

Mother's Day Celebrated by Assam Rifles in Manipur

Imphal, May 11: Assam Rifles celebrated Mother's Day across Tengnoupal, Pallel, Moreh and Kamjong districts of Manipur, bringing together 220 local women and 90 students from Naga, Meitei and Kuki communities.

The events featured discussions on women empowerment, healthcare and social harmony, along with recreational activities, community lunch and movie screenings to strengthen mutual trust and unity.

In Kamjong, Assam Rifles also celebrated with Olina Ningshen of Kangpat Khunou village, who was recently rescued after being abducted by KNA (B) and VVEZ militants.

Following her safe rescue and rehabilitation, Assam Rifles personnel visited her home on Mother's Day to present gifts and essentials, reinforcing the bond of care, security and compassion with local communities.

Himanta Biswa Sarma elected Assam BJP legislature party leader, to take oath as CM for 2nd term

Guwahati, May 11: Himanta Biswa Sarma was elected as the leader of the BJP legislature party in Assam today, confirming his second consecutive term as the Chief Minister of the state. BJP central observer and Union Minister JP Nadda announced that Sarma was elected unanimously as the party's leader in the State Assembly, paving the way for his swearing in as the Chief Minister on May 12. Assam BJP's legislature party meeting was held in Guwahati this morning. Apart from Nadda, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini was also present at the meeting as central co-observer. State party president Dilip Saikia, and all newly elected MLAs of the BJP were also in attendance. Sarma will now meet Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya to stake claim to form the third consecutive BJP-led NDA government in the state. Sarma will be accompanied by



Dilip Saikia, and leaders of NDA allies AGP and BPF, during his meeting with the Governor. NDA has returned to power for a third consecutive term by securing 102 seats in the 126-member Assam Legislative Assembly. The NDA secured a decisive mandate in the recently concluded Assembly elections, winning 102 seats in the 126-member House. The BJP contested 89 seats, while allies AGP and BPF contributed to the alliance's overall tally. The Congress-led opposition struggled to make

significant gains, underscoring the BJP's entrenched dominance in the state's political landscape. Sarma's leadership has been credited with consolidating the BJP's position in Assam, particularly through initiatives in infrastructure, education, and welfare schemes. His government has also emphasized law and order, economic growth, and regional connectivity, which analysts say resonated strongly with voters. The upcoming swearing-in is expected to be attended by senior national leaders of

Mizoram's first NCC Fest & Parasailing Camp held

Aizawl, May 11: Mizoram Health & Family Welfare Minister Lalrinpuoi on Saturday graced as the chief guest the on-going first-ever NCC Fest & Parasailing Camp in Mizoram, organised by 2 Mizo Battalion National Cadet Corps at C. Thua-mluaia Mual, Lunglei. The Minister was accompanied by Lunglei High Powered Committee (HPC) Vice Chairman Pu V. Malsawmtluanga, Lunglei Municipal Council (LMC) Vice Chairman Pu K. Lalrinawma and district officials. Commanding Officer of 2 Mizo Battalion NCC, Col. Sagar K. Mohanty, along with NCC officers, army personnel and cadets, accorded her a warm reception. NCC cadets also presented a Guard of Honour. Speaking on the occasion, Minister Lalrinpuoi expressed happiness that Lunglei was hosting Mizoram's first NCC Fest and Parasailing Camp and thanked the organisers for bring-

ing the event to south Mizoram. She said the programme reflected the Mizoram government's commitment towards balanced development across all regions of the state and highlighted the proposed establishment of Mizoram State University at Lunglei as one such initiative. Referring to the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, the Minister stressed the importance of empowering youth and described NCC as an ideal platform for nurturing disciplined, responsible and capable citizens. She encouraged cadets to equip themselves with modern knowledge and skills, adapt to changing global realities and contribute positively towards national integration and nation-building. The programme also featured a felicitation ceremony honouring NCC alumni, individuals who rendered valuable services to NCC and youth development, and State achievers.

Rhino Poaching Bid Foiled in Assam



Guwahati, May 11: Three suspected rhino poachers have been apprehended in a joint operation by forest officials from the Eastern Range, Gamiri and Crime Investigation Range of Biswanath Wildlife Division, Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve, officials said on Sunday.

The accused, who were allegedly planning to carry out rhino poaching in Kaziranga National Park, were apprehended from Narayanpur in Lakhimpur district, officials said on Sunday. The apprehended persons have been identified as Kiran Pegu, a resident of Ukhal Chuk village under Garmur police station in Majuli district; Riju Pegu (Rijukanta) a resident of Chesa village under Bihpuria police station in Lakhimpur district and Pulen Kaman from Dak Chapori village under Gohpur police station in Biswanath district.

The accused have been arrested on the basis of intelligence inputs received on Saturday and in connection with offence (number ER/02 of 2026 dated March 21, 2026.

Guwahati girl sets Guinness World Record for longest duration hula hooping

Guwahati, May 11: Assam's Lovely Thakuria has etched her name in the Guinness Book of World Records by achieving a remarkable feat in the world of fitness and performance art. The young enthusiast from Guwahati created a new world record by performing the longest duration of hula hooping around one arm, sustaining the activity for a full hour. Her achievement shattered the previous record of 21 minutes and 2 seconds, setting a new benchmark that has drawn admiration from across the country. The record attempt, verified by Guinness officials, showcased not only her physical endurance but also her dedication to mastering a skill that blends rhythm, balance, and stamina. Hula hooping, traditionally seen as a playful pastime, has evolved into a versatile activity with applications in fitness, dance, and performance. It involves spinning a hoop made of plastic, metal, or wood around different parts of the body—most commonly the waist, but also the limbs and neck. In recent years, hula hooping has gained popularity as a form of exercise, improving core strength, flexibility, and



cardiovascular health. Lovely's achievement highlights the growing recognition of this art form as a serious

discipline. Speaking after her record was confirmed, Lovely expressed gratitude to her trainers, family, and supporters who encouraged her throughout her journey. "It was not easy to keep the hoop spinning for an hour, but I wanted to prove that with focus and determination, anything is possible," she said, adding that she hopes her success will inspire young people to explore unconventional fitness activities. Her accomplishment has also brought pride to Guwahati and the wider Assamese community. Local organizations and fitness groups have hailed her as a role model, noting that her achievement places Assam on the global map in a unique way. The Assam Sports Council is expected to felicitate her in the coming weeks, recognizing her contribution to promoting fitness and perseverance. Experts point out that hula hooping requires a combination of muscle coordination and mental concentration. Maintaining rhythm for extended periods is particularly challenging when performed on the arm, as it demands continuous motion and precise control.

Nagaon robbery victim succumbs to injuries

Nagaon, May 11: A woman, who suffered grievous injuries during an armed robbery at her residence in Nagaon district of Assam last month, succumbed to her injuries on Sunday. Ruprekha Bhuyan, wife of Dr Ranjit Saikia, passed away at a private hospital in Guwahati after battling for her life for 16 days following the brutal assault.

The gruesome incident took place on April

24. Her husband was also injured in the incident but recovered after undergoing treatment. Her cremation took place last night after the post-mortem examination was conducted. Police have so far arrested six suspected robbers in the case. Following her death, demands were being raised to give strictest possible punishment to the culprits.

COCOMI Questions Role of Assam Rifles Over Kamjong Attack

Imphal, May 11: Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI) convenor YK Dhiren on Sunday raised questions over the role of the Assam Rifles and other security forces during the recent attack allegedly carried out by KNA-B and PDF militants in Kamjong district. Speaking on the sidelines of the 12th Foundation Day programme of Nongchup Imphal Palem Ima Apunba Lup (NIMPAL) at Urpok Machin Khwai Brahmapur Community Hall, Dhiren criticised a recent statement issued by the Assam Rifles regarding the rescue of a woman allegedly from the custody of KNA-B cadres in Kamjong. He questioned

where the Assam Rifles and other security personnel were when armed militants allegedly crossed over from Myanmar and attacked villages in Indian territory. According to Dhiren, houses were set on fire and civilians in Namlee village, Wangle village and Choro village came under attack while security forces remained "silent spectators." The COCOMI convenor further alleged that the ongoing conflict in Manipur was a "proxy war" being carried out through Kuki armed militant groups against the indigenous communities of the state. He questioned whether the government would acknowledge a security lapse if militants from

Myanmar were allegedly able to enter Indian territory and attack villagers in Kamjong. Stating that people now understand the nature of the crisis, Dhiren stressed the need for unity among the public and called for taking the people's movement in what he termed the "right direction." The NIMPAL foundation day programme was attended by several women leaders and civil society representatives, including NIMPAL president Th. Ibeyaima, All Manipur Women Social Reformation and Development Samaj president Th. Ramani, along with leaders of AMKIL and other organisations.

455 Candidates Lose Security Deposit in Assam Assembly Elections

Guwahati, May 11: A total of 455 out of the 722 candidates who contested the recent Assam Legislative Assembly election forfeited their security deposits after failing to secure the required number of votes. Among them were four candidates from Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), 18 from Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), 10 each from Indian National Congress and Asom Gana Parishad (AGP), 16 from All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF), and seven from United People's Party Liberal (UPPL). Besides them, 248 independent candidates and 102 candidates from registered but unrecognized parties also lost their deposits.

The list included 418 male and 37 female candidates. The election results witnessed massive winning margins for both NDA and Opposition candidates, reflecting a high level of political polarization in the state. As per election rules, the security deposit for an Assembly election is Rs 5,000 for general category candidates and Rs 2,500 for candidates belonging to SC and ST categories. Under Section 158(4) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, a

defeated candidate forfeits the deposit if he or she fails to secure more than one-sixth of the valid votes polled in the constituency.

This year, 722 candidates contested the elections, averaging six candidates per constituency. Two constituencies had as many as 15 contestants, while nine constituencies witnessed direct contests between only two candidates. Candidates from five national parties, four state parties, five parties from other states and 14 registered unrecognized parties were in the fray. According to a statistical report released by the Election Commission of India, female voter turnout surpassed that of males in the election. Male turnout stood at 1,06,97,888, while female turnout reached 1,08,37,040. Additionally, 113 voters from the third gender category also cast their votes.

The state recorded a historic voter turnout of 86.33 per cent, including postal ballots. In the previous Assembly election, the turnout was 82.04 per cent, with 97,00,486 male voters and 94,76,334 female voters participating.

Study Highlights Biochar benefits for Hill Agriculture

Kohima, May 11: Nagaland University has led an international research study highlighting the potential of "Biochar" as a low-cost and sustainable solution to tackle water scarcity and soil degradation in the hilly agricultural regions of Nagaland. Biochar is a carbon-rich material produced by heating crop residues and organic biomass under low-oxygen conditions. According to the study, converting agricultural waste into biochar can significantly improve soil moisture retention, increase crop productivity and support climate-resilient farming practices. Researchers noted that Nagaland's mountainous terrain poses major agricultural challenges. Farming on steep slopes often leads to rapid rainwater runoff, causing the loss of nutrient-rich topsoil, while dry spells create serious water shortages. Rising temperatures, irregular rainfall patterns and declining soil quality have further intensified the need for sustainable farming solutions in the region. The study involved researchers from University of Johannesburg, Amity University, Parul University and

Nagaland University. The research focused on the application of biochar in agricultural fields and found that it acts like a sponge in the soil, improving water retention, reducing irrigation needs and enhancing soil fertility. It also helps reduce soil erosion, making it especially useful for hill farming systems. The researchers pointed out that unlike many conventional water-conservation techniques requiring expensive infrastructure, biochar offers a nature-based, low-cost and circular-economy solution. By transforming farm waste into a valuable soil enhancer, biochar can improve water availability, reduce dependence on chemical fertilisers, increase crop yields and support long-term carbon storage in soil. The findings are also considered relevant for addressing wider agricultural concerns across India, including groundwater depletion, drought stress and declining soil quality. According to the study, adopting biochar-based farming practices could help farmers improve crop survival during dry periods, boost productivity and income, and encourage sustain-

able management of agricultural residues instead of open burning. Jagadish K Patnaik, Vice Chancellor of Nagaland University, said the research reflects the university's commitment to developing locally relevant and practical solutions for the challenges faced in hill agriculture and surrounding ecosystems. He added that converting farm waste into biochar not only improves soil health and conserves water but also provides farmers with an affordable and climate-resilient farming technology. The research was conducted by Prabhakar Sharma from the Department of Agricultural Engineering and Technology, Nagaland University, along with Shakir Ali, Anamika Shrivastava and Krishna Kumar Yadav. The findings were published in Discover Soil, an open-access peer-reviewed journal published by Springer Nature. Prof. Prabhakar Sharma said the study aims to identify locally available biomass suitable for biochar production and evaluate its effectiveness in terraced and steep farming systems. The research also examines

optimum application rates, long-term impacts on soil health and crop yields, and economic benefits for small and marginal farmers. He further stated that the study stands out because it directly links water conservation, soil restoration and climate resilience specifically for hill agriculture, where runoff, moisture loss and soil degradation are major concerns. The research also focuses on using locally available biomass resources to create an affordable and scalable solution for farmers in Northeast India. The research team now plans to expand the work through pilot projects in university farms, village clusters, terrace fields and horticulture plantations. Future plans also include farmer training programmes and collaboration with government agencies to encourage wider adoption of biochar-based farming methods.

The study underlines the broader environmental benefits of biochar, including restoring degraded soils, reducing biomass burning and increasing carbon storage, thereby strengthening climate resilience in ecologically sensitive hill regions.

NE/EAST

Himanta's leadership to boost NE growth

Arunachal CM Khandu



Itanagar, May 11: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Sunday congratulated his Assam counterpart Himanta Biswa Sarma on being unanimously elected as the leader of the BJP-led NDA in the state, expressing confidence that Assam would witness greater progress under his continued leadership.

Sarma was elected as the leader of the BJP-led NDA in the Assam Assembly earlier in the day, paving the way for him to become the CM for a second term. In a social media post, Khandu stated that Assam under Sarma's leadership has emerged as "a strong engine of growth and development in the Northeast", and asserted that the state's advancement would significantly contribute to the prosperity and economic progress of the entire region, including Khandu said in a post on X. The chief minister further expressed confidence that with the continued guidance of Prime Minister and greater service to the people of Assam and the Northeast, first coming to power in 2016 under the leadership of former chief minister and current Union minister Sarbananda Sonowal. The BJP's alliance partners, the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) and the Bodoland People's Front (BPF), also supported his nomination, leading to his unanimous election as the NDA leader.

In a joint meeting in Delhi, NE Congress leaders spoke about the Anti-Racial Discrimination Act

Guwahati, May 11: Congress leaders from four northeast states – Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim – convened a joint meeting at New Delhi on Sunday to discuss issues concerning the region including the need for an Anti-Racial Discrimination Act among others. In a post on its official Facebook, Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) informed that the joint meeting held at Indira Bhawan, New Delhi, discussed issues concerning the northeast region, including the need for an Anti-Racial Discrimination Act and youth empowerment. "During the meeting, leaders discussed the urgent need for a Northeast India Anti-Racial Discrimination Act, empowerment of Northeast youth, building a strong leadership pipeline for the Indian Youth Congress, and the promotion of cultural and sports activities across the northeast region," the post read.

The meeting also emphasized strengthening unity, safeguarding the rights and identity of the people of the northeast, and creating greater opportunities for the youth of the region. Leaders and delegates from four states – Mani-



pur, Nagaland, Tripura, and Sikkim – attended the meeting convened under the chairmanship of Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka, AICC in-charge of all four states and Christopher Tilak, AICC secretary in-charge of the four states. MPCC president O Ibobi Singh, CLP Manipur leader K Meghachandra Singh, Nagaland PCC president S Jamir, Tripura CLP leader Birjit Sinha,

Tripura PCC president Asish Kumar Saha, Sikkim PCC president Gopal Chettri, and Indian Youth Congress president Uday Bhanu Chib were among others who attended the meeting. Youth leaders and delegates from Manipur who attended the meeting were Manipur PYC president W Anand Singh, Avinas, Md Tajuddin, Malem Laithangbam, and Wajir Ahamad.

Regarding the Anti-Racial Discrimination Act, India has so far no such dedicated, comprehensive Act that defines and penalizes racism specifically, relying instead on constitutional provisions and general criminal laws. The Indian Constitution prohibits discrimination on grounds of race, and private initiatives like the Anti-Racism and Equality Bill, 2026 are being discussed, but not yet enacted. People from the northeast region frequently encounter racial discrimination in mainland India due to distinct Mongoloid features. Most common incidents included verbal slurs like "chinki," "Chinese" etc., housing discrimination, and physical violence. Often treated as outsiders, they face prejudices linked to stereotypes, cultural ignorance, and "othering" by mainland society, creating significant daily challenges. As of now, such incidents of racial abuse are often registered under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (formerly Indian Penal Code) regarding "hurt," criminal intimidation, or insult, but these do not specifically identify the motive as racial.

late Dr. K. Kath's monolith was unveiled

Dimapur, May 11: A memorial monolith programme in honour of late Dr. K. Kath, former minister, was held on May 9 at Tesophenyu New Village in the presence of dignitaries, church leaders, village authorities, frontal organisations, civil society representatives, political party leaders, officers, senior citizens and well wishers Meshenchu Kath, pastor TNBC, with invocation by Tekesheng Kath, senior pastor TUBC. A brief life sketch of the late leader was presented by his brother, Agwalo Kath, who recalled Dr. Kath's service oriented life. Beginning his career as Assistant Surgeon at Naga Hospital, Kohima in

1980, he entered politics in 1989 and made history on June 19, 1990, as the first Cabinet Minister from the Rengma community. Agwalo highlighted his contribution in upgrading the SDO Civil Office to ADC Office at Tseminyu, paving the way for the district's eventual upgradation. He noted that Dr. Kath remained committed to the regional political movement and loyal to the NPF until his passing on, lauded Dr. Kath's dedication to the party and his role in strengthening NPF. He credited him for his pivotal contribution to Tseminyu's administrative advancement.



Himanta Biswa Sarma to take oath as Assam CM on May 12

Guwahati, May 11: Paving the way for a second consecutive term, Assam Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya on Sunday formally appointed Himanta Biswa Sarma as the Chief Minister of Assam. The Raj Bhavan issued an official notification to this effect following Sarma's unanimous election as the leader of both the BJP and the NDA Legislature Parties. The appointment has been made in exercise of the powers vested in the Governor under Clause (1) of Article 164 of the Constitution of India. "In exercise of the powers vested in him under clause (1) of Article 164 of the Constitution of India, the Governor of Assam is pleased to appoint Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma as the Chief Minister of Assam," the Raj Bhavan notification stated.

The high-profile swearing-in ceremony, which is expected to draw top national leadership, is scheduled for



Tuesday, May 12, 2026. According to the official itinerary, the oath of office will be administered at 11:40 am at the Veterinary College Field in Khanapara, Guwahati.

Rs 20 lakh canteen dues spark allegations of administrative lapses at IOCL-AOD

Digboi, May 11: Serious questions are being raised over the role of senior officials of the Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Assam Oil Division (AOD), after nearly Rs 20 lakh in payments to local suppliers remained unpaid for months despite repeated representations.

Several businessmen from Digboi have alleged that the prolonged non-payment of dues linked to the AOD canteen points to gross administrative negligence and possible irregularities involving both the canteen contractor, M/s Vidya Caterers, and certain officials of the AOD management. The affected vendors, many of whom are small and medium-scale local entrepreneurs, have now demanded a high-level independent inquiry to identify those responsible, fix accountability, and ensure immediate release of all outstanding payments. The unpaid bills relate to supplies of vegetables, groceries, meat, and packaged drinking water made to the AOD canteen. Among the affected businesses are Shanti Traders, Organic Point, Gautam Enterprise, and Samsuddin Mutton Shop, all of which claim they supplied materials in good faith after receiving orders from canteen authorities and representatives of Vidya Caterers. The vendors allege that while the supplies were received and consumed without objection, payments were either partially made or withheld altogether. Many say the pending dues have crippled their cash flow and forced them into severe financial hardship.

Simanta Deori of Organic Point said he supplied vegetables to the AOD canteen between January and October 2025. According to him, his total bills amounted to nearly Rs 10 lakh, but he received only Rs 6 lakh.

"My total bills were close to Rs 10 lakh, but I received only Rs 6 lakh. The remaining Rs 4 lakh is still unpaid," he said. Rocky Agarwal of Shanti Traders stated that approximately Rs 8 lakh remains unpaid out of supplies worth Rs 10.5 lakh. "We are being made scapegoats. The management blames the



contractor, and the contractor blames the management. Meanwhile, local businessmen are suffering," he said. Samsuddin Ali of Samsuddin Mutton Shop said he is still awaiting Rs 21,300 towards meat supplies made to the canteen. Kanhaiya Prasad Jaiswal of Gautam Enterprise has claimed the largest outstanding amount. He alleged that Rs 6,54,509 remains unpaid for supplying packaged drinking water to various AOD units during 2023-24. Jaiswal further alleged that when he repeatedly sought payment of his pending dues, former canteen in-charge Dipak Bhuiyar threatened him with "dire consequences" and used abusive language involving members of his family. He said he has preserved an audio recording of the telephonic conversation and is willing to submit it to the appropriate authorities as evidence. The controversy has intensified following allegations that AOD management continued to accept supplies from local vendors despite being aware that Vidya Caterers had already expressed its inability to bear further costs. According to an AOD official, speaking on condition of anonymity, the contractor had informed the management by email that the contractual quota of 7,000 bottles with 20 litres of Bisleri can each had been exhausted and that any additional procurement would be financially unviable.

Despite this clear communication, the management allegedly did not alert local vendors and continued to place and receive orders. Vendors argue that this raises troubling questions regarding

under whose authority supplies were accepted without guaranteed payment. They also question why some payments were reportedly made in cash rather than through traceable banking channels and whether any officials exceeded their administrative powers. The vendors allege that the conduct of certain officials suggests more than simple negligence and warrants a thorough investigation. The aggrieved vendors maintain that both IOCL-AOD management and Vidya Caterers are jointly responsible for removing the confusion. They argue that AOD management should clarify who authorized the purchases and why supplies were accepted despite the contractual dispute. The affected businessmen of Digboi have demanded that IOCL and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas order a high-level inquiry into the matter. They want the investigation to determine the exact amount of unpaid dues, identify the officials and contractor representatives responsible for the lapse, and examine allegations of threats, abusive behaviour, and cash transactions. The vendors have further urged the authorities to fix accountability for any administrative or financial irregularities and to ensure immediate payment of all legitimate dues, along with interest if deemed appropriate. They have urged the authorities to protect local entrepreneurs who support major industrial establishments and to take strict action against anyone found responsible for the alleged irregularities.

Manas is home to reintroduced rhinos, but their recovery is still precarious

Guwahati, May 11: The greater one-horned rhinoceros was once wiped out from Assam's Manas National Park (MNP), marking a major conservation setback. The rhino population, however, was re-established through the wild-to-wild translocation under the Indian Rhino Vision 2020 (IRV2020) and rhino rehabilitation programmes. A recent study on the re-established population, introduced through two routes — translocation from other protected areas, and rehabilitation and release — between 2012 and 2021 offers encouraging signs of adaptation in their restored habitat. The study also followed the first generation (F1) of rhinos born in Manas. Manas National Park lies in Assam's Chirang and Baksa districts in northeast India and borders the Royal Manas National Park in Bhutan to the north. Between 2008 and 2021, 22 greater one-horned rhinos were translocated from Kaziranga National Park and Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary as a part of efforts to restore the park's rhino population. In addition, 20 rehabilitated rhinos from the Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation were released in the park between 2006 and 2021, as Manas was considered a more suitable natural habitat than keeping them in rehabilitation facilities. Breeding and calving pattern



Researchers recorded 35 rhino births in Manas during the study period. Nineteen calves were born to translocated females and nine to rehabilitated rhinos. Five calves were born to the F1 generation, while two calves were recorded without identified mothers. In total, eight translocated females, four rehabilitated females, five F1 females and two unidentified adults produced calves. "Breeding and calving are among the most important indicators that reintroduced rhinoceroses have adapted well to their new environment," says the corresponding author of the study, Deba Kumar Dutta, a wildlife biologist and member of the IUCN/SSC Asian Rhino Specialist Group.

In two cases, calves were born less than 480 days after release (roughly the gestation period for the species), suggesting they had conceived before translocation and that the move did

not disrupt their pregnancies. During the study period, the animals were tracked using radio telemetry systems that included VHF collars, directional antennae and receivers, along with camera traps and field observations. Rhinos have slow life history traits, and recovery is extremely slow and highly dependent on active and continued conservation efforts, says Yadvendradev Jhala, senior scientist of INSA at NCBS, Sr Professor & Dean (Retd.), Wildlife Institute of India, adding: "The reintroduction has been remarkably successful but should not be viewed with complacency since it can easily be reversed." He said that the Manas rhinos should always be managed as a metapopulation with Kaziranga, Pobitora and other populations in West Bengal. So all these populations benefit from occasional immigrants bringing in genetic diversity and population vigorously as they won't sustain themselves without continued management in these landscapes. Dutta says the population would need to be strengthened further, possibly through additional introductions from donor sites such as Kaziranga and Pobitora. He also emphasises the importance of continued monitoring and habitat management, including the removal of invasive plant species from grasslands and maintaining perennial water sources.

NSS officers complete mid career training at ATI Kohima

Kohima, May 11: A valedictory programme of the mid career training for officers of the Nagaland Secretariat Service (NSS) was held on May 8 at the Administrative Training Institute (ATI).

The training programme, conducted from April 27 to May 8, saw 23 Junior Section Officers successfully complete the course. Sharing their experiences, the officer trainees said the programme had instilled confidence and motivation to perform better in their duties. In his address, Shashank Shekhar stressed the importance of continuous learning, reminding the trainees that society benefits when government systems function effectively. "Health is wealth." A brief report on the training was delivered by deputy secretary and course coordinator Asalie Lese. The programme was attended by joint directors Er. N. Moa Longkumer and Kaholi Sema and deputy director, Imlienla Jamir.

Assamese Congress became a minority party: Borah

Guwahati, May 11: Assam BJP leader Bhupen Borah on Sunday said that the Congress in the state has turned into a minority-dominated political party under the influence of Dhubri Lok Sabha MP Rakibul Hussain.

Speaking to reporters here, Borah claimed that Hussain has effectively taken control of the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) and that the party no longer represents all sections of Assamese society.

"Except for one MLA, all Congress legislators elected to the Assembly belong to the minority community. This clearly shows the direction in which the Congress party in Assam is heading," Borah said.

Borah himself was once a prominent Congress leader and had served as the president of the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee before switching to the BJP just ahead of the Assembly elections. Contesting on a BJP ticket, he won the Bihpuria Assembly constituency this time.

The BJP leader also praised Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and credited his leadership for the BJP's growing electoral success in the state.

Referring to the recent political developments, Borah said he had earlier predicted that certain political outcomes would become clear by the end of the assembly polls, though many had doubted his state-



ment at the time. "After what people witnessed recently about Rakibul Hussain's control over the Congress party in Assam, all doubts among the people of the state have disappeared. Moreover, the people have given overwhelming support to Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma's leadership," he said.

According to Borah, the BJP government in Assam was formed with the blessings and aspirations of the people, and the party would continue to move ahead with greater strength.

"The people of Assam voted with hope and faith in the BJP-led government. From today, that journey will become even stronger," he added.

CM flags off first batch of Mizo Territorial Army

Aizawl, May 11: Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma, today flagged off the first batch of 144 Mizo youths selected for the 166 Infantry Battalion Territorial Army (Home & Hearth), Assam at the Assembly Annex Building Conference Hall.

The batch, comprising 135 males and 9 females, is scheduled to leave for Shillong on May 15 for their training.

The event was attended by Home Minister K Sapdanga; Lt. Col. (Retd) Clement Lalhmingthanga, MLA (Champhai South) and Chairman of the Territorial Army (TA) Establishment & Coordination Committee; Home Secretary Vanlalmawia; Brig. Manoj Kumar Patel, SC, Commander, TA Group Eastern Command; along with other distinguished officers from the Armed Forces and Assam Rifles, and senior state officials.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that today is a proud and historic day for Mizoram. He stated that previously, he himself was not aware of the Territorial Army, but after learning about it, he immediately appealed to the Central Government authorities to sanction a Mizo Battalion. Initially, permission was granted to recruit 70 personnel, but further negotiations resulted in the approval of 144 personnel before recruitment even began. He ex-



pressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Chief of Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi for this.

The Chief Minister further added that efforts are already underway to secure additional recruitment quotas. He encouraged as many Mizo youths as possible to join the Territorial Army, stating that besides being a source of employment, the TA is a noble service dedicated to national security and also serves as a path toward disciplined and responsible living.

Addressing the newly recruited youths, the Chief Minister said that

the 144 recruits being sent for training today would serve as pioneers and representatives of Mizo youth. He urged them to give their best, to uphold and showcase the good values and character of the Mizo people wherever they go, and strive to bring honour to the state and its people.

Home Minister K Sapdanga also addressed the gathering and said that the Territorial Army combines civilian excellence with military discipline, bringing honour, dignity, and character-building opportunities. Congratulating the new recruits, he urged them to always give their best, and faithfully carry out their responsibilities and duties. He also

reminded them whenever they feel discouraged during their training, they should always remember that “Difficult roads often lead to beautiful destinations.”

Lt. Col. (Retd) Clement Lalhmingthanga, in his speech, stated that the Mizo Territorial Army became a reality through the initiative and effort of Chief Minister Lalduhoma and described it as a historic achievement that will always be remembered in Mizoram’s history. He further added that efforts for further recruitment are ongoing, and they are hopeful that a new advertisement may be released around September this year.

Brig. Manoj Kumar Patel also credited the Chief Minister’s initiative and hardwork for the establishment of the Mizo Territorial Army and expressed his gratitude to the Chief Minister for it. He further noted that there are still many vacancies within the Territorial Army that they desire to fill.

The MTA recruits will begin their training from next month. Prior to that, they will depart for Shillong later this month to complete the necessary formalities. While the 135 male recruits will undergo their training in Shillong, the 9 female recruits will proceed to Bangalore for their training.

Tripura CM addresses Somnath Swabhiman Parv

Agartala, May 11: Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha today said the country has witnessed massive redevelopment and protection of ancient history, culture, traditions and temples since Narendra Modi became prime minister in 2014. Addressing the ‘Somnath Swabhiman Parv’, Saha said there had been repeated attempts to destroy the historic temple in Gujarat, but it continued to stand as a symbol of the country’s ancient religious pride. The programme marks 1,000 years since Mahmud of Ghazni’s invasion of the Somnath temple in the year 1026. “Whenever invaders such as Alauddin Khilji, Jafar Khan and Aurangzeb attacked the temple, people came forward and rebuilt it to save the pride of our civilisation,” he said. The chief minister said the PM has focused on the redevelopment of several religious structures, which, according to



him, was not witnessed during previous regimes. “The country has been witnessing massive redevelopment and protection of ancient history, culture, traditions and temples after Narendra Modi became prime minister in 2014. The world is changing very fast, but we should not forget our roots, which are laid in ancient culture, tradition and religious pride,” he said. Saha said the present government has initiated the process of redeveloping religious structures across Tripura. Political observ-

ers note that the Somnath Swabhiman Parv carries both cultural and political significance. By commemorating the millennium of Ghazni’s invasion, the event underscores the narrative of India’s civilisational endurance against foreign aggression. For the BJP, it also reinforces its emphasis on cultural nationalism and temple redevelopment as central themes of governance. Saha’s remarks align with the broader national discourse that positions temple restoration as part of India’s cultural renaissance.

Tight Security Ahead of Himanta Oath Ceremony

Guwahati, May 11: Security and traffic arrangements have been geared up ahead of the Prime Minister’s visit to Guwahati for attending the of the swearing-in ceremony of Himanta Biswa Sarma, who will take oath as the Chief Minister of Assam on Tuesday.

Sarma will be the first non-Congress Chief Minister to be sworn in for the top post for two consecutive terms in a row in Assam.

Unconfirmed sources indicate that two MLAs will also take oath as ministers in the oath-taking ceremony even as the final list of members to take oath would be finalised by Monday evening. Bamboo barricades and security checkpoints have been put up near Veterinary College Field in Khanapara, the venue of the oath-taking ceremony of the BJP-led NDA government’s third consecutive term in Assam.

Sources here have informed that Prime Minister Narendra

Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Union defence minister Rajnath Singh would be arriving in the city by Monday night to attend the swearing-in ceremony scheduled to begin at 11.40 am on May 12. Senior BJP leaders, alliance partners, bureaucrats and party workers from across the state as well as industrialists will be attending the oath-taking ceremony on Tuesday.

“National BJP president Nitin Nabin is also arriving this evening. Twenty-one NDA Chief Ministers would be attending the swearing-in ceremony,” Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma informed mediapersons on Tuesday.

According to the City Police’s advisory, movement of heavy and slow-moving vehicles will remain completely prohibited on NH-27 and NH-17 during the restricted period on Monday.

The restrictions will be enforced from the Koinadhora point in Khanapara up to Bhu-



pen Hazarika Samadhi Kshetra in Jalukbari, and further towards Azara.

Earlier, the Governor of Assam officially appointed Sarma as the Chief Minister under Article 164(1) of the Constitution of India.

According to a notification issued by the Parliamentary Affairs Department of the Government of Assam, the oath-taking ceremony will be held at the Veterinary College Field in Khanapara, Guwahati.

The official order stated that the Governor exercised pow-

ers vested under clause (1) of Article 164 of the Constitution to appoint Sarma as the Chief Minister of the state.

Sarma had on Sunday formally staked claim to form the next government following the BJP-led alliance’s emphatic victory in the Assam Assembly elections.

The notification, signed by Assam Chief Secretary Ravi Kota, was circulated to senior administrative officials, constitutional authorities and departments concerned for necessary action ahead of the swearing-in ceremony.

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programme marks 1,000 years since Mahmud of Ghazni’s invasion of the Somnath temple in the year 1026.

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The chief minister said the PM has focused on the redevelopment of several religious structures, which, according to him, was not witnessed during previous regimes.

“The country has been witnessing massive redevelopment and protection of ancient history, culture, traditions and temples after Narendra Modi became prime minister in 2014. The world is changing very fast, but we should not forget our roots, which are laid in ancient culture, tradition and religious pride,” he said.

Saha said the present government has initiated the process of redeveloping religious structures across Tripura.

Two Northeast Women Allegedly Assaulted and Abused in South Delhi; Police Launch Investigation

Aizawl, May 11: Two women from Northeast India were allegedly subjected to derogatory remarks and physically assaulted near Nehru Place in South Delhi on the morning of May 10, following which Delhi Police launched an investigation and carried out multiple raids to trace the accused.

According to police, a PCR call reporting two women in distress was re-

ceived at Kalkaji Police Station at around 7 am on May 10. Acting on the information, police personnel rushed to a tea stall near Eros Hotel in Nehru Place, where the incident had reportedly occurred. During the preliminary enquiry, police found that the victims were allegedly abused with derogatory remarks, which later escalated into a physical altercation between the

women and the accused persons.

Both victims were taken to All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) for medical examination. Police said an FIR has been registered and further investigation is in progress.

As part of the investigation, CCTV footage from nearby locations has been examined and several witnesses and passersby present

at the scene have been identified.

Delhi Police stated that multiple raids were conducted and eight persons, including witnesses and bystanders, were rounded up and questioned during the probe. Investigators have identified four main accused in the case. Police teams are continuing raids at different locations linked to the accused in an effort to arrest them.

RGU Assam Collaborates With Indian Museum Kolkata

Guwahati, May 11: The Assam Royal Global University in Guwahati is set to host a landmark cultural and academic initiative in collaboration with the Indian Museum, Kolkata, under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

A major highlight of the event will be the launch of a specially curated exhibition titled “Bharat – Contours of Continuity”, featuring rare replicas and heritage treasures from the collections of the Indian Museum.

The special exhibition will

remain open for seven days, from May 13 to 21, offering students, scholars, and the public a unique opportunity to experience the rich cultural legacy preserved by one of India’s most esteemed museums.

The programme is being organised in celebration of International Museum Day 2026 and the commemoration of 150 Years of Vande Mataram.

Significantly, this will be the first time that the Indian Museum is curating such an exhibition in Northeast

India, making it a historic cultural occasion for the region.

The event will be inaugurated on May 13 at RGU campus, and it will be graced by the Director, Indian Museum, Kolkata, apart from others. The programme will also feature two specialised workshops on May 14 and 15, conducted by experts from the Indian Museum and Prof. Susmita Basu Majumdar, Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, University of Calcutta.

Guwahati Hosts Successful Regional Badminton Championship

Guwahati, May 11: The two-day Regional Inter-School Badminton Championship 2026, hosted by Modern English School, Guwahati, concluded at the state-of-the-art courts of the Modern Badminton Academy, Kahilipara on Sunday.

Organised under the umbrella of the Modern School of Languages, Sports and Performing Arts, the championship brought together more than 250 budding shuttlers from various schools across Guwahati, creating an atmosphere of enthusiasm, healthy competition, and sportsman-

ship.

The tournament featured competitions across multiple categories, ranging from Under-9 to Under-17 for both boys and girls in Singles and Doubles events. Young athletes displayed remarkable talent, determination, and discipline throughout the championship, making the event a memorable celebration of emerging sporting excellence. Congratulating the winners and participants of the championship, Jonali Das, principal of Modern English School, said: “We are delighted to have hosted the Regional In-

ter-School Badminton Championship 2026 on our state-of-the-art badminton courts. The energy, dedication and sporting spirit displayed by the participants have been truly inspiring.”

The championship featured exceptional performances across categories, and winners and runners-up were honored at the closing ceremony, attended by officials, coaches, and parents. Experienced officials and the dedicated MES Sports team ensured a professional, competitive sporting environment throughout the tournament.

DG NCC Reviews First Paramotor Training for Cadets in Guwahati

Guwahati, May 11: The National Cadet Corps is scaling new heights in adventure training, with major milestone achieved by commencement of Basic Paramotors Course at NIMAS node in Guwahati Assam. in collaboration with NIMAS.

Lt Gen Virendra Vats, YSM, SM, VSM, Director General NCC, during his visit to NCC North Eastern Region Directorate on 11th May witnessed the training of 50 NCC senior division boy cadets in the ongoing Basic Paramotors Course at the NIMAS Paramotors Node, Panikheti, Guwahati.

Fifty NCC cadets from across the North Eastern Region are undergoing exclusive paramotor flying training from 04 May 2026 till 19 May 2026 under qualified instructors of the National Institute of Mountaineering & Adventure Sports. This is the first such dedicated course for NCC cadets in the region, aimed at promoting aero-adventure sports and fostering the spirit of adventure, courage, and discipline.

During the visit, DG NCC interacted with the trainees, witness live paramotor flying demonstrations, and reviewed the training infrastructure established at Panikheti. The course covers ground handling, motor operations, flight theory, emergency procedures, and solo flying under strict



safety norms.

Speaking on the course DG NCC said, “Paramotors training gives cadets wings — literally and figuratively. It builds confidence, decision-making, and the ‘Touch the Sky with Glory’ ethos of the NCC.” He said in future these courses are being organised for NCC cadets from all over the country including girls cadets.

He emphasised that the inaugural Paramotors Course underscore NCC’s renewed focus on high-end adventure training for the youth of India.

DoNER Secretary meets Mizoram CM, discusses projects concerning state

Aizawl, May 11: Chief Minister Lalduhoma and Sanjay Jaju, Secretary, Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), met at the Chief Minister’s official residence on Sunday evening.

The Chief Minister expressed his gratitude to the Secretary for the approval of the NEC-funded project “Sustainable Cultivation of Mizo Ginger USP.” He stated that Mizoram produces high-quality and pure ginger, and that NITI Aayog has even recognized Mizoram as the “Ginger Capital of India.” He added that the approved fund would greatly benefit ginger cultivators across the state. The Chief Minister also raised the need for a more systematic and transparent implementation of the 10% Gross Budgetary Support (GBS). The DoNER Secretary assured him that the matter would be looked into. Under the NE-SIDS (Roads) scheme, the Khankawn



to Rongura Hmun road can reportedly be extended by about 1.70 km to connect with the Thenzawl–Buarpoi Intermediate Lane, which would be highly beneficial. The Chief Minister requested that the extension be considered, and the DoNER Secretary assured that necessary steps would be

taken. Sanjay Jaju informed the Chief Minister that efforts are being made to facilitate the entry of private investors for the development and upgradation of the Thenzawl Golf Resort. They also discussed several pending DoNER scheme projects concerning the Government of Mizoram.

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Editorial

The Importance of Teaching Financial Discipline Early

Financial habits are often formed at a young age, yet financial education receives little attention in everyday learning. Many young adults enter professional life without understanding budgeting, savings, debt management, or investments. Easy access to online spending and credit has made financial discipline even more important. Poor financial decisions can lead to long-term stress and insecurity. Teaching financial awareness early can help individuals make informed choices and build stable futures. Financial literacy is not only an economic skill—it is a life skill that should be encouraged from an early stage.

The WHO pandemic treaty

The Covid-19 pandemic did deep and lasting damage to the international political system. Countries in the global south are keenly aware that the established order let them down. They received vaccines later, in smaller numbers and often at a higher price than rich countries, resulting in avoidable death and suffering, and extended economic malaise. Last week, a coalition of those countries made their displeasure known by continuing to stonewall negotiations on the vaunted pandemic preparedness treaty of the World Health Organization (WHO), sending a clear message that when the next crisis arrives, they will not accept the same status quo.

An international treaty is sorely needed. But five years into negotiations, it is clear that the western backers of this plan, especially in Europe, have consistently presented it as a fait accompli, while avoiding the most basic and obvious political impasse before them.

In broad terms, countries in the global north want global south states to share information on any new pathogens their scientists encounter. (Research shows that the next pandemic is most likely to emerge from their region.) In return, those countries have organised to demand that global north states and pharmaceutical companies be required to share treatments, including vaccines, developed from that information – a quid pro quo that western states would prefer to keep voluntary. The fact that this sounds like technocratic haggling in what is in effect an annex of the main treaty belies its importance. Vaccine equity is a long-held red line for these global south groups. The larger treaty cannot be ratified without agreement on this issue.

Europe has been the greatest champion of this process. Ordinarily that would be commendable. But shortly after negotiations began in 2021, global health scholars warned that no agreement would be possible without addressing the concerns of the global south. This is entirely reasonable: an international pandemic response must mean fair access to treatments. The current global south negotiating position is for just 20% of medicines to be earmarked for them, as well as technology-sharing to arrange their own production. The pharmaceutical industry has opposed this, but that is to be expected. Governments could make firms at least partly address those demands by coercing or cajoling them – via guaranteed profits or other subsidies. If they had no plan to do so, they have been engaging in fantasy negotiations for half a decade.

Talks are set to continue next year. If they stall again or collapse entirely it will have consequences beyond global health. These sorts of agreements are the loose bonds that tie countries in the international system together. Europe hoped to take the lead and show that basic international consensus could still be brokered in a post-pandemic world – that frayed bonds could be reknit. Each passing year has strained the system further, and the US is now negotiating its own global health surveillance system through bilateral agreements outside the WHO.

The world needs an agreement to prepare for and respond to the next pandemic. And the custodians of the global order need to produce proof that the system can still function. Covid-19 prefigured and contributed to our current crises: “might makes right” and narrow national interest crowded out international cooperation. Avoiding a reckoning with that history suggests that the global north learned little from the Covid years, and has no serious plan for the future.



Why, in light of the Hormuz situation, India needs to reconsider maritime security

India’s exposure in the current Hormuz crisis underlines that maritime energy and trade routes are not a peripheral concern but a central variable in its long term growth and strategic autonomy. The data emerging from this crisis gives reason to argue that New Delhi must treat sea lanes of communication almost the way it treats land borders: with sustained political attention, resources, and hedging strategies. The Hormuz Crisis The Strait of Hormuz carries about 20 million barrels per day of oil—roughly a quarter of global seaborne oil trade and around 20 per cent of total daily oil supply. It is also a major artery for LNG and even fertilisers, with about onethird of global seaborne fertiliser trade transiting this narrow waterway. When military escalation and attacks on shipping recently reduced tanker traffic by about 70 per cent and then almost to zero, roughly one fifth of global oil flows and significant LNG volumes were abruptly stranded in and around the Persian Gulf. India is structurally exposed to this chokepoint. Around 46–50 per cent of India’s crude oil imports and over 60 per cent of its LNG/LPG have typically moved through Hormuz, primarily from Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, and Iran. India imports over 88–85 per cent of its crude oil needs and more than half of its natural gas in various forms, the bulk of it coming by sea along vulnerable sea lines of communication. Put differently, a single narrow corridor between Iran and



Oman has been carrying nearly half of the energy that fuels the world’s third largest oil consumer and a major Asian growth pole. The crisis has already translated into market stress.

Brent crude spiked above 90 dollars a barrel on the disruption news, war risk insurance premia for tankers surged, and freight rates and marine fuel costs have all increased, feeding through into global inflation and shipping costs. For India, which remains a price sensitive importer with a large current account exposure to energy imports, such volatility translates into macroeconomic risk: pressure on the rupee, higher subsidy burdens, and imported inflation hitting both industry and households. India’s broader trade profile adds another layer of vulnerability. Nearly 16 per cent of

India’s total trade is heavily tied to Hormuz corridor economies, a proportion higher than that of several other major Asian importers such as South Korea and Japan. More than a third of India’s imports within this 16 per cent exposure are concentrated in a handful of Gulf states, making supply chain disruption not just an energy issue but a wider industrial and trading risk. When you combine this structural dependence with the fact that Suez/ Red Sea traffic has also been periodically disrupted by Houthi attacks, forcing rerouting around the Cape of Good Hope, the picture is of a double chokepoint vulnerability from West Asia to Europe. The real significance of the current Hormuz shutdown is that it has forced rapid improvisation. New Delhi has publicised that roughly 60–70 per cent of India’s

crude imports is now being sourced through alternative corridors from an expanded pool of about 40 supplier countries, compared with reliance on 27 suppliers a decade ago. This diversification is a rational crisis response, but it also reveals how thin India’s pre crisis redundancy actually was. If nearly half your oil and most of your LNG can be jeopardised within a matter of days by a regional war you do not control, then maritime energy routes are clearly a first order strategic variable, not a routine logistical detail. Securing Maritime Lifelines Since the 1990s, India’s liberalisation led growth has driven a relentless increase in energy and trade volumes, but its maritime security thinking has lagged behind the pace and complexity of that dependence. About 95 per cent of India’s trade by volume and around 70 per

cent by value still moves by sea; the economy’s export led components and import dependent sectors, from petrochemicals to fertilisers to electronics, are all ultimately tied to a small number of global chokepoints. As India aims for a \$10 trillion economy in the near future, energy security through vulnerable sea lanes becomes a systemic constraint. Domestically, Delhi has launched port led development initiatives such as Sagarmala to expand capacity, increase coastal and inland waterway traffic, and integrate ports with hinterland logistics. These have yielded a more than 100 per cent rise in coastal shipping traffic over the past decade and are projected to push coastal and inland cargo movements sharply higher by the mid 2020s. But Sagarmala and related projects focus more on efficiency and

connectivity within India’s maritime ecosystem than on external route diversification and chokepoint risk. At sea, the Indian Navy has built a credible record of keeping parts of the global commons open, most visibly through sustained anti piracy patrols in the Gulf of Aden since 2008 and convoy escorts for hundreds of merchant ships of multiple flags.

Yet the Hormuz crisis is not a piracy problem: it sits at the intersection of state-on-state conflict, missile and drone threats, and great-power contestation. Securing India’s energy sea lanes in this environment demands more than episodic naval presence; it calls for persistent maritime domain awareness, coalition operations, and the ability to project limited but decisive power along key Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) from the Arabian Sea to the Western Pacific. The data also shows that India’s exposure is comparatively higher than several Asian peers when you factor in the share of total trade tied to Hormuz economies and the share of LNG imports from them. Japan may have a higher oil import share from the Gulf, but India’s overall economic and demographic trajectory, twin SLOC exposure (Hormuz plus Red Sea/Suez), and still developing naval and merchant marine capacities make its vulnerability structurally different. The crisis thus becomes a strong empirical case for mainstreaming maritime route security into economic policy rather than treating it as a specialised naval concern.

Donald Trump will arrive in Beijing this week knowing that Xi holds all the cards

Like an out-of-control wrecking ball, swinging wildly back and forth, Donald Trump smashes up the international order without much thought for the consequences. Lacking coherent strategies, workable plans or consistent aims, he power-trips erratically from one fragile region, tense warzone and complex geopolitical situation to another, leaving misery, confusion and rubble in his wake. Typically, he claims a bogus victory, demands that others repair the damage and pick up the tab, then looks around for something new to break.

The president will bulldoze into another international minefield this week – the fraught standoff between China and Taiwan – when he travels to Beijing for a two-day summit with President Xi Jinping. After a string of humiliating policy implosions over Ukraine, Gaza, Nato, Greenland, and now Iran and Lebanon, needy Trump craves a diplomatic success to flaunt at home. But his hopes of vote-winning trade pacts are overshadowed by his latest war of choice. He needs Xi’s promise not to arm Iran if all-out fighting resumes – and Xi’s help keeping the strait of Hormuz open as part of a mooted framework peace deal.

The weakness of Trump’s position going into the summit is fuelling speculation that reduced US support for Taiwan may be Xi’s price for playing nice. Xi knows the Iran war is deeply unpopular with US voters. Trump is universally blamed for pushing up global energy, food and medicine prices. European allies have refused to bail him out, Russia is undeservedly benefiting from inflated oil prices – and poorer countries bear the brunt. Trump is not winning militarily, either, as shown by his half-baked, on-off Project Freedom. He’s desperate to escape the quagmire he created – and reduce Xi’s advantage.

What will Xi make of his epically furious guest? For China, Trump is the gift that keeps on giving. Thanks to him, the US is increasingly viewed internationally as an aggressive potential enemy or unreliable friend, much given over to treachery.

Its loss of influence and leverage is Beijing’s gain: Trump’s volatility assists Xi’s promotion of China as the new guardian of global stability. The Iran impasse is drawing US forces away from Asia – it now has two aircraft carrier strike groups in the Middle East – and reducing its military capacity to defend Taiwan and regional allies from future Chinese aggression.

The downside for Xi is the negative impact of the war on energy prices, global trade and export demand at a time when China’s economy is already struggling. Last year, about 80% of Iranian oil shipments were bought by China – shipments the US navy is now blocking. So far, Beijing has largely managed to offset supply shortfalls by drawing on reserves, capitalising on green energy and buying more oil from countries such as Brazil and Russia. But for the world’s largest importer of crude oil, safe and reliable navigation through the strait of Hormuz is critical.

China is urging both sides to embrace a negotiated settlement. It hosted direct talks last week with Iran’s foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, and is backing Pakistani intermediaries. Recalling China’s successful 2023 fence-mending between Saudi Arabia and Tehran, anxious Gulf states are counting, like Trump, on Beijing’s ability to influence its Iranian ally, with which it launched a “comprehensive strategic partnership” in 2021. And Xi is unafraid to take on Trump. He warned recently against a return to “the law of the jungle”. He added: “To maintain the authority of international rule of law,



we cannot use it when it suits us and abandon it when it doesn’t.” Ouch.

The wishful idea, voiced in Washington, that the brazen US-Israel aggression against Iran has shaken Xi into cooperating, and will deter Beijing’s expansionist ambitions in Taiwan and the South China Sea, would be more convincing if the war had actually succeeded. Instead, Trump has exposed the limitations of US power, military and political, and revealed a startling lack of strategic understanding. While he prefers a peaceful outcome, Xi’s top priority is not going to be digging Trump out of a hole in the Middle East. And if he chooses, he has the means to prolong the US nightmare by expanding deniable military support for Iran – as he has done for Russia in Ukraine. Trump seems aware of this risk.

He wrote to Xi last month, asking him not to supply weaponry to Tehran – and said he had received assurances China would not do so. But the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a conservative US research institute, claims China already provides Iran with dual-use precursor chemicals for its ballistic

missiles, satellite intelligence about US military movements, assets and bases, and help with sanctions evasion and money laundering. It’s possible that more, overtly military aid could flow to Tehran if Trump starts bombing again or fails to satisfy Xi in their summit talks.

For a man who likes to boast he holds all the cards, the US president may find himself seriously short of trumps when he sits down with Xi. It’s an instructive measure of the geopolitical omnishambles Trump has created. His own 2026 national defence strategy states that deterring China in the Indo-Pacific is of primary importance. Yet Trump has hopelessly compromised the US position with his Middle East obsessions and biases. Typically, others could now take the fall for his incompetence. Which is why Taiwan – and US allies such as Japan, South Korea and the Philippines – might be worried.

Xi’s top external priority is not the Middle East. It is the unification of communist China with a de facto independent, democratic Taiwan – a personal legacy project that he has repeatedly threatened to pursue by

force. Pentagon planners believe China’s ever-expanding military could be ready to launch an invasion next year. Taiwan’s forces are vastly outnumbered, while its fractious political parties are as divided as ever about increased defence spending and the wisdom or not of seeking closer ties with Beijing. The US says that its policy favouring the status quo on Taiwan has not changed. But Trump is famously flaky on Taiwan. He frequently makes contradictory, sometimes alarming statements. Discussing Xi’s intentions, he said recently that any move to invade was “up to him” – a choice of words that suggests he does not care much either way, even if he did add that he would be “very unhappy” were China to invade.

Summit bottom line: will a weakened, outmanoeuvred Trump cut back US support for Taipei in return for Xi’s help with Iran and favourable deals on, say, rare-earth minerals and agricultural imports? Serious questions similarly surround the depth of Trump’s commitment to South Korea and Japan – Beijing-Tokyo tensions are running hot at present, partly because of Taiwan; and his ability to persuade China to rein in North Korea, a hostile, bullish rogue state that, unlike Iran, really does possess nuclear weapons.

In other words, will Trump claim another fraudulent triumph on the world stage in Beijing while selling out US allies, kowtowing, once again, to an anti-democratic, anti-western dictator, and recklessly demolishing decades of painstaking diplomacy that, until now, has prevented a war in the Pacific over Taiwan? This week, largely due to wrecker Trump, the writing is on the wall for the future of the US as number one global superpower. With all his blundering, this know-nothing numbskull has put China in the driving seat.

Goldilocks run trips on turmoil as West Asia war hits India growth outlook

Mumbai: Hyundai Motor India Ltd. reported a 22.2% year-on-year (YoY) decline in consolidated net profit for Q4FY26 at ₹1,255.6 crore, compared with ₹1,614.3 crore in the same quarter last year. The result also missed Bloomberg’s estimate of ₹1,268 crore. The decline was driven by higher commodity costs and a shift in the sales mix toward lower-margin sedans and hatchbacks instead of high-margin SUVs, along with intensifying competition from domestic players. These factors also contributed to Hyundai slipping to fourth position in FY26 from second in the previous year.

Margin Compression The Pune plant is expected to scale up to 250,000 units initially and further to 320,000 units in the second phase of expansion

The move comes as competition intensifies in the SUV segment, with Mahindra & Mahindra and Tata Motors steadily gaining market share. Hyundai also said it remains confident of meeting the upcoming Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency (CAFE 3) norms as it strengthens its product portfolio and compliance strategy.

Revenue from operations rose 5.4% YoY to ₹18,916.2 crore from ₹17,940.3 crore, but it missed Bloomberg’s estimate of ₹19,197 crore. EBITDA declined 22.4% to ₹1,966 crore from ₹2,532.7 crore, while EBITDA margin narrowed sharply to 10.4% from 14.1% a year earlier.

Ujjivan SFB Q4 profit jumps over three-fold on record disbursements, lower provisions

For FY26, Hyundai’s revenue increased 2.3% to ₹70,763 crore from ₹69,192.9 crore in FY25. Net profit declined 3% to ₹5,431.2 crore from ₹5,640.2 crore in the previous year. EBITDA margin also narrowed to 12.2% from 12.9%, impacted by commodity inflation and capacity stabilisation costs. On the volume front, total sales rose 1.7% YoY to 775,031 units. Export volumes grew 16.4% to 190,125 units,

while domestic sales declined 2.3% to 584,906 units. The company said demand recovery in the second half of the fiscal year was partly supported by GST reductions in select vehicle categories. SUVs continued to dominate Hyundai’s portfolio, accounting for 68% of domestic sales in FY26, led by models such as the Creta, Venue, and Exter. The Creta remained one of the company’s strongest-performing products. “So, before GST reform, the mix was heavily skewed in favor of only cars more than 4 meters but now we are seeing a growth across segments. But I don’t think this is a trend as such. We’re going to introduce two new models this year which are both going to be SUVs,” Garg said. The company also reported strong traction in rural markets and alternative fuel vehicles. Rural penetration reached a record 25% in Q4FY26, while CNG contribution rose to 18%. The company projected 8–10% growth in both domestic sales and exports in FY27. It expects profitability to improve, supported by new product launches, improved operating leverage, and a stronger export mix. The automaker plans to introduce two new nameplates during the year, including a new internal combustion engine SUV and an electric SUV, as it sharpens its focus on the fast-growing utility vehicle and EV segments. Roadmap for FY27 Hyundai is also preparing for a major expansion in India with planned capital expenditure of about ₹7,500 crore in FY27, its highest-ever investment in the country. The investment will be used to expand production capacity and support its growing SUV and electric vehicle pipeline. The company plans to increase total installed manufacturing capacity to 1.14 million units through phased expansion of its Pune facility. Currently, Hyundai’s combined installed capacity stands at 994,000 units annually, including 824,000 units at its Chennai plant and 170,000 units at Pune.

Sensex, Nifty outlook for Monday, May 11: What to expect from stock market

Mumbai: Sensex, Nifty: Domestic equity markets managed to wrap up in the green for the second consecutive week, with the BSE Sensex and NSE Nifty edging up 0.53% and 0.76%, respectively. However, the trading week ended on a bitter note on Friday. Nifty futures on the NSE International Exchange were trading 40 points, or 0.17%, higher at 24,280, indicating an opening with a positive bias. Market view & global cues

Ajit Mishra, SVP of Research at Religare Broking Ltd, noted that the weakness late in the week was fueled by a fresh spike in crude oil prices. Brent crude briefly surged past the \$100 mark following renewed military exchanges between the US and Iran, which quickly dampened hopes of a near-term peace agreement.

Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, said that early optimism regarding de-escalation faded fast, keeping global risk appetite subdued. “Elevated oil prices continue to remain a key overhang for the domestic economy, intensifying concerns around imported inflation, pressure on the rupee and the potential impact on corporate margins,” he said. Meanwhile, Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Investments Ltd, observed that the market ultimately absorbed the late-week profit-booking. He



attributed the underlying resilience to favourable state election outcomes and fourth-quarter corporate earnings that surpassed cautious expectations. Sensex: Ponmudi placed immediate resistance at 77,600–78,000, while pegging support at 76,700–76,300. he said. StrategyMishra advised that investors should “maintain a stock-specific approach, preferring pharma, energy, auto, and select metal counters, while remaining selective across other sectors.” Nair also noted that investors should stay nimble and focus on fundamentals. “A stock-specific approach focused on earnings quality remains preferable until greater geopolitical clarity emerges,” he said. Nair also noted that selective op-

portunities continue to exist in the mid and small-cap space, where valuations still look reasonable when paired with domestic growth drivers like infrastructure spending and a recovery in consumption. Nifty: The 50-pack index remains stuck in a consolidation zone of 24,000–24,400. Ponmudi identified the 24,300–24,500 band as a resistance and strong supply zone. He said if the index sustains a breakout above this range, momentum could shift toward the 24,600–24,800 levels. “On the downside, the 24,100–24,000 region remains a crucial support area, with a break below this zone potentially opening the path toward 23,800 levels,” Ponmudi said.

Titan shares rise 6% to reach a 52 Q4 PAT

Mumbai: Shares of Titan Company, Tata Group’s fashion accessories company, rose over 6 per cent to hit a 52-week high of ₹4,585 on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) after the company reported healthy results for the March 2026 quarter (Q4FY26). Titan’s profit after tax came in at ₹1,179 crore in Q4FY26, up 35 per cent from ₹871 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal. He said the strong quarterly performance was led by the “Festival of Diamonds,” with brands like Tanishq, Mia, Zoya, CaratLane, beYon, and Damas seeing strong consumer response across regions and age groups. The watches business continued its premiumisation journey through new collections and design-led offerings, while emerging businesses also delivered steady growth while strengthening their customer proposition.

Titan will continue to focus on strengthening its competitive positioning, deepening customer engagement, and driving long-term value creation for stakeholders.

In the full FY26, Titan reported total income of ₹76,078 crore, up 38 per cent Y-o-Y. PAT rose 52 per cent Y-o-Y to ₹5,073 crore. The company’s jewellery portfolio increased 50 per cent to ₹18,195 crore, excluding bullion and digi-gold sales, reflecting sustained consumer confidence despite an elevated gold price environment.

The analogue watches segment grew 15 per cent during the quarter on the back of continuing premiumisation trends, the company said. During the quarter, Titan successfully completed its 67 per cent acquisition of Damas Jewellery, one of the GCC region’s heritage and trusted jewellery brands. Ajoy Chawla, managing director at Titan Company, said FY26 has been a landmark year for Titan, with the company crossing the ₹50,000 crore annual revenue milestone in FY25 and adding another ₹25,000 crore in FY26 within a single year.

Manipal Hospitals expands advanced cancer care reach in Northeast with successful robotic prostate surgery

Aizawl: Manipal Hospitals EM Bypass Kolkata has successfully treated a 56-year-old prostate cancer patient from Mizoram through advanced robotic-assisted surgery, underlining the growing demand for high-end minimally invasive healthcare solutions across Eastern and Northeastern India.

The patient, businessman H. Zohmingthanga from Aizawl, had initially visited the hospital for treatment related to diabetes and general health concerns. During routine investigations, doctors detected elevated PSA levels, while an MRI later revealed a suspicious prostate lesion. A biopsy conducted in June 2025 confirmed prostate cancer. Following the diagnosis, the hospital’s urology team led by Dr. Abhay Kumar, Director – Urology and Uro-Oncology, performed a robotic radical prostatectomy in August 2025.

The patient was discharged within three days and subsequent PSA tests in October 2025, January 2026 and April 2026 remained undetectable, indicating successful recovery with no signs of recurrence. Dr. Kumar said robotic-assisted surgeries are witnessing rapid adoption in India due to benefits such as higher precision, reduced blood loss, shorter hospital stays and faster recovery.

He added that Manipal Hospitals Kolkata has completed over 3,000 robotic-assisted procedures, reflecting increasing patient trust in advanced cancer care technologies. The hospital said the case highlights the expanding accessibility of specialized robotic oncology treatment for patients from the Northeast seeking advanced healthcare closer to home.

Sebi suggests more actions to improve the buyback structure

Mumbai: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has proposed additional measures to its earlier proposal of reintroducing open market buybacks through stock exchanges after consultation with the Primary Market Advisory Committee (PMAC).

The earlier proposal on reintroduction of open market buybacks was floated in April. On Friday, the regulator made additional proposals after internal deliberations on the recommendations. Sebi may also mandate companies to send an intimation through electronic mode regarding the buyback offer to shareholders as on the date of the public announcement within one working day of such public announcement. At present, companies make a public announcement within two working days from the date of the results of the postal ballot for special resolution.

Sebi has proposed allowing companies to undertake open market buybacks through stock exchanges, with a maximum completion timeline of 66 working days from the date of opening of the offer. It has proposed retaining the requirement that at least 40 per cent of the buyback size be utilised within the first half of the offer period. While the PMAC had recommended keeping the completion timeline at six months and the utilisation level at 50 per cent, the regulator noted



that the framework under the Companies Act is undergoing changes under the Finance Act, 2026, with respect to the permissible gap between two buyback offers, which necessitates a balanced approach. The regulator has proposed removing the requirement for a separate trading window for buyback transactions and allowing such trades through the normal market mechanism. It has also proposed dispensing with the requirement to display the company’s identity as a purchaser on the trading screen.

The proposals include introducing an explicit provision to en-

sure that buybacks do not result in breach of minimum public shareholding norms.

Sebi has also proposed aligning the interval between two buyback offers with provisions under the Companies Act, 2013.

The regulator has further proposed making the appointment of a merchant banker optional. Responsibilities currently handled by merchant bankers may be reassigned to the company, stock exchanges, and secretarial auditors.

The regulator further added that a six-month-long period may make

buybacks irrelevant in the context of market developments and could be cumbersome for shareholders to track. Sebi may also direct freezing of the shares and other specified securities of the company undertaking the buyback, held by promoters and their associates, at the ISIN level during the buyback period. This is an additional safeguard, as the current regulations direct promoters and their associates not to deal in the shares of the company, including transfer of shares among promoters, from the date of the board decision till the closing of the buyback.

Records a 50% QoQ increase in net profit



Mumbai: The financial services platform Northern Arc Platform recorded a 50% QoQ increase in its net profit from Rs 92.17 crore in Q3FY26 to Rs 138.62 crore in Q4FY26. Lower expenses and tax expenses were the major contributors to this rise in profit. The net interest income in Q4FY26 recorded a 21% YoY rise to reach Rs 387 crore. The yearly net profit of the company also saw an increase from Rs 342.61 crore in FY25 to Rs 429.15 crore in FY26, recording a 25% YoY increase. Hyundai Q4 profit falls 22.2% to Rs 1,255.6 crore amid margin pressure

The lending and D2C assets

also saw a YoY increase of 22% and 39%, respectively. The gross and net NPA of the company were 1.2% and 0.6% as of March 2026, respectively. The net worth of the company grew by 13% YoY to Rs 3,896 crore as of March 2026 alongside an increase in profitability metrics like return on assets and return on equity. digital partnerships and invest in technology, data analytics and AI to drive efficiency and scale to ensure we position Northern Arc Capital to double its AUM by FY2029, sustaining 22-25% growth and deliver consistent profitability.”

Government intends to prohibit auditors from providing non-audit services

Mumbai: A key amendment in the Corporate Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026 restricting auditors and audit firms from providing non-audit services after their term completes, could potentially increase the compliance cost for domestic companies by 20-30%, top auditors working with Big Four firms told FE. These auditors, while opposing the rule, said that such restrictions don’t exist anywhere else in the world, and would result in service quality deterioration as companies will have to rely on lower-tier firms to deliver crucial services like tax advisory, internal audits and consulting.

As per the Bill, which has been referred to the joint parliamentary committee (JPC) for detailed scrutiny, Section 144 of the Companies Act will be amended to include a new provision that prohibits auditors or audit firms from giving non-audit services to a company or its subsidiary for a period of three years after their term as statutory auditor has completed. In India, mandatory rotations of statutory auditors after every five years and audit firms after every 10 years are provided under Section 139(2) of the Companies Act. “Firms will have to charge higher audit fees to compensate



for the potential loss of earnings by not providing non-audit services. Large firms often rely on future advisory revenue from the same client,” said a senior official at a Big Four firm, on condition of anonymity. A partner at another big audit firm said that the proposed cool-off period could limit the choice for companies, especially those with operations in different countries, to get their non-audit work done. “The decision will severely impact not just large audit firms, but also mid-sized and smaller firms that rely on statutory audit and on-

going advisory/non-audit work to maintain viability,” he said. In fact, industry body ASSOCHAM raised this issue and recently submitted its recommendations to the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA). ASSOCHAM’s note said that if this proposal is accepted, it will reduce choice for companies, increase costs, and accelerate market concentration. “When auditors are permitted to offer certain non-audit services, they develop a deeper understanding of their client’s business, risks, and industry. This insight helps deliver higher-quality au-

ditions and supports stronger governance and compliance frameworks,” the note stated. Industry Alarm

Prior to this, industry body FICCI also voiced its concerns and asked the MCA to omit this requirement. “With top-tier firms excluded for long periods, businesses would be forced to rely on smaller firms, which can compromise service quality in complex areas requiring global reach and deep technical knowledge. Smaller firms may not always possess the capacity, reach or specialised skill sets necessary to service such organisations, especially in areas involving complex regulatory, cross-border or sector-specific requirements,” the FICCI note said. Hyundai Q4 profit falls 22.2% to Rs 1,255.6 crore amid margin pressure Section 144 of the Companies Act restricts statutory auditors from rendering non-audit services like internal audits, actuarial, investment banking/advisory, management, outsourced financial services, and bookkeeping services to their clients. However, there are many other services they can offer to their clients and their subsidiaries, including administrative, consultancy, forensics, fact-finding, diligence services, etc.

As the truce continues, Trump describes Iran’s response to the peace proposal as “totally unacceptable”



Iran: On a day when drone strikes were reported around the area and Benjamin Netanyahu cautioned that the conflict was “not over,” Donald Trump dismissed an Iranian answer to a US peace offering as “totally unacceptable.” Washington received the Iranian counterproposal via intermediaries from Pakistan. Iran’s proposed negotiation text emphasized the need for lifting US sanctions, ending the US naval blockade of the Strait of Hormuz following the signing of an initial understanding, and an immediate end to the war with guarantees against any renewed attack on the country, according to the semi-official Tasnim news agency on Sunday night, citing an informed source. A week ago, the US made a peace offering that was said to include a one-page, fourteen-point memorandum of agreement that would reopen the strait and establish a framework for future negotiations on Iran’s nuclear program. A moratorium on Iranian nuclear enrichment for up to 20 years, the transfer of Iran’s stockpile of highly enriched uranium (HEU), which could be used to make nuclear warheads, overseas, possibly to the US, and the dismantling of Iranian nuclear facilities were reportedly among the US demands for nuclear negotiations. The Wall Street Journal claims that the Iranian counterproposal called for a shorter moratorium, the export of a portion of the HEU stockpile while diluting the remainder, and a rejection of the facilities’ demolition. Trump responded shortly afterwards by saying: “I have just read the response from Iran’s so-called ‘representatives’. I don’t like it – totally unacceptable.” Earlier in the day Trump had posted a long statement on his online platform, Truth Social, alleging Iran “has been playing games with the United States, and the rest of the World, for 47 years”, adding that Tehran “will be laughing no longer”. Trump was expected to talk to Netanyahu on Sunday. The Israeli prime minister had earlier warned the war would continue as long as Iran had a stockpile of HEU. “It’s not over, be-

cause there’s still nuclear material – enriched uranium – that has to be taken out of Iran. There’s still enrichment sites that have to be dismantled,” he told the CBS programme 60 Minutes, according an excerpt published before its broadcast. Asked how the HEU should be removed, Netanyahu said: “You go in and you take it out,” adding that the best way would be to enter Iran to secure the fissile material as part of an agreement. He said Donald Trump had told him he wants “to go in there”. In a separate interview, Trump appeared to take a more relaxed view of the HEU stockpile, which the UN nuclear watchdog, the IAEA, says is buried deep under mountains in central Iran. The US president suggested that for the time being, satellite surveillance was sufficient to guarantee no one had access to it. Trump said on the Full Measure programme: “We’ll get that at some point ... We have it surveilled. I did a thing called Space Force, and they are watching that ... If anybody got near the place, we will know about it – and we’ll blow them up.” As he has on numerous occasions since a ceasefire was declared a month ago, Trump said US attacks on Iran could be resumed. He said the US could “go in for two more weeks and do every single target. We have certain targets that we wanted, and we’ve done probably 70% of them, but we have other targets that we could conceivably hit.” But even if we didn’t do that, you know, that would just be final touches,” he added. Trump is under heavy pressure to maintain the ceasefire, and potentially make a peace deal, before a scheduled visit this week to China, which is pushing for an end to hostilities and the opening of the strait. Two critical issues that will be at the heart of any future nuclear talks between the US and Iran are the disposal of Iran’s 440kg of HEU enriched to 60% purity – close to weapons grade – and the suspension of uranium enrichment. In an interview on Iranian state media late on Saturday, a military spokesperson said the country’s forces were at “full readiness” to protect

with established procedures”, without attributing responsibility for the incursion. Meanwhile, Iran’s deputy foreign minister warned against a planned French-British effort that aims to support maritime security in the strait after hostilities are over. The French president, Emmanuel Macron, responded by saying it would not be a military deployment but an international mission to secure shipping when conditions allow. The UK and France will on Tuesday host a multinational meeting of defence ministers on military plans to restore trade flows through the strait, the British government said. “The defence secretary, John Healey, will co-chair a meeting of over 40 nations, alongside his French counterpart, minister Catherine Vautrin, for the multinational mission’s first defence ministers’ meeting,” a ministry statement said Sunday. Hours earlier, Iran warned London and Paris against sending warships to the region. As the US and Iran have attempted to establish their dominance over the strait, tensions have increased under the ceasefire. Trump initiated Project Freedom on May 4th, which was intended to give the hundreds of ships stranded by the conflict a way out of the Gulf. Iran attacked US Navy boats, commercial vessels, and oil infrastructure in the United Arab Emirates in retaliation for closing the strait following the initial US-Israeli strike on February 28. After 36 hours and just two US-flagged ships had passed, Trump canceled Project Freedom. Saudi Arabia has denied US forces access to its airspace and bases for the operation. Tehran has insisted that all ships passing through the strait coordinate with its armed forces and pay a \$2m (£1.5m) toll. On Sunday, Iranian state media reported that a Panama-flagged vessel bound for Brazil had been allowed to sail through the strait. The US military has blockaded Iranian ports since 13 April, saying it has turned back 61 commercial vessels and disabled four. Trump has said that the current ceasefire includes Lebanon, and has told Israel to stop the bombing of Hezbollah targets there. Israel has reduced the intensity of its campaign but has continued to carry out strikes. Lebanon’s health ministry reported that 36 people had been killed and 74 wounded by Israeli strikes on Saturday. Among the casualties were several paramedics wounded in southern Lebanon. The Israeli military said, meanwhile, that it had intercepted Hezbollah drones approaching its troops in the area.

Will the global campaign to halt the hantavirus’s further spread be successful

Europe: Greetings for the morning. I’m Michael Segalov, and starting today, I will occasionally appear in your inboxes. As the dust settles on the government’s dismal election results, there will be plenty of infighting, intrigue, and briefing in Westminster this week. Along with the rest of the aftermath, we’ll be providing you with the most recent information on backbench MP Catherine West’s (probably failed) attempt to remove Keir Starmer. But today, we start with something different. The race to contain a dangerous, uncommon virus. The World Health Organization (WHO) was notified on May 2 of a deadly hantavirus strain breakout on a luxury cruise ship. Nine probable cases and three fatalities had been detected as of this morning. Experts are now rushing to carry out a global track-and-trace operation. At least 29 guests from 12 different countries had already evacuated, but 149 passengers and personnel were still on board when the virus was discovered. There were seven British among them. I spoke with our correspondent Robyn Vinter, who is on the ground in Tenerife, where the ship has been evacuated, and infectious diseases epidemiologist Dr. Charlotte Hammer for today’s First Edition. First, though, the headlines. UK politics | Keir Starmer faces a fight for his political life in the next 24 hours as potential Labour leadership rivals from Wes Streeting to Angela Rayner position themselves for a contest. Iran conflict | Donald Trump has rejected an Iranian response to a US peace proposal as “totally unacceptable”, on a day the ceasefire showed signs of fraying as drone strikes were reported around the region and Benjamin Netanyahu warned the war was “not over”. UK news | Labour has accused Nigel Farage of attempting to dodge scrutiny as the Reform leader continued to face questions over the £5m gift he received from a crypto billionaire shortly before the last general election. Business | The full nationalisation of British Steel is expected to be announced in the king’s speech this week, a year after the government took over the daily running of the loss-making business from its Chinese owner. Health news | Experts have called for a four-day week in the UK as research suggests those who work longer hours are more likely to be obese. Passengers on board the MV Hondius set sail from Argentina on April 1 and traveled across the Atlantic to Cape Verde, passing through some of the most isolated places on earth. When a dangerous infection entered the ship, an idyllic vacation became the stuff of nightmares. In a few of days, symptoms included pneumonia, breathing difficulties, fever, and gastrointestinal problems. A 70-year-old Dutch man passed away on board on April 11, and his 69-year-old wife passed away in Johannesburg two weeks later after visiting South Africa. On May 2, a German woman, the third passenger, passed away. The ship’s physician and one of its guides are among the at least six more suspected or confirmed cases from this epidemic. There are three British patients among them. When the ship arrived in Cape Verde, authorities refused to let it dock. On 6 May, it headed to the Canary Islands. Anchored beyond the shores of Tenerife, the first tranche of passengers disembarked yesterday, under tightly controlled conditions. The remaining 22 British nationals onboard (19 passengers, three crew) were taken to shore, with 20 of them transferred to a Merseyside hospital to isolate. Dr Charlotte Hammer leads an infectious disease research team at Cambridge University, and previously worked on the frontline in public health, investigating outbreaks just like this one. “All the evidence suggests this is a known strain of hantavirus,” says Hammer, “which



makes the mission to contain it far easier”. First identified in the mid-twentieth century, hantaviruses are zoonotic – primarily infecting rodents and occasionally transmitting to humans. The specific strain onboard is known as the Andes hantavirus. It can cause a severe and often fatal lung disease called hantavirus pulmonary syndrome. “It’s transmitted from specific species of rodent,” says Hammer, “and we already have evidence of it transmitting from human to human. But being on a boat with 20 plus nationalities represented makes it a challenge in both epidemiology and international coordination.” Once the WHO identified and confirmed the outbreak, Hammer says, attention turned to the patients’ stories. “Hypotheses developed to establish how transmission happened,” says Hammer. “Systematically, you eliminate all incorrect options. Simultaneously, we are studying published reports and studies on this strain of virus. Past and present evidence come together to form a coherent picture. It’s why we call these experts ‘disease detectives’.” As the ship is flagged to the Netherlands, Dutch authorities were involved early. “En route to the Canary islands, Spanish authorities also stepped in. The WHO leads the international coordination, with all countries affected or with nationals onboard contributing. There’ll be a rolling team working 24/7.” Currently, says Hammer, the most likely scenario “is that one or two people caught the virus while travelling in South America prior to embarking, and they brought it on to the ship, with limited person-to-person transmission on the ship itself”. From that point on, containment is key. “You follow and monitor anyone who may have been exposed to the virus,” says Hammer. “As a precautionary measure, that includes everyone who embarked on the cruise.” While utterly miserable for the passengers themselves, the outbreak occurring onboard a cruise ship is a massive benefit for public health. “Cabins are tight and small with limited air circulation,” says Hammer. “Passengers remain in close, sustained contact for extended periods of time.” But, once the outbreak was identified, keeping the remaining passengers onboard until their tightly choreographed departure was organised was relatively straightforward. Slightly trickier was the task of tracking down the 29 passengers who disembarked early. “But thanks to the isolated nature of the locations where they departed the ship,” Hammer says, “all will have had some sort of traceable ticket. Plus, they have a rather pressing motivation to identify themselves to the authorities – it’s a scary disease. And given how much attention this story has received globally, the chances they’ll be unaware are low.”

In short, says Hammer, there’s little risk posed to the public. “This type of virus requires significant close contact for human-to-human transmission to occur.” And while there is a short, initial period of milder symptoms, the onset of serious illness is rapid. “If this was a virus like Covid – with relatively easy pre-symptomatic transmission in transient contexts – it would be close to impossible to control by this point.” Overnight, two more passengers displayed symptoms of the virus and another tested positive. One French national showed symptoms while on a chartered flight to Paris, leading all five nationals onboard to be placed in “strict isolation”. US authorities said that of the 17 Americans returning home, one has tested positive but does not have symptoms, while another has mild symptoms. Both were “traveling in the plane’s biocontainment units out of an abundance of caution,” the US Department of Health and Human Services said. Robyn Vinter has been on the ground in Tenerife all weekend. “Throughout Sunday, dozens of people were brought to shore in blue plastic ponchos and face coverings,” Robyn tells me. “From where I was standing, it was hard to gauge their expressions. But their body language portrayed exhausted, even bewildered, people. By early evening, flights had taken off bound for several countries, including the UK. Today, the process will happen all over again for passengers from the US and Australia, who will be the last passengers to leave. After that, the seas are due to get too rough, and the ship will return to the Netherlands.” The experts stress there is no need to panic about this specific outbreak. This virus has been known for decades. And while rare, it is not uncommon. “Argentina sees 50-100 cases annually,” says Hammer, “even if we aren’t used to dealing with hantaviruses of this type in Europe. I would be surprised if any of this was a massive challenge for the authorities beyond the practical logistics.” The WHO has repeatedly made clear this is not the start of a pandemic, with risks to public health “absolutely low”. Still, this scare should offer a moment for reflection. “Another pandemic is certainly likely,” says Hammer, “even if the timescale remains unknown.”

Much like this incident, she believes “it will probably originate from a zoonotic virus through human-to-animal contact, and through some sort of major transport hub.” A global, coordinated response will prove vital. Meanwhile, the United States has slashed funding for infectious disease research under Trump, and quit the WHO. Last year, Argentina followed suit. This relatively contained drama feels like a rather ominous warning.

Every five hours, one lithium-ion battery fire is reported to UK firemen

London: According to data, fire departments in the UK are battling lithium-ion battery fires at a rate of one every five hours. Fire chiefs caution that public awareness and government legislation have not kept up with the prevalence of this new threat. The majority of rechargeable gadgets, such as cell phones, electric toothbrushes, toys, vapes, e-bikes, e-scooters, and electric cars, are powered by lithium-ion batteries. Fire departments were summoned to 1,760 incidents connected to lithium-ion batteries in 2025, or 4.8 fires every day,

according to data obtained by the international business insurance QBE through freedom of information requests. This is a 147% increase over the previous three years. The number of electric cars on UK roads tripled over that time, and the number of electric vehicle fires increased by 133%. Ebike fires accounted for almost one-third of all lithium-ion battery fires in the country, according to QBE researchers, who also observed that modified and retrofitted e-bikes seemed to be disproportionately implicated when compared to approved ver-

sions. In 2025, there were 520 reports of e-bike-related fires, up from 149 in 2022. With 230 ebike fires in the capital last year and five fatalities in the previous three years, the London Fire Brigade (LFB) handled 44% of these incidents. Spencer Sutcliffe, LFB’s deputy commissioner for prevention, stated that public awareness was crucial and that the brigade was still “extremely concerned” about e-bike and e-scooter fires. He stated, “We think regulation can help improve product safety and reduce the chance of consumers being exposed

Roger Stone, a Trump friend, was denounced for offering lobbying services to the military dictatorship in Myanmar

Washington: Donald Trump’s longtime friend and supporter, US lobbyist Roger Stone, has come under fire for taking \$50,000 a month to “rebuild” ties between Washington and the military-backed government of Myanmar. Since taking over in a coup in 2021, Myanmar’s leaders have been shunned by the international community and are frequently charged with activities that might be considered war crimes. The military rulers, who just conducted internationally denounced “sham” elections, are allegedly attempting to reassert themselves overseas, according to activists. Stone is identified as offering “public affairs services” to Myanmar’s ministry of information in paperwork submitted under the US Foreign Agents Registration Act. These services are directed at “rebuilding relations between the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the United States, with a focus on trade, natural resources, and humanitarian relief,” the filings say. Stone is listed as a consultant for the firm the DCI Group. Stone, 73, is a longtime political strategist and Trump confidante. In 2019 he was convicted of obstructing a congressional

investigation into whether the Trump campaign colluded with Russia to win the 2016 election. He was sentenced to 40 months, but never went to jail. He was granted clemency by Trump in 2020. Justice for Myanmar, a civil society group, accused DCI Group and Stone of profiting “from a heavily sanctioned junta that is committing war crimes and crimes against humanity with total impunity”. Roger Stone and DCI Group were approached for comment. In recent years, the US has placed a number of sanctions on people and companies connected to Myanmar’s military. These were made in reaction to the 2021 military coup as well as the military’s claimed genocide against the Rohingya Muslim minority, which is currently being heard by an international court of justice.

Following the coup that overthrew Aung San Suu Kyi’s administration, the nation experienced economic instability and a rapidly escalating civil conflict. UN experts and human rights organizations have accused the military of repeatedly committing crimes against civilians in an effort to quell opposition movements.

Electronics breakthrough means our devices may one day no longer emit waste heat, scientists say

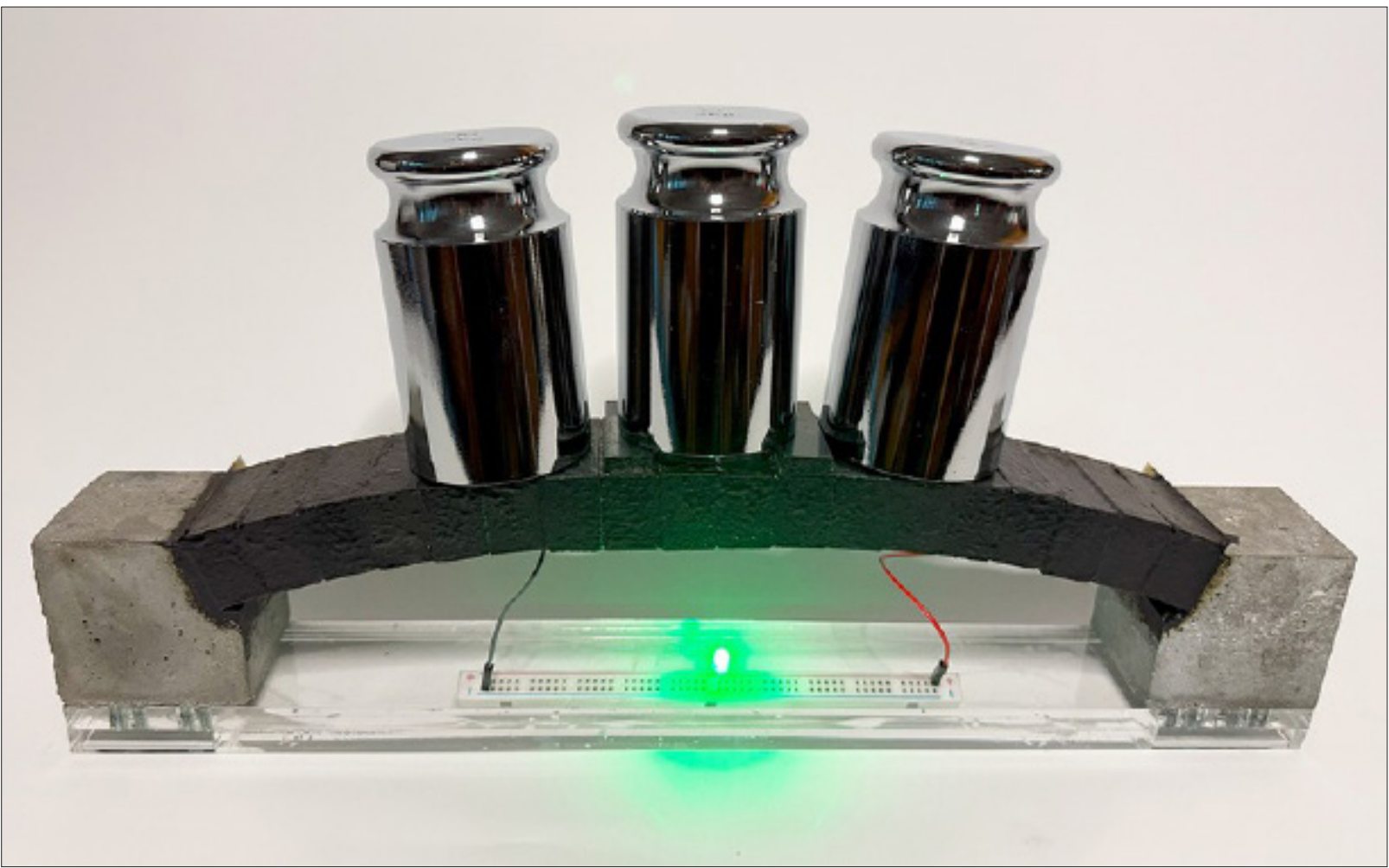
Because these electrons are charged, they produce “waste heat.” This is why your laptop gets hot when you play a demanding video game and why massive data centers operate at extraordinarily high temperatures. The new “excitonic switches,” on the other hand, rely on neutrally charged “excitons” — a class of quasiparticles created by “exciting” an electron in such a way that it’s removed from its position within an atom. These excited electrons leave behind a hole that binds with the free electron. Together, the free-moving electron, which now has a negative charge, and the hole it leaves behind, which has a positive charge, form a single quasiparticle called an “exciton” that remains neutrally charged. As excitons have a neutral charge, they don’t produce heat when they transfer information. The breakthrough research, published Aug. 31 in the journal *ACS Nano*, is the first time excitons have been used to create a switch that exceeds the performance of current photonic switches and achieves overall state-of-the-art performance. “Electronics get hot, and that’s because electronic devices always have capacitors,” study co-author Parag Deotore, associate professor electrical engineering, computer engineering, and applied physics, told Live Science. “Every time you store energy or you release that energy, you heat it up. An exciton is a new charge-neutral particle, like a photon, that doesn’t produce this heat.”

The new device uses excitons to overcome the heat problem and im-

proves on the electronic design by shrinking the switches used to move information by two orders of magnitude. Deotore said the long-term goal in developing these new switches is to create excitonic circuits that function so efficiently that computer systems don’t need fans and that phones can keep their batteries charged for far longer periods of time. While the theory behind excitonic switches is sound, engineering and testing the new technology presented the biggest challenge for the team. In a conventional electronic system, electrons are pushed where they need to go through a brute-force electrical charge. Excitons lack this option because of their neutral charge.

To get excitons to go where they need to go, the scientists used similarly neutrally charged photons to order the excitons in a linear array along a one-dimensional plane — or “ridge.” The team created the excitons, then affected them with a specific number of photons, which were absorbed at the tip of the ridge to create an exciton population, Deotore said. In other words, this is a crowd of excitons bunched up and standing still at the bottom of a straight line. The team then applied more photons until the excitons began to move. If they added too many photons, the excitons failed to follow the ridge; too few photons caused the excitons to remain still.

“Our prediction was that if you grow them thick enough, the light coupling to excitons will be such that the push is going to be destroyed. And they could show it. So basically, it had to have a magical thickness,” study



co-author Mackillo Kira, a professor of electrical and computer engineering, and the co-director of the university’s Quantum Research Institute, told Live Science. “Because light acts as a wave, the photons “pushed” the excitons once that magical thickness was achieved. Observing this activity confirmed the theories and proved

that the experiment was a success, Kira added. “That’s actually easy to verify for experiments, because the color of the exciton will change as you go along the ridge, Kira said. Based on the results of the experiment, the switch already meets or exceeds the capabilities of current technology. The ultimate goal is to

scale these switches into circuits that would, ostensibly, replace current electronics. According to the researchers, several advances are necessary to reach that goal, including finding new materials and developing techniques to fabricate and scale the prototype devices used in the team’s experiments. But the team believes

these challenges could be overcome in a matter of decades. The hope is that optoexcitonic switches and circuits could overcome waste heat — arguably the biggest problem in computing. This would enable massive reductions in size coupled with exponential improvements in performance, the scientists said.

Humans in South Africa were quarrying stone 220,000 years ago



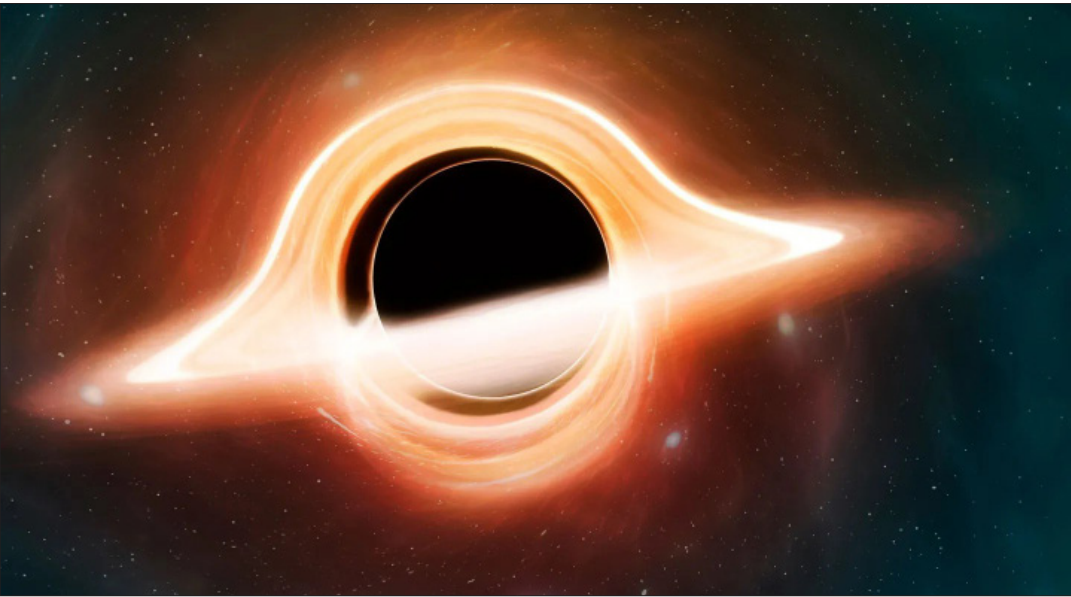
New research reveals that early humans quarried metamorphic rock at the Jojosi site in eastern South Africa as long back as 220,000 years ago. An international team of researchers demonstrated that this was deliberate behaviour, challenging the conventional belief that Paleolithic hunter-gatherers gathered raw materials only incidentally during other activities, and did not actively quarry. At the site, researchers identified extensive traces of extraction of hornfels, which is a fine-grained metamorphic shale valued for Stone Age tools. Evidence includes testing blocks, flakes of various sizes, thousands of millimetre-scale production waste and hammerstones.

People worked cobbles directly on site, knapping the material to achieve the desired shapes before transporting it elsewhere for the production of stone tools. The assemblage is made up almost exclusively of production waste. The lack of finished tools or settlement traces in the vicinity indicate that groups visited Jojosi specifically to obtain the stone. Activity was sustained for tens of thousands of years, lasting

till at least 110,000 BCE, based on luminescence dating of the sediments. In this technique, researchers can determine when the sediment was last exposed to sunlight, applies across a wide age range, and allows for precise chronology of finds. The site lies in grasslands about 140 kilometres from the Indian Ocean coast. Pleistocene geological processes created erosional gullies that exposed the layers of hornfels. The excavation work at the site began in 2022, with initial surveys on foot and drones locating about a dozen areas with well-reserve, unweathered hornfels flakes in eroded sediment. The excavations revealed clearly stratified artefact horizons containing 200,000 to two million finds per cubic metre. The researchers sieved all sediment to recover even the smallest fragments. 353 discarded pieces were re-assembled in one analysis, showing the sequence of knapping and allowing scientists to infer the original end-product forms that were removed from the site. The research indicates that early *Homo sapiens* engaged in planned, long-term resource acquisition.

To understand black holes, physicists turn to a mathematical ‘Rosetta stone’

Physicists have found a new way to investigate a long-standing black hole enigma using the mathematics of particle physics. Black holes aren’t entirely black. They emit a faint mist of particles called Hawking radiation, a concept central to major puzzles that swirl around black holes. But Hawking radiation is so faint that it’s not possible to observe directly. Fundamental physics theories fall into two distinct camps: A theory called the standard model describes the physics of subatomic particles, while the general theory of relativity describes gravity. The double copy draws a mathematical connection between these two seemingly separate theories. That relationship can be used as a mathematical translation tool, switching a calculation from one “language” of physics to another. The swap can make calculations easier or reveal new insights. According to the double copy, many phenomena of general relativity are mathematically equivalent to those of certain particles in the standard model, with one change: In general relativity, there are two copies of a particular part of the equation. Since this relationship was discovered in 2010 and developed in the years since, it has become a useful tool for understanding a variety of grav-



itational effects. “It allows us to calculate things we’ve never been able to calculate before, just by recycling results in a clever way,” says theoretical physicist Chris White of Queen Mary University of London. Until now, scientists didn’t have a standard model analog for Hawking radiation based on the double copy. Finding one “constitutes a major advance for these techniques,” says theoretical physicist Cynthia Keeler of Arizona State University in Tempe, who was not involved with the research. That’s because Hawking radiation connects

the large and the small, with enormous black holes emitting tiny particles. The discovery shows that the double copy can bridge both scales. In a paper accepted to the *Journal of High Energy Physics*, White and colleagues determined how Hawking radiation translates into the language of the standard model. In that language, the mathematical alter ego of Hawking radiation is a charged particle scattering off a spherical shell of charged matter collapsing in on itself. That’s mathematically equivalent to the emission of a particle of

Hawking radiation. Two other teams came to essentially the same conclusion, finding a mathematical analog of Hawking radiation. Reported in February in *Physical Review Letters*, the pair of papers shows that physics intrinsic to black holes is contained in the standard model of particle physics, says theoretical physicist Anton Ilderton of the University of Edinburgh, a coauthor of one of the studies. “These papers have started to show how to extract that information from the standard model.” Scientists hope to explore

even more inscrutable features of black holes in this way. For example, researchers would like to also find a standard model analog for a black hole’s event horizon, the boundary beyond which nothing that enters can escape. “That’s the big question that we would like to answer,” says theoretical physicist Uri Kol of Harvard University, who was not involved with the research. “These papers provide tools that can be used to address this question.” Hawking radiation alone is intriguing enough for further study. After physicist Stephen Hawking conceived of the radiation in 1974, physicists realized it implied a puzzle. As a black hole spews particles, it shrinks and eventually obliterates itself. Physicists don’t understand what happens to the information it once swallowed. According to quantum physics, information can’t be destroyed. Studying features of Hawking radiation translated into the language of the standard model may help illuminate what’s going on. Hawking radiation is a “Rosetta stone” problem, says theoretical physicist John Joseph Carrasco of Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., coauthor of one of the *Physical Review Letters* papers. By studying it, physicists could become more fluent with gravity’s language.

James Webb telescope zooms in on a black hole that could reveal the truth about ‘little red dots’

Now, in a paper published March 16 in *The Astrophysical Journal Letters*, astronomers have described an object that may illuminate the murky nature of LRDs. Formally known as 3DHST-AEGIS-12014 and colloquially called the X-ray dot (XRD), this object had remained hidden in a survey conducted by NASA’s Chandra X-ray Observatory more than a decade ago. Its importance was revealed only recently, after JWST observed the same cosmic field. “It is always wonderful to see archival data aid in solving mysteries that were completely unknown when the data were first taken,” Anthony Taylor, an astro-

physicist at the University of Texas at Austin who was not involved in the study, told Live Science via email. “This is a prime example of legacy science programs that continue to provide scientific value both upon their initial release and far into the future.” The XRD discovered by Chandra resembles an LRD, save for a few differences. The biggest one is that it is a bright source of X-ray light. Normally, LRDs do not seem to emit X-rays. This anomaly has deepened the mystery of their identity, because active black holes commonly emit X-rays from their chaotic coronas, where infalling material reaches near light speeds and intense

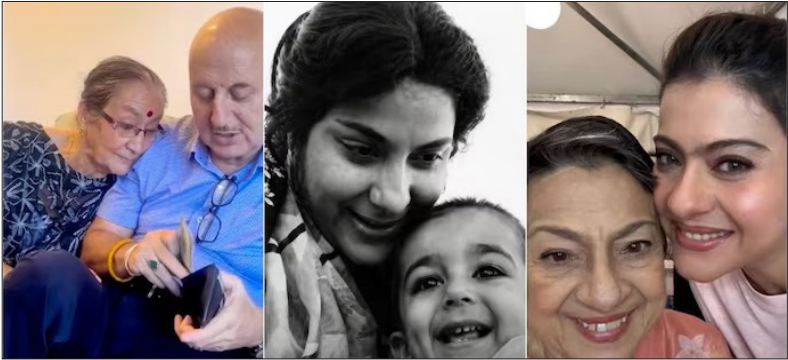
temperatures. “If little red dots are rapidly growing supermassive black holes, why do they not give off X-rays like other such black holes?” co-author Anna de Graaff, an astrophysicist at the Harvard & Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, said in a statement. As suggested in this study and in previous research, the X-rays may be blocked by thick cocoons of gas surrounding LRDs. The XRD offers evidence of this process. As the black hole at its heart gorges on the surrounding gas, it clears holes in its cocoon. This forms sight lines into the object’s interior and allows X-rays to escape, while also preserving its overall reddish appearance □—□ picture a

cosmic jack-o’-lantern with its eerie inner light bleeding into the dark. “This single X-ray object may be — to use a phrase — what lets us connect all of the dots,” lead author Raphael Hviding, an astronomer at the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy in Germany, said in the statement. Overall, the XRD may help strengthen the idea that LRDs are young black holes in the midst of a transitional phase, during which they’re enveloped in a dense cloud of gas. This gaseous shroud is similar in composition to some stellar atmospheres, earning LRDs an awe-inspiring appellation: “black hole stars.” Accordingly, if LRDs represent a phase of

rapid gas accretion by young black holes, this period of quick consumption may help to explain how early supermassive black holes (SMBHs) grew so fat, so fast, accumulating many millions or billions of solar masses when the universe was only about 10% of its current age. It is essential to study the evolution of these objects in more recent times. “LRD-like objects have actually been found in the modern universe but it is clear that LRD analogues are exceedingly rare,” Hviding told Live Science via email. “Why? The short answer is that we don’t know.” One possibility is that giant gas reservoirs grow thinner as the universe evolves, he

said. Next-generation observatories like the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope will scan the sky for the rare, modern LRDs in the evolved universe. “They cannot go nearly as deep or as detailed as Webb,” Hviding added, “but because they survey wide areas of the sky, finding rare analogues becomes viable.” In the meantime, the XRD warrants further observations. Maybe it isn’t an elderly LRD, after all, but a more common SMBH veiled in an exotic dust never seen before. Either way, astronomers appear to have made a distinctive discovery that may elucidate a chain of cosmic mysteries in the evolution of the universe.

On Mother’s Day, celebrities like Kajol, Sanjay Dutt, Chiranjeevi, and others pay respect to their mothers



Mumbai: Mother’s Day is a deeply felt holiday honoring moms, motherhood, and the enormous impact mothers make on our lives. The event serves as a reminder to show appreciation for their steadfast support, unselfish sacrifices, unconditional love, and significant contribution to the upkeep of families and society. Indian celebs shared heartfelt tributes and treasured memories of their mothers on social media to mark the special day. Here are a few of their heartfelt posts. In a poignant social media homage to his mother, Dulari Kher, Anupam Kher celebrated Mother’s Day by considering the sacrifices, tenacity, and unwavering love that characterize parenthood. The actor ended the post with a video of himself reciting a poignant poem after sharing a sentimental video montage full of touching moments with his mother. The

second slide included a lighthearted and humorous film of the two. He shared a poignant message to his mother in the Hindi caption, saying, “A mother does not just give birth to us.”Every day, she continues to mold us. She discreetly gives us her fair share of sleep, joy, desires, and occasionally even her whole life. A mother can interpret our quiet without using words when the outside world takes its time to comprehend us. Her prayers are so powerful that even someone who has been broken can find the fortitude to get back up. A mother’s bond is the most selfless of all in life. Greetings and sincere respect to all mothers worldwide on this Mother’s Day. And to my own mom...We continue to move forward, smile, and exist because of them. “Jai Mata Di!” Kajol and her mother Tanuja took a cute selfie together, both of them grinning broadly

at the camera. Tanuja looked sophisticated in a V-neck kurta with a pastel orange floral design, while Kajol wore a simple pink T-shirt. Kajol praised her mother as Goddess Kali, Durga, Lakshmi, and Saraswati all wrapped into one in the amusing yet loving letter that accompanied the touching photo. On Instagram, Sanjay Dutt posted a touching carousel of old black-and-white childhood photos of himself and his late mother, Nargis Dutt, who died in 1981. The actor’s early years and his strong relationship with his mother were poignantly revealed in the rare and private photos. In one picture, Sanjay was seen cuddling up to Nargis, while in another, he was sitting on her lap while a small puppy chewed at his ears.

On Mother’s Day, several celebrities shared heartfelt tributes to their mothers. Sanjay’s post featured nostalgic photographs, including a playful image from his childhood, expressing his longing for his mother with a touching caption. Rakul Preet Singh shared a video montage celebrating moments with her mother and mother-in-law, emphasizing gratitude for their love and support. Chiranjeevi posted throwback pictures with his mother, Anjana Devi, along with a Telugu caption honoring mothers as vital sources of courage and love. Each tribute highlighted the deep emotional bonds and blessings mothers provide in their lives.

Gir officials explain that Rakul Preet Singh was strolling outside a safari car in the widely shared video



Mumbai: Actor Rakul Preet Singh’s recent visit to Gir National Park was captured in a video that went viral on social media, sparking a discussion about wildlife safety regulations and celebrity privilege. Several social media users questioned whether forest restrictions had been broken after seeing the actor wandering close to a safari vehicle in what appeared to be a jungle safari. Many brought up the fact that it is usually forbidden for visitors to exit safari vehicles within protected wildlife zones. According

to reports, Rakul went to the park with the crew of the upcoming movie Pati Patni Aur Woh Do before it was released. Users debated whether celebrities are given preferential treatment in limited forest regions as soon as the video became viral.Gir National Park officials said that the viral images were not taken inside the restricted sanctuary zone in response to the online outrage. Authorities claim that the video was taken outside the sanctuary’s official entrance. “We have already issued a clarification regarding this video through our official

Twitter handle,” according to an official statement. We made it clear that the footage was taken from outside the Sasan Sanctuary’s entrance. Every sanctuary has a specific point of entrance where guests can access the protected area. The footage that went viral was taken outside of that location. As a result, we made it clear that the incident did not occur within the restricted area.

Officials went on to say that once guests enter the sanctuary, stringent procedures are followed, and leaving a safari vehicle inside the protected area is prohibited. Rakul allegedly had a medical problem prior to entering the refuge and was forced to depart without finishing the safari, according to the authorities.No one is permitted to exit their safari vehicle once they are inside the sanctuary, per the regulations. She is visible outside the access point area in the widely shared images,

after which she departed and came back. Rakul Preet Singh and her group had arrived for a scheduled visit to the sanctuary. But she had a health problem prior to entering the sanctuary. She did not access the sanctuary grounds as a result, and her crew took her back,” the official continued. Only after the sanctuary entry point does our limited area start. There were no infractions. We have already made this clear on our official Twitter account,” the statement said.Rakul Preet Singh is preparing for the premiere of Pati Patni Aur Woh Do.

Wamiqa Gabbi, Sara Ali Khan, and Ayushmann Khurrana are also featured in the movie. The film, which is directed by Mudassar Aziz, will be released in theaters on May 15, 2026. It is a follow-up to the 2019 movie Pati Patni Aur Woh, which starred Ananya Panday, Bhumi Pednekar, and Kartik Aaryan.

In Maine Pyar Kiya, Bhagyashree discusses why she was paid more than Salman Khan

Mumbai: With Salman Khan and Bhagyashree in the key roles, Maine Pyar Kiya became the biggest Bollywood hit of 1989. The film, which was directed by Sooraj Barjatya, was Bhagyashree’s acting debut and a turning point in her career. Even though it was only Salman’s second movie following Biwi Ho To Aisi, which came out in 1988, it shot him to fame and made him one of Bollywood’s most promising young stars. However, Maine Pyar Kiya had an uncommon reversal in contrast to the long-standing gender pay discrepancy in the entertainment industry, where male actors are frequently paid more than their female colleagues. Even though it was Bhagyashree’s first movie, she reportedly received a lot more money than Salman, who had more acting experience. Bhagyashree clarified in a recent interview with Zoom that the fundamental economics of supply and demand frequently determine an actor’s compensation.

According to her, casting selections are made by producers using a “simple business” approach, selecting performers based on both their



quoted fee and the value they add to a production. She claims that producers wouldn’t think twice about replacing the initial choice if another actor offered comparable attributes at a lower cost. “It depends on a lot of supply and demand,” the 57-year-old actor stated. When it comes to money, it’s a straightforward business. Even if a woman puts in a lot of effort, the producer or director will keep to the amount they are ready to pay that actress if they believe she can be replaced by someone else who is providing a greater price. The

actress would then have to decide if she was willing to let go of the job that was coming her way and let someone else have it. It won’t happen unless women as a whole band together and declare that this is how we should be compensated. Bhagyashree went on to say that the entertainment sector is driven by constant compromise and negotiation, just like any other business. She pointed out that there is nearly always someone who is prepared to accept different jobs, longer workdays, or lesser compensation. She claims that the

industry’s “standard” is that people are constantly willing to compromise and back off, which is why it’s such a “volatile market.” In the same discussion, Bhagyashree clarified that movie compensation frequently operates similarly to a standard company model, where cost is mostly determined by added value.”When you are working with someone, it is not just about pay, but you also need to like working with that person,” she said. You are willing to pay a little bit more when purchasing an apartment because it has a swimming pool, etc. Why do you act in such way? You are prepared to make concessions and spend less when you no longer require such items. Therefore, I believe it to be a business strategy. Shortly after Maine Pyaar Kiya was released, Bhagyashree wed Himalaya Dasani. She moved away from movies to raise her children after making a couple films opposite her spouse. Years later, the actor returned with Humko Deewana Kar Gaye. Bhagyashree has recently appeared in movies such as Raja Shivaji, Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan, and Radhe Shyam.

Director Mudassar Aziz discusses the tone of Pati Patni Aur Woh Do

Mumbai: Director Mudassar Aziz returns with “Pati Patni Aur Woh Do,” a comedic take on infidelity that explores the complexities of a marriage involving Ayushmann Khurrana’s character, who navigates relationships with his wife and two other women. Despite criticism claiming the film promotes infidelity, Aziz clarifies that the film deviates from such narratives, presenting a devoted husband caught in a series of misunderstandings. The character, Pranjapati Pandey, is portrayed as a genuinely committed spouse, contrasting sharply with traditional perceptions of infidelity.

Aziz emphasizes his intention to craft a film that is distinct from previous interpretations of the subject. He seeks to offer new insights into marital challenges beyond mere temptation, such as communication breakdowns that lead to confusion. Through comedy garnered



from real situations rather than crude humor, both Aziz and Khurrana tackle sensitive topics responsibly, paralleling their previous endeavors in films like “Vicky Donor” and “Shubh Mangal Saavdhan.”

Critics have labeled the film as trivializing affairs, a stance Aziz disputes by stressing the societal responsibility of filmmakers to convey meaningful narratives. He believes that true

comedy stems from situational context and insists that negative assumptions about the film’s message arise from hasty judgments. “Pati Patni Aur Woh Do,” produced by T Series Films and BR Studios, features a diverse cast and is set for a theatrical release on May 15. Aziz intends for the film to provoke thoughtful engagement, making it clear that it does not glorify unfaithfulness.

Just minutes before her Cannes debut, Priyanka Chopra had a wardrobe malfunction



Mumbai: The French Riviera will host the 79th Cannes Film Festival from May 12 to May 23. Let’s reminisce about Priyanka Chopra’s 2019 Cannes debut before the film festival. Wearing a dazzling black Roberto Cavalli dress with a thigh-high slit and a sparkly band of crimson on the bodice, the actress lit up the red carpet. Prior to her debut, Priyanka once admitted that she was “freaking out” because her dress’s “delicate zipper” “broke minutes before she had to leave for the red

carpet.” “I may appear calm on the outside, but nobody knew that I had been freaking out on the inside,” she wrote. Just before I had to depart for the Cannes red carpet, the delicate zipper on this vintage Roberto Cavalli dress broke.She continued, “The solution? My amazing team had to sew me into the dress on the way in the 5-minute car ride!” In 2019, Priyanka made her second appearance on the red carpet wearing a stunning white tiered tulle gown from Georges Hobeika’s wardrobe.

Nick was dressed in a white suit.Priyanka Chopra and her mother, Madhu Chopra, attended the Gold House Gala 2026 in Los Angeles last week, where Priyanka was given the Global Vanguard Award.She honored the strong women who reared her, especially her mother and grandmothers, in her victory speech.

In 2018, Priyanka wed Nick Jonas. In 2022, the couple used surrogacy to welcome their first child, a daughter called Malti Marie. Regarding her career, Priyanka last appeared in Citadel’s second season. She previously acted in The Bluff and is currently preparing for her next movie, Varanasi, which will be released in 2027 under the direction of SS Rajamouli. Meanwhile, Ari Sandel is directing an untitled romantic comedy starring Nick Jonas.

The movie centers on a bachelor whose life transforms once he inherits his cousin’s baby, and issues arise when the child’s godmother shows up.

Ananya Panday and Lakshya Manage a Toxic Love Story in the Chand Mera Dil Teaser



Mumbai: Recently, Chand Mera Dil’s trailer was released. It provides an insight into the passionate romance between Ananya Panday and Lakshya.The film, which was directed by Vivek Soni, seems to go beyond the typical romantic drama genre and instead concentrates on the complex reality of contemporary relationships, such as possessiveness, ma-

nipulation, and emotional struggle.Lakshya’s character Aarav and Ananya’s character Chandni had a heated conversation at the beginning of the trailer. When Aarav responds, “I apologised for my mistake, and I will keep apologising.” Chandni asks, “But how long will you keep committing such mistakes?”The trailer shows romantic moments, disagree-

ments, and emotional breakdowns during various stages of their relationship. In one scene, while wearing traditional clothing, Chandni asks Aarav, “How do I look?” to which he replies, “...like you’re mine.” But as the trailer goes on, their relationship starts to exhibit the same possessiveness in a more sinister way. Themes of self-respect and emotional boundaries in love are also explored in the movie. “Our love story has become legendary,” Chandni remarks at one point, and Aarav responds, “Legendary love stories always have a tragic ending.” In addition to discussing male dominance, toxic behavior, and emotional manipulation in relation-

In the midst of a divorce dispute, Celina Jaitley writes a heartfelt Mother’s Day letter

Mumbai: In November 2025, actress Celina Jaitley initiated legal proceedings against her husband, Peter Haag, citing domestic violence, cruelty, and manipulation, and demanded compensation of ₹50 crore. Following the filing, the Mumbai police registered a First Information Report (FIR) citing multiple offenses under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and issued a Look Out Circular (LOC) against Haag due to his alleged non-cooperation with the investigation.

Celina has publicly expressed the emotional distress stemming from her separation from her three sons, twin boys Winston and Viraag, and Arthur, and is particularly anguished over being denied access to them. On Mother’s



er’s Day, she shared a poignant note detailing her experience since leaving Austria to safeguard her dignity and her family’s future.

In her note, she articulated the systematic oppression and emotional trauma she endured, emphasizing her efforts to protect her children and family, which led to her current plight.

She accused her husband and his father of alienating her from her children, stating that they were being manipulated against her faith and emotional well-being.Describing her existing custody arrangement and ongoing legal battles in Austria, Celina lamented that her children had been relocated to an undisclosed place without her

consent, contrary to the Australian Family Court’s orders. She also revealed her profound sadness, particularly recalling the loss of her deceased son, Shamsher, who died from a heart condition, during her visit to Austria for court proceedings.Celina’s marriage to Haag, an Austrian entrepreneur, began in 2010.

Over the years, she claims to have faced consistent abuse and sought an amicable separation focused on her children’s welfare, but instead encountered coercive demands regarding her pre-marital assets. Her call to action concludes with her determination to return to India to fight for her children, her dignity, and justice, fueled by her ancestral heritage and maternal love.

Delhi High Court’s delayed appointment of an amicus curiae for Kejriwal and Sisodia



New Delhi, May 11: Due to Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma’s absence from court for the second time in a week, the appointment of senior advocates as amicus curiae to represent former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia, and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Durgesh Pathak in the Central Bu-

reau of Investigation’s (CBI) appeal against their discharge in the excise policy case was postponed on Monday.Kejriwal informed the Court in writing on April 27 that he will be boycotting the proceedings after Justice Sharma refused to recuse herself from hearing the CBI’s appeal on April 20 and the court decided to start hear-

ing the case on its merits on April 29. The AAP convenor wrote that following the April 20 verdict, he had carefully considered his options. He claimed that his “well-grounded apprehensions” were still unresolved and that the ruling gave him the impression that his justifiable concerns had been interpreted as a “assault” on the institution and a personal attack on the judge. Subsequently, Sisodia and Pathak also sent comparable letters expressing the same choice. Despite receiving letters, Justice Sharma gave them one last chance to submit their reply on April 29 and scheduled the hearing on May 4 to hear arguments on behalf of CBI. This came when she pointed out that she had not yet gotten the full trial court record,

which included the most recent orders issued by the court following the February 27 order.On May 4, though, the judge did not convene.On May 5, the next day, she announced that on May 8, an order designating amicus curiae to defend Kejriwal, Sisodia, and Pathak would be passed.

However, the selection of an amicus curiae has been postponed until Tuesday because the judge did not convene on May 11 either. The trial court’s February 27 ruling freeing Kejriwal, Sisodia, and 21 others—holding that the CBI’s material did not even disclose a prima facie case—gave rise to the entire issue surrounding the appointment. The agency then challenged the order before the high court.

PM Modi’s strategy to counter the impact of the US-Iran war: WFH, don’t buy gold for a year

New Delhi, May 11: As the government struggles with the economic consequences of the ongoing global energy crisis and rising crude prices, Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged Indians on Sunday to adopt austerity measures ranging from reducing edible oil use and avoiding gold purchases to cutting back on petrol-diesel consumption and delaying foreign travel.Speaking in Hyderabad,where he unveiled several projects, Modi presented the call as a national obligation at a time when supply lines are still strained due to the turmoil in West Asia and India imports more than 88% of the crude oil it processes. “We have to make a resolution keeping duty paramount and fulfill it with complete dedication in this time of global crisis,” Modi declared. “Using gasoline and

diesel sparingly is a major resolution. We need to consume less gasoline and diesel. We should choose to travel only by Metro in cities that have Metro lines. “We should try carpooling if we have to use a car,” he remarked. The prime minister also urged people to maximise the use of electric vehicles, shift freight movement towards railways and revive work-from-home arrangements that became common during the Covid-19 pandemic.

We created a number of remote work, online meeting, and video conferencing solutions during the Corona era, and we even became used to them. Restarting these systems will be in the best interests of the country because of the demands of the modern era, he stated. Modi emphasized the urgent need for India to conserve foreign exchange

in light of escalating import costs, particularly due to rising global fuel prices. With crude oil prices surging from approximately \$70 to nearly \$120 a barrel since February, the rupee has weakened from ₹91 to almost ₹95 against the dollar. India’s oil import bill reached \$121.8 billion in 2025-26, with expectations of further increases amid ongoing geopolitical tensions and disrupted shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. While the government has managed to keep domestic fuel prices stable, officials warn of fragile conditions and upcoming challenges in the energy market.Modi urged citizens to postpone non-essential foreign travel and gold purchases for at least a year to relieve pressure on foreign exchange reserves. He further called for reduced consumption of edible oils and chemical fer-

tilizers to conserve foreign currency and push for natural farming. Officials noted monthly losses of around ₹30,000 crore for state-run fuel retailers, maintaining prices amid global pressure.

An expert interpreted Modi’s statements as a precursor to potential fuel price hikes and austerity measures. Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri supported Modi’s appeals for energy conservation. Puri highlighted the critical financial losses faced by oil marketing companies, estimating losses of up to ₹1,000 crore per day during the crisis. In contrast, the opposition criticized the government for inadequate crisis preparedness, accusing Modi of failing to ensure energy security and adequately shield citizens from economic hardships.

After midnight, a woman disappears from Nanda Devi Express and is discovered in Bihar

New Delhi, May 11: For a newlywed woman traveling on the Dehradun-Ghaziabad Nanda Devi Express, what was meant to be a tranquil trip home following the Kedarnath pilgrimage turned into a perplexing six-day abduction.Pragya Singh, who was only married three months prior, vanished inexplicably after midnight while traveling back with her husband, Manish. This set off an intense police search that ultimately brought detectives to Bihar.Her husband, fearing the worst, called the train police, and the hunt took detectives hundreds of kilometers to Begusarai in Bihar after spanning stations and compartments. After six days, Pragya was eventually located safely. Now, she’s disclosed how she got there.The pair got

into a fight on the way, according to Laksar area SP Shekhar Chandra Suyal. After the argument, Pragya was upset and waited for her husband to go to sleep before discreetly getting off the train and getting on another.She didn’t even realize the train she boarded was going to Begusarai, according to police, and she traveled without a ticket. Pragya called her mother after arriving in Bihar to let her know she was safe and to reassure her family. Before returning her, police located her and notified her family. After finishing the Kedarnath Yatra, the couple was taking the Nanda Devi Express from Dehradun to Ghaziabad.Manish discovered Pragya missing from her seat when he woke up at Muzaffarnagar station. He waited for her to return before starting

to investigate the train, initially assuming she had gone to the restroom. Manish notified the train police after searching surrounding compartments and restrooms several times without finding her and discovering her phone turned off.

A missing complaint was filed when the matter was later moved to the Roorkee police station.Manish had been afraid that there had been a crime or an accident. Additionally, he said that the CCTV cameras at the Roorkee and Muzaffarnagar train stations were broken.Police looked through Pragya’s call detail records during the investigation, which ultimately assisted in locating her in Begusarai. She has finally been reunited with her family, according to the authorities.

In Telangana, a speeding Hayabusa bike collides with a car, killing two of the five children

New Delhi, May 11: After Sunday midnight, a sports bike and a car collided in Mahbubnagar, Telangana, killing five persons, including two children. After midnight on Sunday, the automobile was making a U-turn on the Mahabubnagar bypass road when the Hayabusa bike struck it from behind, according to police.According to reports, the deadly collision occurred on the Palakonda bypass road near Mahabubnagar.

Three of the five people that died were in the automobile, and two were riding the Hayabusa bike. According to police, the car-borne victims sustained severe injuries and were taken to a hospital, where they passed away while receiving medical attention. According to the Times of India, Mahabubnagar Rural



Police stated that they had not yet received an official complaint regarding the accident that happened at around one in the morning. Arshiya Begum (30), Ujepa (7), and two-year-old Amar have been identified as the family members who perished in the vehicle. Yakub Afzal, a resident of Hyderabad who is 25 years old, has been recognized as one of the riders; the name of the other has not been determined.According to accounts, bike racing may have contributed to the deadly collision, howev-

er the investigation is still ongoing. According to reports, the two children on the bike lost control and collided with a car while traveling at a speed of around 140 kmph. According to locals, kids frequently speed on sports bikes, do bike stunts, and use the bypass as a racing stretch at night.

They claimed that despite their frequent complaints, the authorities did nothing. These kids ride loud sports bikes and race on the bypass every night. They endanger the lives of innocent people by driving recklessly. Locals were cited as stating, “We complained many times, but nobody listened,” adding that the police should, among other things, organize special drives against reckless driving, install CCTV cameras, and enhance patrols.

IPL 2026: How the Mumbai Indians Were Eliminated Due to Last-Ball Drama Against RCB

New Delhi: In the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 match against the Mumbai Indians (MI), Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) required 15 runs from the final over to correct their mistake at the end of the season. RCB had Romario Shepherd and Rasikh Salam Dar in the middle while Raj Bawa bowled the last over for MI. The match came down to the very last ball, and RCB needed to score two runs on the last delivery to win. If the fielder’s throw had been at the right end, the game would have gone to a Super Over. Raj Bawa did not appear to be in the finest state of mind throughout the final over, which began disastrously with a wide and a no-ball. At a moment when every run counted, the pacemaker ultimately let up five extras (four wides and a no-ball).The batter struck the last delivery he bowled to Rasikh directly, but a misfield caused the ball to be diverted into the mid-on region. Bawa stood in the middle, probably defeated by his inability to grab the ball, unaware that a Super Over could still keep the match going. The fielder had to toss the ball to the wicketkeeper’s end since Bawa was standing in the center rather than at the bowler’s end. Rasikh needed two runs to finish the run chase by the time the ball touched the wicketkeeper’s gloves.It is evident from a video that has gone viral on social media that if the throw had been directed at the bowler’s end, the non-striker would not have reached the crease. Suryakumar Yadav, the Mumbai Indians’ stand-in captain, was questioned regarding Bawa receiving the final over—a choice that appeared to have cost the team the match. However, he said he “almost pulled it off” and refused to place the blame on the child.He was a totally different all-rounder when we saw him this year, and I believe he has been practicing that pretty well throughout the season and last year as well.

Recalling his best six years with the Mumbai Indians, Krunal Pandya breaks down

New Delhi: Following his game-winning 73 off 46 balls that helped Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) defeat Mumbai Indians (MI) by two wickets in a last-ball thriller in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 match on Sunday, all-rounder Krunal Pandya of RCB said he enjoys playing under pressure and always gets ready for challenging situations. In their pursuit of 167, RCB found themselves at 39/3 in 5.1 overs. Before being dismissed in the 18th over, Krunal Pandya stitched together a vital 55-run partnership with Jacob Bethell (27) and a 37-run partnership with Jitesh Sharma (18). On the final ball of RCB’s innings, Bhuvneshwar Kumar (7* off 2 balls) and Rasikh Salam Dar (3* off 2 balls) led the hosts home following Krunal’s dismissal.Despite having cramps, Krunal hit four boundaries and five sixes during his innings.Following the game, Krunal acknowledged that

he couldn’t finish the game on his own but stated he always prepares for and relishes high-pressure situations. He said that the Raipur pitch required patience and proper cricketing shots rather than aggressive stroke play, and he complimented Bhuvneshwar’s late six as the game’s turning point. “Obviously, I enjoy challenging circumstances, and I always prepare for and anticipate them. I obviously wanted to end the game, but I was unable to do so. However, Bhuvi’s shot was the game-winning shot. It was a wicket where cricketing shots were required. It’s not the type of wicket where bowlers line up.

During the post-match speeches, Krunal stated, “You have to apply, grind, and play the knock.”He added that he is not accustomed to battling for extended periods of time and that he suffered from excruciating cramps during his session. “I had a lot of cramps. I began in the

calf, moved to the glutes, and then reached my back. I was having a lot of cramps. “I don’t typically bat for so long.” Pandya remarked.Krunal Pandya, who played for the Mumbai Indians for his first six years in the Indian Premier League (IPL) from 2016 to 2021, gave an emotional account of his time with his old team. He referred to MI batting coach Kieron Pollard as a “big brother” and praised him as a terrific T20 player who was crucial to the team’s success. He emphasized the close relationship among the Pandya-Pollard core, which also includes his brother Hardik Pandya, and claimed that his six years at MI were the best part of his IPL career. “My older brother is Polly (Kieron Pollard).” My best six years at MI were spent in the engine room with Kieron Pollard and the Pandya brothers. It was clearly emotional, and I like Kieron Pollard, who is an amazing person. GOAT of this

format, having won numerous games and trophies. During the post-match ceremonies, Krunal stated, “And as he says, you can’t keep a good man down.”In a thrilling final-ball match in Raipur, RCB defeated MI by two wickets after chasing down 167 in a tense IPL match.

RCB maintained their composure in the last over, with Krunal Pandya’s fifty anchoring the chase and Bhuvneshwar’s late six clinching the victory, despite Corbin Bosch’s outstanding four-wicket haul. Tilak Varma and Naman Dhir’s partnership helped MI recover from an early collapse, while RCB had earlier bowled out MI for 166 due to a four-wicket effort from Bhuvneshwar.With this victory, RCB climbed to the top of the standings with seven wins in 11 games, while MI’s chances of making the playoffs were all but eliminated as they stayed in ninth place with just three victories.

A new era in Tamil Nadu is marked with Vijay’s star-studded oath as chief minister

Chennai , May 11: Actor-turned-politician C Joseph Vijay took the oath of office as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on Sunday, ending five dramatic days of alliance bargaining, political uncertainty, and intense backroom discussions following a divided verdict. It was an incredible political spectacle.For many, it represented the birth of an entirely new political culture in Tamil Nadu rather than just a swearing-in event.Vijay’s public appearance was in stark contrast to a period when coalition math dominated headlines and parties negotiated support behind closed doors. Young, charismatic, and still at the height of his acting career, Vijay entered Chennai’s Nehru Stadium wearing a blazer over a white shirt instead of the customary white shirt and dhoti that have long been connected to Tamil Nadu’s political elite. There were clear cinematic connotations in the oath itself. In contrast to the customary seriousness of constitutional ceremonies, Vijay’s delivery was more like the dialogue-heavy rhythm that millions of moviegoers are accustomed to. Like viewers responding to a hero’s punch speech on screen, the audience erupted with cheers and clapping.The event was momentous in a number of ways.After decades of alternating dominance between the DMK and AIADMK, a non-Dravidian party has taken power in Tamil Nadu for the first time in 59 years.

Before 2027 Votes in UP, Yogi’s cabinet adds 6 new ministers



New Delhi, May 11: In an effort to bolster the BJP’s socio-political base ahead of the 2027 assembly elections, Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath appointed six new ministers to his cabinet on Sunday, including two cabinet-ranked ministers and four ministers of state.

He also promoted two ministers of state (MoS) to independent charge. As the BJP looks to win a third consecutive term in the state, the expansion is perceived as an attempt to manipulate socio-political dynamics in its favor.Former Samajwadi Party (SP) minister Manoj Pandey and former UP BJP president Bhupendra Chaudhary are the new cabinet ministers. Krishna Paswan, Kailash Rajput, Surendra Diler, and Hansraj Vishwakarma are the new MoS.

The recent induction of two new Ministers of State (MoS) marks a significant expansion of the Yogi 2.0 government, with Ajit Pal overseeing science and technology, and Somendra Tomar responsible for energy.

Governor Anandiben Patel administered their oaths in a ceremony attended by senior officials in Luc-

know. This cabinet expansion is viewed as a strategic move by the BJP to counter the Samajwadi Party (SP) and its emphasis on the PDA (Pichhda, Dalit, and Alpsankhyak) formula.

The new cabinet includes a diverse representation: one Brahmin, three OBCs, and two Dalit leaders. Notable new members include Pandey, formerly affiliated with the SP, who represents Unchahar and has a significant political background. Bhupendra Chaudhary, a Jat leader from Moradabad, and Krishna Paswan, a Dalit leader from Khaga, are other key appointments, contributing to an increased representation of women in the cabinet.The additions also reflect geographical diversity, with two ministers from western Uttar Pradesh, one from the east, and three from central regions.

The expansion fills six vacancies, raising the total number of cabinet ministers to 23, alongside 16 MoS (independent charge) and 21 MoS, reaching the maximum permissible strength of 60. Finance Minister Suresh Khanna emphasized that these changes aim to enhance governmental effectiveness.

Krunal Pandya Gets Emotional Remembering Mumbai Indians Days With Pollard And Hardik



Raipur: Krunal Pandya turned emotional after helping Royal Challengers Bengaluru pull off a dramatic win over Mumbai Indians on May 10 night, as memories of his old MI days alongside brother Hardik Pandya and Kieron Pollard came flooding back. The all-rounder admitted the bond shared during Mumbai Indians’ golden era still remains special for him years later. Krunal produced a heroic 73 off 46 balls despite battling severe cramps to guide RCB to a thrill-

ing two-wicket win in Raipur, officially knocking Mumbai out of the IPL 2026 playoff race. RCB were in deep trouble at 39/3 in the Powerplay before Krunal rebuilt the chase almost single-handedly under pressure. Speaking at the post-match presentation, Krunal reflected on his years at Mumbai Indians and the role played by Pollard and Hardik in shaping that successful core group. Kieron is my big brother, right? I mean, I had my best six years in MI. I remember the Pandya

brothers and Kieron Pollard were the engine room. We won a lot of games with bat, ball and fielding,” Krunal said. “I still remember in 2021 when we were playing our last game, the three of us held each other’s hand and felt like okay, this is the last time we’ll be able to play together. It was obviously an emotional moment again, but I love Kieron Pollard.

He’s a terrific human being, goat of this format, won so many trophies and games.” Krunal also revealed one particular line from Pollard that stayed with him through difficult moments in his career. “As they say, you’re right, Kieron always used to tell me that you can’t keep a good man down,” he added. The innings itself felt like a throwback to Krunal’s best Mumbai Indians days. He steadied the innings first with Jacob Bethell before later switching gears despite cramps taking over in the closing overs. Two massive sixes off AM Ghaznafar in the 18th over proved crucial in a chase that eventually went down to the final ball, where Rasikh Salam Dar scrambled back for the winning second run.

East Bengal Aim To Retain Their Lead At The Top Against Formidable Punjab FC

Kolkata: East Bengal FC will be determined to defend their position at the top of the standings as they host a resilient Punjab FC side in their Indian Super League (ISL) 2025-26 fixture at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan in Kolkata on Monday, May 11. The kick-off is scheduled for 19:30 IST.

A victory for East Bengal FC would firmly consolidate their position at the summit and apply immense pressure on the surrounding title contenders. Conversely, maximum points for Punjab FC would significantly bolster their climb up the standings, potentially tying them on points with the title contenders Mohun Bagan Super Giants with 21 points and further igniting their championship campaigns. East Bengal FC will aim to build on their recent performances following a brilliant 2-1 comeback victory away against Mumbai City



FC. Under the guidance of head coach Oscar Bruzon, the Red and Gold Brigade has shown signs of potent attacking football and remarkable tactical flexibility, securing four wins and one draw in their last five matches. Trailing early in their last outing, Bruzon’s inspired half-time substitutions changed the complexion of the game, with Youssef Ezzejjari, who bagged a brace and Nandha Kumar finding the net to complete the turnaround. They will now look to dominate proceedings in front of an electric and vocal home support. The Kolkata

giants possess incredible firepower to mount a fierce challenge on home turf.

Currently sitting at the summit of the table in first place with 21 points from just 10 games (6 wins, 3 draws, 1 loss), they are looking to accelerate their push and extend their lead. A much-needed victory would take them to 24 points, strengthening their position at the top and boosting squad morale ahead of the highly anticipated Kolkata Derby against Mohun Bagan Super Giant looming on May 17, meaning Bruzon’s men cannot afford any complacency.

MS Dhoni’s Expert Advice Transforms Urvil Patel Into An IPL Record Breaker

New Delhi: CSK’s Urvil Patel revealed the chat he had with MS Dhoni and the advice the legendary wicketkeeper gave him as he became an IPL record-breaker during the clash against LSG. Urvil scored the joint-fastest fifty in the history of the competition when he reached the landmark at the Chepauk in just 13 balls.

During the madness against LSG, Urvil was able to hit five sixes in a row as CSK



powered to the win on the back of his blistering knock of 65 off 23 balls. Urvil had



often got starts for CSK, scoring 24 off 12 against MI and 17 off 9 against DC but

was unable to convert them. The Gujarat batter quickly turned to Dhoni for assistance. Speaking to the IPL’s website, Urvil said that Dhoni told him that there was no doubt in his abilities and it was just a mental block for him. The 27-year-old said that Dhoni told him to just try and target the right balls to the right areas. “After getting out in the last two matches, I sat with Mahi bhai in the dressing.

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Vinesh Phogat Arrives For Her Comeback Event In Gonda While Contesting A Federal Wrestling Ban

Gonda: Vinesh Phogat arrived in Gonda, Uttar Pradesh on Monday and replied to the Wrestling Federation of India’s (WFI) show-cause notice, claiming that she was eligible to return from retirement even though the national federation maintained that she cannot be allowed to compete in the ongoing National Open Ranking tournament.

The WFI said she cannot compete until disciplinary proceedings against her are complete. The national federation had earlier declared Vinesh ineligible to participate in domestic events till June 26, 2026, citing the mandatory six-month notice period linked to athletes returning from retirement under anti-doping rules. Immediately after landing in Ayodhya, Vinesh replied to the WFI’s show-cause notice, claim-



ing that Rule 5.6.1 of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Code concerning retired athletes does not apply to her as she had already informed United World Wrestling (UWW) in June about her decision to resume competition after retirement. In her response, Vinesh argued that she had formally intimated UWW about her comeback well in advance and, therefore, fulfilled the procedural requirements needed to return to competition. How-

ever, WFI sources said the federation was not satisfied with her reply and felt that the wrestler had addressed only the eligibility aspect while failing to respond comprehensively to the broader disciplinary charges levelled against her in the detailed notice issued earlier. The reply is not enough. She has not answered the full show-cause notice. Until a disciplinary hearing is conducted and the matter is decided, she cannot be permitted to compete,”

a WFI source told PTI. The controversy erupted after the WFI issued a strongly worded show-cause notice to the celebrated wrestler, accusing her of indiscipline, breach of federation rules and anti-doping related procedural violations. Before that, Vinesh had claimed that the WFI was trying to block her entry.

The WFI also maintained that a “wrong narrative” was being spread that the selection criteria for the National Open Ranking Tournament had been altered specifically to prevent Vinesh from competing. Vinesh had announced her retirement from the sport after her disqualification from the women’s 50kg gold medal bout at the 2024 Paris Olympics. While her husband said that Vinesh never announced her retirement officially, and merely posted it on social media.

Trossard Goal and VAR Drama Keep Arsenal’s Historic Title Charge Alive

London: A late strike from Leandro Trossard helped Arsenal’s Premier League hopes massively as they defeated West Ham United 1-0 to stay five points clear of second-placed Manchester City. The Sunday’s win did not come without some drama as the ruling out of Callum Wilson’s 95th-minute equaliser was ruled out because of a foul on the Gunners’ goal-keeper David Raya, as per Sky Sports. The VAR spotted West Ham’s Pablo’s arm across Raya’s neck as the latter fumbled the initial delivery into the box. The referee, Chris Kavanagh, was sent to the monitor by VAR Darren England, and the goal was disallowed. After a total of 17 replays of the incident, the referee Kavanagh made his final decision, and the home crowd erupted. Had the goal stood and the match ended at 1-1, Arsenal’s lead over City would have been cut short to three points, giving the multi-time champions a sniff at another Premier League title if they win their next game against Crystal Palace on Wednesday. With a relegated Burnley clash visiting Arsenal’s home turf, and the Gunners

travelling to Crystal Palace for their last fixture, the Gunners look all but set for their first Premier League title in 22 years. But other than that, it was tricky out there for the Gunners for the first 83 minutes. They started off on a dominating note, but Trossard hit the bar twice from the same corner, and Riccardo Calafiori came close to scoring. But an injury to Ben White threatened Arsenal’s control over the game. With Mikel Arteta getting Martin Zubimendi as a substitute and moving Declan Rice to right-back, West Ham started to look a little threatening. Arteta reversed his decision at half time, bringing Declan back into the midfield and bringing Cristhian Mosquera.

Then, Zubimendi was taken off the field midway through the second half, giving West Ham some more con Peter Schmeichel criticized the VAR decision to disallow Callum Wilson’s stoppage-time equalizer for West Ham United because he believes it was inconsistent and hypocritical. He argued that Arsenal frequently uses similar physical tactics, such as blocking and holding opponents during set-pieces,



to score goals without being penalized. The former goalkeeper said that Arsenal “would never be top of the league” if the officials consistently applied the same standard of foul to their own aggressive routines. Additionally, he stated that the five-minute delay in the VAR review by official Darren England demonstrated a lack of certainty, as the repeated replays suggested there was no clear and obvious error. The decision sparked fierce debate among fans and pundits, with many arguing that similar physical challenges during

set-pieces are often allowed to continue — particularly involving Arsenal, who have earned a reputation for their aggressive blocking routines from corners and free-kicks. Former Manchester United and Manchester City goalkeeper Schmeichel was among the harshest critics of the call. “What really makes me angry is that Arsenal would never be top of the league if that’s a free-kick,” Schmeichel said on Viaplay. “That’s how they’ve scored so many goals, by blocking people, holding people, doing all kinds of things.

India’s Campaign Ends At World Squash Championships Following Veer Chotrani’s Second Round Loss In Egypt

Giza: Veer Chotrani’s defeat in the second round match against world number one Mostafa Asal marked the end of India’s challenge at the World Squash Championships being held in Giza, Egypt on Sunday. Chotrani, ranked 45th in the world rankings, registered a 3-0 loss (11-5, 11-2, 11-4) to local favourite and defending champion Mostafa Asal, as per Olympics.com. The 24-year-old was only one of four Indian squash stars who made it to the second round of the competition. Enroute to the second round, he beat compatriot and India’s top-ranked, World Cup-winning star Abhay Singh 3-2 in the opening round.



The first round saw Velavan Senthilkumar and Ramit Tandon exiting after poor outings. While the world number 50th Senthilkumar lost to France’s sixth seed and current world No. 5 Victor Crouin 3-0, the world number

40 Tandon lost to Egypt’s Kareem El Torkey by 3-1.

The last year also witnessed India’s World Squash Championships campaign fizzling out in the round two in Chicago, as Anahat Singh, Veer Chotrani, Abhay Singh and Ramit Tandon all exited after competitive losses. Velavan Senthilkumar was ousted in the opening round. However, India’s women’s squash players, including teen star Anahat Singh, did not compete this year. India is yet to win a medal in the singles competition at the World Championships. Squash is set for its Olympics debut in the 2028 Los Angeles edition.

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