

In Brief

2nd Day of Winter Tales lits iconic Wards Lake

Shillong: The second day of Winter Tales 2025 celebrated sustainability and storytelling at Wards Lake, focusing on the theme ‘Nurture’. The event featured local crafts, the ‘Go Green Awards’, and engaging sessions, including architect Mario Pathaw’s discussion on transforming objects into characters. Noteworthy book launches by MLCU Press included Taptung Tangthu: Paite Folktales for Children and Sunset and Pine Needles. Photojournalist Pablo Bartholomew showcased his work Father & Son, highlighting a decades-long photographic dialogue. The Go Green Awards recognized Ebor Tariang, P. Cooper Kharluki, and Cleric Jayden Wanniang for their contributions in photography, art, and film, with each recipient awarded Rs 10,000, and plaques made from recycled materials.

Meghalaya government moves to end decades-old land disputes in Tura

Shillong: The Meghalaya government has initiated the distribution of land pattas under long-term leases to eight localities in Tura Town, aiming to resolve longstanding disputes over encroached government land. Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma highlighted that this decision addresses decades-old conflicts with the General Administration Department, which arose from encroachments on government properties. This initiative mirrors a successful model previously applied in Williamnagar. The lease arrangements, while maintaining government revenue land status, will provide clarity and security to residents and the government, with criteria for leases being specific and transparent. The first phase focuses on localities that have consented, with further phases open to voluntary participation from other areas.

12,000-page chargesheet filed in Zubeen Garg murder

Guwahati: In a significant advancement in the investigation of singer Zubeen Garg’s death, the Assam CID’s Special Investigation Team (SIT) has filed a 12,000-page chargesheet, the largest ever in a murder case in India. Presented in the Kamrup Metropolitan Chief Judicial Magistrate’s Court, the chargesheet details two linked cases and employs the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023. It names multiple accused individuals and outlines the charges against them, including murder, conspiracy, and destruction of evidence. The SIT claims to have met its commitment to submit the document on time, aiming for justice for Garg. The court is set to review the evidence soon, making this a highly followed case in Assam. Notable accused include Siddharth Sharma, Shyamkanu Mahanta, Shekhar Jyoti Goswami, and Amritprava Mahanta, each facing serious charges related to the incident.

Assam govt to fast-track Zubeen’s death case in High Court

Guwahati: The Assam government plans to petition the Gauhati High Court for a fast-track court regarding the Zubeen Garg death case, as announced by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sama on December 12. This follows the submission of a 12,000-page chargesheet against multiple suspects, including murder charges under Section 103 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Sarma stated the government would also appoint a special public prosecutor when the case progresses to the sessions court. He assured that the investigation was thorough, relying primarily on evidence gathered in Assam, and expressed confidence in the judiciary’s independence and ability to deliver justice.

CM Himanta Biswa Sarma launches Orunodoi 3.0 in BTR

On Friday at Green Field, Bodofa Nwgr, Assam Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma launched Orunodoi 3.0 in the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), distributing benefits to 1,20,854 beneficiaries in Kokrajhar.

Guwahati, Dec 13: At a lavish public event on Friday at Green Field, Bodofa Nwgr, in Kokrajhar, Assam Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma formally introduced Orunodoi 3.0 in the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR). Orunodoi 3.0 was ceremoniously distributed to 1,20,854 Kokrajhar district beneficiaries by Dr. Sarma. Speaking to the crowd, BTC chief Hagrama Mohilary expressed gratitude to Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma for the ceremonial inauguration of Orunodoi 3.0 for the BTR’s economically disadvantaged segment beneficiaries. According to him, this program will be available to all qualified recipients in the following stage. As Orunodoi 3.0 begins in BTR, he said, the BTC government will also begin providing financial support to SHGs, land pattas, assistance to disabled people, and other commitments starting in January 2026. He hoped that this program would help the impoverished manage their families. Additionally, he declared that his government will examine land and home taxes and reduce the excessive rate set by the previous council government.

Mohilary stated that his government would treble the developmental projects in BTR with more funding and that the Mini Secretariat of BTC



would be formed in Udalguri. Orunodoi could not begin in BTR earlier because of council elections, according to Assam Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma’s speech. He said that Orunodoi 3.0 benefits would be given to 1,20,854 beneficiaries in Kokrajhar, 60600 in Chirang, 60545 in Baksa, 61578 in Tamulpur, and 1,09,360 in Udalguri. He stated that on the tenth of each month, the recipients’ accounts would receive the Rs 1250 in cash as-

sistance under Orunodoi 3.0. He added that the Assamese government had implemented a number of pro-poor initiatives, such as free rations and 1 kg of salt, sugar, and dal for Rs 100 apiece. He added that this privilege would be extended to all low-income families. Sarma stated that BTC president Hagrama Mohilary and Minister Jayanta Mallabaruah would formally deliver Rs 10,000 to Lakhpati Baideo beneficiaries on December 13 in Gos-

saigaon and December 17 in Dotma. Additionally, he promised that the Assamese government would launch comparable programs for the boys starting in January 2026. A snake briefly caused a commotion among the beneficiaries during the CM’s speech. Minister Jayanta Mallabaruah, MLAs Lawrence Islary and Jiron Basumatary, EMs Rabiram Narzary, Derhasat Basumatary, Mritunjay Narzary, Moon Moon Brahma, and Prakash Ba-

sumatary, MCLAs Doneswar Goyary and Wilson Hasda, former Minister Pramila Rani Brahma, and BTC Principal Secretary MC Sahoo were also present at the program. The welcome speech was earlier delivered by Finance Minister Ajanta Neog. According to her, this program is an effort by the State Government to support the economically disadvantaged group in order to boost the local economy and direct Assam’s development.

IOCL announces 2 lakh new LPG connections for Assam under PMUY

Guwahati, Dec 13: Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) today announced a major expansion of LPG coverage in Assam under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY). The announcement was made during a press meet held at the AOD State Office in Noonmati, Guwahati, where AOD Chief General Manager Amarjyoti Bordoloi briefed reporters about the new targets approved for the state and the region.

Bordoloi said the central government has approved 25 lakh additional LPG connections across India under PMUY. Out of this, the Northeast will receive 5 lakh new connections, and 2 lakh of these have been allotted to Assam alone. He said the fresh allocation will help the state bring more households under clean cooking fuel and reduce dependence on traditional biomass. PMUY, launched in May 2016, provides

free LPG connections to adult women belonging to economically weaker families. To avail the scheme, beneficiaries must have a ration card and an Aadhaar card. Officials said the documentation process remains simple so that eligible families can access the benefit without difficulty. IOCL said that PMUY has already achieved major milestones across the country. Since its launch, the scheme has delivered over 10.33

crore LPG connections, making it one of the largest clean-energy initiatives aimed at improving the lives of rural and low-income households. Assam has also seen significant progress under the scheme. According to IOCL, the state has received 51.02 lakh LPG connections so far through PMUY. The addition of 2 lakh new connections is expected to expand access even further, especially in remote and underserved areas.

Arunachal landslide study pushes renewed call for mountain-specific building codes

Itanagar, Dec 13: A recent review of landslide risks in Arunachal Pradesh has once again brought attention to the urgent need for building rules designed specifically for mountain regions. Experts say that existing construction standards followed across the country do not fully address the unique geological and environmental challenges faced by hill states like Arunachal Pradesh. The issue came into focus during a technical discussion held this week, where scientists from the Centre for Earth Sciences and Himalayan Studies (CESHS) examined landslide hazards along some of the state’s most vulnerable transport corridors. These routes are critical for daily travel, supply of essential goods, and emergency services, yet they remain highly exposed

to landslides, especially during the monsoon season. The CESHS team, led by its Director Tana Tage, held detailed discussions with Dr Pinom Ering, a geotechnical engineering expert from IIT Bombay and a member of the National Building Code committee. The meeting focused on two major concerns — the limitations of current landslide early-warning systems and the lack of construction guidelines suited for steep, fragile mountain terrain. Experts pointed out that many landslides in Arunachal Pradesh are triggered not only by heavy rainfall and seismic activity, but also by road cutting, slope modification, and construction practices that do not consider local ground conditions.

Media workshop urges child-sensitive reporting practices in Manipur

Imphal, Dec 13: A media workshop on child rights protection in Manipur called upon journalists to avoid sensationalism and adopt child-sensitive practices such as using pseudonyms, blurring visuals, and ensuring stories remain informative yet protective. The Manipur Digital Media Association (MDMA), in collaboration with the Manipur Commission for Protection of Child Rights (MCPCR) and the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), Manipur, jointly organised a one-day workshop titled “Consultation on Ethical Media Practices for Protecting Child Rights and Dignity in Manipur” at the DIPR office



auditorium in Imphal on Saturday. MCPCR Chairperson Keisham Pradipkumar spoke at length on the topic “Responsible Digital Media and Social Platforms”, emphasising the dos and don’ts of reporting that media persons should follow while covering sensitive issues and crimes in-

volving children.

He noted that journalists must not misuse children as objects of sympathy and must safeguard their identity, rights, privacy, and dignity. Editor of The Frontier Manipur, Dhiren Sadokpam, said journalists must always preserve and protect the priva-

cy, dignity, and physical and emotional development of children. He highlighted the need for sensitisation to check and balance the trauma caused by disclosing the identity of juvenile children involved in crises or crimes. He added that reporting should follow accurate verification, ethical guidelines, accountability mechanisms, and the core values of digital media. State Coordinator, MCPCR-UNICEF, Boipuo Koirang, underlined the importance of digital media ethics in the present day, stating that its key components include collecting relevant information, developing frameworks and ensuring linkages in child protection.

2nd Day of Winter Tales lits iconic Wards Lake



Shillong, Dec 13: The second day of Winter Tales 2025 brought the iconic Wards Lake to life with a vibrant celebration of sustainability, storytelling, and intellectual exchange. The festival’s theme, ‘Nurture’, took center stage as local craft, important dialogues, and the prestigious ‘Go Green Awards’ converged to honor the custodians of the environment and culture. The Workshop Stage hosted a series of engaging sessions, including architect Mario Pathaw’s insightful talk on transforming ordinary objects into expressive characters.

The written word took center stage with book launches by MLCU Press, featuring Taptung

Tangthu: Paite Folktales for Children, Rain U Slap, and Picnic and Pine Needles. Acclaimed photojournalist Pablo Bartholomew presented Father & Son, Richard and Pablo Bartholomew - Affinities, showcasing a photographic dialogue spanning decades. The Go Green Awards recognized outstanding contributions to sustainability, with Ebor Tariang, P. Cooper Kharluki, and Cleric Jayden Wanniang receiving awards for photography, art, and film, respectively. The awards were accompanied by a cheque of Rs 10,000 each, and notably, the plaques were crafted from recycled waste materials.

Meghalaya government moves to end decades-old land disputes in Tura

Shillong, Dec 13: The Meghalaya government has begun handing over land pattas under long-term lease arrangements to eight localities in Tura Town, marking a major step towards resolving long-standing disputes over encroached government land.

Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma said the move addresses issues that have persisted for decades between residents and the General Administration Department (GAD). Several government properties and office spaces in Tura had been encroached upon over the years, leading to prolonged court cases, eviction notices and repeated law-and-order challenges.

“Pleased to hand over land pattas through long-term leases to 8 localities,” Sangma said, describing the decision as a practical solution to a complex problem.

The initiative follows a model implemented in Williamnagar two to three years ago, which the government considers successful. Under the new arrangement, the land will continue to remain government revenue land, but households currently residing on it will receive leases based on “specific, transparent criteria”.

According to the chief minister, the policy is aimed at preventing future disputes while providing clarity and security to both the government and residents. “This approach is designed to prevent future disputes and bring clarity and security to both the government and the public,” he said.

The first phase covers localities that have already agreed to the process. These areas have undergone surveys, drone and digital mapping, as well as public hearings over the past two years. Localities that have not yet consented will be taken up in a second phase, with the government emphasising that participation will remain voluntary and that “no area will be compelled to participate”.

NATIONAL

Will not give up on calling for North Karnataka state: MLA

Bengaluru, Dec 13: Congress MLA Raju Kage has reignited the demand for statehood for North Karnataka during an Assembly debate on regional development, driven by frustration over chronic underdevelopment in his constituency. He highlighted the extreme poverty faced by many residents, with some unable to afford the trip to Bengaluru and expressed concern that voicing these struggles leads to accusations of disloyalty to the government. Kage criticized the administrative neglect of his area, pointing to disparities in funding for development projects, such as the significantly lower allocation for his constituency, Kagwad, compared to Kaduru in Chikkamagaluru. Despite receiving applause from opposition BJP legislators, Kage cautioned them against misinterpretation of his remarks as an attack on the government, emphasizing his focus on regional issues rather than political affiliation. He insisted on equitable funding for North Karnataka, conveying a sense of persistent discrimination against the region and reaffirming his commitment to the statehood demand, undeterred by opposition. Kage lamented the ongoing regional disparity and called for structural solutions, echoing past sentiments from various leaders advocating for fairness in development throughout Karnataka.

Six in the 2017 Kerala actress gang rape case received 20 years in prison

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 13: A Kerala court sentenced six individuals to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment for their roles in the 2017 abduction and gang rape of a prominent actress, a case that shocked the Malayalam film industry and led to significant reforms.

The defendants, including ‘Pulsar’ Suni and five others, were found guilty of multiple charges, including gang rape and conspiracy, although actor Dileep was acquitted of conspiracy.

The judge noted that the



convicts would also pay fines and had no prior criminal records, with sentencing considerations reflecting both justice and potential for rehabilitation. The state government

plans to appeal Dileep’s acquittal and the Special Public Prosecutor expressed disappointment over the minimum sentences given, emphasizing robust evidence against the

accused.

The trial history and the impact of the crime on the victim were highlighted by the judge, who stressed the broader societal implications of the verdict. The case stemmed from a violent incident on February 17, 2017, involving the kidnapping and assault of the actress, allegedly orchestrated by Dileep due to personal grievances.

The court’s ruling incorporated the legal maxim “Fiat Justitia Ruat Caelum,” asserting the commitment to justice despite its challenges.

Dinners with party associates rather than political events: DKS

Agency: Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar addressed concerns over his recent social engagements, asserting that his dinners with Congress colleagues were rooted in personal relationships rather than indicative of political strife. In a statement to reporters, he clarified that he often attends gatherings organized by long-time party associates, refuting suggestions that these events were part of a political strategy. He elaborated on a particular invitation from a local acquaintance who offered traditional food, highlighting his commitment to friendships within the party structure. Shivakumar emphasized that these social dinners were informal occasions rather than formal meetings, underscoring his connection to members of the Congress party.

Deputy CM DK Shivakumar denies political tension in Congress, stating recent dinners were personal, not political, despite attendance of many legislators.

Despite his insistence that the events were personal, reports indicated that over 30 key Congress legislators participated in a recent dinner he attended, including various ministers and MLAs. This gathering occurred shortly after Chief Minister Siddaramaiah held a dinner with his close allies, and the timing raised eyebrows among political observers. Additionally, Shivakumar responded to inquiries regarding the government’s decision to allow cricket matches at Bengaluru’s Chinnaswamy Stadium, amidst worries about public safety.

BJP leads 22 wards in Thiruvananthapuram poised to make Kerala imprint

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 13: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is currently leading in 22 wards of the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation, compared to 16 wards for the ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF) and 11 for the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF). With a total of 101 wards, a majority of 51 is required to secure control of the Corporation.

This trend signifies a significant push for the BJP, which has sought power in the urban body for the past decade. Issues were reported at some counting centers regarding access for booth agents and candidates. Voting for Kerala’s 1,199 local bodies occurred in two phases, with counting starting at 8 am on Sat-



urday, prioritizing postal ballots followed by EVM votes; results are expected by day’s end. Counting is taking place across 244 centers and 14 district collectorates, with close monitoring as these results may influence the 2026 state assembly elections.

Elected panchayat members and municipal councillors will take their oaths on December 21, with the corporations’ councillors following suit. The LDF

leads in more gram and block panchayats, while the UDF is ahead in municipalities and corporations, leading in 48 of the 86 municipalities, with LDF securing 30, and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) claiming just one; there are ties in five municipalities.

In terms of corporations, the UDF is ahead in four key cities, with one corporation each for the LDF and NDA.

Kavitha claims ex-BRS legislators grafted

Hyderabad, Dec 13: Kalvakuntla Kavitha, president of Telangana Jagruthi, accused Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) leaders of extensive corruption and land grabbing during the previous government led by her father, K Chandrasekhar Rao.

she asserted that illegal activities particularly flourished throughout the BRS government’s tenure. Kavitha expressed her determination to investigate these alleged wrongs if she ever becomes chief minister. She claimed to have only revealed a small fraction of the scandals and has been receiving regular complaints about the misconduct of BRS officials.

Kavitha denied personal financial gains during her

father’s administration and defended her integrity, stating that she had not profited illegally. Following her suspension from the BRS, she announced legal action against specific individuals and a media outlet for making defamatory statements about her and her husband. Kavitha questioned the BJP’s defense of BRS leaders despite her criticism being aimed at BRS and Congress and hinted at a “mastermind” behind the allegations against her. She also criticized her brother, K T Rama Rao, for his hypocrisy regarding land-use policies, accusing BRS leaders of enabling property misappropriation while alleging large-scale irregularities in real estate dealings under their watch.

Prosecution miserably failed to show conspiracy against Dileep

Kochi, Dec 13: The Emakulam District and Principal Sessions Court, presided over by Judge Honey M Varghese, has ruled that the prosecution failed to establish the conspiracy charge against the actor Dileep in the 2017 actress sexual assault case. The judge cited inconsistencies and insufficient evidence, pointing out that the allegation that Dileep conspired to record the victim’s identity via close-up footage of a gold ring was not present in the initial charge sheet and was only later introduced. The court noted that the victim had initially raised allegations against Dileep months after the incident and had not mentioned the ring recording during her earlier statements. Despite viewing the assault visuals twice, she did not mention any specific recording of the ring, which the court found unexplainable. The testimony from approvers was scrutinized, revealing inconsistencies, particularly regarding claims that Dileep had instructed a co-accused to record the victim’s wedding ring, which was unavailable at the time of the incident. The court determined that the visuals were sufficient to reveal the victim’s identity without the need for ring footage. Additionally, the court rejected claims about Dileep’s alleged planning of the assault since 2013, as they lacked credible support. Ultimately, the court acquitted Dileep and three others while sentencing six other accused, including Suni, to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment for their roles in the attack on the actress, which had sparked outrage throughout Kerala.

UP cough syrup issue centers on Lucknow ex-constable’s residence

Lucknow, Dec 13: The cough-syrup smuggling scam in Uttar Pradesh has unfolded dramatically, revealing a complex crime worth approximately ₹1,000 crore, marked by police raids and international links, centering around the lavish mansion of dismissed police constable Alok Pratap Singh in Lucknow. Recently arrested and currently imprisoned, Singh’s residence is a 7,000 square foot, two-story home noted for its opulent architecture, including tall pillars and ornate railings, with an estimated construction cost of ₹5 crore. It remains unclear how Singh, originally from Chandauli, could afford such a property following a history of misconduct leading to his dismissal from the police force in 2019. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) is investigating the financial aspects of the racket, which involves illegal distribution of cough syrup and similar substances, typically prescribed by doctors, being trafficked across India and into neighboring countries like Bangladesh and Nepal. A joint investigation team was established in February 2024, leading to over 120 FIRs and 32 arrests, with Shubham Jaiswal identified as the primary suspect, reportedly having fled to Dubai. Singh’s previous career in law enforcement included serious allegations that preceded his fall from grace into illegal drug operations, indicating a deeper web of criminal activity linked to influential networks.

Allahabad HC overturns maintenance order for earning wife, claims she lied

Prayagraj, Dec 13: The Allahabad High Court overturned a lower court ruling requiring Ankit Saha to provide maintenance to his estranged wife, who was found to be financially self-sufficient. Justice Madan Pal Singh noted that the woman, a post-graduate web designer and currently employed as a senior sales coordinator earning ₹34,000, had previously misrepresented her earnings in an affidavit, claiming she was unemployed. During cross-examination, she admitted to earning ₹36,000 per month. The court deemed this income sufficient for her needs, considering the man’s responsibilities towards his elderly parents. The judges criticized the wife’s lack of transparency and stated that litigants who suppress material facts should not have their cases heard. Thus, the high court annulled the earlier judgment made by the family court in Gautam Buddh Nagar.



The Madras High Court judge has till December 20 to take over the Kerala High Court position

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 13: The Union government mandated Justice J Nisha Banu of the Madras High Court to assume her position at the Kerala High Court by December 20, 2025, following a two-month standoff resulting from her refusal to take up the transfer.

This ultimatum was influenced by communication from Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant, who urged the government to establish a clear deadline for her relocation. CJI Surya Kant’s letter, sent to the Union law minister, sought the President’s intervention,

indicating concerns regarding the implications of a judge’s refusal to comply with a lawful transfer under Article 222 of the Constitution.

The government’s directive emphasized that the transfer was previously notified on October 14 and reiterated the expectation for Justice Banu to vacate her current post. In discussions at the Lok Sabha, Congress MP K M Sudha inquired about Justice Banu’s participation in the Madras High Court collegium, her actions regarding her transfer, and her engagement in recommending new judges.

Although the government did not directly address these inquiries, Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal reiterated the constitutional provisions surrounding judicial appointments and transfers, confirming that a judge must relinquish their role upon transfer, as outlined in Article 217(1)(c).

The Minister noted that transfers are executed at the behest of the CJI, in consultation with senior Supreme Court judges, while considering personal circumstances and public interest. Justice Banu’s ongoing tenure at the Madras High Court has led to a constitutional

dilemma, notably impacting the recent decisions of the collegium. On November 9, the Madras High Court collegium recommended six district judges for elevation, though the Tamil Nadu government contested the collegium’s composition rather than the merit of the recommendations. Following her recommended transfer, Justice Banu was substituted in collegium decisions by Justice M S Ramesh, raising questions from the state government about the legitimacy of this action regarding constitutional principles and directives from the Supreme Court.

PM Modi calls on Telangana BJP MPs to “shape up” in response to the party’s subpar performance

New Delhi, Dec 13: Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed dissatisfaction with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MPs from Telangana during a meeting involving lawmakers from southern states, urging them to improve the party’s performance. Modi highlighted the BJP’s growth since 1984, emphasizing concerns that the Telangana leadership has allowed the party to lose momentum after a disappointing showing in the 2023 state assembly elections, where the BJP secured only 14% of the vote share and lost a recent bypoll in Jubilee Hills, leading to further decline to 8%. He criticized the inability to establish the BJP



as the primary opposition against the rul-

ing Congress party, using the success of

the Congress in Odisha as a cautionary example.

Modi indicated that Telangana’s BJP leaders, including the newly appointed state president N Ramchander Rao and Union ministers Bandi Sanjay Kumar and G Kishen Reddy, must intensify their efforts to combat the ruling party, especially since the Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) is currently facing internal conflicts. He noted that this provided an opportunity for the BJP to shape the narrative in the state, while also referencing the effectiveness of AIMIM’s social media outreach.

The meeting also addressed concerns

regarding an “old versus outsiders” sentiment within the party. BJP’s organizational general secretary BL Santhosh remarked that many local leaders were not “organic” members of the party and should not expect constant guidance, a statement that was later clarified by state president N Ramchander Rao who emphasized the need for unity among party members irrespective of their backgrounds. Additionally, PM Modi directed lawmakers from Andhra Pradesh to collaborate with the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) to foster growth and development, acknowledging the TDP’s positive impact on investment in the region.

In the case of phone tapping, the former SIB chief surrenders



Hyderabad, Dec 13: Retired IPS officer T Prabhakar Rao surrendered to the Hyderabad police following a Supreme Court order related to unauthorized phone tapping during the previous Telangana government. Rao, the main accused, was taken into custody for seven days by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) led by ACPP Venkatagiri. The Supreme Court mandated his surrender while allowing custodial interrogation, ensuring his safety, as concerns arose about his cooperation with investigators. A prior court directive to reset iCloud passwords and provide data access was partially followed, raising suspicions of digital evidence destruction. The phone tapping case, initiated in March 2024, involves multiple accusations against Rao and others under various IPC sections and IT Act provisions. Following protective measures from the Supreme Court, joining others previously arrested who are now out on bail.

Cong leader to go to a Hyderabad football game

Hyderabad, Dec 13: Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, will attend a friendly football match in Hyderabad featuring football icon Lionel Messi and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy as part of the GOAT India Tour. The match, featuring teams Singareni RR9 and Apama-Messi All Stars, will take place at the RGI Cricket Stadium and last approximately 15-20 minutes. CM Reddy, a football enthusiast, will join Messi on the pitch. Gandhi is expected to arrive in Hyderabad at 4:30 pm and will stay at the Taj Falaknuma Palace where Messi will be lodging, sparking speculation about a potential meeting between the two. After the match, Gandhi will depart for Delhi by 10:30 pm. Security measures are in place ahead of the event, which has generated excitement in the city. CM Reddy alongside Messi displayed throughout Hyderabad. Messi’s evening will conclude with a grand musical celebration commemorating his football achievements. Meanwhile, in Kolkata, but an event at the Salt Lake Stadium turned chaotic as fans grew frustrated over visibility issues despite paying for expensive tickets, leading to bottles and chairs being thrown. West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee has expressed her apologies for the incident, labeling it as deeply disturbing, and has announced the formation of a committee to investigate the situation further.

Nitish gives ministers responsibility for new departments while keeping Civil Aviation to himself

Patna, Dec 13: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has formally allocated portfolios for three newly established departments following the Bihar cabinet’s approval on December 9. These departments include the Youth, Employment and Skill Development Department, the Higher Education Department, and the Civil Aviation Department. Additionally, the cabinet has renamed three existing departments for clarity in function and focus.

Specifically, the Animal and Fisheries Resource Department is now called the Dairy, Fisheries and Animal Resources Department; the La-



bour Resources Department has been retitled the Labour Resources and Migrant Workers Welfare Department; and the Art, Culture and Youth Department has been simplified to the Art and Culture Department. The official notification of these changes was released on December 12. Key

appointments include Sanjay Singh ‘Tiger’ as the head of the Youth, Employment and Skill Development Department while also overseeing Labour Resources and Migrant Workers Welfare. The new Higher Education Department has been assigned to State Education Minister

Sunil Kumar. Chief Minister Kumar retains the Civil Aviation Department under his direct control.

In his recent announcements, the CM emphasized the state’s ambitious goal of providing employment to one crore youth within the next five years, underscoring the necessity for enhanced training in skill development. He articulated that the Higher Education Department will focus on improving educational quality, fostering research and innovation, and ensuring a broad spectrum of youth have access to vocationally oriented education. On the establishment of the Civil Aviation

■ The Civil Aviation Department’s creation aims to support airport construction under the UDAN scheme and stimulate job creation and product exports in Bihar.

Department, Kumar noted the ongoing construction of new airports within Bihar and the additional proposals under the UDAN scheme aimed at expanding this infrastructure. The creation of this department is expected to boost the state’s industrial environment, generate employment opportunities, and facilitate the export of locally manufactured products.

Media workshop urges child-sensitive reporting practices in Manipur

Guwahati, Dec 13: As-sam Police in Sonitpur district have arrested a retired Indian Air Force officer on charges of leaking sensitive information to operatives allegedly linked to Pakistan. The arrest, confirmed on December 13, has triggered fresh concerns over national security and the misuse of digital platforms by former defence personnel. According to investigators, the suspect allegedly shared confidential documents and strategic details through social media channels. Law enforcement officials



believe the information reached handlers connected to Pakistani intelligence networks, prompting swift action by the police. Additional Superintendent of Police Haricharan Bhumij said initial findings revealed sustained electronic communication between the accused and foreign-linked operatives. During the arrest,

police confiscated a laptop and a mobile phone suspected to have being used in the exchanges. Authorities have sent the seized devices for forensic examination. However, investigators noted that portions of the digital data appear to have been erased, a development that may pose challenges during analysis. Police have registered a case under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and are continuing the probe to assess the scale of the information breach and identify any possible accomplices.

Manipur BJP MLAs rush to Delhi after high command summons

Guwahati, Dec 13: Political activity intensified in Manipur on Saturday as Bharatiya Janata Party legislators departed for New Delhi in large numbers, a day after the party's central leadership summoned them for crucial consultations. The sudden mobilisation has renewed speculation about the possible formation of an elected government in the state,

which remains under President's Rule. From early morning, BJP MLAs began converging on Imphal Airport to board flights to the national capital. By the time this report was filed, at least 22 legislators had already left for Delhi, reflecting the urgency surrounding the meeting. MLAs S. Kebi, L. Shushindro, and Thongam Biswajit were seen rushing

through the airport after arriving late for their scheduled flight. The flurry of movement has raised expectations of a political breakthrough amid the prolonged uncertainty in Manipur. Several BJP legislators openly expressed optimism that the discussions with the central leadership could pave the way for the installation of a new government.

12,000-page chargesheet filed in Zubeen Garg murder case, SIT explains full list of charges

Guwahati, Dec 13: In a major development in the investigation into the death of singer Zubeen Garg, the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Assam CID has submitted a massive 12,000-page chargesheet. This is now believed to be the biggest chargesheet ever filed in a murder case in India. The document was presented before the Kamrup Metropolitan Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court, marking an important step forward in the long and detailed probe. The size of the chargesheet has drawn attention across the country. Earlier, the murder case of journalist Gauri Lankesh had a chargesheet of 9,235 pages, while the Shraddha Walkar murder case had around 6,629 pages. Although some financial fraud cases like the Bhushan Steel case have crossed several tens of thousands of pages, this is the first time a murder investigation in India has reached the 12,000-page mark. The chargesheet covers two linked cases and uses the new Bharatiya

Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, which has replaced many sections of the old IPC. It names several people and explains the exact charges invoked against each of them. Officials say the document lays out the full chain of events leading to Zubeen Garg's death, including evidence collected, witness statements, and the roles assigned to every accused. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the SIT had lived up to its commitment by submitting the chargesheet within the promised timeline. He said, "We intend to provide justice to our beloved artist Zubeen Garg at any cost. The responsibility taken up by the SIT team has proved right as they managed to submit the chargesheet on time before the court. We believe the court will now review it and punish the guilty." The court is expected to begin examining the document in the coming weeks. The case has remained one of the most closely followed investigations in Assam because of Zubeen Garg's popular-

ity and the seriousness of the allegations. With the chargesheet now filed, the legal process will shift to the courtroom, where the evidence will be presented and tested. Charges explained: What each accused faces? Along with the filing, the SIT has also provided a clear breakdown of the charges against the main accused. The charges include murder, conspiracy, criminal breach of trust, destruction of evidence, and financial-crime links. The details are as follows: **SIDDHARTH SHARMA** Siddharth has been charged under Sections 3(6), 3(7), and 3(8) for common intention, shared knowledge, or cooperation in the act. He is also booked for criminal conspiracy (61(2)). The most serious charge is murder (Section 103(1)). He also faces criminal breach of trust (316(5)), which means he allegedly misused the trust or responsibility placed on him. **SHYAMKANU MAHANTA**

CM Himanta Biswa Sarma says SIT has 'clearly tracked motive and conspiracy' in Zubeen Garg murder case

Guwahati, Dec 13: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma today said the state government has completed a long and detailed investigation into the death of singer Zubeen Garg, and the Special Investigation Team (SIT) has now filed the chargesheet before the court. Speaking to reporters after the submission of the 12,000-page document, the Chief Minister said the case has reached a crucial stage and the next steps will now depend on the judiciary. Sarma said the SIT has worked for months to put together the case. "After a prolonged investigation and a lot of hard labour, we have filed a chargesheet in the court. We have full respect for our judiciary. We know about their independence, their impartiality, and the way the judiciary always gives a victim justice and fair play. So now it is over to the court. We are confident the court will give us justice," he said. The Chief Minister also announced two major steps the government plans to take next. First, the state will approach the Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court to set up a fast-track court for the case. Second, the government will appoint a special public prosecutor to handle the trial. He said both steps will begin only after the case is committed to the Sessions Court and the judge takes cognizance of the chargesheet. Sarma said the SIT has clearly established the motive and the criminal conspiracy behind the singer's death.



He said the findings were examined by the Advocate General and the Director of Prosecution, both of whom agreed that the evidence is strong. "Yes, the motive and criminal conspiracy have clearly been tracked. It has been examined by the Advocate General and the Director of Prosecution. Everyone is convinced that this is a case where conviction is possible. In fact, they are sure the prosecution will be able to secure conviction," the Chief Minister said. He also said the state government has a different approach regarding the future course of the investigation. After the preliminary legal processes are completed, the government plans to transfer the case to a central in-

vestigative agency for further probe. "Once this issue is resolved and the case goes to regular trial, by the end of this month or the beginning of next month, we will share some documents with all of you. However, the matter will be sent to a Central Investigation Agency for further investigation because in a case with so much complexity, only a state-level SIT may not be able to unearth everything completely," he said. Sarma added that the evidence already collected is strong enough to draw conclusions against the accused persons. "Whatever we have achieved or unearthed is sufficient to draw a conclusion against the accused," he said, thanking the SIT team for its work.

Meghalaya fans travel miles to catch a glimpse of Messi in Kolkata

Shillong, Dec 13: Football passion from the hills of Meghalaya reached the streets of Kolkata on Friday as devoted fans undertook a long and difficult journey to catch a glimpse of Argentine football legend Lionel Messi during his visit to the city. Their presence underlined once again the deep-rooted love for football in the northeastern state, where the sport is more than just a game. From overnight train rides to crowded bus journeys, supporters from different parts of Meghalaya travelled hundreds of kilometres to be part of the historic moment. Many said this was the closest they could ever come to seeing their football hero in person, something they could never afford to do abroad. Among the crowd was a young woman from Meghalaya who said she had been following Messi's career since her teenage years. Speaking with visible emotion, she said the journey was tiring but worth every hardship. "We are from Meghalaya. We are very excited. We are huge fans of Messi. We are very happy," she said. "We are thankful that Messi came to Kolkata. We cannot afford to go outside India to meet him. We struggled a lot to be here today. I have been a fan since I was 14."



Her words reflected the feelings of many others who had made similar sacrifices. Several fans said they pooled money, skipped work, and travelled overnight just to be present, even if only for a short glimpse of the football icon. Football holds a special place in Meghalaya. In many villages and towns, daily life slows down during important matches. Children grow up playing football on muddy fields, narrow lanes, and open grounds. Local tournaments attract large crowds, and young players often dream of making it big at the national level. For many in the state, football is closely tied to identity, community, and pride.

ABVP to Host 31st State Convention in Dhubri from Dec 24-26

Guwahati, Dec 13: The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) will hold its 31st State Convention in Dhubri later this month, where student issues and organisational review are expected to be the main focus. The three-day meeting will take place from December 24 to 26 at the Dhubri District Library and is likely to bring together more than 400 delegates from different parts of Assam. ABVP Assam State Secretary Herand Mohan said on December 12 that the convention is an important occasion for the organisation to look at how student representation can be strengthened in colleges and universities. He said the discussions will also cover problems faced by students on campuses and how the organisation plans to address them in the coming year. According to him, the meet will play a key role in setting the group's direction and policy for Assam. The venue of the event will be named Padma Shri Pratima Baruah Pandey Khetra, in honour of the well-known Goalparia folk singer. Organisers said the dedication to the cultural icon is meant to underline the convention's connection to local heritage and the community of Dhubri. Assam's Panchayati Raj and Rural Development Minister Ranjit Kumar Dass will inaugurate the convention. Alongside the meetings and policy discussions, the organisers have planned cultural programmes and exhibitions highlighting student activities from different parts of the state. A major procession is scheduled for the afternoon of December 25. Organisers expect around 1,000 people, including activists, ABVP members, and visiting delegates, to join the march through central Dhubri. They said the procession will reflect the unity of students from various districts and their shared concerns. Mohan addressed the media along with Shivam Brahma, the ABVP Dhubri unit coordinator; Bibek Prasad, the head of the organising committee; and Parineeta Roy, the unit secretary of Bholanath College. The team requested residents of Dhubri to cooperate with the arrangements and said the annual convention has become one of Assam's major platforms for discussions on student-related issues.

Assam University to Host Sonbeel Utsav 2.0 on February 7, 2026

Silchar, Dec 13: Assam University, Silchar, is set to host Sonbeel Utsav 2.0 on February 7, 2026, with an expanded vision to highlight the ecological, cultural, scientific and socio-economic significance of Sonbeel, Asia's largest freshwater wetland. The university aims to make the second edition of the festival more focused, community-oriented and impactful, strengthening ongoing efforts toward conservation and sustainable development of the Sonbeel ecosystem. A key feature of this year's Utsav will be Assam University's collaboration with Rabindranath Tagore University (RTU), Hojai, marking a significant step towards broader academic cooperation and regional outreach. The two institutions plan to jointly promote research, documentation, awareness initiatives and community engagement related to Sonbeel. The collaboration is expected to expand participation from multiple districts and deepen academic cooperation across Assam. Preparations for the event began with a detailed meeting held at the Hemanga Biswas Sabhakakshya in the Vice-Chancellor's Secretariat. The meeting was chaired by Assam University Vice-Chancellor Prof Rajive Mohan Pant, who outlined the broader vision of Bemisaal Barak, an initiative focused on holistic development and cultural enrichment across the Barak Valley. Prof Pant expressed confidence that residents across the valley would actively support Sonbeel Utsav 2.0 and stressed the importance of community participation in environmental conservation. He de-



scribed the festival as a platform that brings together academic institutions, local communities and policymakers. The meeting was attended by senior university officials, including Dr Pradosh Kiran Nath, Registrar and Convener of Sonbeel Utsav 2.0; Dr Subhdeep Dhar, Finance Officer; Prof Piyush Pandey, Director, IQAC; and Dr Angshuman Sen, Director of the Computer Centre, along with faculty members and officials. Joining the meeting virtually, RTU Vice-Chancellor Prof Manabendra Dutta Choudhury said Sonbeel Utsav 2.0 would play a vital role in the development of the Sonbeel region. He described the wetland as an ecological treasure and a critical resource for local livelihoods, agriculture and fisheries. He emphasised the need for research-driven initiatives to inform policy decisions and improve socio-economic conditions in surrounding communities, and reaffirmed RTU's commitment to contributing academically and administratively to the event. During the discussions, Prof Arun Jyoti Nath, Coordinator of Sonbeel Utsav 2.0, highlighted Assam University's sustained outreach activities in the region. He noted the university's role in promoting homestay

development around Sonbeel, which has generated new livelihood opportunities while encouraging sustainable tourism. He said the Utsav serves not only as a cultural celebration but also as a platform to raise awareness about ecological challenges facing wetlands across the State. Designed as a one-day programme, Sonbeel Utsav 2.0 aims to deliver deeper impact through curated sessions. The event will feature cultural performances, awareness activities, interactive exhibitions and expert-led discussions on scientific and environmental aspects of wetland management. Special sessions will focus on climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, community-led protection initiatives and sustainable development models. University officials emphasised that Sonbeel Utsav 2.0 is not merely an academic event but a collective regional initiative to protect and celebrate one of the Barak Valley's most valuable ecosystems. They stressed that preserving Sonbeel's biodiversity, cultural heritage and economic significance requires coordinated efforts involving universities, government agencies, environmental groups and local communities.

Assam govt to fast-track Zubeen's death case in High Court

Guwahati, Dec 13: The Assam government will approach the Gauhati High Court to establish a fast-track court for the Zubeen Garg death case, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced on December 12, following the filing of a comprehensive chargesheet against multiple accused. Speaking to reporters, Sarma confirmed the state would petition the chief justice of Gauhati High Court for a fast-track court and recruit a special public prosecutor once the case reaches the sessions court. "These are the steps which we have to now meticulously follow," he stated. The chargesheet, filed in the Court of Chief Judicial Magistrate, spans approximately 12,000 pages of documentation. Several individuals face murder charges under Section 103 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, whilst one person has been charged with culpable homicide. Two personal security officers also face separate charges. Sarma emphasised the investigation's thoroughness, noting that whilst documents were obtained from Singapore, the prosecution has built its case primarily on evidence gathered within Assam. "Even if the court says that Singapore documents are not admissible, we have filed a chargesheet in a way that the documents collected in Assam itself is sufficient to prove the charges," he explained. The chief minister expressed confidence in the judicial process. "We have all respect for our judiciary. We know about their independence. We know about their impartiality and we know the way the judiciary always gives a victim justice and fair play," Sarma said, adding that the government now awaits the court's proceedings.



Transformers and Rectifiers share rebound 21% from record lows

New Delhi: Shares of Tran sformers and Rectifiers (India) Ltd (TARIL) surged 16.04 per cent on Friday to close at Rs 277.50, recovering 20.65 per cent from an intraday all-time low of Rs 230 hit yesterday. Despite the rebound, the stock remains down 44.94 per cent over the past six months.Earlier this month, TARIL secured a Rs 53.33 crore order for an HVDC converter transformer and related works. Prior to that, it won a Rs 389.97 crore contract to manufacture transformers.The stock had fallen sharply following weak quarterly results and a World Bank debarment. For Q2 FY26, TARIL reported revenue of Rs 460 crore, flat year-on-year (YoY). EBITDA declined 26 per cent to Rs 52 crore, and profit after tax fell 19 per cent to Rs 37 crore. EBITDA and PAT margins dropped 380 basis points (bps) and 180 bps YoY to 11 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively, largely due to higher employee costs.Last month, the World Bank debarred TARIL from participating in its projects over alleged corruption and fraud linked to a \$486 million project in Nigeria. The company later announced that the World Bank had removed its name from the list of debarred firms and granted an extension until January 12, 2026, to submit an explanation in the case.Technically, analysts say TARIL's stock is showing signs of a rebound after a correction. Support is around Rs 230-241 and it could rise to Rs 295-333 in the near term.Osho Krishan, Senior



Analyst – Technical & Derivative Research at Angel One, noted, “TARIL has seen a rise in both price and trading volume after an extended correction, suggesting a possible pause in the ongoing bearish trend. Support lies in the Rs 230-240 range, while resistance levels are seen between Rs 300-340 and extending to Rs 385, relevant for both short- and medium-term perspectives.”Sebi-registered independent analyst AR Ramachandran said, “TARIL appears bullish on daily charts, with strong support at Rs 241. A daily close above Rs 283 could push the stock towards a near-term target of Rs 333.

IT stock remains volatile as board approves proposal

New Delhi: Shares of IT services and business solutions provider Bartronics remained volatile on Friday's trade, even as stock markets rallied in early trade. Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty extended their previous session's rally, in tandem with a positive global trend amid a rate cut by the US Federal Reserve. The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 402.99 points to 85,221.12 during early trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty jumped 115.3 points to 26,013.85. The stock opened in green at 13.60 against the previous close of Rs 13.21 on the BSE. The stock opened with a gain of 2.95 per cent, and it jumped to hit a high of Rs 13.61 but later dipped to touch an intraday low of Rs 12.06, a dip of 8.71 per cent. Last seen, the counter was trading at Rs 12.35 with a dip of 6.51 per cent. The market cap of the company stood at Rs 376.15 crore.The stock has fallen after four days of consecutive gains and tech-



nically, the counter trades higher than the 5-day and 20-day moving averages but lower than the 50-day, 100-day and 200-day moving averages. The stock's 14-day relative strength index (RSI) is 62.13. For the uninitiated, a level above 70 is considered overbought or overvalued, and below 30 is defined as oversold or undervalued. In its latest exchange filing, the company stated that its board of directors has approved several decisions, including the proposal to change its name to 'Avio

Smart Market Stack Limited,' which will be effective after the ministry's approval.Additionally, the company plans to rename its wholly-owned subsidiary, BIL Healthtech Private Limited, in line with the new brand identity. The meeting also decided that the company will be able to borrow up to Rs 250 crore, subject to shareholder approval. The board has also approved the proposal of the company to borrow Rs 100 crore from Kinex India Private Limited under a relating-party transaction.

A bill to increase FDI in the insurance industry to 100% has been approved by the cabinet

New Delhi: The Bill may be introduced in the ongoing Winter session of Parliament, which is slated to conclude on December 19. According to a Lok Sabha bulletin, the Insurance Laws (Amendment) Bill 2025, which seeks to deepen penetration, accelerate growth and development of the insurance sector and enhance ease of doing business, is part of the 13 legislations listed for the ongoing session of Parliament. The Insurance Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2025, may be introduced in Parliament on Monday, sources said.Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in this year's Budget speech, proposed to raise the foreign investment limit to 100 per cent from the existing 74 per cent in the insurance sector as part of new-generation financial sector reforms. Ac-

cording to sources, the proposed Bill also provides a provision for at least one among the top management, like the Chairman, Managing Director, or CEO, to be an Indian citizen as part of the guardrails.The Cabinet has retained the net worth requirements for insurance companies, sources added.As part of a comprehensive legislative exercise, the Life Insurance Corporation Act 1956 and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act 1999 will be amended, alongside the Insurance Act 1938.facilitating the entry of additional players into the insurance market, thereby driving economic growth and employment generation.Such changes will help enhance the efficiency of the insurance industry, enable ease of doing business, and enhance insurance penetration to achieve the goal

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in this year's Budget speech, proposed to raise the foreign investment limit to 100 per cent from the existing 74 per cent in the insurance sector as part of new-generation financial sector reforms.

of 'Insurance for All by 2047'.The Insurance Act of 1938 serves as the principal Act to provide the legislative framework for insurance in India. It provides the framework for the functioning of insurance businesses and regulates the relationships among insurers, their policyholders.

Equity mutual fund inflows rise in November as AUM grows on strong market sentiment

Mumbai: Equity mutual funds staged a strong comeback in November after three months of easing contributions, with net inflows rising 21 per cent to ₹29,911 crore, supported by stable macroeconomy and steady corporate earnings.This improvement in inflows also lifted the broader industry's asset base, with total assets under management rising to ₹80.80 lakh crore in November from ₹79.87 lakh crore in October, according to data released by industry body Amfi on Thursday.“Equity-oriented schemes continued to drive growth, supported by sustained inflows. Hybrid and passive funds also saw healthy traction, with multi-asset and arbitrage funds together accounting for over 70 per cent of hybrid category flows,”

Venkat N Chalasani, CEO of Amfi, said.However, retail participation via systematic investment plans (SIPs) showed marginal softness, with SIP inflows easing to ₹29,445 crore from ₹29,631 crore in October.Despite this dip, overall equity inflows strengthened, rising to ₹29,911 crore in November from ₹24,690 crore in the previous month, the data showed. Flows, ₹30,421 crore registered in September, ₹33,430 crore in August and ₹42,702 crore in July.Market experts caution that while the month-on-month improvement signals firmer investor sentiment, sustaining the momentum will be important.The growth reflected sustained “investor confidence amid a supportive macro environment, resilient corporate earn-



ings and improving clarity around the global interest-rate trajectory”, Himanshu Srivastava, principal research at Morningstar Investment Research India, said.“The overall trend for November reflects a stabilising risk appetite and stronger, broad-based

net inflows across core equity categories,” said Akhil Chaturvedi, ED and CBO, Motilal Oswal Asset Management Company.Flexi-cap funds continued to dominate with ₹8,135 crore in inflows, though slightly lower than October's ₹8,929 crore.

Wealth creators of 2025 10 multi bagger stocks skyrocketed

Mumbai: While the major indices have delivered steady returns in 2025, with the Nifty 50 gaining 10% and the Sensex rising nearly 9% year-to-date, the broader market has told a different story. While the BSE Midcap index has remained largely muted this year, yet beneath the surface of these benchmark movements, a select group of stocks has defied gravity. Investors with an appetite for risk who spotted these outliers early have seen wealth creation of extraordinary magnitude. Here are 10 multibagger stocks that have skyrocketed over 1,000% on the BSE in 2025 so far, driven by strategic acquisitions, massive order book wins, and sector-specific turnarounds. RRP Semiconductor Ltd a staggering rally this year, jumping from Rs 181.9 to Rs 11,207. Incorporated in 1980, the company has evolved from a trading and investment outfit into an electronics and semiconductor-focused player. Addressing a BSE query on November 7, 2025, the company clarified that all material information is disclosed on a real-time basis and that there was no unpublished price-sensitive information behind the sharp price movement.The stock has soared from Rs 2.92 to Rs 146.40, ending Friday's session 1.99% higher. The rally follows the company's push to expand overseas. In a November 12, 2025, exchange filing, Swadeshi Industries announced a strategic partnership with Philippines-based Peralas Weil Flores International Trading



Corporation. The MoU, signed on November 6, focuses on developing MSME industrial parks across the Philippines and other Asian markets, along with collaboration in agriculture, renewable energy and EV mobility.Formerly known as Euro Asia Exports Limited, RRP Defense has climbed from Rs 20.31 to Rs 936.30 as it pivots toward deep-tech defence manufacturing. In a filing to the exchanges on December 11, 2025, the company unveiled a strategic collaboration with Israel's Meprolight to manufacture advanced electro-optics and weapon sights in India. The partnership includes technology transfer for assembly and testing at RRP's Mahape facility, aligning with the government's Atmanirbhar Bharat push.Midwest Gold has rallied from Rs 111.57 to Rs 4,048.85, closing 3.65% higher on Friday. On Novem-

ber 27, 2025, Midwest Gold informed exchanges about the incorporation of a step-down wholly-owned subsidiary, Good Energy (Pvt) Ltd, in Sri Lanka. The new entity will focus on renewable energy, clean power solutions and battery energy storage systems. Shares of Swan Defence (earlier Reliance Naval and Engineering) have surged from Rs 37.78 to Rs 1,259.70, supported by a series of strategic developments. On October 28, 2025, the company signed an exclusive teaming agreement with Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd to jointly design and construct Landing Platform Docks for the Indian Navy. This was followed by a Letter of Intent on November 10, 2025, from Norway-based Rederiet Stenersen AS for building six chemical tankers, valued at around \$220 million.

SBI lowers lending rates following RBI policy rate cut, home and personal loans become cheaper

New Delhi: Following the Reserve Bank of India's policy rate drop, State Bank of India, the nation's largest lender, lowered its lending rate by 25 basis points, making loans more affordable for both new and existing customers. Another state-owned lender, Indian Overseas Bank, also announced a reduction in its lending rates, effective 25 December, 2025.The bank has reduced its External Benchmark Lending Rate, specifically the Repo Linked Lending Rate, by 25 basis points from 8.35 per cent to 8.10 per cent, fully passing the policy rate cut to its customers.Additionally, IOB's Asset Liability Management Committee has approved a 5-basis-point reduction in the Marginal Cost of Funds-Based Lending Rate across tenors from three months to three years. These revisions will lower Equated Monthly Instalments for both existing and new borrowers whose loans



are linked to these benchmarks. Retail customers seeking home, vehicle, and personal loans will benefit from enhanced affordability. SBI's External Benchmark Linked Rate (EBLR) would drop by 25 ba-

sis points to 7.90 percent as a result of the most recent modification. The reduction comes in response to last week's RBI decision to slash the key interest rate by 25 basis points for the fourth time this year to sup-

port growth. SBI has also lowered the Marginal Cost of Funds-Based Lending Rate (MCLR) across all tenures by 5 basis points.The one-year maturity MCLR will fall to 8.70 per cent from the existing 8.75 per cent. Similarly, one-year maturity rates will be reduced to 8.75 per cent and 8.80 per cent, respectively. The bank has revised its Base Rate/ BPLR to 9.90 per cent from the existing 10 per cent, effective 15 December.

Fixed deposit rates for maturities from two years to less than three years have been cut by 5 basis points to 6.40 per cent, also effective 15 December.However, SBI has retained interest rates on other maturity buckets, indicating pressure on deposit mobilisation.The interest rate of the specific tenor scheme '444 days' under Amrit Vrishti has been revised from 6.60 per cent to 6.45 per cent.

Swiggy Dineout and The Diners Club by HDFC Bank India's Premium Dining Festival

Mumbai: Get ready for a celebration that promises flair, flavor, and a lot of fizz! Swiggy Limited (NSE: SWIGGY) (BSE: 544285), India's leading on-demand convenience platform, has announced a unique collaboration between Swiggy Dineout, its dining out business and The Diners Club by HDFC Bank. The duo have joined hands to launch The Diners Club: Gourmet Edit, India's most exclusive and premium dining festival that will be offering a never-before elite experience to all the Diners Club by HDFC Bank cardholders. The festival has been launched to celebrate the 75th anniversary of The Diners Club by HDFC Bank and will be live till December 21, 2025 across 10 cities in the country, namely Bangalore, Mumbai, Delhi NCR, Hyderabad, Chennai, Pune, Kolkata, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, Chandigarh.

The Diners Club: Gourmet Edit will offer a luxury dining experience to the users of Swiggy Dineout. Food lovers can enjoy special discounts of up to 50% off on bookings done via



Swiggy Dineout. The offers are available at some of the most luxurious & premium restaurants across Luxury Hotels like Novotel, The Leela, ITC hotels, Hyatt, Ritz Carlton et al in 10 cities. Sharing his thoughts on this unique partnership, Swapnil Bajpai, Senior Vice President and Business Head, Swiggy Dineout said, “Dining out in India has evolved from a simple meal to an immersive lifestyle experience. With the Diners Club Gourmet Edit, we are thrilled to elevate this experience for

the country's most discerning diners. By combining Swiggy Dineout's premium network of 700+ luxury restaurants with the legacy of The Diners Club by HDFC Bank, we aren't just offering deep value; we are curating moments. The addition of 'Swiggy Scenes' to reward top spenders with exclusive access to luxe events adds a layer of experiential magic that goes beyond the dining table. This collaboration is our way of celebrating the art of good food and the joy of coming together.”

IndiGo faces Rs 59 crore GST, asserts strong case appeal

New Delhi: IndiGo said on Friday that it has been hit with a penalty of nearly Rs 59 crore in relation to GST for the financial year 2020-21, and the airline plans to challenge the order issued by the Additional Commissioner of CGST, Delhi South Commissionerate.In a filing to the BSE, the airline disclosed that the penalty amounts to Rs 58,74,99,439 and that the department has raised a GST demand along with the penalty.

The company stated that it considers the order incorrect, noting that “the company believes that the order passed by the authorities is erroneous. Further, the company believes that



it has a strong case on merits, backed by advice from external tax advisors.”“Accordingly, the company will contest the same before the appropriate authority,” IndiGo said in the filing. financials, operations or other activities.

SRK and Son AbRam’s Historic Photo-Op with Lionel Messi in Kolkata Goes Viral

Agency: Shah Rukh Khan has arrived in Kolkata to meet football legend Lionel Messi. After heightening the excitement among fans by hinting at a meetup with the Argentine footballer, the superstar was spotted arriving at the city with someone very special. Early on Saturday, Shah Rukh Khan landed in Kolkata, accompanied by his youngest son, AbRam Khan. Shah Rukh’s manager, Pooja Dadlani, was also spotted with them.

Several pictures and videos surfaced online where the Bollywood star was seen making a swift exit from the airport, escorted by his security team. One video also captured a brief glimpse of Shah Rukh holding AbRam’s hand as they made their way out of the airport. Shah Rukh Khan arrived in the City of Joy in style, donning jeans and a dark jacket. On the other hand, AbRam was seen in a relaxed all-black outfit. King Khan’s Kolkata visit came amid the ongoing buzz



of him meeting with Lionel Messi. On Thursday, Shah Rukh took to social media to tease that he would share the stage with Messi on December 13 at the Salt Lake Stadium. “This time round I’m not planning my Knight in Kolkata...” and hoping the day ride is completely ‘messy’. See you guys on the 13th at the Salt Lake Stadium,” the superstar wrote on X previously. As a part of Messi’s GOAT India Tour, the legendary footballer arrived in Kolkata early on Saturday morning with thousands of fans crowding to get a glimpse of him at the Netaji Subhash

Chandra Bose International Airport. Upon disembarking the flight, Messi was seen surrounded by multiple security personnel and airport ground staff members as he made his way to the exit. Lionel Messi is in the country on a three-day tour, which starts with Kolkata on December 13, following which he will travel to Hyderabad the same day. On the second day of his tour, he will arrive in Mumbai and will conclude by visiting Delhi on Monday, December 15. The footballer is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his residence before leaving the country.

Salman Khan Hosts Starry Bigg Boss 19 Success Bash

Mumbai: The success party, which was hosted by Salman Khan at a location in Mumbai on Friday night, marked the success of Bigg Boss 19, which has been considered one of the best editions in the history of Bigg Boss by many of its followers. The event saw the attendance of contestants, celebrities, as well as people close to the reality show.

Being the host of the event, Salman Khan arrived as he always does, with his effortless charm, greeting contestants and taking pictures with photographers. The limelight, though, was on the winner, Gaurav Khanna, who made a confident and cheerful appearance with his wife, Akanksha. Fresh from his win, Khanna seemed to be taking it all in, with his victory on December 7 when he took home



the prized trophy still fresh in his mind, as he appeared quite calm yet classy, taking in all the love he received. Runner-up Farrhana Bhatt too managed to generate interest as she stepped into the party wearing a stunning black outfit that perfectly complemented the party mood. The manner in which she has been carrying herself is a result of the impact she has generated throughout the season. Participants Tanva Mittal and Malti Chahar further increased the glamour element as they stepped on the red carpet with heads turning because of their elegant attire when they are interacting with fellow contestants from the house. The party soon turned into a reunion, with contestants laughing, hugging, and reminiscing about their experiences inside the Bigg Boss house.

Akshay Kumar Praises Akshaye Khanna’s Performance in Dhurandhar



Mumbai: Akshaye Khanna is being widely appreciated for his performance in Aditya Dhar’s Dhurandhar. So much so, that social media has erupted with memes and appreciation posts for the actor. The film, along with Akshaye and Ranveer Singh’s performances is being discussed at length every day. Now, Akshay Kumar has joined the trend with a hilarious Tees Maar Khan throwback.

When a social media user on X posted a viral meme, a snapshot from the movie, Akshay gave a hilarious reply. In the film, Kumar plays a thief who poses as a celebrated filmmaker and goes to extreme lengths to persuade Khanna’s character that he is worthy of an Oscar. This meme has resurfaced on social media as many users are drawing parallels with it after Dhurandhar’s massive success. Sharing the screengrab of the moment from Tees Maar Khan, a fan wrote, “Thank

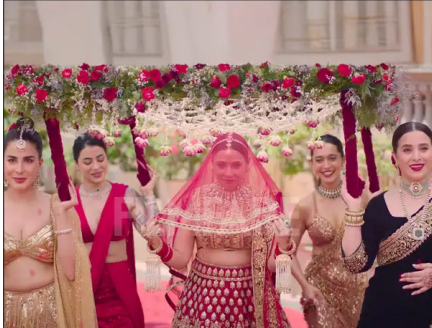
you director saab, for giving the nation such an amazing actor.” Akshay shared the same and wrote, “Kabhi ghamand nahi kiya bhai kabhi ghamand nahi kiya.” Interestingly, Akshay also praised the movie in another post. He wrote, “Watched Dhurandhar and I am blown away. What a gripping tale, and you have simply nailed it, Aditya Dhar. We need our stories to be told in a hard-hitting way, and I am so glad that audiences are giving the film all the love it deserves.” Our reviewer gave the

movie 3.5 stars out of 5. He mentioned, “Dhurandhar remains an arresting film, bold in its scale, muscular in its action, textured in its craft, and powered by performances that elevate even its weaker stretches. It is imperfect, overlong, but never dull. And in Akshaye Khanna, it gives Hindi cinema one of its most memorable antagonists in recent years.” On the professional front, Akshaye Khanna will next be seen in Mahakali. Akshay Kumar, on the other hand, is currently working on Bhooth Bangla and Haiwaan.

Emotional Farewell: Four More Shots Please! Drops Final Season Trailer

Mumbai: The International Emmy-nominated original series Four More Shots Please! is releasing its fourth and final season on December 19, 2025. Produced by Prithish Nandy Communications and created by Rangita Prithish Nandy and Ishita Prithish Nandy, the final season is directed by Arunima Sharma and Neha Parti Matiyani. It stars Sayani Gupta, Kirti Kulhari, Bani J and Maanvi Gargroo in the lead roles.

Signing off the year in style, the final chapter arrives just in time for the holiday season. It shows a heartwarming reunion of the beloved girl gang of Anjana, Siddhi, Damini and Umang. The new season sees the four divas return for one last round, not to start over, but to finish what they started. Alongside the lead cast, the other cast members include Prateik Smita Patil, Lisa Ray, Rajeev Sidhartha, Ankur Rathee and Milind Soman. It sees the quartet back in action with Dino Morea, Anasuya Sengupta and Kunaal Roy Kapur joining the ensemble this season. The trailer gives a glimpse into the end of an era. It is a vibrant and emotional peek into the final chapter of the quartet’s journeys, loaded with the comedy that made millions fall in love with this franchise in the first place. It shows glimpses of fights and long conversations, alongside some unwarranted mistakes. The unshakeable sisterhood between the four leads is also visible in the trailer. As Damini, Umang, Anjana and Siddhi step into new phases of their lives, this season promises bold choices, long-overdue conversations, rekindled sparks, heartbreak, reinvention and the signature chaos that made the show a cultural phenomenon. It’s all here - only bigger, funnier and more spirited than before. “It’s rare for a show to touch lives so deep-



ly, and Four More Shots Please! did that because fans embraced these four women exactly as they were – messy, brave, vulnerable, loud, loving, and real women with agency and distinct voices. Damini has been a fun, liberating character to play for the last 8 years and I have literally grown up with her. As we close this chapter, I feel immense gratitude to the fans that stood by us, season after season with unbound love, affection and loyalty,” shares Sayani Gupta. “Being a part of Four More Shots Please! has been one of the most meaningful experiences of my career. Anjana’s journey – her strength, her flaws, her evolution – resonated with so many women across the world, and that love has carried us through four beautiful seasons. As we wrap this final chapter, my heart is full. This show became bigger than just a story. It became a voice. And that’s only because the fans held us, celebrated us, and kept us going from day one,” expresses Kirti Kulhari. Maanvi Gargroo adds, “Four More Shots Please! didn’t just give me a character. It gave me a tribe. From the very first season, Siddhi found a place in people’s hearts, and that connection is something I continue to cherish deeply.

Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon 2 Secures ₹1.75 Crore at the Box Office on Opening Day

Mumbai: Kapil Sharma’s long-awaited comedy entertainer Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon 2 finally made its theatrical debut on December 12, marking his return to the silver screen with a sequel to his 2015 hit. Riding high on expectations and nostalgia, the film opened to decent numbers at the Indian box office while generating mixed but lively reactions on social media.

According to early trade estimates reported by Sacnilk, Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon 2 managed to earn approximately Rs 1.75 crore (India net) on its opening day. The first-day performance reflects moderate audience interest, driven largely by Kapil Sharma’s fan base and the familiarity of the franchise. On Friday, the film recorded an overall 16.45 per cent Hindi occupancy, with noticeable growth during evening and night shows. During the morning shows, it was 5.91 per cent, afternoon shows were 13.90 per cent, evening shows were 17.21 per cent and night shows were 28.77 per cent.



As of the latest early trends, Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon 2 has earned around Rs 0.03 crore (India net) on its second day. This brings the total collection to approximately Rs 1.78 crore so far. Soon after the early morning shows, viewers took to X (formerly Twitter) to share their first impressions, resulting in a wide range of reactions. Several fans were clearly delighted with the sequel. One enthusiastic viewer declared, “Just watched a blockbuster. What an amazing movie,” while also awarding the film five stars. Another positive reaction came from a first-day, first-show audience member who simply wrote, “Awesome work Bade bhai.” A different user highlighted the perfor-

mance of the late Asrani, pointing out that the film strongly evokes 90s Govinda-style humour, which adds a nostalgic charm for longtime Bollywood comedy lovers. Overall, early reactions on X suggest that Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon 2 has received a divisive response. While a section of the audience is enjoying the slapstick humour, nostalgic references and comic performances, others feel that the storyline lacks depth. Some viewers have criticised the film for repetitive jokes, a predictable narrative and questioned the necessity of a sequel. Directed by Anukalp Goswami and produced by Ratan Jain, Ganesh Jain, and Abbas-Mustan under the banners of Venus Worldwide

Entertainment and Abbas-Mustan Film Production, Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon 2 amplifies the chaos and confusion that defined the first instalment. With the madness taken several notches higher, Kapil Sharma’s character finds himself attending and participating in every kind of wedding imaginable, from Nikkah to Pheras to Christian vows. In the story, Kapil plays a Hindu man who falls in love with a Muslim woman, only to discover at the time of marriage that she is actually Christian. This shocking revelation leads him into three religious marriages and the film revolves around how he navigates the chaos that follows. Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon 2 boasts an ensemble cast featuring Sushant Singh, the late Asrani, Akhilendra Mishra, Vipin Sharma, Jamie Lever, Smita Jaykar, and Supriya Shukla in key roles. The film serves as a sequel to Kapil Sharma’s Bollywood debut, Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon (2015), which was well-received for its situational humour and mass appeal.

Baseer Ali Slams Nehal, Supports Gaurav Khanna

Mumbai: Just like the audience, contestants can’t seem to get over Bigg Boss 19 as well. Ever since the show ended, interview clips, social media antics and explosive statements have continued to dominate the internet. The latest to make headlines is Baseer Ali.

Baseer was recently spotted at the airport in a paparazzi video. When quizzed about the buzz over the winner being “undeserving” and Nehal’s comments about him, his candid reply immediately went viral, leaving fans buzzing. When the paparazzi asked Baseer about his view on Gaurav Khanna winning Bigg Boss 19 and fans claiming that Tanya Mittal, Farrhana Bhatt, or even he should have won the reality show, Baseer replied that while everyone is entitled to their personal opinions, Gaurav is the true winner. He also congratulated Gaurav on his victory. Baseer’s reply made it clear that, while he had his own views, he respected audience’s decision to make Gaurav the winner.

Dacoit Hindi Teaser with Adivi Sesh and Mrunal Thakur Confirmed for December 18

Mumbai: The buzz around Adivi Sesh and Mrunal Thakur’s upcoming romantic action thriller Dacoit is steadily intensifying as the film gears up for its first major promotional reveal. According to a Pinkvilla report, the makers are all set to unveil the Hindi logo and teaser on December 18, 2025, marking the official kickoff of the film’s marketing campaign.

The launch has been planned as a two-city event, underscoring the film’s strong bilingual positioning. While the Hindi teaser will debut in Mumbai, the Telugu version will be launched simultaneously in Hyderabad, allowing the makers to tap into both markets at once. At its core, Dacoit tells the story of a man who is wrongly convicted and imprisoned, only to return after his escape with revenge burning in his heart. His target is the woman who betrayed him — a betrayal that shattered his life and altered his fate forever. However, the narrative refuses to remain straightforward. As he confronts his past, the protagonist finds himself torn between avenging the betrayal and protecting the



very woman who wronged him, along with her husband. What unfolds is a dangerous emotional and criminal entanglement filled with secrets, shifting loyalties, and moral conflict, pulling all characters into a volatile world where every choice carries consequences.

Dacoit is scheduled to hit theatres on March 19, setting the stage for a major box office showdown with big-ticket releases like Toxic and Dhurandhar 2. Despite the competition, the film’s layered premise, intense emotional undercurrent, and action-heavy treatment

have already sparked strong curiosity among audiences. With the teaser launch now locked in, fans are eager to catch their first glimpse of the film’s stylised action sequences and the much-anticipated on-screen chemistry between Adivi Sesh and Mrunal Thakur.

Beyond its lead pair, Dacoit boasts a formidable supporting cast. Prakash Raj brings his trademark gravitas to the film, while Anurag Kashyap, Atul Kulkarni, Sunil, Zayn Marie Khan, and Kamakshi Bhaskarla round out the ensemble, adding depth and unpredictability to the narra-

tive. The simultaneous teaser launches in Mumbai and Hyderabad are expected to offer audiences a compelling first taste of the film’s world — one that blends romance, vengeance, and high-stakes drama. As December 18 approaches, Dacoit is shaping up to be one of the most closely watched releases on the 2026 calendar.

The film marks the directorial debut of Shancil Deo, who is also credited for co-writing the story and screenplay with Adivi Sesh. It is produced by Supriya Yarlagadda under the Annapurna Studios banner.

A Gritty New Role: Sirai Trailer Heralds Vikram Prabhu’s Powerful 25th Film



Chennai: The trailer of Sirai, marking Vikram Prabhu’s twenty-fifth film as a lead actor, was unveiled on Friday and it offers a gripping look at a police escort drama rooted in real events. Directed by debutant Suresh Rajakumari, the film positions itself as a tense character-driven narrative that unfolds almost entirely on the road, powered by moral conflict and escalating danger. Vikram Prabhu plays a member of the Armed Reserve assigned to escort Abdul Rauf, portrayed by Akshay Kumar, a murder accused who must be produced before the Sivagangai court. What begins as a routine transfer soon turns into a test of resolve, conscience, and survival. The trailer es-

tablishes a cold and distant dynamic between the cop and the prisoner, hinting at unspoken judgments and personal biases that accompany the uniform.

As the escort progresses, Sirai shifts gears dramatically. Midway through the journey, Abdul manages to escape with a rifle in hand, triggering chaos within the police force and raising the stakes for everyone involved. The trailer suggests that this is not merely a chase, but a psychological duel between two men bound together by circumstance. Interspersed with the tense present day narrative are flashback sequences that shed light on Abdul’s past. These glimpses focus on a romantic relationship that appears to

have played a key role in the events leading to his arrest. Rather than spelling out answers, the trailer keeps its cards close, hinting that the truth may be far more complicated than the charges suggest. The emphasis on Sirai being inspired by a true incident lends the drama an added layer of weight and realism.

Vikram Prabhu’s performance, as suggested by the trailer, leans into restraint. His character is defined less by loud heroics and more by internal conflict, a man torn between protocol and an emerging sense of moral unease. Akshay Kumar, meanwhile, appears to bring a volatile intensity to Abdul, oscillating between vulnerability and menace. Sirai reunites Vikram Prabhu with Tamizh, who has written the story and co-written the screenplay. Tamizh previously collaborated with the actor on Taanakkaran, a police drama that earned critical attention for its raw portrayal of systemic issues within the force. While Tamizh made his directorial debut with that film, Sirai marks the directorial debut of Suresh Rajakumari, who shares writing duties on the screenplay.

The film is produced by SS Lalit Kumar under the banner of Seven Screen Studios, with LK Vishnu Kumar serving as co producer. Arun K and Manikandan come on board as executive producers, while Arosam is credited as the creative producer. Akshay Kumar, who plays Abdul, is also the son of producer SS Lalit Kumar, adding a personal milestone to the project.

‘A delightful slice of unhurried life’: readers’ favourite European islands

Procida, in the Bay of Naples, is not as famous as nearby Capri and Ischia, but is all the more appealing for it. Not a tourist trap but an island where people actually live, it’s a delightful slice of unhurried Italian life. The island is small enough to be explored on foot or by bicycle, though there is a bus service too. There are many pretty little beaches for swimming, sunbathing and picnicking – our favourite was Il Postino, where scenes from the movie of the same name were filmed. As people still fish for a living, there’s no shortage of wonderfully fresh seafood in the restaurants. A local delicacy is lemon salad, made from the enormous, thick-skinned lemons unique to Procida. Villa Caterina B&B’s orchard of lemon and orange trees provides fresh juice and marmalade for breakfast, and the rooms have wonderful views of the island and the bay, with Vesuvius looming in the distance and Naples only 45 minutes away by ferry.



the perfect summer escape. It’s topped off by a brilliant seafront restaurant, Tångbaren, where you can have a plateful of fresh seafood and a cold glass of wine, and watch the sea bob away. Tranquillity among the dunes, Germany I was 21, living in Germany for a year to improve my language skills, and decided on a whim to visit the tiny East Frisian island of Spiekeroog (yes, it was the fantastic name that first attracted me to the place). I spent a happy couple of nights at the Hotel Inselfriede, a small family-run hotel



Seafood and sunshine in Sweden

When life gets too much, I dream of Styrsö in the Gothenburg archipelago. Big open skies, nature trails and heaps of swimming spots make this car-free island

just a 10-minute walk from where the ferry arrives from the mainland. The island is car-free and a beautifully peaceful place to explore the dunes or simply sit with a coffee and watch the sea.

A Balearic beauty

Sa Dragonera is a tiny but utterly beautiful uninhabited island that lies just south-west of Mallorca in the Balearics. It is brimming with history (there are 18th-century watchtowers built to observe pirate activity). Supposedly named after the lizards that inhabit it, the island is a hugely popular walking and birding spot, and is only accessible by small ferries from the nearby Sant Elm. It is best to go first thing to beat the heat and pedestrian traffic – you won’t regret it when you see the views from the top.

A tiny Greek island with great beaches

Everyone knows that Greece has some of the most beautiful Mediterranean islands. But few foreign tourists have heard of Kythira and that’s just the way the locals like it. For most of the year only about 3,500 people live on the island. In summer, however, thousands of Greeks come for holidays, many back to homes that have been in their family for generations. There are no major tourist resorts – it’s a Greek island rich in history and tradition, with dozens of beautiful beaches.

Explore old world Ireland in Galway Bay

Inisheer (or Inis Oírr), one of the three spectacular Aran Islands in Galway Bay, is my favourite small island by far. The ferry from Rossaveel on the mainland takes just under an hour, but you feel as if you’ve been transported back in time – this is a tiny island of stone walls, fishing boats, old cottages, and more ponies and traps than cars. You can walk or cycle across the island in an afternoon to explore shipwrecks and ancient ruins. At the end of the day, enjoy some traditional music in the charming pub. You can camp almost on the beach for a good price.

Peace (and sheep) in the middle of Helsinki Kuusiluoto is a gem in the heart of Helsinki, only reachable on foot across rickety wooden duckboards that make it feel like you’re walking on water. Setting foot on the island, you’ll meet a welcoming committee of friendly sheep. The only indication you’re in a bustling European capital is the skyscrapers across the water. To get to Kuusiluoto, start from the city’s technology museum (itself well worth visiting, and just a short bus journey from the city centre) and walk a couple of miles along well-marked paths through reed beds. The island has a sauna, woodland trails, free postcards and those most valuable attributes – peace and quiet. I didn’t know much about Silba before I arrived – it’s a small, car-free island with no hotels, just family-run guesthouses. The catamaran from Zadar takes roughly 90 minutes, with several sailings a day during summer. Once there, you can walk on shaded paths through olive groves, find quiet pebble coves with clear water for swimming.



The Best Time to Visit Bali for Every Activity

Bali has so much to offer, from the verdant jungles surrounding Ubud, largely considered to be Bali’s cultural center, to the beaches lining its southern shore. Popular itineraries include touring the island’s many temples, attending a yoga retreat, or embarking on a hiking adventure. You may also want to time your visit with one of its vibrant festivals. The island has a tropical climate, with two main seasons: dry, from April to October, and wet, from November to March. Average temperatures range from the mid-70s to the low 80s throughout the year. Here’s a general breakdown of Bali’s tourist seasons:

Best Times to Visit for Smaller Crowds

In Bali, the off-season stretches from January to March. These months can be humid and rainy, which means you won’t find crowds in search of perfect beach weather and diving conditions. And because you’ll also be avoiding the biggest holiday months (November and December), you’ll find the island to be calm and populated by a mix of locals and expats. While the rain brings mosquitoes and may take activities like diving and surfing off the table, it’s not a deal-breaker if you’re in Bali to tour temples, practice yoga, or simply unwind. In fact, you might find that the peaceful rain in the Ubud forest adds to the overall serenity of your experience. The jungle and rice paddies thrive in this season, and the magnificent green color and sprouting vegetation are worth seeing.

Best Times to Visit for Good Weather

Sunseekers should time their trip with Bali’s dry season, which runs from April to October. During this period, humidity and rain decrease, creating ideal conditions for visiting beaches, surfing, scuba diving, and snorkeling. It still rains during these months, especially in April, May, and October, but showers are usually short and followed by clear skies. The average high this time of year hovers between 80 and 82 degrees Fahrenheit, with lows dipping into the mid-70s. For the best weather, visit during July and August, the peak of the dry season. With less humidity, these months feel cooler, with an average temperature of 75 degrees Fahrenheit, so they’re perfect for enjoying a mix of active adventures and beach time. Those coming to Bali to catch some legendary waves should also aim to visit during the dry season, with June to August bringing larger swells to the main surf spots along the southwest coast. Unsurprisingly, Bali’s dry season is its busiest and most expensive period, with hotel prices peaking between June and September. Tourism also sees a boost during the holidays, so you can expect higher hotel prices in November and December. The most affordable time to visit Bali is from October through March, the ainy season months that fall outside of the festive season. Hotel prices during this time tend to be lower due to the lack of demand.

What Happens to Your Body When You Eat Peanut Butter Every Day

Whether slathered on bread or eaten for many Americans—so households keep it on Board.

Support Muscle Growth and

Protein is a standout nutrient in 2-tablespoon serving providing 14% of the recommended daily more protein than any other MS, RDN, child feeding expert Food Allergy Prevention. That nient source of amino acids your and repair muscle mass. Help You Stay Full For Longer Thanks to its combination of protein of fat per 2-tablespoon serving—peanut you fuller for longer.2 This can be especially a healthy weight. In a 2022 study, researchers found that 24 women with obesity who ate whole peanuts as part of a calorie-restricted diet lost more weight—an average of 7 pounds—compared to those who didn’t eat peanuts.

Give Your Heart Health a Boost

Like other nuts and olive oil, peanut butter is rich in monounsaturated fats, which have been associated with increased HDL (“good” cholesterol) and reduced LDL (“bad” cholesterol) when consumed regularly—both important for maintaining heart health. “However, one serving of peanuts also provides significant amounts of other nutrients that have been shown to support heart and overall health,” including fiber, mag-

Peanuts are also a source of arginine, vessels and improve circulation, and blood pressure levels.6 In one daily for six months saw a greater compared to those who didn’t

Give You a Solid Dose of Oth-

Additionally, peanut butter con-magnesium and vitamin E.2 health and energy metabolism, the immune system and protect cells

Derail Your Diet

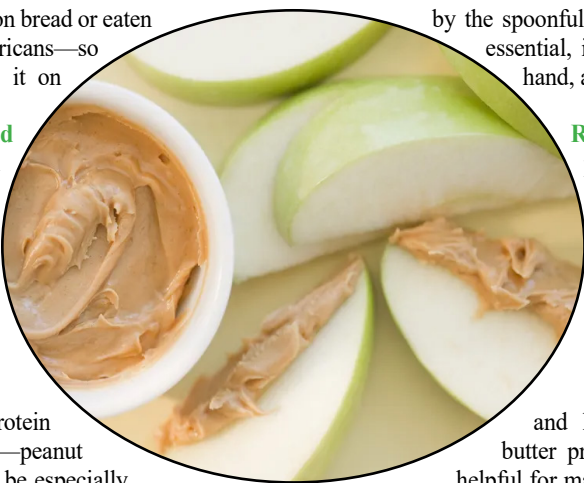
While peanut butter can be a nutritional backs. A standard 2-tablespoon serving packs contribute to excess calorie intake. That said, eating peanut butter daily—in moderation and as part of a balanced diet—shouldn’t lead to weight gain, explained Sarah Garone, NDTR, CNC. “Several studies have shown that nut consumption either does not affect weight or actually helps prevent weight gain,” she told Health.

Increase Your Additive Intake

Eating peanut butter daily might mean consuming hydrogenated oils, added sugars, and excess sodium—ingredients that can diminish its health benefits. On the flip side, choosing a peanut butter with just two ingredients—peanuts and a bit of salt—helps you avoid those additives, Garone said.

Cause Illness

Peanut butter can be harmful for those with peanut allergies, which affect about 1.6 million people in the U.S. Of course, consuming peanut butter often if you have an allergy would trigger potentially dangerous reactions. Another potential concern is aflatoxins, toxic compounds produced by molds that can grow on peanuts. While U.S. manufacturing processes are regulated to minimize this risk, long-term exposure has been linked to liver issues. However, more human-based research is needed. Choosing peanut butter from reputable brands that follow strict safety and quality standards can help reduce the risk of contamination.



by the spoonful, peanut butter is a daily staple essential, in fact, that about 94% of U.S. hand, according to the National Peanut

Repair

peanut butter, with a standard ing about 7 grams—or roughly ly value.2 “Peanuts contain nuts,” said Malina Malkani, and author of Safe and Simple makes peanut butter a convey-body needs to build, maintain,

and healthy fats—about 16 grams butter promotes satiety and helps keep helpful for managing cravings or maintaining that 24 women with obesity who ate whole peanuts as

an amino acid that helps relax blood potassium, which supports healthy study, people who ate peanuts drop in systolic blood pressure consume peanuts.7

er Nutrients

tains key micronutrients like Magnesium supports bone while vitamin E helps strengthen from damage.

gem, it’s not without potential drawbacks. A standard 2-tablespoon serving packs around 190 calories, so overindulging may contribute to weight gain. However, eating peanut butter daily—in moderation and as part of a balanced diet—shouldn’t lead to weight gain, explained Sarah Garone, NDTR, CNC. “Several studies have shown that nut consumption either does not affect weight or actually helps prevent weight gain,” she told Health.

Protein Myths You’ve Probably Heard

From protein-packed ice cream to high-protein water, it seems that everyone is trying to pack in as much protein as possible. But with all the buzz about protein, it can be tricky to separate fact from fiction. Should you be following the RDA? Is a high-protein diet really bad for your kidneys and bones? Do you have to eat protein right after you work out for optimal gains?

Keep reading for the most common protein myths and clear up the confusion about this essential nutrient.

Myth #1: You Can Only Absorb 30 Grams of Protein per Meal

There’s a misconception that your body can only absorb and use around 30 grams of protein at a time. However, a 2023 study found that a 100-gram dose of protein produced a significantly greater and longer-lasting anabolic response (the body’s process of building new muscle tissue) than a 25-gram dose of protein. This means that your body can handle and utilize high doses of protein in one sitting, especially during times of increased physical or metabolic stress. Amino acids (the building blocks of protein) are used for much more than building muscle. They are needed for hormone regulation, enzyme production, tissue repair, and immune health. Myth #2: Older Adults Don’t Need Much Protein Some people think that old-

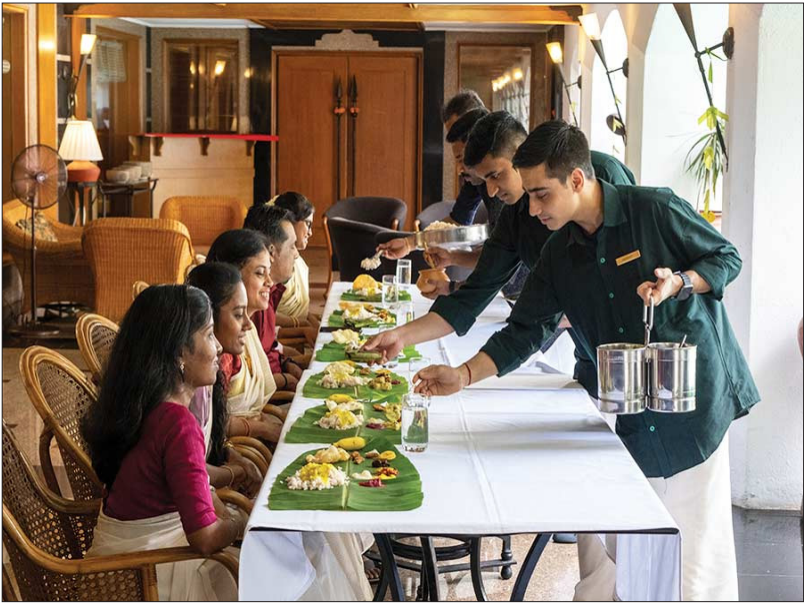


er adults don’t need as much protein as younger people, but that’s not the case. In fact, following a low-protein diet can have negative effects on older adults’ bone health and muscle mass. You lose muscle mass as you age. Additionally, as you age, your body doesn’t respond to protein as efficiently, which is known as anabolic resistance. Because of this, older adults need to take in more protein to get the same benefits. Studies suggest that people aged 65 and older require 1.0 to 1.3 grams of protein per kilogram per day (0.45-0.59 grams per pound) for overall health and physical function. Older adults who engage in resistance exercise may need even more protein. Myth #3: Eating Protein Right After a Workout Is Mandatory

Drinking a protein shake or consuming a high-protein meal after your workout can stimulate muscle growth, but studies show that your overall protein intake is most important. The most effective way for most people to gain muscle is to combine a diet that provides around 1.6 to 3.3 grams per kilogram (0.7-1.5 grams per pound) of protein per day with resistance training. Additionally, some experts recommend spacing protein-rich meals at least three hours apart to maximize muscle growth. “Many people consume the majority of their daily protein at dinner. A more balanced approach would be spreading protein intake across breakfast, lunch, and snacks,” Kimberley Rose-Francis, RDN, CDCES, told Health.

Some people think high-protein diets are harmful to the kidneys. Though a high protein intake increases the production of nitrogenous waste, which the kidneys filter, this isn’t harmful in healthy people. In fact, studies show that a protein intake up to 5 times the RDA is safe and has no negative impact on kidney health or function in healthy people. That said, people with kidney disease may need to reduce their protein intake in order to manage their condition and preserve kidney function. The RDA for protein is currently set at 0.8 grams per kilogram (0.36 grams per pound). Many people think that the RDA is the “optimal” amount of protein to be aiming for, but this isn’t the case.

Science of ‘sadya’: How to enjoy a traditional Onam feast



A little bit of ayurveda involved. A sadya is a balance of six tastes: sweet, sour, salty, bitter, pungent and astringent. They are all present, some singularly and others in a mix. A sadya is also a melody of textures, from crisp to soft to watery. Here, putting together the science, ayurveda, textures and my observations from what I have seen and been told by the elders in the family, is a largely acceptable way to serve the Onam sadya. Prior to inviting people to sit for the meal, place the leaves with the tail to the left of the person eating. The left corner is for all the accompaniments: a pinch of salt, pickles, chips, a banana, ela ada/unniyappam and pappadum. Towards the right upper half put some pulli inji and inji thayir. Put a tablespoon full of payasam in the lower, right-hand corner.

Now, between these two ends, running clockwise, comes the rest. After everyone is seated, begin with the thorans, serving them in the upper part of the leaf, starting from where the chips are placed. Below this put drier preparations like avial, erissery, kootu kari and kaalan. On the right-hand side serve the runny preparations like theeyal, olan and puliserry. Leave the lower centre half for the rice.

After the rice is served, pour a few teaspoons of parippu followed by ghee. The meal begins with that. Then comes the sambar. And the sadya is on. On the periphery of the leaf, either above the centre or on the right, you could place buttermilk and rasam in tumblers or glasses. The payasam could also be placed in bowls next to them. For the truly deft diners all this is served on the leaf.

What you have on the leaf is an array of tastes, flavours and textures, from the salty and pungent left side to sweet and sour at the other end, with bitter and astringent in between.

In fact, when you look at the narrow left corner, you would find it packed with all the tastes: salty (salt, pickles), sweet (banana–jaggery chips, ela ada, (unniyappam), pungent and bitter (pickles), sour and astringent (pulli inji and inji thayir). In terms of texture, you have the crisp pappadums and chips on the left, the firm but soft curries in the middle and the watery olan, puliserry and theeyal to the right. With all this left corner, right corner, centre and the centre half, it sounds like a football match!

One of the most elaborate traditional vegetarian meals, the sadya (or sadhya) is a mainstay of Onam celebrations. Traditionally served on a banana leaf, and with the number of dishes ranging in double digits, it is also a unique combination of flavours and textures. In his debut book *Feast on a Leaf* (Bloomsbury, 2024) veteran chef Arun Kumar T.R. digs into the history, rituals and folklore around the Onam sadya. With techniques and stories from a traditional Nair tharavad kitchen — around which the chef spent his childhood — the book also has recipes for over 30 sadya dishes. In the following excerpt from *Feast on a Leaf*, we look at the nuances behind serving and arranging a sadya — which dishes are served from left to right, how to go about eating a sadya meal, and more.

Left to Right, ‘Feast on a Leaf’
Serving an Onam sadya is quite a challenge, and one which goes beyond simply cooking the twenty-four-plus dishes. If it is a family sadya, confusion and chaos sets in from the moment you begin placing the leaves on which the meal will be served. Should the narrow tail end of the leaf be on the left or right? There is some disagreement about this. The tail end should be on the left of the person who is eating. Sometimes you do not get leaves which have a tail and a head, they are almost rectangular pieces because they have been trimmed to remove the torn portions. In this case the leaf could be placed without bothering about left and right. This was just one of the problems I faced when I managed the first Onam sadya at the restaurant I was heading. There is science and a



Now everything is served. But how does one eat a sadya? Definitely with your hands, but in what order? Traditionally, as soon as you sit down to eat, the accompaniments would already be on the leaf. Eat the chips, taste the pulli inji and inji thayir. Purists would check the payasam, a teaspoon of which would be placed along with the accompaniments. There is a little controversy regarding the first course, which is the parippu with ghee. Crush a little pappadum into this. These days the parippu is followed by sambar, but according to my aunt, Radha Thampuram, after parippu you had the erissery, kaalan, avial, olan, pachadi and puliserry along with the thorans. The last two courses before the payasams, according to her, were sambar followed by rasam. And after the payasams you had some rice with the sambaram or buttermilk. Anything more on the leaf was eaten between these dishes. These days, few people venture to have rasam or sambaram with rice as it is not an easy task to handle these flowing liquids on the leaf. Remember to start with small quantities of rice. It is served continuously, as are the other items when required. There is a way to indicate you do not want to be served more, by extending your hand, palms down, over the leaf. I have tried employing this constantly, especially with liquid curries like olan, but I have been reprimanded by the person serving, asking me to remove my hand. The first serving of the dish cannot be avoided. My idea was to have the chips on the left of the leaf, a little bit of rice served in the middle with parippu and sambar and get to the payasams.

When the curries were served at home, I would see my elders dipping a finger into them as they were served and tasting them. Follow the elders and do as they do. It was exactly what we kids did when it came to consuming a sadya. Step by step we followed their cues. If they took a bit of avial, we did the same. If they reached out to the olan, we did too. Purists would argue about the order of not just the serving of the sadya but the order in which it is to be eaten: should the avial come first or the erissery, should the theeyal be served or placed on the leaf; what about the puliserry? There is no end to the debate. Enjoy it the way you feel.

Flavors of Mumbai: Unmissable dining destinations for sunset conversations



In Mumbai, finding places to hang out with friends is never a challenge. Whether it’s savoring vada pav from street vendors or indulging in gourmet meals at fine dining spots, the combination of good company and great food elevates the experience. If you’re on the lookout for the next best restaurant offering not just excellent flavors but also



a stunning view of a Mumbai sunset or a place that seamlessly blends casual and gourmet dining with exciting flavors, here are our top picks for your next outing.

Sampan – Novotel Mumbai Juhu Beach

When it comes to legendary restaurants in Mumbai, Sampan is at the top of the

list for its Chinese cuisine, ranging from Cantonese to Sichuan dishes. Frequented by celebrities, Sampan offers a unique dining experience with signature dishes curated by its chefs. Recently, they’ve introduced a special Sampan Kitty Party Menu, featuring a welcome drink, soup, appetizers, main courses, and dessert, all while enjoying the sunset with friends. This offer is available for groups of at least eight women at INR 1111 per person. Penpa Tsering, Chef De Cuisine at Sampan, Novotel Mumbai Juhu Beach, explains, “Each dish is crafted to highlight the bold flavors and fresh ingredients that define Cantonese cooking. Our secret lies in the ‘wok hei’ method, where high-heat wok cooking imparts a distinct smoky flavor.” The Kitty Party special menu includes Cha Chu Potatoes, Mandarin Chicken, Sliced Paneer in Sampan Sauce, Sampan Chicken, Hunan Noodles, and a delightful Honey Noodles dessert. With elegant Chinese art and soothing music, Sampan provides a beautiful setting, perfect for an unforgettable Kitty Party experience.

Ness, Trident Nariman Point Mubai

For a culinary adventure, visit Ness, where you’ll not only enjoy a gastronomic extravaganza but also soak in panoramic views of Mumbai’s seascape. Reflecting grandeur and fluidity, Ness epitomizes delicate and masterfully curated flavors.

Olive Bar and Kitchen, Mumbai

If dining among celebrities is your desire, Olive Bar and Kitchen is where you’ll find them flocking. Enjoy laughter and conversation in an airy open space with ample seating, lively music, and a multi-cuisine menu that promises to impress with each dish made from the freshest and finest ingredients.

Ekaa, Mumbai

For food and cocktails that celebrate ingredients and culture, head to Ekaa, a noteworthy addition to Mumbai’s dining scene. With its minimalist design and exquisite dishes, Ekaa promises a memorable experience that will linger in your memory.

These Mumbai restaurants not only offer exceptional food but also create the perfect ambiance for a memorable time with friends.

Benefits of starting your day with Tulsi water



Drinking tulsi water on an empty stomach is gaining popularity for its numerous health benefits. Tulsi, also known as holy basil, is revered for its medicinal properties and can significantly enhance overall wellness. Consuming tulsi water first thing in the morning helps boost the immune system, as the herb is rich in antioxidants and essential oils that combat harmful free radicals in the body. Tulsi water can also aid in digestion and improve metabolism. It helps to cleanse the digestive

system, alleviating issues such as bloating and gas. Regular intake of tulsi water may lead to better nutrient absorption and a more efficient digestive process, contributing to overall health and vitality. Additionally, tulsi water has been found to have stress-relieving properties. Its adaptogenic qualities help the body manage stress and reduce anxiety. By starting the day with tulsi water, individuals can promote mental clarity and emotional balance, setting a positive tone for the rest of the day.

A Complete Guide To Keep Your Tawa Roti Fresh And Soft

A fresh tawa roti not only satisfies your hunger but can also bring comfort to your heart. The soft texture of this unleavened flatbread is a staple in India, best enjoyed warm and fresh. While roti is widely loved across India, the intake and preparation can vary by individual and region.

How to keep your tawa roti fresh?

The key to keeping roti fresh and soft starts with how you knead the dough. Take your time with this process, don’t rush. Add a small amount of oil or butter at the beginning, and use an adequate amount of lukewarm water, which helps keep the roti soft and easy to roll out. When storing rotis, it’s important to let the steam leave before placing them in a container. Storing hot rotis with steam trapped inside can make them soggy.

To keep your roti fresh for longer, wrap it in aluminium foil or, ideally, a muslin cloth. Although aluminium foil is safe for most uses, Healthline suggests that it could increase the aluminium content in your diet. Muslin cloth is the better option for wrapping.

If you like making extra rotis for later, an airtight container is a must. Wrap the roti in a muslin cloth and place it in the



container to keep it fresh and soft.

Are rotis good for health?

Yes, rotis are a healthy choice. They are rich in fiber and contain good carbohydrates, which can aid digestion, promote weight loss, balance blood sugar levels, and improve bone health. Roti also known as chapati is also a good source of Vitamin D.

How to enjoy roti?

There are so many ways that one can enjoy roti. Mostly roti are paired



with a savoury and saucy side. But it goes well with food items like butter chicken, mutton curry, mattar paneer, mutton curry, makhana dal etc. Knead a soft dough

Many people make the mistake of kneading the dough in a hurry and add insufficient water. You must add the appropriate amount of water to knead a soft and smooth dough. Do not overdo it as it might cause the rolled rotis to break. You can also add lukewarm water or milk to your dough and knead for at

least 15 minutes for best results. Leaving it to rise for 20-30 minutes would make it softer and easier to roll.

Roll the perfect Chapati

When you are making the balls before rolling your chapatis, make sure they are small in size and free of any corners or crevices. The balls should be smooth and moist. Use a rolling board and pin with a slightly rugged surface so that the rotis don’t stick to them.

Sprinkle the surface with flour before you begin rolling the rotis. No need to strictly measure them but try to roll chapatis that are 5 to 7 inches in diameter and 1.5 mm to 2.5 mm in thickness.

Puff the Chapati on the flame

After that put the first side centrally and directly on the flame until puffed properly. If the roti is not puffing up properly, press it lightly with a spoon.

Time the cooking process

This might seem like a chore at first, but you will get used to it with time. Keep the pan on high heat before you put the rolled chapati over it. The temperature of the pan should be about 160-180 degrees before you cook your roti. You can check if your pan is perfectly hot by putting a few drops of water over it. If they sizzle and evaporate immediately, you can start cooking!

Unearthing the flavours of Champaran mutton

Champaran mutton, also known as ahuna mutton, originates from the Champaran district in Bihar. This dish has roots in the rural traditions of the region, where it was commonly prepared for community gatherings and celebrations. The distinctive cooking technique involves slow-cooking marinated mutton in earthen pots sealed with dough, which locks in the rich flavours and juices. This method, passed down through generations, also embodies the simplicity of village life. Over time, Champaran mutton has gained popularity beyond its origins, celebrated for its tender, aromatic meat and strong connection to Bihar’s cultural and culinary heritage.

To enjoy Champaran mutton at its best, order the juiciest mutton curry cut from Zappfresh. Zappfresh delivers fresh, high-quality meat across Bengaluru, Delhi NCR and Mumbai, ensuring a delightful culinary experience. Their diverse range includes chicken, mutton and seafood. With a user-friendly app and swift delivery service, Zappfresh makes it easy to prepare delicious meat dishes at home, making it a preferred choice. Order fresh mutton cuts from Zap-



fresh to treat your taste buds. To prepare Champaran Mutton, begin by marinating 1kg of mutton with 750g of sliced onions, 6 tablespoons of ginger-garlic paste, spices (turmeric, coriander and red chilli powders), 150g of yoghurt and 3/4 cup of mustard oil. Allow the marination to sit for 20 minutes.

Next, add the marinated mutton to a pot and cook on low heat, stirring occasionally. Seal the pot with dough to trap the steam, and let it cook for 1 to 2 hours until the meat is tender and infused with flavours. Garnish with fresh coriander and serve with rice or bread.

Special Tips:
Marinate overnight for better flavour absorption. Use an earthen pot for enhanced aroma. Use an earthen pot for enhanced aroma. Use an earthen pot for enhanced aroma.

SPORTS

50kg wrestling event at Paris Olympics
Vinesh Phogat says she'll keep wrestling in preparation for Olympics in Los Angeles

Mumbai: Wrestler Vinesh Phogat, who suffered heartbreak at the Paris Olympics before moving into politics last year, has confirmed that she will continue to wrestle and will try and compete for India at the Los Angeles Olympics in the USA in three years' time. Vinesh said that her newborn son will act as her biggest supported as she starts her quest to compete at the LA Olympics."People kept asking if Paris (Olympics) was the end. For a long time, I didn't have the answer. I needed to step away from the mat, from the pressure, from the expectations, even from my own ambitions. For the first time in years, I allowed myself to breathe I took time to understand the weight of my journey the highs, the heartbreaks, the sacrifices, the versions of me the world never saw. And somewhere in that reflection, I found the truth, I still love this sport. I still want to compete," Vinesh wrote in a post on social media on Friday.Vinesh continued: "In



that silence, I found something I'd forgotten the fire never left. It was

only buried under exhaustion and noise. The discipline, the routine, the fight... it's in my system. No matter how far I walked away, a part of me stayed on the mat. So here I am, stepping back toward LA28 with a heart that's unafraid and a spirit that refuses to bow. And this time, I'm not walking alone my son is joining my team, my biggest motivation, my little cheerleader on this road to the LA Olympics."Vinesh had made it to the final of the 50 kg women's wrestling event at Paris Olympics, but on the day of the final against USA's Sarah Hildebrandt, she failed to make weight. That not only prevented her from competing in the final, but also meant that she would be disqualified from the event itself. Vinesh had knocked on the doors of the Court of Arbitration for Sport to appeal the decision. But that too was turned down. Former Olympic gold medallist Abhinav Bindra called it the "most brutal day in India's Olympic history."

Visitors put on clinical despite dew to level 5-match series
India vs South Africa 2nd T20I

Mumbai: It had been an unusually subdued first half of the first international men's match to be played at the New PCA Stadium on Thursday. The venue's location, in Mullanpur on the outskirts of Chandigarh, meant it took a while for it to fill up. The elegant batting masterclass from Quinton de Kock, which had powered South Africa to a hefty-looking 213-run total, had flattened the home crowd too.On his first ball, Punjab lad Shubman Gill nicked one to second slip to depart. Abhishek Sharma had given the fans some cause to roar with a couple of early sixes, but nicked one to the wicketkeeper himself a few minutes later. The hush grew. It meant that the local troika – the first time in nearly 20 years that as many as three players from the state were playing an international on home turf – had all flopped after Arshdeep Singh's wicketless, error-ridden spell that leaked 54 runs.Bad omens persisted. The rest of the noise was hopeful, at best, and sometimes hapless. A clinical performance by South Africa took the wind out of the crowd's sails, and brought India back down to earth after their hammering in the first T20I, to pick up a 51-run victory and level the five-match series 1-1. They



extracted more runs with the bat – led by the pressure of leaking runs. India were put under the pump midway through the first innings and immediately caved in, while South Africa were disciplined and stuck to their bowling plans.One stat exemplifies the contrast between the two sides: South Africa bowled one wide compared to India's.

PKL honours Indian Women's Kabaddi World Cup Winners

Mumbai: The Indian women's kabaddi team was felicitated by the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) on Friday after their triumphant return from Dhaka, Bangladesh, where they clinched the Women's Kabaddi World Cup on November 24, according to a press release.India remained unbeaten through the tournament, sweeping all their group matches before defeating Iran 33-21 in the semi-final. Chinese Taipei, also unbeaten in their group, entered the final after overcoming hosts Bangladesh 25-18.India defeated Chinese Taipei 35-28 in the final to secure their second consecutive World Cup title, reaffirming their dominance in the sport.PKL League Chairman and Business Head of Mashal Sports, Anupam Goswami, underlined the long-term vision for women's kabaddi, "The federation's commitment -- especially in bringing back the Women's World Cup after 12 years shows that the sport is moving firmly in the right direction. This World Cup trophy is more than a win; it is a shared responsibility for all of us as we look ahead."When we think about a Women's Kabaddi League, rushing it isn't the answer. We need to build it the right way -- with players who truly want to be part of it, with a model that makes commercial sense, and with a structure that can support women's kabaddi for the long run", he added.Head coach V. Tejeswini Bai highlighted the



team's evolution and preparation."This is the third time I've been part of a coaching setup that has won a medal, and every single one of them feels incredibly special. I'm proud not just of the result, but of the journey this group has taken... What you're seeing in this victory is the result of months and months of disciplined preparation."Skipper Ritu Negi spoke about the team's unity and resolve. "In the last match, I wasn't able to play much because of my injury, and of course, that was frustrating. But our team is bigger than any one player. What matters is that our players stepped up and executed exactly what was needed. Winning the World Cup and seeing the response from across the country -- including from the Honourable Prime Minister -- makes us feel that our hard work truly represents India."On the global stage, Vibhor Vineet Jain,

The Indian women's kabaddi team was felicitated by the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) and JioStar on Friday after their triumphant return from Dhaka, Bangladesh, where they clinched the Women's Kabaddi World Cup on November 24

President of AKFI, highlighted the sport's evolution, "Kabaddi is no longer limited to the subcontinent. Nations like Chinese Taipei and Iran have transformed the competitive landscape. This diversity is enriching the sport, and we're operating at every level to ensure kabaddi reaches its highest global pinnacles."The felicitation event celebrated not only the team's remarkable triumph but also the rising momentum and strengthened institutional support for women's kabaddi in India signalling an exciting, transformative phase ahead for the sport.

Global Chess League returns with debut as world stars unite for franchise battle

Mumbai: The third season of the Global Chess League (GCL), a joint initiative of Tech Mahindra and Fide, will take place in Mumbai from Sunday.The 10-day event, featuring the world's best chess talent in a unique, global franchise team-based format, will make its much-anticipated debut in India at Mumbai's iconic Royal Opera House. Six franchises — Fyers American Gambits, Alpine SG Pipers, Ganges Grandmasters, upGrad Mumba Masters, PBG Alaskan Knights and Triveni Continental Kings — featuring players from 17 chess-playing nations will vie for top honours. Reigning world champion D. Gukesh, five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand, Fabiano Caruana, Alireza Firouzja, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, Anish Giri, R. Praggnanandhaa, Arjun Erigaisi, four-time world champion Hou Yifan and Koneru Humpy will



add star power to the tournament. Hikaru Nakamura's participation, however, is in doubt because of personal reasons."The GCL is great practice ahead of Rapid and Blitz, though the no-increment format is tricky, and I support shorter, innovative formats because long classical games can be boring for spectators. The league is becoming tougher each year, and the team format helps us learn

from each other," Humpy said in a media release."For young girls, it's crucial to compete in open sections and face stronger players that's how real improvement happens."Grandmaster Vidit Gujrathi was excited to be part of the tournament again. "Having the GCL in Mumbai feels literally like coming home. This league is Indian at heart, and I'm sure the passion from

fans here will be unmatched. The teams are much more balanced now, and as defending champions we know everyone will take us very seriously," Triveni Continental Kings player Gujrathi said. The GCL committed to elevating chess into a global spectator sport built on innovation, entertainment, technology and fan experience. "The idea behind introducing headphones and live commentary inside the playing hall is simple — the level of chess our GMs play is so advanced that without guidance, fans miss a lot of the flavour," League commissioner Gourav Rakshit sai "While fans usually gather in the fan zone because commentary helps them appreciate the moves, the real action is on the live playing field, and we want to give them an experience that matches that energy."

India 19 vs UAE U19 Asia Cup 2025: India Tighten Grip On UAE After Setting 'World Record'

Mumbai: India U19 vs UAE U19 Live Updates, U19 Asia Cup 2025: UAE have lost their sixth wicket in a 434-run chase against India. Vaibhav Suryavanshi's superb innings formed the bedrock for India to post 433/6 in 50 overs against the UAE on Friday. This is India's highest-ever score in U-19 ODIs. India also became the first team to record three 400-plus totals in U-19 ODIs. Before Friday, India's highest U-19 ODI score was 425/3 against Scotland in 2004. They had also scored 405/5 against Uganda in 2022. The 14-year-old Suryavanshi smashed 171 off just 95 balls - the second-highest score by an Indian in a youth ODI. His innings included 14

sixes and nine fours, the most sixes hit by a batter in a single innings of the U-19 Asia Cup. Previously, Afghanistan's Darwish Rasooli had hit 10 sixes in an innings in 2017. Suryavanshi also broke another Asian record: most sixes in a U-19 Asia Cup innings. Rasooli (22) held that record earlier. Suryavanshi now has 26 sixes. Apart from Suryavanshi, Vihaan Chennai Super Kings star Ayush Mhatre disappointed as he nicked one off Yug Sharma to Aleh Amin. The contest is taking place at the ICC Academy Ground in Dubai. India are placed in Group A of the eight-team U-19 Asia Cup 2025 tournament. Pakistan and Malaysia are the other two teams in their group.



Hockey: From Princedeep to Arshdeep, four players from Junior World Cup who can push for places in senior India Colts from with potential for the senior circuit

Mumbai: The most intriguing outcome of any junior global event is the surge of promising youngsters who could step up to the senior teams. From the 2025 edition of the men's FIH Junior World Cup, where India finished with a bronze medal, here's a look at four players who could potentially transition to the main squad in the months or years to come.Princedeep Singh (GK)The No 16, who started as a defender but then took up goalkeeping after being inspired by PR Sreejesh, has emerged as a genuinely serious contender for the senior team between the posts. Krishan Pathak's form hasn't inspired much confidence in recent times, and head coach Craig Fulton will have a serious headache when he picks the squad for the Pro League matches in February based on Pawan's performance at Sultan Azlan Shah Cup and Princedeep's heroics at JWC. With Mohith HS and Bikramjit Singh also in the fray, India's goalkeeping depth is impressive. Princedeep's textbook technique has been further refined by Sreejesh over the last year or so and the Pathankot native made a series of impressive saves in Madurai and Chennai.Priyobarta Talem (DEF)By sheer numbers, India's defenders contributed significantly to the goal tally, Sharda Nand Tiwari scored five in regulation times, and most memorably, stepped up

thrice in the penalty shootout against Belgium to convert strokes. Anmol Ekka and Rohit, two more drag-flickers, scored four and two, respectively. Anmol, in fact, was the player of the match in the final as his drag flicks led to indirect deflections for a couple of crucial goals. But beyond these stats, one defender impressed with his all-round abilities. Priyobarta showed that he can shift across the backline and play any position, allowing the big-hitters to rotate. His distribution out of defence was often pinpoint, sending some fine aerials to beat the opponents' press. And his ground-passing was solid too, as he combined with Manmeet Singh for India's goal of the tournament.India's midfield was perhaps the biggest concern to emerge from the tournament. , however, who emerged from the tournament with his reputation seriously enhanced. Having already made his senior debut, the farmer's son from Amritsar is making a name for himself when it comes to creating attacking openings, with an uncanny ability to create outcomes from the circle. While the forwards collectively struggled against Germany's strong defensive structures, Arshdeep stepped up in the final quarter against Argentina, creating two Penalty Corners and a Penalty Stroke that led to India's first three goals that triggered the turnaround. He is also aware



: Goalkeeper Princedeep Singh, midfielder Manmeet Singh, defender Priyobarta Talem and forward Arshdeep Singh

that he needs to add goals to his game, having worked on his finishing skills post the HIL. With an opening or two in the senior's squad for energetic forwards, Fulton would have his eye on Arshdeep.

Vaibhav Suryavanshi Inspires Team To Historic 433 In U19

Mumbai: The Indian U19 team has sent a massive statement to their rivals in the ACC Men's U19 Asia Cup 2025, registering their highest-ever Youth One Day International (ODI) total with an unbelievable display of power-hitting against the UAE. This monumental innings saw India cruise past the 400-run mark for the third time in Vaibhav Suryavanshi, who anchored the innings with a spectacular knock. Suryavanshi dominated the bowling attack, smashing a breathtaking 171 off just 95 balls. His innings was an exhibition of order capitalised on ruthlessly. By the end of their innings, India U19 had posted a mammoth 433 for 6 against the UAE in the opening clash of the tournament, which now stands as India's highest-ever Youth ODI score.