurates newly established gym facility

Imphal, Jan 20: The Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS), Imphal, formally inaugurated its newly established gym facility at the Gymkhana. The facility was inaugurated by Prof. G. Sunil Kumar Sharma, Director of RIMS, Imphal, in the esteemed presence of Prof. N. Sanjib Singh, Medical Superintendent of RIMS Hospital, Imphal, and Prof. L. Rajesh Singh, Dean (Academics), RIMS, Imphal. The inauguration marked an important step towards promoting physical fitness, mental well-being, and a healthy lifestyle among students,

residents, faculty members, and staff of the institute. The gym has been equipped with modern fitness equipment aimed at encouraging regular exercise and effective stress management within the campus. Notably, the facility stands as one of the biggest gymnasiums in a government institute, housed in a G+2 building with a dedicated floor exclusively for yoga and wellness activities. Speaking at the occasion, Prof. G. Sunil Kumar Sharma stated that since joining the institute two and a half years ago, he has always prioritized physical

fitness and well-being. He shared that the idea of establishing a gym at RIMS was initiated despite challenges faced in procuring equipment. Emphasizing that health and time are the most valuable assets, he expressed gratitude to all teams involved and announced that the gym is now fully functional with facilities including badminton courts, cardio sections, yoga spaces, and plans for recruiting trained instructors to support both physical and mental well-being of students, staff, and faculty members. The event was attended by the

Deputy Director (Administration), Chief Account Officer-cum-Financial Advisor, Heads of Departments, faculty members, resident doctors, staff, and students of RIMS, Imphal. The inauguration reflects the institute’s continued commitment to strengthening campus infrastructure and supporting holistic development. The newly inaugurated gym facility at the Gymkhana is expected to serve as a valuable resource for promoting long-term health, fitness, and overall wellness among all members of RIMS, Imphal.

Four vehicle thieves from Assam held in Aizawl

Aizawl, Jan 20: Police arrested four suspects in Aizawl for their alleged involvement in vehicle thefts.

The accused, hailing from Karimganj and Patharkandi in Assam, were arrested during an investigation into a two-wheeler theft case registered at Bawngkawn police station.

The accused are residing at the Durtlang area of Aizawl. According to police, the accused have confessed to their involvement

in multiple vehicle thefts during interrogation. The accused said that they have sold some of the stolen motorcycles at Silchar in Assam.

During the recovery of a stolen motorcycle from the Zuangtui area on Monday, two more motorbikes stolen by the accused in the intervening night of Sunday and Monday were also recovered.

Police also said that efforts are on to recover the remaining stolen motorcycles.

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When Ambition Replaces Ethics

Ambition is a powerful force that drives progress, innovation, and personal growth. It motivates individuals to dream bigger and work harder. However, when ambition begins to replace ethics, it transforms from a positive energy into a destructive one. In the race for success, power, and recognition, moral values are often pushed aside. This dangerous shift creates a society where outcomes matter more than honesty, and achievement is valued even when it is built on unfair means. In professional life, this conflict between ambition and ethics is increasingly visible. Many individuals feel pressured to succeed at any cost. Promotions, wealth, and social status become measures of worth, while integrity and fairness are treated as obstacles. When ambition is unchecked by ethics, dishonesty finds justification. Shortcuts, manipulation, and exploitation slowly become normalised. Over time, institutions lose credibility and trust collapses, because success is no longer linked to merit. Education is another space where this imbalance is growing. Students are taught to compete fiercely but are rarely reminded of the importance of moral conduct. Marks and rankings overshadow values like honesty and respect. Cheating, plagiarism, and unfair practices are often dismissed as harmless tactics for survival. This creates a generation that associates success with cleverness rather than character. Knowledge without ethics produces individuals who may be intelligent but not responsible. In public life, ambition without ethics leads to corruption, misuse of power, and erosion of democratic values. Leadership should be driven by service, yet ambition often turns leadership into a tool for personal gain. When leaders prioritise self-interest over public welfare, society suffers. Citizens lose faith, and cynicism replaces hope. Ethics must guide ambition, especially in positions of authority, because decisions affect millions of lives. Media and social platforms also shape this mindset. The celebration of wealth, fame, and influence without questioning the path taken to achieve them sends the wrong message. Young minds grow up believing that results justify all methods. The idea that integrity is more important than victory slowly fades away. Restoring balance between ambition and ethics is essential. Schools must emphasise moral education alongside academic excellence. Families should teach that success achieved dishonestly carries no real value. Workplaces must reward integrity as much as performance. Media should highlight stories of ethical leadership and honest struggle, not just glamorous outcomes. Ambition guided by ethics builds true progress. Without ethics, ambition becomes dangerous. A society that honours both achievement and integrity secures not only success but also dignity and trust.

As Trump menaces Greenland, this much is clear: the free world needs a new plan – and inspired leadership

A European-wide chorus of resistance, led this morning by Keir Starmer, has greeted Donald Trump's plan to take over Greenland, by force if necessary, and to start a tariff war if any country stands in his way. Have no doubt, this is a moment: if pursued as a non-negotiable demand, Trump's plan ends any lingering hope that the liberal rules-based order can stumble on through his remaining time in office. The real question now is whether the 2020s will be defined by the complete collapse of the order's already crumbling pillars and the atrocities accompanying it, or whether an international coalition of the willing can come together to build a new global framework in its place.

For, in quick succession, the US has abandoned its longstanding championing of the rule of law, human rights, democracy and the territorial integrity of nation states. Gone is its erstwhile support for humanitarian aid and environmental stewardship. Gone, too, is the founding principle of the postwar settlement: that countries choose diplomacy and multilateral cooperation over aggression and unilateral action. We cannot doubt any longer that the president meant it when he said he doesn't "need international law", and that the only constraint on his exercise of power would be "my own morality, my own mind".

Indeed, in the past few weeks, every single promise of the US-led Atlantic charter, authored by Franklin D Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, which foreshadowed the United Nations charter and which includes "freedom of the high seas", free trade and freedom from colonial aggrandisement, has seemingly been cast aside. For Trump, as his political adviser Stephen Miller tells us, the world is to be "governed by strength ... by force ... [and] by power".

But if Greenland marks



the end of the world looking to the US for leadership, it has also become the moment for Europe and the democracies of the global south to lift their heads out of the sand. They, and other democracies, should now set out a new statement of values and rules that show how we will champion peace, stability and justice, and deliver meaningful progress in areas where international cooperation is essential. As Keir Starmer has argued, reaffirmed by the attorney general at the 80th anniversary celebration of the United Nations in London on Saturday, this now means reinvigorating, for a new age and new challenges, the enduring shared values on which the post-1945 institutions were founded. So how to proceed? The democracies of the world should draft a short values statement, echoing the UN charter's starting point – "We the peoples ..." – and this time showing we mean it. Its first section would assert our full support for self-determination and the mutual recognition of nation states; for the outlaw-

ing of war and coercion; and for the primacy of law, civil rights and democratic accountability as the essential means by which human dignity is advanced. A second section would outline the rules that govern the cooperation essential to guarantee food, water and security, economic opportunity and social justice, and climate resilience and health for all, including pandemic prevention. Such a charter should make it clear that no one need apply for the vacant leadership of the global order for, in our new multipolar world, power has to be shared among countries, each with vastly different traditions, ethnicities and ideologies. But neither can the new world acquiesce in what the US, Russia and China now threaten: a return to the 19th-century arena of spheres of influence and great-power domination.

Instead, we have to ask how we can advance multilateral cooperation in a multipolar world, and so a charter has to take fully into account what has fundamentally changed long before the Trump presi-

dency, and what was never considered seriously in the constitutions of 1945: the existential nature of the climate crisis; the rightful demands for gender equality; the modern threat of terrorism and the role of other non-state actors, including those with vast concentrations of accumulated wealth and technological power. Also the previously neglected but now rising aspirations of the global south; and perhaps most of all, the need to reach across borders to reflect our increased and inescapable interdependence. For one thing seems clear: the truth is that an "America first", us-versus-them, nationalist politics that despises international cooperation does not have the support of the global public. In fact, they are ahead of leaders in understanding that the sheer extent of our dependence on each other gives us no other option but to work together. And whether it be the stranglehold China has through its monopoly of rare earths, or the maritime choke points that can close down the Strait of Hormuz and other trade corridors,

we know that to prevent interdependence being weaponised in hostile ways, the rest of us must act together. We have arrived at a moment of truth for Europe. For too long, its voice has been silent as the Trump administration has violated internationally agreed trade rules; savagely slashed international development aid; and threatened Canadian, Panamanian and Mexican neighbours. This month, Trump's US is walking out of 66 international organisations, most of which the US itself had created, while at the same time making the momentous decision to constitute an alternative, a "board of peace", with a remit for interventions far beyond Gaza, and with membership offered to about 60 favoured states, including Russia. But no global initiative can hope to command wide support or be seen as legitimate if it is merely elites agreeing how to balance their power. And any new charter has to make the connection between meeting local needs and aspirations and the global cooperation that can bring

this about. We need to reaffirm for a new generation the need for equality of opportunity and fairness of outcomes, and for what Roosevelt called the four freedoms – of speech and worship, from want and from fear. Years from now the history books will tell us that Trump could have declared a quick victory in negotiations over Greenland – accepting the Danish offer of virtually unlimited military bases and access to Greenland's 25 critical minerals. But, to quote the Danish foreign minister after his Washington talks: "It's clear that the president has this wish of conquering over Greenland." With that Trump has truly signalled the end of the era when people in every continent saw the US as "a shining city on the hill".

That does not mean the US cannot lead again. In his 1961 inaugural address, President John F Kennedy said we must build "a new world of law where the strong are just and the weak are secure and the peace preserved". That is a path the US, and the world, must walk again.



How patriarchy continues to limit women's political role

Women were at the forefront of the July 2024 uprising, but in the subsequently formed political structures, insecurity and social backlash gradually pushed them aside. Female students from universities across the country, including Dhaka University, were not only leading participants in the uprising, but they also became victims of attacks and lawsuits by law enforcement agencies. However, the number of female candidates in the post-uprising Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU) election remained limited, and those who did contest faced extensive cyberbullying.

There were only 62 female candidates in the DUCSU election, accounting for merely 13 percent of the total candidates, even though 48 percent of DUCSU's voters are female students. Women's participation in the Liberation War of 1971 was similarly undervalued in the post-war era. The title Birangana, rather than honouring their contributions, foregrounded the trauma and humiliation they had endured, while obscuring the critical roles they had played on the frontlines. This reflects a long-standing social failure to recognise women's agency, a problem that persists to this day.

Although women participants of the uprising were subjected to humiliation by members of Chhatra League during Ju-



ly-August 2024, in the post-uprising political climate, they faced widespread cyberbullying. In fact, nearly all female DUCSU candidates reported experiencing online harassment during their campaigns. One woman who filed a petition challenging the candidacy of a Shibir-backed GS nominee received threats of "gang rape." When the issue of women's harassment arises, political parties across ideological divides often appear united in their silence. The cyberbullying faced by female leaders and candidates during and after the uprising was not merely personal abuse; it was a direct form of gender policing. Khadijatul Kubra, who was arrested and imprisoned under the controversial Digital Security Act during

the previous regime, recently contested in the Jagannath University Central Students' Union election. Following the announcement of her candidacy, she publicly expressed deep frustration over the scale of cyberbullying she had encountered. In a Facebook post, she wrote, "Even after spending 15 months in prison under the Digital Security Act, I have not been as mentally disturbed as I have been in the past few days."

Most of the abuse directed at female candidates was vulgar, gender-based, and overtly sexist. The absence of accountability on social media, combined with the ease of operating through fake identities, has made perpetrators increasingly reckless. The dominant psychology driving these online

attacks can be summed up in a familiar refrain: "Why enter politics as a woman? Stay at home." This narrative is a clear manifestation of gender policing, whereby society seeks to confine women to a prescribed role and behaviour. It is rooted in the perception of women as sexual objects rather than as political actors, reflecting an effort to deny women agency, legitimacy, and visibility in public spaces.

Last year, Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Dr Shafiqur Rahman announced that if his party came to power, it would introduce a new work policy for women, allowing them to work five hours a day while being paid for eight. Although the proposal may appear women-friendly at first glance, if implemented, it has

the potential to curtail women's careers. If men continue to work eight hours while women work five, men will inevitably accumulate more output, experience, and institutional capital, ultimately dominating leadership and decision-making positions. Realistically, why would any institution reserve senior roles for individuals producing only a fraction of the required labour? Such proposals are detached from socio-economic realities. Bangladesh's garment sector, driven primarily by women, continues to struggle with low wages and unsafe working conditions. In this context, providing eight hours' pay for five hours' work for millions of women is economically unsustainable.

This proposal—a structural

restriction disguised as welfare—could very well confine women to the domestic sphere. This stands in contrast to feminist thinkers John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor's argument that economic participation outside the home is essential for women's emancipation. But subconsciously, society has normalised the idea that women can be insulted and subjected to sexually suggestive remarks. Women in positions of power are systematically targeted in efforts to "clip their wings." As a result, even women in the upper echelons of society are not immune to humiliation. Former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's personal grooming and private life were once criticised on the floor of parliament, in an unmistakable example of political misogyny. Although women's participation in government, political parties, and public administration has increased over the years, patriarchal impulses to undermine their authority persist.

The persistent salary disparity faced by the national women's football team is another manifestation of this structure. In this way, patriarchal systems create conditions in which women are routinely humiliated across cyberspace, workplaces, and social settings. Gender-based differentiation is also embedded in culture and language. Sufia Kamal, Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, and Kamini Roy are routinely described as

"female poets," while no male poet is ever labelled a "male poet." Such linguistic practices reinforce the notion that active women are exceptions rather than equals. While some progress has been made in empowering women at higher levels, empowerment at the grassroots remains elusive. Even when women legally inherit property, social structures often obstruct the realisation of that right. This gender-based structural disempowerment continues to limit women's freedom and security.

A number of steps must be taken to change the discrimination women face. First, the state must adopt effective policies to prevent violence and discrimination against women. Second, schools and colleges should provide training on digital safety, responsible use of cyberspace, and gender studies for students of all genders. Establishing a dedicated cybersecurity agency and a cyber police helpdesk is also essential. Third, institutional protection of women's leadership in public administration must be ensured for women to exercise independent decision-making. Policy reform alone is insufficient; societal attitudes must also change. The role of the younger generation is crucial. By raising awareness in cyberspace and beyond, a strong social foundation for women's safety, freedom, and leadership must be built.

What does NAV mean for mutual funds



New Delhi: There is a belief that ‘if funds have a lower NAV, it is cheaper.’ There are also those who feel hesitant to go into a fund because its NAV ‘is a bit too high.’ Then there is panic redemption because of sudden downturns in funds’ NAV during times of volatile markets.It’s ironic that NAV is of little consequence to your mutual fund investment’s success or failure. To truly understand NAV, one must move beyond definitions and look at what NAV represents in practice—and what it does not. NAV reflects the per-unit value of a mutual fund’s portfolio after accounting for expenses. It’s calculated at the end of every trading day using the closing prices of the securities held by the fund. NAV=Total Assets-Total Liabilities/Total Outstanding Units

Suppose a mutual fund holds shares and cash worth Rs 1,020 crore. Its expenses and liabilities amount to Rs 20 crore. If the fund has issued 100 crore units, the NAV will be:

NAV=1,020-20/100=Rs 10This calculation highlights an important truth: NAV is an accounting outcome, not a price determined by demand and supply like stocks. Investors transact at NAV, but they do not influence it.Why a High NAV Is Not a Sign of Expensiveness

One of the most persistent myths in mutual fund investing is that funds with lower NAVs offer more upside. This belief largely comes from how stocks are perceived, but the comparison is misplaced.Consider two equity mutual funds with identical portfolios and performance:Fund A was launched in 2004 with an initial NAV of Rs 10

Fund B was launched in 2019 with an initial NAV of Rs 100

If both funds deliver a 12% annual return, fund A’s NAV will naturally be much higher today because it has compounded for a longer period. This does not make fund A “expensive” or fund B “cheap.” Both investors earn the same percentage return on their invested capital. NAV changes every day, and these movements are often misinterpreted. In reality, NAV fluctuations are driven by three key factors.Market Value of Underlying SecuritiesWhen the stock or bond prices in the

fund’s portfolio rise, the fund’s total assets increase, pushing NAV higher. Similarly, market corrections reduce NAV. If a fund’s equity portfolio rises by 1% in a day and expenses remain unchanged, the NAV will also rise by roughly 1%. Expenses and Fees

Mutual fund expenses are not deducted annually in one shot. They are adjusted daily.For example, if a fund has an expense ratio of 1.5% per yearDaily expense impact=1.5%365=0.0041%This small daily deduction quietly reduces NAV over time, which is why expense ratios have a meaningful long-term impact on returns.Dividends and Distributions

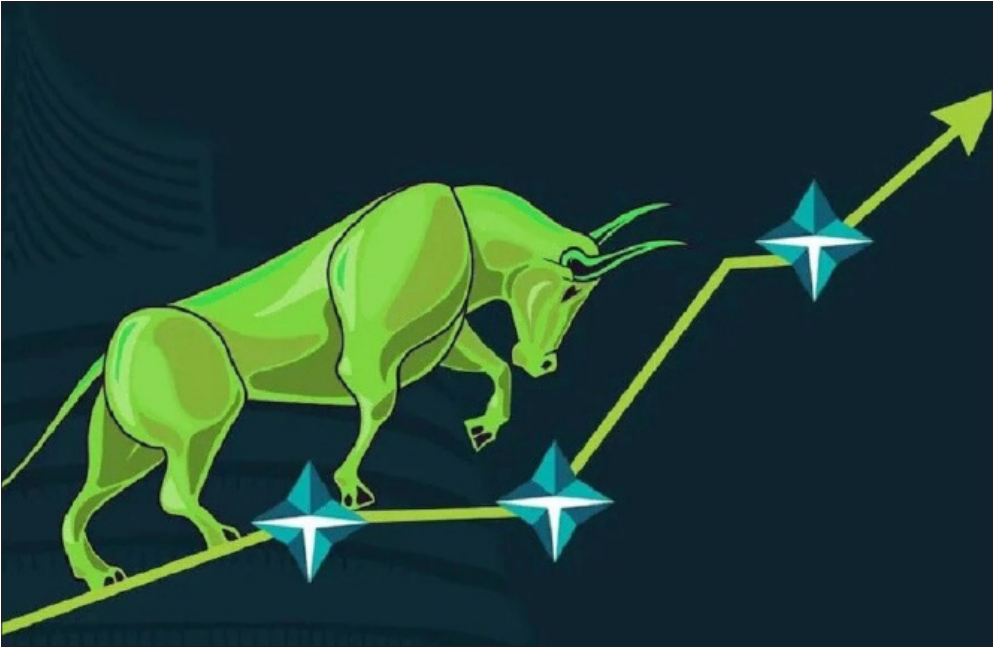
When a fund pays a dividend, the NAV falls to the extent of the payout.If a fund with a NAV of Rs 60 declares a dividend of Rs 4 per unit, the NAV will drop to approximately Rs 56 after the payout. This drop is often mistaken as a loss, even though the investor has received Rs 4 in cash. When markets correct and NAVs fall, SIP investors accumulate more units. Over time, this averaging effect improves return potential when markets recover. This is why experienced investors focus more on staying invested than on short-term NAV movements. Sharp declines in NAV often trigger emotional decisions. Investors see their portfolio value drop and assume something is fundamentally wrong with the fund. However, NAV reflects current market prices, not long-term intrinsic value. A fall in NAV during a broader market correction does not automatically mean the fund has failed. In many cases, it simply reflects temporary market sentiment.Investors who redeem based solely on falling NAVs often lock in losses, while those who remain invested benefit from eventual recovery. NAV is an essential metric, but it’s often given more importance than it deserves. It tells you what a fund is worth today, not whether it’s a good or bad investment.

A high NAV does not limit future returns, and a low NAV does not guarantee growth. What truly matters is the quality of the underlying portfolio, the discipline of the fund manager, and the investor’s ability to stay invested through market cycles.

159% return in a year! Dolly Khanna buys stake in this multibagger stock; do you own it

New Delhi: Shares of IFB Agro Industries buzzed on Dalal Street this Tuesday, climbing as much as 4.9 per cent to hit an intraday high of Rs 1,538 on the BSE. While ace investor Dolly Khanna picked up a fresh stake in the company in the third quarter. By the time of last check, the stock had cooled slightly but was still trading 2.47 per cent higher at Rs 1,501.65, against its previous close of Rs 1,465.50. The spotlight turned to the breweries and distilleries player after the latest shareholding data for the December quarter revealed a new entry in its marquee investor list. Dolly Khanna now holds 1,05,693 shares in IFB Agro Industries, translating to a 1.13 per cent stake. Notably, she did not hold any stake in the firm during the preceding September quarter, signalling a fresh entry into the counter.The stock has delivered multibagger returns, surging nearly 159 per cent over the last one year. The momentum has been particularly strong in the shorter term as well, with the counter rallying over 100 per cent in just the last six months.

Consolidated profit after tax (PAT) jumped 986 per cent to Rs 22.70 crore in the September quarter of FY26, a massive increase from the Rs 2.09 crore recorded in the same period a year ago, the company informed stock exchanges.. The performance also improved sequentially, beating the Rs 17.18 crore profit reported in



Q1FY26. Revenue followed a similar upward trajectory, surging 38.9 per cent year-on-year to Rs 532.88 crore, compared to Rs 384.32 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal

Fundamentally, the stock trades at a Price-to-Earnings (PE) ratio of 25.28 on a standalone basis and 27.16 on a consolidated basis on BSE.

IFB Agro Industries is engaged in a diverse range of activities including the manufacturing of alcohol, bottling of branded alcoholic beverages, and the sale of feed. The company also has a significant footprint in the processed marine foods sector, catering to both domestic and export markets.

RBL Bank’s price decreased by 9% compared to target price

New Delhi: The volatility in the market is likely to continue in the near-term till some clarity emerges regarding the US- Europe stand-off on Greenland tariffs. Since both sides have hardened their positions, the uncertainty will continue for some time,” said VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Investments. Tech Mahindra’s stock price has fallen over 2% to a low of Rs 1,678.20, which was followed by Wipro, which declined 2.7% to Rs 239.40. Other IT stocks like Infosys, HCLTechnologies, Mphasis, Co-forged, and TCS also fell in Tuesday’s trade. LTIMindtree’s Q3 FY26 revenue was marginally below Nomura’s estimates. The company’s revenue at \$1,208 million was up 2.4% sequentially (5.2% YoY) in constant currency terms, against the brokerage’s expectations of 2.5% QoQ growth. In dollar terms, LTIMindtree’s all verticals delivered QoQ growth except for BFSI, which came in at -0.7%, and Technology, which was flat sequentially. Manufacturing came in at 9.4%, Consumer at 1.2%, and Life-sciences at 9.9%.

As per another brokerage house, Nuvama Institutional Equities, the top-5 clients of LTIMindtree re-



ported a decline of 8.7% YoY/2.9% QoQ, led by weakness in top BFSI clients. Four of the Top-five clients have already stabilised, and the fifth, too, is anticipated to bottom out in Q4. The rupee fell 0.13% against the US dollar to 91.0250, with ongoing flow-based dollar demand tightening the squeeze as the currency broke past 91 per dollar levels for the first

time in a month, putting it within striking distance of a fresh record low. The FII outflows continue adding to investor apprehension. FIIs are net sellers in equities so far in January.

A new development is likely today if the US Supreme Court ruling on Trump tariffs goes against President Trump. But there is no certainty on

whether the ruling will happen today, added Vijayakumar. If it does, the ruling might change the scenario completely overnight. The midcap IT stocks saw the maximum impact in today’s session, with LTIMindtree falling the most, plunging as much as 7.7% to an intra-day low of Rs 5,911.50 on the National Stock Exchange.

Govt to raise Section 87A rebate to Rs 15 lakh under new tax regime Experts weigh

New Delhi: BAhead of the Union Budget 2026-27, income tax relief for the middle class is once again in sharp focus. One provision that has gained prominence in recent years is Section 87A rebate, especially under the new tax regime.Section 87A is a rebate available to resident individual taxpayers. Unlike deductions that reduce taxable income, this rebate directly reduces the tax payable, and in some cases, brings the tax liability down to zero. Over the years, it has become a crucial tool for offering relief to lower- and middle-income earners.How much rebate do taxpayers actually get under Section 87A?

The benefit under Section 87A differs sharply between the two tax regimes. Under the new tax regime, a rebate of Rs 60,000 is allowed for taxpayers with taxable income of up to Rs 12 lakh. It was earlier allowed on annual income up to Rs 7 lakh. This expanded rebate was one of the biggest attractions of the last year’s Budget tax overhaul. In contrast, under the old tax regime, the Section 87A rebate is capped at Rs 12,500 and is available only for taxpayers with income of up to Rs 5 lakh. Beyond this threshold, no rebate is available, making the old regime less attractive for taxpayers who do not have substantial deductions to offset their income. Under the old tax regime, Section 87A continues to be available, but its impact remains limited as tax slabs and exemptions have largely remained unchanged. Taxpayers under this regime rely more on deductions such as Section 80C, 80D, HRA, and home loan interest to reduce taxable income.The real change has happened under the new tax regime, which was introduced with the aim of simplifying taxation by offering lower slab rates in exchange for fewer exemptions. Since becoming the default regime from FY 2023-24, the government has steadily made it more attractive.The hike in Section 87A rebate is a key part of this shift. Today, the rebate under the new regime can reduce tax to zero for taxable income of around Rs 12 lakh, making it a major incentive for salaried individuals who do not claim large deductions. With inflationary pressures and rising household costs, expectations are growing that Budget 2026 could further enhance the Section 87A rebate, possibly extending



tax-free income up to Rs 15 lakh under the new tax regime. However, tax experts caution that further expansion may be difficult given fiscal constraints. As Richa Sawhney, Partner -Tax, Grant Thornton Bharat, points out: This suggests that while demands for higher relief are understandable, the government may prefer to maintain stability after already absorbing a substantial revenue impact. While a jump in Section 87A rebate to Rs 15 lakh would be a major boost for middle-class taxpayers, expectations need to be tempered. The government has already delivered back-to-back reliefs through slab rationalisation, higher standard deduction, and expanded rebate under the new tax regime.For now, the focus in Budget 2026 may remain on consolidating the new tax regime, rather than announcing another aggressive tax giveaway. Taxpayers, meanwhile, would do well to evaluate both regimes carefully based on their income structure rather than relying solely on expectations of further rebates.New vs old tax regime: Which one makes sense for FY 2026-27?

The expanding scope of Section 87A under the new tax regime has reignited the debate over whether taxpayers should

continue with the old regime or switch.According to Avnish Arora, Executive Director, Direct Tax, Forvis Mazars in India, the new regime has become broadly attractive for a large segment of taxpayers: “Consequently, taxpayers with minimal deductions or modest total deductions generally benefit more from the new regime, while those with substantial investments and eligible exemptions may still find the old regime advantageous after careful comparison of net tax liabilities. Ultimately, the optimal choice for FY 2026-27 depends on individual income, deduction potential, and financial goals, and should be confirmed by computing liability under both regimes before filing.”

“Since Budget 2023 (FY 2023-24), the new tax regime (Section 115BAC) has become the default for FY 2023-24 onwards and now offers lower slab rates, a higher basic exemption, a larger standard deduction (Rs 75,000), and an enhanced Section 87A rebate that can reduce tax to zero up to around Rs 12 lakhs of taxable income, making it broadly attractive for most salaried taxpayers with limited deductions.”The old regime still allows popular deductions and exemptions such as Section 80C, 80D, HRA, home loan interest, etc., which can significantly reduce taxable income, but its higher rates and complexity often outweigh these benefits for many taxpayers, Arora noted.

Section 87A rebate was introduced to support lower income resident taxpayers and is currently available under both the old and new tax regimes. As against reduction in income, this rebate reduces the income tax payable by the eligible taxpayer. Major overhaul of new tax regime was carried out last year, it was anticipated by the government that this change along with other reforms would result in revenue loss of nearly Rs 1 lakh crore in direct taxes.”So further tweaking in section 87A rebate may not be feasible this year. In any case as far as old tax regime is concerned, given the government’s focus on simplification of taxation regime, which is embodied in the new tax regime, any relief under old tax regime may not be envisaged, she added.

Sensex, Nifty fall sharply Rs 8L cr

New Delhi: Indian equity benchmarks extended their decline for a second consecutive session in Tuesday’s trade, pressured by global uncertainties and continued foreign fund outflows. At 2:14 pm, the BSE Sensex was down 667.43 points or 0.80 per cent at 82,578.75, while the NSE Nifty slipped 228.40 points or 0.89 per cent to 25,357.10. The weakness was broad-based, with broader markets also under heavy pressure as mid-cap and small-cap indices traded in the red, shedding up to 2.74 per cent.

Such was the fall in the domestic indices that around Rs 8 lakh crore of BSE market capitalisation (m-cap) was wiped out.Here’s a look at today’s market fall in numbers: Rs 8 lakh crore investor wealth lostInvestor wealth, as suggested by the BSE m-cap, declined by Rs 8.27 lakh crore to Rs 457.41 lakh crore compared with a valuation of Rs 465.68 lakh crore recorded in the previous session. Frontline stocks such as Eternal, Bajaj Finance, Infosys, Sun Pharma, M&M, Reliance Industries, L&T, Tata Consultancy Services, ITC and IndiGo contributed to the fall today.611 stocks hit 52-week lows on BSE

As many as 611 stocks hit their 52-week lows today. BSE500 stocks such as Aarti Industries, AAVAS Financiers, Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd, Aditya Birla Lifestyle Brands Ltd, Aditya Birla Real Estate Ltd, Action Construction Equipment, Aegis Vopak Terminals and Afcons Infrastructure touched their respective one-year low levels.

That said, 61 stocks touched their one-year high levels today. Out of 4,318 stocks, 3,395 stocks were seen declining. 784 stocks were advancing, while 139 stocks remained unchanged.Newgen, Data Patterns & Oberoi Realty down up to 12%Shares of Newgen Software Technologies, Data Patterns (India), Oberoi Realty, Ola Electric Mobility, Jyoti CNC Automation and IFCI fell up to 12.41 per cent.FII-DII dataForeign institutional investors (FIIs) sold Rs 3,200.98 crore worth of shares on a net basis during the previous session, while domestic institutional investors (DIIs) bought Rs 4,007.35 crore worth of equity, NSE data showed.

Trump says he will ‘100%’ carry out Greenland tariffs threat, as EU vows to protect

Dubai: Donald Trump has vowed to “100%” follow through on his threat to impose tariffs on European countries who oppose his demand to take control of Greenland. European allies have rallied around Greenland’s sovereignty. Denmark’s foreign minister emphasised the US president cannot threaten his way to ownership of the semi-autonomous Danish territory.UK Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper reiterated the UK’s position that the future of Greenland is for “Greenlanders and for the Danes alone” to decide.

On Monday, Trump declined to rule out the use of force and insisted he would press ahead with the threatened tariffs on goods arriving in the US from the UK and seven other Nato-allied countries. Asked by NBC News if he would use force to seize Greenland, Trump answered: “No comment”.The US president said he would charge Britain a 10% tariff “on any and all goods” sent to the US from 1 February, increasing to 25% from 1 June, until a deal is reached for Washington to purchase Greenland from Denmark.

Trump said the same would apply to Denmark, Norway, Sweden, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Finland - all of whom are members of the defence alliance Nato which was founded in 1949.

Asked if he will follow through on the tariff threat, Mr Trump told NBC News: “I will, 100%.” Trump added: “Europe ought to

focus on the war with Russia and Ukraine because, frankly, you see what that’s gotten them... That’s what Europe should focus on - not Greenland.”

Denmark has warned that US military action in Greenland would spell the end of Nato. In recent days, Greenland has received support from European members of the alliance - some even sent a handful of troops to Greenland last week in a move seen as symbolic. However, Trump followed that deployment with an announcement to impose tariffs on the eight Nato allies.Danish foreign minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen said that Europe had to show President Trump tariff threats were “not the way forward”We have red lines that can’t be crossed,” he told Sky News. “You can’t threaten your way to ownership of Greenland. I have no intention of escalating this situation.”

Nato secretary general Mark Rutte said the alliance will keep working with Denmark and Greenland on the security of the Arctic. The European Union is to hold an emergency summit in Brussels for its leaders on Thursday where they will discuss how to respond to Trump’s latest threat to take over Greenland. Kaja Kallas, the EU’s foreign policy chief, said the bloc has “no interest to pick a fight, but we will hold our ground”.

But trades threats are not the ay to go about this,” Kallas added. “Sovereignty is not for trade. It



comes as text exchanges between Trump and the Norwegian prime minister were released - showing that on Sunday the US president blamed Norway for the fact he didn’t get the Nobel Peace Prize. In his reply - seen by the BBC - Jonas Gahr Store explained that an independent committee, not the government of Norway, awards the prize which last October went to Venezuela’s opposition leader Maria Corina Machado.“Norway’s position on Greenland is clear. Greenland is a part of the Kingdom of Denmark, and Norway fully supports the Kingdom of Denmark on this matter,” Store added.Trump also addressed the text message ex-

change in Monday’s interview and said: “Norway totally controls it [the Nobel Prize] despite what they say.”They like to say they have nothing to do with it, but they have everything to do with it.” Meanwhile, the North American Aerospace Defense Command (Norad) on Monday announced that multiple aircraft are on their way to Pituffik Space Base in Greenland.

The joint US-Canada military defence organisation stressed they are part of a routine operation “to support various long-planned Norad activities”, and said they had been coordinated with Denmark and that the government of Greenland had been informed.

Italian fashion designer Valentino dies aged 93

Dubai: Italian fashion designer Valentino Garavani, known as Valentino, has died at the age of 93.One of the giants of 20th Century fashion, Valentino’s creations were worn by celebrities and well-known figures including Elizabeth Taylor, Nancy Reagan, Sharon Stone, Julia Roberts and Gwyneth Paltrow

He co-founded the Valentino fashion house in 1960 and ranked alongside Giorgio Armani and Karl Lagerfeld at the top of the profession.

In a statement posted on Instagram, the Valentino Garavani and Giancarlo Giammetti Foundation said: “He passed away peacefully in his Roman home, surrounded by the love of his family.” The foundation said Valentino will be lying in state at Rome’s Piazza Mignanelli between 21 and 22 January.

Valentino’s funeral service will be held the following day at the Basilica of Saint Mary of the Angels and Martyrs, the foundation said.

Born in Lombardy in May 1932, Valentino was known for his collections that displayed luxury, wealth and opulence. He moved to Paris to study at the Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne when he was just 17, and went on to work with designers Jacques Fath, Balenciaga, Jean Dessès and Guy Laroche.His adoption of his signature colour “Valentino red”, inspired by a trip to Spain, helped elevate the brand to global fame with the debut of the iconic fiesta dress.It became so meaningful for the house that for Valentino’s last collection in 2008 all the models wore red dresses for the finale.

Valentino designed the wedding dress of Princess Madeleine of Sweden when she married British-American financier Christopher O’Neill in June 2013.In December 2023, he was honoured with the outstanding achievement award at the British Fashion Awards which were held at London’s Royal Albert Hall. Alexandra Shulman, the former editor-in-chief of British Vogue, told BBC Radio 4’s PM programme that every aspect of Valentino “epitomised glamour and luxury”.“It is very sad news because he was one of the last of the great designers of the modern day and I think his main contribution will be that he was what people wanted a fashion designer to be,” Shulman said.“He really didn’t care that much that he wasn’t the most fashionable, the most cutting-edge designer, he just wanted to produce clothes that were beautiful - and they were.”He also kept his celebrity customers for a long time, he started off with people like Jacqueline Kennedy who wore Valentino when she was in mourning.”

Shulman listed a number of Hollywood stars who have been big supporters of Valentino’s designs over the last 15 years - including Paltrow, Nicole Kidman and Jennifer Lopez.

“He was helped in later years by the red carpet [becoming] such a thing, because that’s what his clothes were about,” Shulman added.“They weren’t something you slipped on to go to the office - they were really fabulous gowns.” Valentino was an only child, born into a well-to-do family in Voghera, south of Milan, where his father ran an electrical supplies company.Having started drawing and appreciating high-end clothes from a young age, he studied couture in Milan and Paris, where he then worked as an apprentice for designer Jean Dessès. He returned home in 1960, opening his own fashion house in the heart of Rome.

Locals and foreigners divided on issues of jobs,helps bridge differences: IPS study

Dubai: A pilot study released by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) on Tuesday (Jan 20) found that while Singaporeans and foreigners have little common ground on issues such as jobs, education and multiculturalism, structured discussions helped reduce some of these differences.In collaboration with government feedback unit REACH, IPS conducted a pilot consensus conference on local-foreign integration in Changi Simei and East Coast GRC last year. Twenty-four residents of various residency statuses – 16 Singapore citizens, three permanent residents and five non-resident foreigners – participated in four full-day sessions to discuss contested issues such as employment, education and community. According to IPS, the residents exchanged views and worked towards shared positions during the sessions.IPS policy lab research fellow Nicholas Thomas said the pilot drew on a 2024 survey where 37.5 per cent of respondents expected anger towards certain communities if immigration issues were poorly handled, while 35.5 per cent fore-saw a weakened sense of identity.“These were really the anchors for why we wanted to do (this) and bring people, based on those surveys, into the room to see if we can actually find consensus,” he said.In a related study, IPS’ Social Lab surveyed 3,713 people from October to November 2025 on the diversity of their friendships. Respondents were asked to describe up to five of their close or online friends by gender, ethnicity, age, national-ity, education level and housing type.The results showed that individuals with more diverse social networks reported higher trust in neighbours and other Singaporeans, said Dr Mathew Mathews, who heads the lab. For example, individuals with more diverse friendships were more likely to feel accepted by others. They were also more likely to report stronger emotional attachment to Singapore, said Dr Mathews

While acknowledging that the correlation does not prove causation, Dr Mathews said: “It could be that because you felt very strongly entrenched in this space, you’re more likely to want to build that kind of friendship.”But I think theoretically it’s the other way very often because of certain kinds of interactions and that willingness to build, there is an ultimate result in that.”Those from minority groups tended to have more diverse friends: 88.7 per cent of Chinese respondents said all their close friends were of the same ethnicity, compared with 62.6 per cent of Malays and 50.8 per cent of Indians.This reflects a majority-minority dynamic, said Dr Mathews. “It does seem to be intuitive that if you are a minority individual, you have more opportunities or more reasons you are in situations where you do have other people of different backgrounds.”Diverse networks were also associated with a stronger sense of belonging, civic participation and social cohesion.Citing research on social capital, Mr Thomas noted that government policy can address resource allocation concerns related to immigration, but it cannot manufacture mutual understanding and trust. IPS reported that 95.8 per cent of participants described the experience as positive, 91.6 per cent found it meaningful and 87.5 per cent said it was empowering.A NEED FOR CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE

IPS researchers noted that while Singapore has long invested in infrastructure to foster cohesion among its founding communities – Chinese, Malay, Indian, Eurasian and

others – the local-foreign dimension now warrants similar attention.This could involve expanding the role of current institutions or establishing new civic bodies to address identity questions that cannot be resolved by policy adjustments alone.On public mes-saging, researchers said better communication could affirm citizens as stakeholders and ensure that relevant information is easily accessible on official platforms.They added that the pilot showed how structured deliberation can surface shared concerns and generate collaborative action, and recommended extending the approach to other constituencies and polarising issues“

These require a different kind of intervention where people have to listen to one another, reason together and see if they can find commo From the pilot, researchers recommended recognising local-foreign integration as a distinct pillar of Singapore’s multiculturalism and expanding the initiative to other constituencies and contested issues.They also called for stronger public communications. Participants felt that official messaging tends to highlight foreigners’ contributions – such as skills and investments – while overlooking citizens’ roles, including tax payments and National Service.

“This asymmetry of perception was experienced as a signal that citizens’ contribu-tions were taken for granted,” said Mr Thomas.Participants also expressed discomfort with what they saw as “framings of dependency” in policy language. For instance, some felt that the design of certain grants portrayed citizens as passive recipients of govern-ment generosity, rather than active stakeholders.COMMON GROUND AND STICKING POINTS

Out of 67 statements generated during the pilot, the group reached unanimous consen-sus on 23. Statements on community life saw the highest agreement, with participants agreeing with 77.8 per cent of statements on norms of mutual respect and reciprocal effort in everyday interactions. In contrast, jobs and education were seen as “zero-sum” issues, with consensus achieved on only 22.2 per cent and 25 per cent of statements in those areas, respectively. Agreement was possible when certain conditions were spec-ified – for example, that Singaporeans should be prioritised for jobs if they meet required competencies, though merit-based hiring should remain the norm.Education-related statements that did not reach consensus included tighter caps on local and private edu-cation providers, and a proposal to lower the school fee gap for PRs to retain talent.As for multiculturalism, participants came to a consensus on only one statement: “Singapore residents should accept and understand people of different nationalities without losing who we are, and foreigners must respect the host country.”Statements such as “Singapore must remain open with evolving criteria to immigration to continue its economic growth” and “Singapore is a multicultural nation and we are learning to welcome all without fear or prejudice” did not find common ground.

Following the sessions, participants co-authored a residents’ report. A voluntary work-ing group of seven Singaporeans and three foreigners was formed to develop a commu-nity integration initiative.

He writes to prison inmates every day

Singapore: Every morning, Roger Tan opens his laptop, brews a cup of tea and begins sending out emails. But these messages are not for colleagues, friends or family, let alone people he has met. They are for prison inmates.

“I’m writing to about 25 inmates right now,” he shares. “It could take an hour to even three hours each time.” For those who are cut off from the outside world, there is no shortage of things to write about.The former bank risk manager fills his letters with snippets about everyday life, from how to use banking app PayNow — introduced in 2017 — to reviews of films inmates only get to watch about two years after they were first screened. (The letters) could be educational, ... in-formational (or) just for entertainment,” the 49-year-old says.

“(I’m writing) to help them stay in touch with society, so that they don’t feel left out. ... And it’ll be easier for them to re-integrate (later).”He has kept up this daily routine since June 2022. In that time, he has written more than 28,000 letters to inmates, mainly from Changi’s maximum-security prison and some from the Tanah Merah Prison School. Behind the prison walls, his efforts have not gone unnoticed. What began with one or two pen pals grew, at its peak, to nearly 100 of them as more and more inmates asked to be included in his “mailing list”.He is among several individuals featured on the On The Red Dot series, Hidden Heroes, which sheds light on ordinary Singaporeans who step up when no one is watch-ing, often at personal cost.Tan shares why he writes, how he navigates the emotions inmates sometimes share and what keeps him going on his mission to offer comfort and hope, especially while living with terminal cancer. Tan’s journey with inmates began in 2018, when he started volunteering as a para-counsellor in a Buddhist charity. The role did not require him to be a fully certified counsellor but involved offering emotional support and, importantly, a listening ear. He met them in groups of about 30 to 50 in monthly sessions and gradually built trust and rapport. But those sessions came to a halt in 2020, when the pandemic hit and in-person coun-selling was suspended.So he emailed them instead. His deci-sion to write every day, he says, was inspired by an inmate who shared that his friend had loved ones, such as parents, siblings and girlfriend, who took turns writing him an email daily.“He wished something like that could be done for him. So I thought, ‘Eh, that’s a good idea. Why don’t I do that for them instead?’” Tan recalls.

ICE Arresting Americans Using Prohibited Chokeholds

Dubai: A new investigation by ProPublica finds over 40 cases of immigration agents using potentially fatal choke-holds and other moves that can cut off breathing. “These arrests are playing out around the country, and often in full view of cameras and witnesses,” says ProPublica reporter Nicole Foy. She also reports that at least 170 U.S. citizens have been arrested by immigration agents. AMY GOODMAN: We begin today’s show looking at ICE’s escalating use of violence and force. Last week, an ICE agent fatally shot Renee Good, 37-year-old mother of three, in Minneap-olis, sparking nationwide protests. On Thursday, President Trump threatened to invoke the Insurrection Act and send troops to Minnesota.Following the shooting of Renee Good, ICE’s violent tactics have come under increasing scrutiny. A new investigation by ProPublica documents more than 40 cases of immigration agents using banned chokeholds and other moves that can cut off breathing.In one case, ICE agents violently arrested an ICU nurse in California named Amanda Trebach while she was documenting ICE opera-tions in the Los Angeles area. Two plainclothes, masked agents were filmed pinning her against the pavement as



they knelt on her back. One agent put his knee on Trebach’s head for a brief moment. AMANDA TREBACH: They came out in a convoy. They jumped out of the vehicle. As you could see, they pinned me to the ground, and they hand-

cuffed me. They took me into an unmarked vehicle. They did not read me my rights. They didn’t tell me where I was going. They shut the vehicle. They drove me to the other side of the noncivilian side of Terminal Island. And basi-

cally, they kidnapped me.AMY GOODMAN: We’re joined now by ProPublica reporter Nicole Foy, her latest article headlined “We Found More Than 40 Cases of Immigration Agents Using Banned Chokeholds and Other Moves That Can Cut Off Breathing.” In October, Nicole also revealed how ICE detained more than 170 U.S. citizens.

Nicole Foy, welcome to Democracy Now! It’s great to have you with us. Why don’t you lay out your latest find-ings? Talk about these potentially lethal chokeholds — which are, in fact, illegal?

to the internet out of frustration with the lack of legal process and progress in the case. JUAN GONZÁLEZ: And this issue of ICE arresting American citizens? You mentioned there have been about 130 of them, including about a dozen elected officials. Could you talk about some of those cases, especially the case of Dulce Consuelo Díaz Morales?

U.S. citizens, like Dulce, who were arrested and detained because of the fact that immigration agents believed that they were not U.S. citizens. And this is despite evidence that was often presented to them at the time of arrest or afterwards

‘I was bullied in school for being different. At 16, I hit a crashing point’: the awkward kid who became the world’s strongest man

Tom Stoltman was a skinny kid: 90kg, 6ft 8in, with glasses and sticking-out teeth. Diagnosed with autism as a young child, he felt he didn’t fit in. “I was really shy,” he says. “I got bullied in school for being different.” Back then, the boy from Invergordon didn’t like what he saw in the mirror. He lived in baggy hoodies. “Hood up. That was my comfort.” He loved football but “I used to look at people on the pitch and think, ‘He’s tinier than me, but he’s pushing me off the ball.’”

By 16 he’d hit a “crashing point”. He went from football-obsessed to playing Xbox all day. He’d skip meals in favour of sweets. “Sometimes it was four or five, six bags.”

It was Stoltman’s older brother Luke who got him out of the

rut. A bodybuilder at the time, he dragged Tom to the gym and taught him how to lift free weights. “At the start I was just doing the 20kg bar and the next day I’d be so sore,” he says. But after a week he started to enjoy it.

Luke wasn’t just into bodybuilding; by 21 he had become a strongman competitor. Tom remembers watching Luke’s first competition, Scotland’s Strongest Man, where he lifted and towed huge, heavy objects such as cars, logs and atlas stones. “Watching your brother do that, you’re, like, oh, he’s like a Hulk.” Tom wanted in.

He joined a strongman gym, trained nonstop and focused on eating to get strong enough to compete, ditching snacks for protein-rich meals. “Autism be-



came my cheat code.” He could lock into routine; block out dis-

tractions. Now 31, he weighs 180kg – the same as a large

lion. It took 10 years to double his weight. He eats five times a

day to fuel training: eight boiled eggs with cheese and mayonnaise on sourdough for breakfast, then two meals of spicy mince and rice before training at 12.30pm. These days he’s a strongman full-time – running a gym with his brother near his home, where he lives with his wife. He spends his downtime like a biohacker – using an oxygen chamber, red-light therapy, a sauna and cold tub – and works with a nutritionist and sports doctor who monitors his health, including his cholesterol (it’s low). “When I go to the doctor, I’m classed as obese,” he says, but his BMI doesn’t reflect his health. “A lot of people think strongmen are fat guys lifting one rep. But you can be fit at any shape or size.” He can run holding a 200kg atlas

stone, can deadlift 350kg for 12 reps. “I’ve pulled two monster trucks.”

How does he feel about his body now? “I’m proud of it.” Not because of the inches on his biceps – that’s artificial, he says – but because of the mental toughness his body represents and the superhuman strength it gives him. Last week he helped a man push his broken-down car off the road.In 2021, at 27, Stoltman became the World’s Strongest Man for the first time, defeating industry veterans to take the title. He has won it twice more. At 16, when he looked in the mirror he saw a lost kid asking, “Why am I different?” Now he sees someone who turned that difference into a superpower. “I can look in the mirror and smile.”

Sanya Malhotra’s Leather Trench Moment Redefines Quiet Power Dressing

There is a certain kind of authority that doesn’t demand attention. It earns it. Sanya Malhotra’s latest sartorial moment taps into that exact frequency. Stepping out against Delhi’s winter backdrop, the actor delivered a look that felt grounded, deliberate, and refreshingly free of theatrics.

Shared on social media with the caption, “Delhi being the perfect backdrop”, the post captured more than just an outfit. In an era of exaggerated silhouettes and overt glamour, Sanya Malhotra’s restraint felt quietly radical. At the core of the look was a brown leather trench coat, structured yet fluid, layered over a sharply tailored power suit. The combination struck a careful balance between softness and strength. Leather, often associated with rebellion, was recontextualised here as refined and composed, while the suit beneath grounded the ensemble in classic authority. The colour palette – earthy, warm, and seasonally apt – allowed the craftsmanship and fit to take centre stage. It was winter dressing with intention, not excess. Accessories were kept deliberate and minimal. Statement earrings introduced just enough visual interest, offering contrast without overpowering the look. The beauty styling followed suit: softly highlighted eyes, winged eyeliner, and an otherwise restrained makeup palette reinforced the ensemble’s composed energy. Nothing competed for attention. Everything worked in harmony. Sanya’s style has long echoed her career choices – measured, thoughtful, and rooted in substance. As an actor known for emotional range and fearless storytelling, she embodies a contemporary idea of power that values clarity over dominance. This look, like her performances, didn’t rely on exaggeration. It relied on conviction.

What makes the ensemble resonate is its relatability. It’s aspirational without being alienating – a reminder that modern boss dressing is less about commanding a room and more about being fully at ease within it. Sanya Malhotra’s latest appearance reinforces a growing shift in fashion language: power doesn’t need to be loud to be lasting. Sometimes, it’s the quietest statements that carry the most weight.



Unique Berries Found Only In India And Their Health Benefits

India is home to a remarkable variety of berries that are not only delicious but also deeply rooted in traditional medicine and local cuisines. While the world is familiar with strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries, India’s indigenous berries remain lesser-known treasures. These fruits are packed with nutrients, antioxidants, and unique flavors that reflect the country’s biodiversity.

Amla (Indian Gooseberry): Amla is one of the most celebrated berries in India, prized for its exceptionally high vitamin C content. Small, green, and tart, it has been used for centuries in Ayurveda to boost immunity, improve digestion, and enhance skin health. Amla is often consumed raw, pickled, or as part of herbal tonics like chyawanprash. Its antioxidant properties make it a powerful fruit for detoxification and overall wellness, earning it the title of a “superberry.”

Ber (Indian Jujube): Ber is a tropical berry that thrives in India’s warm climate. It is small, round, and ranges from green to reddish-brown when ripe. Known for its sweet taste, ber is rich in vitamin C and dietary fiber, making it excellent for gut health. Traditionally enjoyed fresh or dried, ber is also used in local sweets and snacks. Its resilience in arid regions makes it a staple fruit for rural communities.

Phalsa (Sherbet Berry): Phalsa, often called wild blueberry, is a small purple berry native to India. It is cherished for its cooling properties and is commonly made into refreshing summer drinks. Rich in vitamins A and C, calcium, and potassium, phalsa supports hydration and immunity. Its tangy-sweet flavor makes it popular among street vendors who sell phalsa sherbet during hot months. This berry is a seasonal delight that perfectly complements India’s tropical climate.

Jamun (Indian Blackberry): Jamun is a deep purple berry with a sweet yet slightly astringent taste. It is widely consumed during the monsoon season and is known for its medicinal properties, especially in managing blood sugar levels. Jamun seeds are often dried and powdered for use in traditional remedies. The fruit is also rich in iron and antioxidants, making it beneficial for skin and overall health. Its vibrant color and unique taste make it a favorite summer fruit. (

Karonda (Carissa Carandas): Karonda is a small, oval berry that grows in thorny shrubs across India. It has a sharp, sour taste

and is often used in pickles, jams, and chutneys. Rich in iron and vitamin C, karonda is valued for its ability to combat anemia and boost immunity. Its hardy nature allows it to thrive in semi-arid regions, making it a reliable source of nutrition for rural populations. Karonda’s tangy flavor adds zest to traditional Indian condiments.

Lasora (Cordia Dichotoma Berry): Lasora is a lesser-known berry found in India’s dry regions. It is small, sticky, and greenish when raw, turning brown as it ripens. Traditionally, lasora is used in pickles and curries, valued for its mucilaginous texture. Rich in fiber and minerals, it aids digestion and provides energy. Though not widely commercialized, lasora remains an important fruit in local diets, especially in Rajasthan and Gujarat, where it is a seasonal delicacy.

Sohphie (Garcinia Pedunculata): Native to Northeast India, particularly Assam and Meghalaya, sohphie is a sour berry used in traditional Assamese cuisine. It is often added to curries and fish dishes for its tangy flavor. Sohphie is rich in antioxidants and has anti-inflammatory properties, making it a valued ingredient in local medicine. Its unique taste and health benefits highlight the biodiversity of India’s northeastern states, where it is considered both a culinary and medicinal treasure.

Kokum (Garcinia Indica): Kokum is a deep purple berry native to the Western Ghats. It is widely used in coastal cuisines, especially in Goa and Maharashtra, to add sourness to curries and drinks. Kokum is renowned for its cooling properties and is often consumed as a refreshing summer beverage. Rich in antioxidants and garcinol, it supports digestion and heart health. Kokum’s culinary versatility and medicinal value make it one of India’s most cherished indigenous berries.

Bhokar (Cordia Myxa Berry): Bhokar is a sticky, sweet berry found in parts of central India. It is traditionally used in pickles and local dishes, valued for its unique texture. Rich in fiber and minerals, bhokar aids digestion and provides energy. Though not widely known outside rural communities, it plays an important role in local food traditions. Its resilience in dry climates makes it a dependable fruit for subsistence farming.

Chironji Berry (Buchanania Lanzan): Chironji is a small berry whose seeds are more famous than the fruit itself. Native to central India, chironji seeds are used in



sweets, gravies, and festive dishes. The berry itself is edible, though less commonly consumed. Rich in protein, healthy fats, and minerals, chironji seeds are considered

highly nutritious. This berry highlights India’s tradition of using every part of a plant for food and medicine, reflecting sustainable practices.

New Restaurant And Café Openings Across India: Fresh Concepts, Design-Led Spaces And Purposeful Dining

India’s dining landscape continues to evolve with brands expanding thoughtfully, blending strong culinary identities with design, community, and purpose. Across cities, new openings are no longer just about food, they are about experience, storytelling, and creating spaces that resonate with changing lifestyles.From neighbourhood-focused outlets and delivery-first concepts to design-led cafés and purpose-driven restaurants, these launches reflect how modern diners seek more than a meal. Comfort, inclusivity, nostalgia, innovation, and connection now sit at the heart of hospitality. As brands grow, they are choosing locations and formats that feel intentional, responding to local communities while staying true to their core philosophy. Whether it’s reimagining familiar flavours, centring desserts as the main event, building culture-forward spaces, or creating inclusive dining experiences, these new ventures highlight how the food and beverage sector is expanding with clarity and confidence, one carefully considered opening at a time. Circle of Crust has opened a new outlet in Uttam Nagar, New Delhi, marking another milestone in its steady expansion. Known for its philosophy of “Pizza But Better,” the brand continues to build a loyal following by pairing familiar flavours with Indian-inspired twists. The Uttam Nagar outlet, launched on 15 January 2026, carries forward this approach with a strong focus on consistency and customer experience. Led by

Founder Neha Anand and Co-Founder Kartik Anand, Circle of Crust was created to cater specifically to Indian palates. Over the years, the brand has expanded across Punjab, Chandigarh, and Haryana, and has also entered the international market with an outlet in Dubai.The new outlet features a vibrant, youthful setting suited to students, families, and working professionals. The menu includes vegetarian and non-vegetarian favourites such as Paneer Makhani, Chicken Tikka, Butter Chicken, and Pijja Chatkare, along with specialty crusts made from whole wheat, beetroot, and spinach. Pastas, sides, desserts, and beverages complete the offering. To mark the launch, the brand is offering complimentary pizzas from its Super Singles range for three days. Dessert-first café FES Café has launched its third outlet at Nirvana Courtyard, Gurgaon, further strengthening its presence across Delhi NCR. With existing locations in Greater Kailash II and Galleria Market, Gurgaon, the brand has built a loyal following for its indulgent desserts and thoughtfully designed spaces.Founded by Vidur Mayor, FES Café is widely known for introducing New York-style chunky cookies to the Indian market and for placing desserts at the centre of the dining experience. Over time, it has evolved into a cultural “third space” where food, design, and community naturally intersect. The Nirvana Courtyard outlet is the brand’s largest and most design-led space so far. It is also FES Café’s first split-level café,

with the ground floor dedicated to service and takeaway, and the upper floor designed for relaxed seating and longer visits. A standout feature is the Music Corner, inspired by early-2000s headphone booths, where guests can listen to cassette tapes together, creating a tactile, nostalgic experience. Depot48 has launched Khasta, a delivery-only kulcha concept that reimagines the traditional tandoori kulcha as a complete, generously filled meal. Rooted in Punjabi comfort food, Khasta blends familiarity with innovation, offering slow-crafted kulchas designed for everyday convenience. The menu balances classics like Amritsari Aloo-Pyaz Kulcha and Butter Chicken Kulcha with inventive options such as Mushroom Truffle Kulcha with Mirch Ka Salan, Pulled Jackfruit & Podi Kulcha, Goan Chorizo Blue Cheese Kulcha, and even a Gur-Dal Halwa dessert kulcha. Each kulcha is sealed and cooked in the tandoor to achieve a crisp, flaky texture while remaining easy to transport and reheatFOUNDERS Vikas Narula and Girjashanker Vohra describe the concept as an extension of Punjabi generosity, food meant to be warming, satisfying, and easy to share, adapted for how people eat today.PHURR PHURR Elevated Vegetarian Cuisine has opened its second outlet in Indiranagar, following the success of its consistently houseful Jayanagar location. Co-founded by Rahul Lunawat, the brand has carved a niche by making vegetarian dining indulgent, design-forward, and memorable.

The Indiranagar space builds on PHURR’s expressive aesthetic, combining playful maximalism with comfort. The menu continues to celebrate rooted vegetarian flavours, featuring favourites like Tender Coconut Fritters, Andhra Chilli Broccoli, Vegetable Kofta with Banarasi Pukhtan Curry, and Bhindi 2 Way, along with a new addition, Finger Millet Nihari. The mocktail-only bar remains a highlight, proving that creativity and balance can stand independent of alcohol. PHURR’s expansion reinforces its belief that elevated vegetarian cuisine is here to stay. Ishaara by Bellona Hospitality has launched a new standalone outlet at 1 Sobha, Church Street, Bengaluru, bringing its purpose-led dining philosophy to the heart of the city. Known for championing inclusion, the restaurant is run by a team of hearing and speech-impaired service professionals, where gestures form the language of hospitality. Led by Prashant Issar, Managing Director of Bellona Hospitality, the brand continues to focus on empathy and meaningful human connection. The menu draws from familiar Indian flavours, offering refined yet nostalgic dishes across chaat, mains, and desserts. The Church Street outlet also introduces Taal, a cocktail programme inspired by rhythm and the elements, alongside zero-proof options.Designed by Minnie Bhatt Design, the indoor-outdoor space blends concrete, wood, brass, and greenery into a grounded, welcoming environment, further strengthening Ishaara’s presence in Bengaluru.

ENTERTAINMENT

Shah Rukh Khan's Trending Photos with Millie Bobby Brown and Katy Perry

Mumbai: Shah Rukh Khan was in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, recently for the Joy Awards 2026. The celebrity was spotted mingling with a number of celebrities from Hollywood, including Lee Jung-jae, Millie Bobby Brown, and Katy Perry. Images of these exchanges have gone widespread on the internet. Another photo shows Shah Rukh Khan sitting for a group photo with Lee Jung-jae from Squid Game and Millie Bobby Brown from Stranger Things. Superstar Lee Jung-jae of South Korea shocked his followers by posting a photo of himself with Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan and declaring that he was "honored." On Saturday, Lee posted a selfie with Shah Rukh on his Instagram account. Lee's famous work includes appearances in films like Assassination, The Thieves, and the Netflix series Squid Game, in which he played the well-



known character Seong Gi-hun, also known as player number 456. Both stars were seen grinning at the camera in the post. "Honoured to be with a respected icon Mr. @iamsrk," Lee captioned the

photo. Both performers met at the Joy Forum, which was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, according to earlier photos that have appeared online. Shah Rukh is presently filming King, his next

movie. Suhana Khan, Deepika Padukone, and Abhishek Bachchan play key parts in King, which is directed by Siddharth Anand, who previously collaborated with the actor on Pathaan.

Taslima Nasreen, Author, Responds to AR Rahman's "Communal" Remark



Mumbai: Noted AR Rahman has come under fire from Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasreen, who has been living in self-exile in India, for suggesting that he might have lost employment in the Hindi cinema industry because of a sectarian bias. The article claimed that being "pitied" is inappropriate for the Oscar-winning music composer, citing Shah Rukh Khan and Salman

Khan as examples. Taslima criticized Rahman for the group comments on X, the original name for Twitter, claiming that "rich" people don't have any problems. "AR Rahman is incredibly well-known in India and a Muslim. To the best of my knowledge, he receives more money than any other artist. He is most likely the wealthiest musician. He is grumbling that because he is a Muslim, Bollywood

does not hire him. Salman Khan, Aamir Khan, Javed Akhtar, and Shahana Azmi are all celebrities; Shah Rukh Khan remains the Badshah of Bollywood," Taslima stated. "The famous and the rich never face difficulties anywhere," she went on, regardless of their caste, community, or religion. Poor folks like me have challenges. Taslima talked about her difficulties, saying, "Even though I am a strict atheist, because of my name I am assumed to be a Muslim." Anti-Muslims don't give a damn if someone is a believer or an agnostic. Nobody is interested in renting me a flat. They trick me and amputate my leg when I visit a hospital. In Hyderabad, I am beaten simply for being an atheist; in Aurangabad, I am not allowed to enter;

and in West Bengal, I am expelled. These issues are not even remotely related to the lives of Muslim Bollywood celebrities or A. R. Rahman. "I'm not a citizen. The legislation states that all other rights are equal between a citizen and a resident, with the exception of the right to vote. I reside in India because I love it; many people do not. I never stray from my values and ideals. People still tell me things like, "You people celebrate Eid by sighting the moon," or "polygamy is practiced among you," even though I am enduring a sentence of exile after shattering the hollow bones and marrow of Islam. The average citizen of our nation is largely ignorant of both atheism and the humanism that underpins it, she continued.

Neha Kakkar Responds to Divorce Rumors After Cryptic Posts

Mumbai: Rumors about Bollywood diva Neha Kakkar's potential divorce from spouse Rohanpreet Singh were prompted by her recent post proclaiming a break from everything. She has now clarified her marriage in another social media post, though. Neha has advised against involving her family or husband in the situation. She voiced her dissatisfaction with certain other members of the system. "Guys, please don't drag my innocent husband or my sweetest family in all this," Neha wrote on her Instagram Stories.

They are the purest people I have ever met, and their support has made me who I am today. "I'm angry with the system and a few other people. I hope you understand and keep my hus-



band and my family out of all of this. Yes, I agree that I shouldn't post on social media with such emotion since media people are fully aware that "Rai ka pahaad kaise banaya jaata hai"

(mountain out of a molehill). "Lesson learned," she continued. "Ab se (now) I'm Not going to talk about my personal life bhai sahab!!!!," she said, concluding that she was too emotional for

this world. Bechari (powerless) Nehu is too sensitive for this world! I apologize for this world! I apologize and I'm grateful, NeHearts. I'll be back with a BANG, so don't worry! Much love. Neha announced that she was taking a break from "responsibilities, relationships, and work" in her earlier post, which has now been removed. "Time to take a break from responsibilities, relationships, work, and everything I can think of right now," she said.

I'm not sure if I'll return. I'm grateful. The "Lollipop" singer went on, "I ask paparazzi and fans not to film me at all." I hope you allow me to live freely in this world and respect my right to privacy. Please, no cameras! I ask! For my peace, this is the least you can all do.

Ranveer Singh's mother displays her granddaughter Dua's name in mehendi



Mumbai: In 2024, Ranveer Singh and Deepika Padukone became parents. That year, they welcomed their first child, a daughter named Dua Singh Padukone. Now, a photo of Anju Bhavnani, Ranveer's mother, proudly holding Dua's name on her palm has gone

popular on social media. Anju Bhavnani is seen displaying her granddaughter Dua's name in henna on her hand in a picture that has been extensively shared on Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh's fan sites. It looks like the photo was taken at a wed-

ding ceremony. Anju is seen grinning while displaying the mehendi pattern with Dua's name while dressed in a traditional lime green attire. Regarding Ranveer, he is currently relishing the success of Dhurandhar, his most recent movie. The spy thriller is still

doing well at the box office after six weeks in theaters. The movie made Rs 4.25 crore on its seventh Sunday, bringing its total Indian box office receipts to Rs 879.75 crore. The movie has already made Rs 1,328.23 crore worldwide (Day 45). Dhurandhar earned Rs 218 crore in Week 1, Rs 261.5 crore in Week 2, Rs 189.3 crore in Week 3, and Rs 115.70 crore in Week 4, according to data released by Jio Studios. In the fifth week, it added Rs 56.35 crore, and in the sixth week, it collected Rs 28.95 crore. Dhurandhar, directed by Aditya Dhar, debuted in theaters on December 5. Along with Akshaye Khanna, Arjun Rampal, Sanjay Dutt, R. Madhavan, Sara Arjun, and Rakesh Bedi, Ranveer Singh plays the main character in the movie. A sequel will be released on March 19 of the following year, according to the producers.

The only film Farah Khan will direct again is one starring Shah Rukh Khan

Mumbai: Farah Khan, a choreographer and filmmaker, has stated that she is preparing to helm her next movie. Many admirers have been waiting for an update on her comeback to filmmaking, even as her humorous and honest YouTube vlogs continue to draw viewers. In her most recent vlog, Farah, the director of well-known Bollywood movies like Main Hoon Na, Om Shanti Om, and Tees Maar Khan, provided an update. She disclosed that she intends to start her next directing project by the end of this year when visiting the Mumbai residence of actor Nakuul Mehta. "Abhi banaungi main!" exclaimed Farah. Abhi bachche chaley jayenge na college fir banaungi! "Wapas Aao Farah Khan" (I will make a film soon!) is a full online petition. I will make it after my children graduate from college.



I have an entire petition to get back on track! I believe it's time,

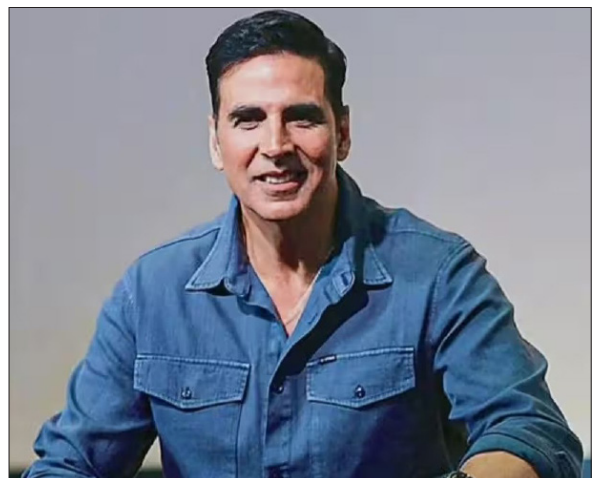
and I want to begin at the end of this year." Additionally, Farah stat-

ed that she will work with Shah Rukh Khan if she decides to go back into directing. "I'll work with Shah Rukh if I decide to direct her movie! If not, I'll wait and watch YouTube," Farah remarked. They have been together for a long time. Om Shanti Om, starring Farah and Shah Rukh, was a huge smash and Deepika Padukone's film debut. In the 2007 film, Arjun Rampal portrayed the antagonist. Shah Rukh Khan, Deepika Padukone, Sonu Sood, and Boman Irani starred in Farah Khan's most recent film, Happy New Year. The movie did well at the box office when it was released in 2014. The 2023 movie Dunki was Shah Rukh Khan's most recent appearance. King, which Siddharth Anand is directing, is his upcoming project. In King, Shah Rukh will collaborate alongside his daughter Suhana for the first time.

Javed Akhtar says he declined to compose music for Border 2

Mumbai: The songs from Border 2, the eagerly awaited follow-up to the 1997 movie Border, have been trending on the internet. Rehased versions of original songs, such as "Ghar Kab Aayoge" and "Aye Jate Hue Lamhon," are featured in the new movie, sparking conflicting reactions online. Fans who grew up listening to the original tunes weren't thrilled to hear the new versions, for obvious reasons. In the midst of the continuing conversation, Javed Akhtar disclosed that the creators of Border 2 had sought him, but he turned them down. "I was asked to write for the movie, but I declined. This strikes me as a form of creative and intellectual bankruptcy. Do you wish to add something to an old song that went well and release it again? "Create new songs or acknowledge that you are unable to perform at the same level," Javed Akhtar advised. "Leave whatever is gone. Why is it necessary to replicate it? In front of us was a movie called Haqeeqat (1964), and its songs weren't your typical ones. We didn't use some really great tunes, like "Kar chale hum fida" or "Main yeh sochkar uske dar se utha tha." We composed brand-new tunes that were completely unique, and they were also well-received. Write fresh songs because you're making a movie again.

Akshay Kumar's security car gets into an accident



Mumbai: On Monday night in Mumbai, Akshay Kumar's security car got engaged in a traffic collision. The incident happened while the actor and his spouse, Twinkle Khanna, were returning from the airport to their house in Juhu. Initial reports state that an auto-rickshaw was struck from behind by a car, which caused the rickshaw to overturn and crash into Akshay Kumar's escort car. The security car fell onto its right side of the road as a result of the impact. Soon after the accident, authorities arrived on the scene and took charge of the situation. We are awaiting more information about the incident. Online footage from the scene showed the auto-rickshaw looking badly damaged after being crushed from above, while the escort car was lying on its side. Thankfully, there

were no reports of significant injuries. After traveling overseas to commemorate a significant personal milestone, Akshay Kumar and Twinkle Khanna were returning from the airport. The pair just commemorated their 25th wedding anniversary. Twinkle posted a video of herself and Akshay paragliding together on Instagram over the weekend to commemorate the event. She wrote, "The best part of our marriage?," next to the video. We always inspire one another to soar. Sometimes literally, as in the case of today! Cheers to 25 years of affection, encouragement, and mountain climbing. Twinkle Khanna and Akshay Kumar were married in Mumbai on January 17, 2001. Their two children are a 13-year-old girl named Nitara and a 23-year-old boy named Aarav.

Mother Madhu Chopra claims that Priyanka Chopra's brother became collateral damage to her success

Mumbai: Madhu Chopra, Priyanka's mother, who frequently divulges information about her children's early years, claimed that her son Siddharth became "collateral damage" to her daughter's achievements. Madhu talked about how she managed to balance her personal and professional lives in the past. Additionally, she disclosed that Priyanka's brother was frequently abandoned and "grew up on his own." "Because their father, Dr. Ashok Chopra, was employed, I was with Priyanka, and he simply grew up alone, Siddharth was the collateral damage to all of Priyanka's success." At the time, he was an adolescent. On the Something Bigger show, Madhu Chopra stated, "I think he was collateral damage for me." Madhu Chopra said, "When I think about it, these are certain things that you had to deal with." "I see him struggling every day, and I feel that, okay, God has blessed you, so just count your blessings one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done," Madhu continued, referring to Siddharth, who

tied the knot in 2024. Every day, I count my blessings. My two wonderful children adore and look out for me. Both Priyanka Chopra's late mother, Madhu Chopra, and father, Ashok Chopra, were Indian Army doctors. Both Priyanka Chopra's late mother, Madhu Chopra, and father, Ashok Chopra, were Indian Army doctors. Even though he doesn't get up very early, my son is up by 8:30 a.m. Priyanka will be up at four in the morning if necessary, depending on the type of work she is doing," she stated. Madhu had previously discussed how she balanced her personal and professional lives while juggling Priyanka's career, her medical practice, and other household responsibilities on Dr. Stuti Khare Shukla's YouTube channel. "It was all children's time when I was with them (the kids). That was excellent. "I believe that's how they could also absorb the work ethic—that you have to put in a lot of effort if you want to accomplish something and also make time for your family, yourself, and your life," she said.

Shubman Gill Hints at “Multiple Changes” Following India’s defeat in the ODI series



New Delhi: In the third and final ODI of the three-match series on Sunday in Indore, India was shockingly defeated by New Zealand by 41 runs. The Blackcaps, who were asked to bat first, amassed an impressive 337/8 in 50 overs, with Daryl Mitchell reaching a century once more. Veteran batsman Virat Kohli responded by keeping India’s innings together and scoring his 85th international century, but he got little help from the opposition. India lost the ODI se-

spite the difficulty of batting at No. 8, Harshit’s performance in this series was outstanding. During the presentation ceremony, Gill remarked, “The fast bowlers also bowled well throughout the series.” “We want to offer Nitish Kumar Reddy opportunity with the World Cup in mind. He continued, “We want to give him enough overs to see which combinations work for us and what kinds of deliveries suit him.” Gill’s remarks regarding Nitish were made the day after Indian assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate acknowledged that the all-rounder was not “doing a heck of a lot” with the little playing time he had been given after the second ODI loss.

Daryl Mitchell, who won Player of the Series with scores of 84, 131*, and 137, claimed that he was able to stay in the moment over the entire series. “Being a part of the team is truly pleasant. It’s unique to win in India. The way we formed alliances as a team was essential, and it’s good to be up there,” Mitchell remarked.

The President of the UAE wraps up his trip to India

New Delhi, Jan 20: On Monday, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the president of the United Arab Emirates, wrapped up his three-hour visit to New Delhi, where he met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and signed important agreements to improve collaboration between Abu Dhabi and New Delhi. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan stated in a post on X that he was happy to see PM Modi and pledged to promote economic growth and sustainable development through bilateral collaboration. “Today I was pleased to meet with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi to discuss opportunities to further strengthen the deep-rooted and historical ties of cooperation between our countries,” he stated. “Committed to fostering sustainable development and economic growth, the UAE and India will continue working together to drive progress in future-focused sectors while achieving mutual benefit for our nations and peoples,” he said. It was a joy to host the president of the United Arab Emirates, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, reaffirming both countries’ desire to deepen their diverse partnership. “Hosting my brother, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, at 7 Lok Kalyan Marg was a great pleasure. His decision to come to Delhi this evening has greatly moved me. In a post on X, PM Modi stated, “We talked about a wide range of issues



aimed at further strengthening the multifaceted India-UAE friendship.” As the UAE President wrapped off the crucial three-hour visit, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar escorted him to the Delhi Airport. In a post on X, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal stated, “A successful visit concluded! President Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed’s visit produced important results and strengthened India and the UAE’s all-encompassing strategic alliance. EAM S Jaishankar dismissed him. Foreign expert Wael Awwad commented on the visit, saying it was crucial given the unfavorable geopolitical changes.

Poland claims that India has demonstrated a willingness to engage in trade



New Delhi, Jan 20: In describing the significance of his trip to India, Polish Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Radoslaw Sikorski noted that Poland has seen “increased tariffs” and is looking for new trading partners, highlighting the necessity of establishing a free trade environment. Radoslaw Sikorski told reporters in Delhi that “India has shown willingness” to interact with Poland. “We

look for new trading partners when faced with higher tariffs from some parts of the world, and India has demonstrated a readiness to participate. We must show the globe that there are parts of the world that continue to support free trade,” he stated. This comes after the United States and the European Union, of which Poland is a member, struck a trade pact last year that imposed a 15% import tax on the majority of EU goods.

In the meantime, the final stage of discussions for a free trade agreement has been completed between India and the EU. The deputy prime minister of Poland stated that there is a lot of potential for EU-India cooperation and emphasized the commission’s consistent single market strategy, which can be advantageous for its allies. “While some industries are sensitive, the agricultural sectors of India and the EU are more or

Ahead of the Assam elections, the Congress is considering record ticket candidates

New Delhi, Jan 20: About 300 people applied for party tickets on Monday, giving the Congress, the largest opposition party in poll-bound Assam, a head start. According to party sources, it is an all-time single-day record for Congress. Among those who filled out their application forms were a number of current MLAs and prominent members of Congress. The deadline for submitting applications is Tuesday. Hemahari Pegu, the treasurer of the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC), reported that over 600 candidates seeking tickets have already applied for different constituencies. Former minister Pranati Phukan, MLAs Wazed Ali Choudhury, Pradip Sarkar, and Abdul Baten Khandkar, former MLA Rozlina Tirkey, and prominent Congressmen Benu Nath, Gopal Sharma, Utpal Gogoi, Deep Bayan, Ajay Gogoi, and Manoranjan Buragohain were among those who applied. Pallavi Saikia, Bidisha Neog, Palakshi Das, Ratul Kalita, Ratul Patowary, Luit Kumar Barman, Kridip Barman,



Tanzil Hussain, Mohsin Khan, and Jehurul Islam were among the other leaders. Along with Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, and West Bengal, elections to the 126-member Assam Assembly are anticipated in the coming months. Leading Congressmen met with state officials and senior observers last week to

discuss a crucial strategy regarding the Assam assembly elections. Former party leader Rahul Gandhi was also present at the meeting, which was held at Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge’s Delhi home at 10 Rajaji Marg. Along with AICC general secretary, Organization, KC Venugopal, Assam Congress presi-

dent Gaurav Gogoi, and the party’s AICC general secretary in-charge Jitendra Singh, the meeting was also attended by Congress senior observers Bhupesh Baghel and DK Shivakumar. In Assam, where the BJP has kept it out of office for the past two terms, the Congress is trying to hold onto power.

Doon Medical College Takes Action Against Nine MBBS Students



Dehradun, Jan 20: According to officials, nine MBBS students at Doon Medical College in Dehradun were suspended and kicked out of the dormitory on Monday for allegedly harassing younger students. They added that the Anti-Ragging Committee’s inquiry report’s recommendations served as the basis for the action taken against the MBBS students from the 2023 and 2024 batches. They were found guilty by the committee of assaulting two junior students on January 12 at the college residence hall. According to them, two students have been ejected from the hostel and internship for the duration of their study and have been suspended from courses for two months. Additionally, each of them has been fined Rs 50,000. Seven additional se-

nior students have also been removed from the hostel for three months and suspended from studies for one month, according to the officials. Dr. Geeta Jain, the principal of Doon Medical College, has received the committee’s investigation report. According to Dr. Jain, ragging is not permitted on the campus of Doon Medical College and will never be accepted. Dhan Singh Rawat, the state’s minister of health and medical education, described the incidence as very regrettable and stated that he has given the college principal instructions to look into it and take such severe measures that it serves as a model for future occurrences. According to him, instances of ragging in schools raise concerns about institutional order and discipline, which are unacceptable.

After a penalty row, Charalampos Kostoulas’ stunning goal saves Brighton’s draw

New Delhi: Brighton overcame Marcus Tavernier’s contentious penalty kick to salvage a 1-1 draw with Bournemouth on Monday thanks to a brilliant late equalizer from Charalampos Kostoulas. After Tavernier’s questionable goal in the first half gave Bournemouth the lead, Kostoulas scored with a spectacular overhead kick in stoppage time at the Amex Stadium. Referee Paul Tierney reversed his decision to charge Amine Adli for diving following a challenge from Brighton goalkeeper Bart Verbruggen, giving Bournemouth the lead in the south-coast derby. The referee agreed to revoke the yellow card and gave a spot kick, which Tavernier converted, after VAR official Jarred Gillett instructed Tierney to check the pitch-side monitor. However, Greek youth Kostoulas saved the day with his second goal since joining from Olympiakos in July, just as Bournemouth were about to secure their first victory away from home in ten games across all competitions. No side in the Premier League has given up



more goals this season than Bournemouth, who have now given up 12 in the final fifteen minutes of the second half. Brighton remained three points ahead of Bournemouth in the middle of the table thanks to Kostoulas’ spectacular equalizer. Talking to the referees is challenging. Regarding the penalty, Brighton manager Fabian Hürzeler stated, “They always have their own opinion.” “The officials informed us before the season began that a touch and a contact is insufficient. Additionally, there are times when they don’t do it; we must acknowledge this

fact.” At the end, we are in that moment in the season when everything is against us,” Bournemouth manager Andoni Iraola continued. “We don’t have the small amount of good fortune you require.” “You conclude with a point after they scored an amazing goal, an overhead kick, and a top corner.” The players have put forth an amazing effort, so it’s quite unfortunate. In the end, they were dead. In the 32nd minute, Bournemouth controversially took the lead. Verbruggen was sprawled at Adli’s feet in the penalty area when he was first booked for diving.

Gautami Naik is astounded by Hardik Pandya’s lovely gesture

New Delhi: Both a game and the speed at which people learn your name are altered by a maiden WPL fifty. Gautami Naik performed the first for Royal Challengers Bengaluru, and the WPL enhanced the second with a classy, compassionate follow-up—a surprise message from her hero, Hardik Pandya. That is the true reason we are discussing her at this time. Her

innings made the headline, not the video. Fans were already wondering, “Who is this batter, and where does that calm come from?” before the video appeared. Gautami Naik explains it in the segment, saying, “Mera cricketing idol Hardik Pandya sir hain.” She then goes into detail about what she finds admirable, focusing on the most difficult aspect of the profession rather

than its merits. She discusses pressure circumstances, how Pandya “match jeetate hain” when the game is close, and how he appears relaxed despite the loud noise. “Har time mein dekhti hu... “Wohi mera nature hain, woh jaise calmly khelte hain,” she continues. It’s more athletic jargon than fan talk: calmness as a repeatable technique, temperament as a skill.

Scotland’s Reaction to Bangladesh’s Possible Replacement in the 2026 T20 World Cup

New Delhi: According to a BBC story, the International Cricket Council (ICC) has not had any discussions with Scotland regarding potentially replacing Bangladesh in the 2026 T20 World Cup. According to media sources, the ICC has requested that the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) determine whether or not to participate in the World Cup by January 21. If the BCB declines to travel to India, Scotland would be invited as a replacement. Citing “security concerns,” Bangladesh had earlier asked the ICC to move its matches from India to Sri Lanka. According to media sources, Scotland, the top-ranked team not participating in the competition, will be able to take Bangladesh’s position if the ICC chooses to do so. The ICC hasn’t gotten in touch with Cricket Scotland about any such decision, according to the BBC. Additionally,



Scotland cricket authorities “out of respect to their counterparts at the Bangladesh Cricket Board” do not want to start negotiations with the ICC. Scotland, the “next best” side in a worldwide qualification event, took Zimbabwe’s place after they withdrew from the 2009 T20 World Cup in England due to political concerns. Mustafizur Rahman, a pacer from Bangladesh, was removed from the 2026 Indian

Premier League on the BCCI’s orders due to undefined “developments all around.” Despite the back and forth between the ICC and BCB, the problem has not been resolved. “The BCB officials have been instructed to make a decision about participation by January 21. According to rankings, they should be prepared to be replaced by another side if they decline to visit India, according to an ICC source. The BCB has declared that its national team would not travel to India for its group matches in Kolkata and Mumbai, citing security concerns and national pride. The ICC has shown reluctance to move Bangladesh’s games to co-host Sri Lanka, where the major India-Pakistan match will take place in accordance with the mutually agreed arrangement for ICC events till 2027, despite the fact that the event calendar has already been finalized.

Naik’s maiden WPL fifty powers RCB into knockouts, securing fifth straight win

Naik, Ghosh partnership powers RCB into knockouts

Vadodara: Gautami Naik struck a fine half-century to steer Royal Challengers Bengaluru to a commanding 61-run win over Gujarat Giants on Monday, ensuring a top-three finish in the Women’s Premier League and making RCB the first team to book a knockout berth. Unbeaten so far, RCB registered their fifth straight win in the tournament. Sent in to bat, the table-toppers did not have the best of starts, losing Grace Harris and Georgia Voll inside the second over with the scoreboard reading just nine. Naik then held the innings together to take RCB to a respectable 178 for six. Skipper Smriti Mandhana (26 off 23 balls) and Naik joined hands to stitch together 60 runs for the third wicket and stabilise the innings. The partnership was cut short by Ashleigh Gardner, who trapped Mandhana plumb in front following a successful review. Naik (73 off 55 balls, 7x4s, 1x6) then combined with Richa Ghosh (27 off 20 balls) in a 69-run stand for the fourth wicket to push RCB forward. While Naik was the dominant player in the partnership, Ghosh used her long handle to great effect, smashing three sixes to compile her runs.

Naik’s knock ended in the 18th over when she was bowled by Gardner. Radha Yadav (17 off eight balls) played a short cameo towards the end to propel RCB to the total. Chasing 179, Gujarat Giants never got their act together from the word go, losing four wickets for 34 by the seventh over. Beth Mooney, Sophie Devine, Anushka Sharma and Kanika Ahuja departed early, while Kashvee Gautam and Georgia Wareham also failed to make an impact. Skipper Ashleigh Gardner (54 off 43 balls) and Bharti Fulmali (14) tried to resurrect the innings, but their effort fell short. Gardner struck five boundaries and a six during her knock, but it was not enough as GG finished on 117 for eight. Right-arm medium pacer Sayali Satghare continued her fine form and emerged as the pick of the bowlers with figures of 3/21. She was ably



supported by Nadine de Klerk (2/17). On a roll, the Smriti Mandhala-led Royal Challengers Bengaluru will look to extend their winning run when they face Gujarat Giants in the Women’s Premier League here on Monday. Unbeaten RCB are the team to beat in the tournament, having registered their fourth consecutive win on Saturday.

GG, on the other hand, started on a bright note, winning their first two games before losing the next two to be placed third in the WPL table. The icing on the cake for RCB is skipper Mandhana’s return to form as she struck a match-defining 96 against Delhi Capitals in their emphatic eight-wicket win on Saturday. Opener Grace Harris too has got good starts in the four matches but failed to convert them into big scores, while Georgia Voll too rose to the occasion with an unbeaten 54. RCB boast of a strong batting line-up in the form of hard-hitting wicket-keeper batter Richa Ghosh, Nadine de Klerk, Gautami Naik and Radha Yadav. While RCB’s bowling unit too is a potent force with the likes of Lauren Bell and Sayali Satghare providing the initial impetus, able support is provided from spinners like Shreyanka Patil, Prema Rawat and Yadav.

RCB would also take confidence from their 32-run win over GG in their first face-off this season at Navi Mumbai two days ago. GG, led by Australian Ashleigh Gardner, consists of a formidable batting line-up which includes Australian great Beth Mooney, Sophie Devine, Kanika Ahuja, Gardner, Georgia Wareham and Bharti Fulmali but in the last two matches they failed to dish out an all-round performance to get over the line. GG’s bowling is being led by Renuka Singh, who has failed to impress in the tournament so far. Devine has been GG’s stand-out performer with both bat and ball, but the likes of Kashvee Gautam, Gardner and Wareham Will need to pitch in with the ball against RCB.

Manini, Aishwary excel in 50m rifle prone, leading Group A opening day

New Delhi: The first day of the Rifle/Pistol National Selection Trials 1 and 2 (Group A) at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range saw strong early statements in the 50m rifle prone events, with Rajasthan’s Manini Kaushik and world championship silver medalist in 50m rifle 3P, Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar finishing on top of the women’s and men’s fields respectively in Selection Trial 1. Manini leads tightly packed women’s field. Manini Kaushik topped the women’s 50m rifle prone T1 with a total of 625.0, built on a composed and balanced series-by-series performance with 104.7, 104.2, 102.3, 104.6, 104.2, and 105. Karnataka’s Tilotama Sen finished second with 622.6, while Kerala’s Vidarsa K Vinod followed in third on 622.0. The depth of competition was evident with just 0.4 separating the athletes placed fifth to eighth. Jharkhand’s Supriya Kumari (621.7) finished fourth, ahead of the current national champion Priya of the Army Marksmanship Unit (620.7). Haryana’s Nischal (620.6), Madhya Pradesh’s Ashi Chouksey (620.5), and Punjab’s (620.4) rounding off the top eight. In the men’s 50m ri-



fle prone Trials 1, Aishwary Pratap stamped his authority early, finishing at the top with an impressive 629.6. The 50m 3P national champion combined a high opening series with a controlled finish to create a clear buffer of 3.2 at the top with 105.3, 105.4, 105.7, 104.9, 103.7 and 104.6. Former world champion Akhil Sheoran claimed second place with 626.4, while current national champion Swapnil Kusale finished third with 625.3. Army shooters Nishan Budha (623.8) and Chain Singh (622.9) followed behind on fourth and fifth, respectively. Navy’s Nikhil Tanwar (621.9), Army’s Babu Singh Panwar (621.6) and Navy shooter Niraj Kumar (620.6) completed the top eight. In T1 of 25m Rapid Fire Pistol, Omkar Singh of the Navy leads the lineup after Stage 1 of qualification with a score of 295-14x, while Bhavesh

Shekhawat of Rajasthan and Ankur Goel of Uttar Pradesh are in second and third with scores of 292-9x and 291-10x respectively. World Championship silver medallist Anish Bhanwala shot 286-12x and is currently in seventh place. The second stage and T1 finals will be held on Tuesday. The finals of 50m Rifle 3 Positions (T1) for both men and women will also be held on Tuesday, along with the T2 finals of 50m rifle prone events. (ANI) (This content is sourced from a syndicated feed and is published as received. The Tribune assumes no responsibility or liability for its accuracy, completeness, or content.) Manini Kaushik topped the women’s 50m rifle prone T1 with a total of 625.0, built on a composed and balanced series-by-series performance with 104.7, 104.2, 102.3, 104.6, 104.2,

and 105. Karnataka’s Tilotama Sen finished second with 622.6, while Kerala’s Vidarsa K Vinod followed in third on 622.0, as per a press release from the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI).

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Madison Keys trails early, rallies strongly to advance into Australian Open second round

Melbourne: Defending champion Madison Keys struggled early but held on to defeat Oleksandra Oliynykova and her offbeat style of game 7-6 (6), 6-1 in a first-round match Tuesday at the Australian Open. Ninth-seeded Keys, playing in her 50th Grand Slam tournament, dug herself into a deep hole at Rod Laver Arena. She trailed 4-0 in the first set and rallied to force a tiebreaker against the Ukrainian. Oliynykova, playing in her first Grand Slam main draw, also raced to a 4-0 lead in the tiebreaker but failed to cash in on two set-point opportunities. Obviously I was very nervous at the start,” Keys said. “As nervous as I was . . . I’m really glad to be back, and that I got through that match.” Keys praised Oliynykova, who signed autographs, accepted loud applause, and waved a Ukrainian flag on-court after the match. My opponent today was incredible,” Keys said. “She started so well. Such a great competitor. She definitely made it tricky for me.” Oliynykova kept Keys off stride, particularly in the first set, with random shots, which included high lobs — moon shots — that forced Keys deep behind the baseline. The Ukrainian’s strong defense and unorthodox play also kept her in the match early. A little bit more of like an unconventional style,” Keys said. “I feel like that made things a little extra tricky at the start. I felt like at the end of the tiebreaker I really kind of found my game and then was able to carry that into the second set.” Oliynykova, who featured a number of facial and other tattoos which she said were only temporary — they wash off — admitted that her style of play can throw opponents off.

Since I started my pro year career, I was hearing that I will not be in top 1,000, then in top 500, in top 300, and in top 100,” said Oliynykova, who is ranked 92nd. “All these people telling me that I won’t be able to progress with this game style. But, actu-



ally, you know, my idea is to do my ‘weird’ things on court, but to be the best player with this type of game. I mean, I saw today that even for one of the best players in the world, it could be really uncomfortable.” Among other early matches Tuesday, two seeded women’s players were beaten. Indonesian Janice Tjen beat 22nd-seeded Leylah Fernandez of Canada 6-2, 7-6 (1) and Tereza Valentova of Czech Republic defeated Australia’s top-ranked women’s player, 30th-seeded Maya Joint, 6-4, 6-4. Former U.S. Open champion Sloane Stephens was knocked out in the first round, beaten by Karolina Pliskova 7-6 (7), 6-2. Stephens, who had to qualify this year, won the U.S. Open in 2017. In men’s play, fifth-seeded Lorenzo Musetti advanced when Raphael Collignon of Belgium retired in the fourth set. The result was 4-6, 7-6 (3), 7-5, 3-2 when the Belgian player quit with an undisclosed injury.

In night matches at Rod Laver, two-time defending men’s champion Jannik Sinner faced Hugo Gaston of France and two-time Australian Open champion Naomi Osaka was scheduled to play Antonia Ruzic of Croatia. Madison Keys overcame a shaky start to defeat Oleksandra Oliynykova 7-6 (6), 6-1 in her opening match at the 2026 Australian Open, advancing to the second round where she will face fellow American Ashlyn Krueger. Madison Keys, the defending champion, looked nervous at the start, quickly falling behind 0-4 in the first set due to double faults and unforced errors. Oliynykova, playing her first Grand Slam main draw, capitalized on Keys’ shaky start and even held two set points in the tiebreaker. However, Keys responded with her trademark big hitting, erasing the deficit and roaring back to clinch the set 7-6. - Keys committed 37 unforced errors and six double faults, allowing Oliynykova to dictate rallies initially. points and snatched the tiebreak with aggressive shot-making.

Australian Open: Sinner advances into second round as Gaston retires early due to injury

Melbourne: Double defending champion Jannik Sinner advanced to the second round of the Australian Open on Tuesday in just over an hour of tennis after his French opponent Hugo Gaston retired upon losing the first two sets 6-2 6-1. In his first official match since beating Carlos Alcaraz for the ATP Finals crown, the Italian world number two was in ominous form on the Rod Laver Arena court he has ruled for two years before the match was cut short. After losing the second set, Gaston gestured he could no longer continue and retired to his seat to cry under a towel. Sinner said he was surprised by the retirement but could see Gaston was not at his best.

Sinner will continue his bid for a third successive Australian Open crown against the winner of James Duckworth and Dino Prizmic. Surpassing the previous six-foot benchmark held by the Kolanka Cup in Chennai, the towering trophy redefines scale and symbolism in the sport, reflecting ambition, excellence and a deep respect for polo’s rich heritage. The trophy was unveiled at Sonu Nigam’s



fiercely contested chukkers and high-octane on-field action. Over the course of the tournament, multiple teams will compete in league and knockout matches starting from January 26, 2026, culminating in a grand final on February 1, 2026. The tournament will be held across different polo grounds in Jaipur.

Speaking on the occasion, Kamlesh Sharma, Managing Director & CEO, KogniVera IT Solutions, said, “Polo is a sport that represents precision, discipline and teamwork -- values that resonate strongly with us at KogniVera. The Cup 2026 is not just about competition; it is about celebrating heritage, nurturing sporting excellence and bringing together a community traalike.

Rohit Sharma’s quiet bat fuels rumours, cannot afford another poor ODI series

New Delhi: The New Zealand series has laid bare several issues with the Indian ODI team, as they were hammered at home for the first time by the Black Caps. An inexperienced, second-string New Zealand scripted a remarkable comeback in the series after losing the first ODI, winning the next two fixtures to seal a historic maiden ODI series triumph on Indian soil. It was India’s first home series defeat since 2023, when they were beaten 1-2 by Australia. In the aftermath of the loss, the sword is dangling over the necks of several underperformers who failed to rise to the occasion in the three-match rubber. While many performances came under scrutiny, star opener



Rohit Sharma also copped criticism for his modest returns. Rohit failed to make a significant contribution in the three-match series, managing just 61 runs from three innings at an average of 20.33 and a strike rate of 76.25.

The experienced batter was unable to convert his starts in the first two fixtures, being dismissed for 26 off 29

balls and 24 off 38 deliveries respectively. Rohit was then dismissed for 11 off 13 balls in the third ODI, caught at mid-on while attempting to pull Zak Foulkes. Rohit entered the series on the back of terrific form, having won the Player of the Series award in Australia, where he finished as the highest run-scorer with 202 runs from three innings. He also

enjoyed productive outings against South Africa, scoring 146 runs from three innings, including two half-centuries. Since the ODI World Cup 2023, Rohit has scored 868 runs from 20 innings at an average of 45.68 and a strike rate of 103.57, with two hundreds and six fifties to his name. The numbers hardly ring any alarm bells for the veteran batter, who has set his sights on featuring in the next ODI World Cup in 2027. Rohit also silenced critics who never missed an opportunity to question his fitness levels. Since his return in October last year, he has worked extensively on his conditioning, shedding more than 10 kilograms in the process. However, with the tournament still months.