

2-day book fair at Nagaland university promotes reading, academic engagement

Medziphema, Mar 13: A two-day book fair, organised by the School Library of the School of Agricultural Sciences (SAS), Nagaland University, concluded at the Old Administrative Building of the university's Medziphema campus in Nagaland on Friday.

The objective of the book fair was to provide a platform for students, research scholars and faculty members to explore and select new academic books for teaching, learning and research purposes. This year, the exhibition featured nationally reputed publishers and suppliers from Delhi and Guwahati. Mhonbemo Ngullie, deputy librarian, SAS, Nagaland University said the purpose of the initiative was to provide a platform to academic community and encourage reading habits and research among the university community. He further said the response from the faculty members, students and research scholars had been quite encouraging. The fair also provided an opportunity for students and faculty members to ac-



cess the latest publications and interact directly with publishers and suppliers. Prof. Deepak Sinha, Pro Vice-Chancellor of the SAS, NU campus, appreciated the initiative taken by the School Library and reiterated the

importance of books in academia. Acknowledging that information and research publications are accessible in digital formats, he mentioned that books continue to offer a greater value in obtaining a complete understanding

and learning.

He also encouraged the students to develop a habit of reading books, stating that although information can be easily accessed online, there is no substitute for reading a phys-

ical book and engaging with it thoroughly and advised the students to make the best use of the books displayed in the University library. The attendees during the fair shared their experiences and mentioned that the availability of diverse academic publications in one place was beneficial for both teaching and research. The faculty members also expressed hope that more publishers would participate in such fairs in the coming days. Students and researchers visiting the book fair expressed their positive feedback stating that with upcoming examinations approaching, the fair has helped guide them in selecting useful academic resources and broaden their knowledge.

One of the research scholars noted that since the university campus is located in a relatively remote area with limited access to bookstores, the fair has provided him an opportunity to explore books from new publishers and discover titles relevant to his research topics as well as competitive examinations.

In Brief

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Imphal: As part of the nationwide "Mahila Jan Sunwai" initiative organised from March 9 to 13 to commemorate Interantional Women's Day, the Manipur State Commission for Women (MSCW) conducted public hearings in five districts in the State namely Imphal West district on March 9 at Kombirei Conference Hall, DC Imphal West Office Complex; Imphal East District on March 10 at EYCA Community Hall, Porompat; Thoubal District on March 11 at Counting Hall, DC Thoubal Office Complex; Tengnoupal District on March 12 at Khunbi Village Community Hall, Tengnoupal and Chandel District on March 13 at Multipurpose Hall, DC Chandel Office Complex, Chandel, reaffirming its commitment to accessible and time-bound grievance redressal for women.

LPG Shortage May Boost Instant Tea Demand: GTABA

Guwahati: A potential shortage of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) in parts of India could create an unexpected opportunity for the country's instant beverage segment, with industry observers expecting a rise in demand for instant tea products. "Tea preparation in most Indian households traditionally requires boiling water, milk and tea leaves on an LPG stove. However, supply disruptions or rising LPG prices often push consumers to adopt quicker and more energy-efficient alternatives. Instant tea, which requires only hot water for preparation, could benefit from this shift," stated Dinesh Bihani, Secretary of the Guwahati Tea Auction Buyers Association.

Two arrested with 1.04 kg of Brown Sugar

Imphal: On March 12 at about 5:50 p.m., reliable information was received regarding individuals involved in distribution of narcotic drugs in the Yairipok Yambem area under Andro PS. Accordingly, after obtaining authorization, a joint team of ANTIF Imphal East Unit and CDO/IE Unit conducted frisking and checking near Yambem High School Gate under proper supervision. During the operation, at 6:54 p.m., two persons riding a Honda Dio scooter (MN06SX5443) coming from Yairipok Ningthounai towards Yambem PHC were detained. On search of the vehicle in presence of a Gazetted Officer, one black plastic polythene concealed inside a green plastic polythene containing suspected Brown Sugar weighing approximately 1.04 kg (including packaging) was recovered from the toolbox.

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Kangpokpi Addl DC chairs road safety committee meeting

Imphal, Mar 13: The District Administration, Kangpokpi, under the leadership of Additional Deputy Commissioner N Shokhongam Baite MCS, chaired the Quarterly District-Level Compliance Review Meeting on the implementation of directions issued by the Supreme Court Committee on Road Safety (SCCoRS) at the Conference Hall of the Deputy Commissioner's Office, Kangpokpi. During the meeting, the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADM) highlighted key initiatives undertaken in the district and urged concerned officials, along with the State Police Department and Central forces, to strengthen coordination in order to further improve frisking and helmet checking along the National Highway. He also directed officials from the Public Works Department (PWD), NHIDCL, and the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to jointly identify unsafe bridges, bridges requiring restoration, and vulnerable PMGSY road stretches. They were instructed to submit a detailed report to the Deputy Commissioner in compliance with IRC standards. District



Transport officials also submitted relevant data and ADM requested the District Police to provide data related to accidents, frisking, and other related matters. The ADM further sought clarification on whether zebra crossings in the town fall under the jurisdiction of the PWD or the DTO, and was informed that it is the responsibility of NHIDCL. Accordingly, he requested the concerned officials to take the necessary action. The meeting was attended by Lamminlal Simte, MCS, AC to DC; Len Singit, MCS, SDO Island, Samuel Misao MCS, SDO, Lhungtin; SDO's, DLO's, amongst others.

PM inaugurates and lays foundation stones via video conferencing for projects worth Rs 4,570 cr in Kokrajhar

Kokrajhar, Mar 13: Prime Minister Narendra Modi today laid foundation stones for various development works in Kokrajhar via video conferencing.

The Prime Minister stated that due to inclement weather, he was unable to visit Kokrajhar in person and expressed his sincere apologies to the gathered citizens. PM Modi remarked that he was communicating from Guwahati.

Modi noted that he bows to the great personalities of the land like Bodofa Upendranath Brahma and Roopnath Brahma. The Prime Minister observed that the massive turnout of people is a debt upon him which he intends to repay through dedicated service and regional development. PM Modi affirmed that "it has always been my endeavor to repay this debt by serving you and developing this region."

The Prime Minister remarked that during his earlier visit to Guwahati, he had the privilege of experiencing the vibrant Bodo culture at the Bagurumba Dahou festival. PM Modi noted that the Bodo community deserves immense credit for meticulously preserving their language, heritage, and traditions. Modi observed that spiritual practices like Bathou and festivals like Baisagu significantly enhance India's overall cultural strength. The Prime Minister stated that "these traditions strengthen the cultural might of India".

The Prime Minister stated that the double-engine government remains committed to both preserving Assam's heritage and ensuring its rapid progress. PM Modi remarked that development projects exceeding 4,500 crore rupees were inaugurated and initiated during the current program. Modi noted that over 1,100 crore rupees are specifically earmarked for enhancing the road network in Bodoland. The Prime Minister observed that the third phase of the Asom Mala campaign will revolutionize connectivity across the state. "Assam's road connectivity will become even more empowered through these initiatives," he affirmed.

The Prime Minister stated that he recently flagged off the Kamakhya-Charlapalli Amrit Bharat Express and the Guwahati-New Jalpaiguri Express to boost regional mobility. PM



Modi remarked that these transport projects would provide essential facilities to the public while simultaneously stimulating trade and tourism. Modi noted that improved logistics will empower farmers by providing easier access to larger markets. He congratulated the citizens on the launch of these transformative developmental works. "These projects will ensure farmers' produce reaches major markets with ease," stated Modi.

The Prime Minister said that Kokrajhar and the surrounding regions had endured immense suffering and loss over the past several decades. He remarked that there was a time when the hills only echoed with the sounds of violence and weaponry. Modi noted that the environment has now shifted toward harmony, with the sounds of traditional instruments like the 'Kham' and 'Sifung' filling the air. The Prime Minister observed that Bodoland and Assam are currently scripting a fresh chapter of peace and prosperity. "Today Bodoland has started walking on the path of peace and development," affirmed Modi.

The Prime Minister stated that the foundation stones for six vital road projects in the B.T.R. region have been laid today to enhance local infrastructure. The PM remarked that significant strides are being taken to bolster rail connectivity, including the establishment of a railway workshop. Modi noted that the upcoming rail link to Bhutan and the modernization of various stations will turn the area into a logistics hub. The Prime Minister observed that the stopovers of Vande Bharat and Rajdhani Express in Kokrajhar symbolize the region's rising status. "Kokrajhar is set to become a major center of

trade through these projects," he asserted.

The Prime Minister stated that he extends his heartfelt congratulations to the teams led by Hagrama Mohilary and Himanta Biswa Sarma for their dedication to development. The Prime Minister stated that the current government prioritized permanent stability. Modi noted that the Bodo Peace Accord was a landmark achievement that united all major organizations on a single platform. The Prime Minister observed that this inclusive approach was a departure from the politics of the past. "We made honest efforts for permanent peace by bringing everyone together," affirmed Shri Modi.

He noted that the present government, has a proven track record of delivering on its words, citing the 2003 formation of the BTC under Sixth Schedule. The Prime Minister observed that institutions like Bodoland University and the Central Institute of Technology stand as evidence of this commitment. "Our double-engine government has honestly tried to fulfill every promise made," Modi asserted.

The Prime Minister stated that all commitments made under the 2020 Bodo agreement are being systematically fulfilled by the government. The PM remarked that the Bodo language has been elevated to the status of an Associate Official Language as promised. He noted that a special development package of 1,500 crore rupees has been deployed, alongside the establishment of new medical colleges. The Prime Minister observed that the integration of 10,000 former insurgents into the mainstream is a major victory for the region. "We are fulfilling every promise to bring the youth into the mainstream," he remarked.

The Prime Minister stated that his government has ensured national recognition for the faith and traditions of the Bodo community.

The Prime Minister stated that he is satisfied with the massive campaign led by CM Himanta Biswa Sarma to reclaim land from illegal occupants. He remarked that the current government has successfully provided legal land titles to the original inhabitants of Assam and noted his appreciation for the tribal community's active support in this vital mission.

LPG Shortage May Boost Instant Tea Demand: GTABA



Guwahati, Mar 13: A potential shortage of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) in parts of India could create an unexpected opportunity for the country's instant beverage segment, with industry observers expecting a rise in demand for instant tea products.

"Tea preparation in most Indian households traditionally requires boiling water, milk and tea leaves on an LPG stove. However, supply disruptions or rising LPG prices often push consumers to adopt quicker and more energy-efficient alternatives. Instant tea, which requires only hot water for preparation, could benefit from this shift," stated Dinesh Bihani, Secretary of the Guwahati Tea Auction Buyers Association.

Unlike conventional tea, instant tea can be prepared using electric kettles, induction heaters, or office water boilers, significantly reducing dependence on cooking gas.

"This makes it particularly attractive for urban households, offices, travel hubs and small food outlets where LPG usage may become constrained," Bihani said.

Market participants say the trend could accelerate the growth of the value-added tea segment, which includes instant tea powders, premixes, and ready-to-drink beverages.

These products rely on processed tea extracts and offer convenience along with longer shelf life.

India, one of the world's largest tea producers, has been gradually expanding its instant tea manufacturing capabilities.

Industry experts believe that any prolonged LPG supply disruption could further encourage consumers to shift toward instant beverage formats.

"For tea-producing regions such as Assam, this shift could open new avenues for value addition and export opportunities, particularly as global demand for convenient beverage solutions continues to rise," he said.

While traditional brewed tea remains deeply ingrained in Indian culture, changing consumption patterns driven by convenience and energy efficiency may provide a significant boost to the instant tea market in the coming months.

NE/EAST

Nine more police outposts Along the Assam border are planned by the government

Dimapur, Mar 13: Nagaland Deputy Chief Minister Y. Patton on Thursday informed the state Assembly that the government is examining a proposal to establish nine new police outposts in border villages along the Assam-Nagaland border. Patton, who also holds the Border Affairs portfolio, was responding to a starred question raised by MLA Achumbemo Kikon on the concluding day of the eighth session of the 14th Nagaland Assembly in Kohima. He told the House that Nagaland had withdrawn all police outposts from the border areas following the 1972 Interim Agreement, while Assam has since established 63 permanent police outposts along the Assam-Nagaland border. Kikon also raised concerns over the current status of the Tchuinjanphen and Lio-Longchym/Longayim police outposts in the border region. He said recent incidents in the area required urgent attention and urged the government to deploy additional police personnel to strengthen security. In response, Patton informed the Assembly that a temporary police outpost has been set up in the affected area, while a proposal to establish a permanent outpost is under process and will be taken up at the earliest.

Regarding the proposed permanent police outpost at Lio-Longchym, he said the matter is currently under examination by the state government. Patton also addressed rumours circulating about the alleged collection of a Rs 2,500 training fee from candidates selected in the ongoing police constable recruitment drive. He clarified that no such fee would be charged. During the session, Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister C. L. John responded to another starred question raised by Kikon



regarding whether any plantation drive had been carried out in the disturbed area belt in the Ralan region along the Assam-Nagaland border, following the recent eviction drive by Assam. John informed the House that no plantation drive had been undertaken so far, but the department is considering initiating one in the coming months. Replying to a supplementary question on whether forest guards have been deployed to patrol the reserve forest in the disturbed area belt, he said the area is currently being patrolled by neutral forces and that the state government has not stationed any personnel there at present.

Curfews have been loosened as things become better In the hostile Garo Hills

Guwahati, Mar 13: With no untoward events reported during the curfew relaxation in violence-hit areas of East and West Garo Hills district of Meghalaya on Thursday, authorities have relaxed curfew to allow people to buy essential commodities. Internet on mobile telephones, however, remained suspended. The law and order situation in Tura, headquarters of West Garo Hills district, which witnessed large-scale acts of violence, arson, looting and assault, was gradually returning to normal.

“The situation in Tura is under control. Curfew was relaxed for two hours from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Thursday in all areas of West Garo Hills district to facilitate public to purchase the essential items including medicines and food items,” Vibhor Aggarwal, the district magistrate said.

Similarly, curfew was relaxed from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursday in East Garo Hills district to allow people to procure essential items, officials said. Meanwhile, Meghalaya police arrested 12 people in connection with arsons, looting and disrupting of public order in Tura.

“We have arrested 12 people so far in connection with the violence in Tura alone. We are still on the lookout for more involved in the recent



violent acts,” Abraham T. Sangma, the district police chief of West Garo Hills, said.

“As of now, the situation is under control. No new incident of violence was reported from anywhere in the district, but we are not taking chances and all security personnel have been instructed to be on a high alert to prevent any mischief acts,” the police official said. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Conrad Sangma went around

Tura town on Thursday and directed the district administration to provide food assistance to communities affected by the disturbances. After inspecting areas where shops and structures were damaged, he also assured residents of necessary government support to those affected. “Visited several locations in Tura to assess the damage caused to public and private properties across the town. It is truly heartbreaking to witness the extent of

the destruction. Distressed to see the loss suffered by individuals and commercial establishments,” the Chief Minister said.

He appealed to all to work towards restoring peace. The unrest had begun with protests opposing the participation of non-tribals in the elections to the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council (GHADC), prompting the government to postpone the polls, which were slated for April 10.

Tension has increased in Ukhrul following the capture of 20 citizens

Guwahati, Mar 13: Fresh tension flared up in Manipur’s Ukhrul district on Wednesday after 20 civilian passengers, including a pastor and women, were reportedly held captive by suspected militants along the Ukhrul-Imphal road. Reports said armed miscreants suspected to be cadres of a militant group intercepted Winger van at Shangkhai while they were travelling from Ukhrul towards Imphal. According to sources, passengers travelling on the Ukhrul-Imphal route were stopped near Mongkot Chephu village by armed militants. Unverified reports circulating on social media claimed that the vehicle was forcibly stopped and the passengers were taken away at Shangkhai and Mongkot Chephu villages, which are reportedly Kuki-dominated areas under Ukhrul district.

Meanwhile, considering the gravity of the situation, Manipur chief minister N. Biren Singh immediately directed senior police and administrative officials to closely monitor the situation and take steps to secure the safe release of the civilians. He warned that stringent action would be taken against those responsible for any unlawful act and appealed to those involved to ensure the safe and unconditional release of the captives. In a statement, the chief minister expressed concern over the incident and termed it a “cowardly act”, assuring that the government was treating the matter with utmost seriousness. Earlier, Tangkhul Naga Long (TNL) submitted a representation to the deputy commissioner of Ukhrul seeking immediate government intervention for the safe release of the civilians. The organisation stated that the incident was a grave violation of basic human rights and freedom of movement along the vital road connecting Ukhrul and Imphal, adding that the continued



captivity of innocent travellers had created fear and distress among their families. Meanwhile, according to Newmai News Network, TNL in a statement said it “took serious note of the abduction and taking hostage of more than 20 Naga civilian passengers, including senior cit-

izens, women and children,” allegedly by Kuki militants at Shangkhai village. Condemning the incident, TNL alleged that the act was carried out “in full view of the central security forces” and described it as “nothing but a pre-planned act of violence targeting the Nagas.”

NLA expresses worry Over neutral forces on Disputed Area Belt

Guwahati, Mar 13: The sensitive and often volatile Disputed Area Belt (DAB) along Assam-Nagaland border which took center stage in the Nagaland Legislative Assembly on Thursday, as legislators voiced grave concerns over territorial integrity, the “one-sided” enforcement of decades-old agreements, and the systemic neglect of border residents.

The discussion, initiated by NPF legislator Achumbemo Kikon during question hour, highlighted alleged violations of the 1972 interim agreement between Nagaland and Assam, increased deployment of police outposts by Assam along the border, and difficulties faced by residents in the disputed belt. Various ministers responded to the concerns raised by the legislator.

Kikon also said that Nagaland had complied with the 1972 interim agreement by withdrawing all NAP outposts and police stations from the disputed belt, while Assam had instead increased its presence. He also alleged that neutral forces such as the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) were not maintaining neutrality and were protecting citizens from the Assam side while obstructing certain activities on the Nagaland side. Among other issues, he also mentioned that after the last eviction drive, landowners in the area had held a meeting and decided to donate 10,000 acres of land to the state government, but no action had been taken by the government.

Responding to the queries, deputy chief minister in charge of Border Affairs and Home Y Patton said that prior to the 1972 agreement Nagaland had five police outposts along the border while Assam had thirteen. He said Nagaland withdrew all its outposts after the agreement, but Assam did not withdraw any and had since established 63 permanent police outposts along the border areas adjoining Nagaland. Patton further informed that about 102 Naga villages are located along the border with Assam and that the government was examining proposals from various departments regarding the establishment of eight to nine police outposts in bordering areas. Power supply to border villages: Raising the issue of power connectivity, Kikon said villagers from the Ralan area, along with organisations such as the Lotha Hoho and local women’s groups, had been collecting money to purchase fuel for generators used by the Indian Reserve Battalion (IRB) stationed at Tchuinjanphen. He asked the government about the progress made in extending power supply to the area. In his reply, power and parliamentary affairs minister K.G. Kenye said the disputed nature of the area had created difficulties in extending electricity supply to border villages. He said two attempts had been made by the department to extend power lines after he assumed office, including one last year, but the proposed alignment had to pass through disputed areas, which led to resistance and tensions.

Three KCP cadres arrested in anti-insurgency operations

Imphal, Mar 13: Manipur Police and central security forces have arrested three alleged cadres of the proscribed Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP) in separate anti-insurgency operations carried out across two valley districts over the past 48 hours, officials said on Friday. The arrested individuals were identified as Ningthoujam Thoi Leima alias Sundari (41), Naorem Yaiphaba Singh alias Keipha (20), and Ningthoujam Hemanta Singh alias Naocha (28). According to police, the three alleged KCP cadres were apprehended from Chanura Bazar in Bishnupur district and from areas under Thoubal Wangma Tabu in Thoubal district during coordinated operations. Security personnel recovered 140 rounds of 9 mm ammunition and two mobile phones from their possession. Meanwhile, the KCP has denied allegations that it collected Rs 20,000 from internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Torbung in Bishnupur district. In a statement, S. Mangal, Member-in-Charge of Information and Publicity of the outfit, said neither the organisation nor its armed wing was involved in the alleged extortion from displaced persons.

The statement further claimed that an internal inquiry conducted by the group indicated that individuals identified as Chingkeihunba Singh, Konthoujam Niraj alias



Ibai Sharat Meitei, Isaren, and Corcom Chalamba Wahengbam were responsible for the alleged collection. It also alleged that the phone calls related to the incident had originated from the Patsoi area in Imphal West district. The outfit urged the individuals named in the inquiry to present themselves before the organisation immediately.

Tripura: Tipra Motha will not break, says Pradyot Debbarman

Imphal, Mar 12: Amid speculation in Tripura’s political circles over a possible defection of several Tipra Motha legislators and members of the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC), Tipra Motha supremo Pradyot Kishore Debbarman on Thursday asserted that any attempt to split the party would not succeed. Addressing a party event at Lembucherra on the outskirts of Agartala, Debbarman dismissed reports of an internal rift and called on party workers to prepare for the politically significant elections to the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council. Political circles in the state have recently been abuzz with speculation that a number of Tipra Motha MLAs and MDCs could shift allegiance to the BJP. However, neither side has officially confirmed the names of any legislators who may be considering such a move. Debbarman said his political struggle was aimed at safeguarding the future of



the Tiprasa, the indigenous tribal population of Tripura. “For the next one month forget your political position and achievements. No one is an MLA, MDC or Bubagra (a Kokborok word for king). Each one of us are warriors who have to fight back. Our mission is not to make someone Minister or MLA, we want to secure the future of our next generation and children,” he said. Emphasising the

support he enjoys among people from his community, Debbarman added, “I may have my head severed from my neck, but shall never betray my people. Never forget that I am a Kshatriya. I am not afraid of any challenges,” seen my love but the time has arrived to face my anger. You have seen me breaking down in tears but now you will see how I fight back.”

All DCs, SPs of Assam told to prevent black marketing, hoarding of LPG cylinders

Guwahati, Mar 13: Amid fears of LPG shortage, the Assam government has instructed all District Commissioners and Superintendents of Police to remain vigilant and ensure that there is no diversion of domestic LPG cylinders for commercial use, hoarding, black marketing, or other unfair trade practices.

The direction was given in a video conference between Chief Secretary Dr Ravi Kota and all DCs and SPs to review the LPG supply situation in the State and to ensure that necessary precautionary measures are in place to prevent any disruption or public inconvenience.

The State Level coordinator for LPG in Assam and ED IOCL briefed about the stock situation and as such, there is no shortage of LPG in the State. However, given the geopolitical situation, DCs and SSPs were advised to take necessary precautions.

They were also directed to regularly coordinate with Oil Marketing Companies, monitor stock positions, and undertake public awareness measures to prevent panic booking and misinformation so that the supply situation remains stable and the public does not face any inconvenience.

Dr Kota clarified that district authorities should not issue independent instructions or SOPs to LPG dealers regarding stock maintenance. Any matter requiring urgent intervention should be referred to the State Level Committee constituted for this purpose. Additionally, two committees have been notified at the State level, including a Media Management Committee, and districts were advised to establish similar coordination mechanisms locally.

Two arrested with 1.04 kg of Brown Sugar

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During the operation, at 6:54 p.m., two persons riding a Honda Dio scooter (MN06SX5443) coming from Yairipok Ningthounai towards Yambem PHC were detained. On search of the vehicle in presence of a Gazetted Officer, one black plastic polythene concealed inside a green plastic polythene containing suspected Brown Sugar weighing approximately 1.04 kg (including packaging) was recovered from the toolbox. The detained persons were identified as Md. Najimuddin (31 yrs) of Yairipok Ningthounai Mathak Leikai and Md. Jabir (27 yrs) of Yairipok Ningthounai, Imphal East. Brown Sugar approximately 1.04 kg, mobile phones with SIM cards and Honda Dio scooter (MN06SX5443) were seized from their possession.

Both accused were arrested at about 7:05 p.m. and the seized items were taken into possession under Section 43 NDPS Act, 1985. The arrested persons along with the seized items have been handed over to Andro Police Station for further legal action.



Arunachal CM Pema Khandu Releases ₹33.41 Crore

Itanagar, Mar 13: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu has sanctioned the release of ₹33.41 crore to provide relief to families affected by hydro-electric projects in the state. The announcement underscores the government's commitment to balance infrastructure development with social responsibility, ensuring that communities impacted by large-scale projects are not left behind. Officials confirmed that the funds will be directed toward project-affected families, offering compensation and support to help them rebuild their livelihoods.

The Chief Minister highlighted that while hydropower projects are crucial for Arunachal's economic growth and energy security, the welfare of citizens remains a top priority. He assured that the government will continue to adopt measures that safeguard the interests of local communities while pursuing development goals. The relief package is expected to address both immediate needs and long-term rehabilitation, including assistance for housing, livelihood restoration, and community development initiatives.

Khandu emphasized that sustainable progress must go hand in hand with compassion, reiterating that the government's vision is to harness Arunachal's vast hydro-power potential without compromising the well-being of its people. The announcement has been welcomed across the state as a positive step toward inclusive development. It reflects a broader effort by the government to ensure that modernization and infrastructure growth are accompanied by meaningful support for those directly affected.

Goalpara Villages Get Solar Lights to Prevent Elephant Encounters

Guwahati, Mar 13: Fifteen solar street lights have been installed for mitigation of human elephant conflict (HEC) by Northeast's leading wildlife and biodiversity conservation organisation, Aaranyak, and the Assam Forest Department at several locations under Lakhipur and Krishnai Forest Ranges and an adjacent location under Goalpara Sadar Forest range in Goalpara district of Assam.

The installation of solar street lights was carried out recently with financial support from Centre for Species Survival-A unit of IUCN SSC, Asian Elephant Rapid Response Grant.

"These solar street lights are expected contributed substantially in respect of HEC mitigation and coexistence at the villagers will now be able to spot presence wild elephants at night in those illuminated areas from a distance which led to prevention of unwarranted confrontation with these animals," a statement issued by Aaranyak on Friday said.

Before the installation of the solar street lights, the local community of various locations were in a panic situation as they could



not realise the presence of wild elephant owing to darkness.

The solar street lights were installed in different villages such as Guriajar, Fofonga, Narayanpara under Krishnai Forest Range and Dhamor, Ambari, Bandarmatha, Pukhuripara, Besorkona, Sigri under Lakhipur Forest Range.

After Three Days of Violence, GH Finds Peace Again

Tura, Mar 13: After three days of intense violence that shook the Garo Hills region, a fragile sense of normalcy is slowly returning. No major incidents of violence or arson were reported on Thursday, though the situation remains tense, with sporadic risks lingering and authorities maintaining strict vigilance. A BSF DIG's convoy was attacked on Wednesday evening near Tura and a vehicle was set ablaze, officials said.

According to officials, the DIG and other personnel sustained minor injuries while one of the BSF vehicles was set on fire by the attackers. The unrest erupted on March 9 following protests against the participation of non-tribal candidates in the GHADC elections, originally scheduled for April 10. Tensions escalated when former Phulbari MLA S.G. Esma-tur Mominin and Enamul Hoque were allegedly manhandled while attempting to file nominations, sparking clashes in Chibinang between tribal and non-tribal groups. Violence quickly spread: In Chibinang, armed civilians roamed the market areas, torching the local GSU office and shops. Retaliatory attacks gutted over 30 shops, with at least two deaths reported on March 9 from group clashes involving sharp weapons and a country-made gun. Police used blank firing to disperse mobs. By March 10, the unrest reached Tura, where mobs torched shops, institutions, vehicles, and the NPP office. Wine stores were vandalised and looted. Rioters marched toward Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma's residence, prompting security forces to use tear gas, blank rounds, and reportedly live fire, injuring four with minor bullet wounds. In Williamnagar, mobs looted and torched properties on March 10-11 before police intervened. Authorities imposed indefinite curfew in the five districts of Garo Hills, suspended mobile internet to curb rumours, and deployed five Army columns alongside paramilitary forces for flag marches and patrols.

Several rioters have been arrested, with investigations ongoing. Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma and Leader of Opposition Mukul M. Sangma appealed for peace and restraint. The GHADC elections were postponed indefinitely due to the situation. On Thursday, residents emerged to clear debris from streets in Tura and other areas. Curfew was relaxed briefly from 8 am to 1 pm in some zones allowing residents to purchase essentials. Community members in Tura formed voluntary vigils to protect neighbourhoods from anti-social elements exploiting the chaos. West Garo Hills SP Abraham T. Sangma described the day as peaceful though tense, confirming multiple arrests and stressing on continued monitoring. A control room has been set up for public assistance with the helpline numbers: 6009926806 and 1077. Security forces remain deployed to prevent recurrence. Res-

Assam Secures ₹1.67 Lakh Cr Investment Commitments from Major Organisations

Guwahati, Mar 13: The Assam government on Thursday signed 'Confirmation of Investment' agreements with 69 leading business houses and public sector undertakings at a function in Guwahati.

The agreements are expected to bring investments amounting Rs 1,67,108.51 crore, generating approximately one lakh direct and indirect employment opportunities in the state.

Some of the major organisations that entered into the agreements include Adani Defence and Aerospace, Adani Airport City Limited, Ambuja Concrete North Pvt. Ltd., Ambuja Neotia Healthcare Venture Limited, Bharat A to Z Private Limited, Conmat Systems Pvt. Ltd., Numaligarh Refinery Limited, Oil India Limited, and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, among others.

Speaking on the occasion, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma thanked the participating companies for translating their commitments made during the investment summit into concrete partnerships.

Sarma said the agreements represent a significant step towards converting the momentum created during the summit into actionable investments.

The Chief Minister noted that by partnering with some of the country's most reputed business organisations in their expansion journey, Assam is steadily emerging as a preferred destination for industry, innovation and enterprise.

"These investments will accelerate industrial growth, generate employment opportunities and further strengthen the state's economic transformation," he said.

Highlighting the state's expanding industrial landscape, the Chief Minister remarked that "from tea to chips, Assam is steadily building a diversified and future-ready economy."

He also informed that during the summit, each partnership brings the state closer to its vision of be-



coming a vibrant investment hub in the country.

Sarma further stated that the Government of Assam remains firmly committed to enabling the state to play a meaningful role in Viksit Bharat, thereby contributing actively to India's journey towards becoming a developed nation.

He also informed that during the summit, Advantage Assam 2.0, investment MoUs worth Rs. 5.18 lakh crore were signed, reflecting unprecedented confidence in Assam's growth potential. "Projects worth nearly Rs 3 lakh crore have already been grounded within a year of the summit, marking significant progress in the implementation of these commitments," he said.

Drukair Announces Increase on Regional Connectivity with Reintroduction of Bangkok and Singapore Services via Guwahati starting this April 2026

Guwahati Mar 13: Drukair, Royal Bhutan Airlines, has announced the reintroduction of twice-weekly flights from Paro to Bangkok via Guwahati and commencement of third weekly frequency on its Singapore route via Guwahati starting this April 2026.

The reintroduction of twice-weekly flights to Bangkok via Guwahati restores an important regional link that has historically played a significant role in facilitating tourism, medical travel, education, and business exchanges among Bhutan, Northeast states of India, and Thailand.

Bangkok remains a major regional gateway with extensive global connectivity, and the reinstated service is expected to further stimulate tourism flows into the region while supporting outbound travel by Bhutanese passengers.

The expanded flight services will operate on the Paro-Guwahati-Singapore (v.v.) and Paro-Guwahati-Bangkok (v.v.) sectors, further strengthening Bhutan's regional air connectivity and enhancing travel options for passengers across South and Southeast Asia.

The additional Singapore frequency is introduced in response to sustained growth in passenger demand and reflects Drukair's strategic focus on expanding access to key international gateways. Singapore serves as one of the world's leading aviation and financial hubs, providing seamless onward connectivity to major destinations across Asia-Pacific, Europe, Australia, and North America.

The increased frequency will offer greater flexibility, improved schedule options, and more efficient connections for both inbound and outbound travellers.

Commenting on the expansion, the Chief Executive Officer of Drukair, Mr. Tandi Wangchuk stated:

"The introduction of a third weekly service to Singapore and the reinstatement of our Bangkok flights via Guwahati represent a significant step in Drukair's ongoing network expansion strategy. The expansion aligns with the Government of India's 'Act East Policy' as well as provide support to the travel requirements of Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC) in southern Bhutan adjacent to Assam.

These services respond to growing market demand and reinforce our role in connecting Bhutan to key regional and global hubs. Enhanced connectivity is vital to supporting tourism growth, facilitating business and educational exchanges, and strengthening Bhutan's engagement with international markets.

As we expand, we remain committed to operating in a sustainable and commercially responsible manner while maintaining the highest standards of safety and service excellence."

These network enhancements underscore Drukair's continued commitment to supporting Bhutan's economic development priorities by improving market access, strengthening trade and investment linkages, and promoting high-value, sustainable tourism.

By leveraging Guwahati as a strategic transit point, the airline enhances regional integration while optimizing operational efficiency and passenger convenience.

Governor flags in National Integration Tour at New Keithelmanbi Garrison

Imphal, Mar 13: Assam Rifles has taken a noble way to foster peace and harmony in Manipur. The NIT encompassing the youth leaders of the State was a significant milestone towards promoting national unity and youth empowerment. It was stated by Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla who flagged-in the 10-day National Integration Tour at New Keithelmanbi Garrison today.

The ceremony was conducted in the presence of senior officials from Assam Rifles and Police, parents and participants of the tour. The National Integration Tour, organised under Operation Sadbhavana by 33 Assam Rifles, commenced with a Flag-off Ceremony on 03 March 2026 by Chief Minister Y Khemchand Singh. 24 youths comprising boys and girls from Imphal, Thoubal, Noney and Kangpokpi districts travelled from Imphal to Kolkata, where they experienced communal harmony during Ramadan Iftar at Zakaria Street, enjoyed a ferry ride on the Hooghly River and visited iconic landmarks including Howrah Bridge and Millennium Park. The participants reached Thruvananthapuram by train on March 6, where they interacted with the Governor of Kerala and visited prominent cultural, scientific and scenic locations including the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Vizhinjam Lighthouse and Kovalam Beach. On March 8, the group visited Pangode Military Station, the Priyadarshini Planetarium, and proceeded to Kanyakumari, witnessing the southernmost tip of mainland India and the Vivekananda Rock Memorial. The tour further extended to Mumbai, where the participants experienced the iconic Mumbai local trains and visited the Gateway of India, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, Marine Drive and the Bandra Worli Sea Link. The tour concluded in Kolkata with an interaction with senior officials at Command Headquarters, Eastern Command if Indian Army. Addressing the gathering, the Governor lauded the Assam Rifles for its people-centric approach and unwavering commitment towards nurturing harmony and national integration. He highlighted that such integration tours play a vital role in broadening the horizons of youth, instilling confidence and fostering unity in diversity. He also appreciated the emphasis laid on encouraging girl participants, describing



them as key agents of social transformation. In his welcome address, the Dy Inspector General Assam Rifles (South) underscored the importance of the tour in conveying the message of peace and cultural harmony. He described the participants as ambassadors of peace and expressed confidence that the lifelong bonds formed between Assam Rifles and participants would continue for eternity. The National Integration Tour stands as a testament to the Assam Rifles' enduring role beyond security, reinforcing its commitment to nation-building, youth empowerment and strengthening the bond with the people of Manipur.

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*Editorial*

Government Must Take Stern Action Against Spurious Drugs

Counterfeit medicines are a silent epidemic claiming lives across the country. The time for half-measures is over. Spurious Drugs - counterfeit, adulterated, or substandard medicines — represent one of the gravest threats to public health in India today. From rural dispensaries to urban pharmacies, fake medications are silently infiltrating the supply chain, robbing patients of healing and, in many cases, costing them their lives. The menace is no longer a fringe problem; it is a systemic crisis demanding urgent government intervention. Recent reports have exposed the alarming scale of the racket. Fake antibiotics, cancer medications, and even life-saving cardiac drugs have been seized across multiple states — yet prosecutions remain dismally low. Regulatory agencies like the CDSCO are often under-staffed and under-funded, while state drug controllers lack the teeth to enforce compliance rigorously. The government must act on multiple fronts simultaneously. First, the Drugs and Cosmetics Act must be amended to prescribe mandatory minimum sentences for those convicted of manufacturing or selling spurious drugs. Treating such offences as equivalent to homicide is not an exaggeration — it is a legal and moral necessity. Second, a national, real-time drug-tracking system using QR codes or blockchain must be mandated for every medicine sold in India, so consumers and regulators alike can verify authenticity at the point of purchase. Third, whistleblower protections must be strengthened so that insiders in pharmaceutical firms can report malpractice without fear of reprisal. Industry self-regulation has patently failed; independent third-party audits of manufacturing units must become the norm, not the exception. Citizens trust medicines with their lives. When that trust is betrayed for profit, it is not merely a commercial crime — it is a moral outrage. The government owes it to every patient in this country to shut down the spurious drug mafia decisively and permanently.

The challenges before the prime minister

The new dispensation—new election, new parliament, new leadership at the helm of the country, and new possibility of accountable governance—can truly be called a product of public will. Tarique Rahman’s emergence as the new leader is also part of that change, which was impossible to imagine before the fall of Sheikh Hasina but appeared inevitable after. In fact, when we participated in the February 12 election, the prospect of his becoming the next prime minister seemed like a foregone conclusion. Such was the transformative nature of the change of fortune.

During his campaign as well as following his massive electoral victory, Tarique has given the impression of being a sober, reflective, and clear-thinking leader. He can be credited to have made a good start. Those have led to questions on which the prime minister must seriously introspect. Normally, for anyone, first-time premiership can be quite challenging. It becomes far more so in case of a country like ours. Of course, we love Bangladesh with all our heart, but our mind never fails to warn us about the tremendous complexity of administering our beloved country. To start with, taking care of such a huge population—close to 18 crore—that lives within such a limited terrain—over 147,000 sq-km—and faces relentless natural calamities makes successful governance extremely difficult. Our industrial growth, though impressive compared to many other countries, suffers from a shortage of capital, lack of skilled workers, supply shortages, inadequate infrastructure, and vital management flaws, not to mention a short supply of energy.

Added to that is the political instability that seems to be our fate. In fact, this new government has inherited over 15 years of corruption followed by 18 months of not so effective governance. Whatever normal challenges the new prime minister would have encountered have now multiplied severalfold with the international order being sent on a wild spin by the whimsical and indecipherable decisions of the US president who appears to be serving the interest of Israel more than that of the US. High unemployment, weak investment, the need for job creation, curbing inflation, export diversification, and stabilising the banking sector are among the most urgent economic challenges the BNP government faces.

On the political side, rebuilding democratic institutions and allowing diversity of views and dissent will take time, but the early signs of that must appear from the very start. One of the most challenging tasks that Tarique Rahman is likely to face is handling parliament with an opposition which, if I am not mistaken, will be robust under Jamaat-e-Islami’s leadership. The question is: does the ruling party have enough experienced parliamentarians who know how to manoeuvre through the challenges that are likely to come? We are looking forward to the workings of the new parliament, which had its inaugural session yesterday. We hope to finally have a parliament that truly represents the electorate, and not just the party that our MPs are nominated from. After the restoration of the parliamentary

Banning groundwater irrigation in the Barind Tract is not the answer

In the 1970s, Bangladesh faced recurring food shortages driven by floods, droughts, and monsoonal uncertainty. Today, it feeds nearly 18 crore people. Rice output rose from about one crore tonnes in 1971 to 3.7 crore tonnes in 2020. This transformation was powered largely by groundwater.

The country withdraws around 32 cubic kilometres of groundwater annually on average, roughly equivalent to draining nearly five Kaptai Lake reservoirs. The Green Revolution of the 1980s and 1990s introduced high-yield crop varieties, fertilisers and, crucially, groundwater-fed irrigation. Nearly 80 percent of dry season Boro rice depends on groundwater. Without it, near self-sufficiency in food grains would not have been possible. Nowhere is this shift more striking than in the Barind Tract of northwest Bangladesh. Once drought-prone and famine-affected, it became one of the country’s rice bowls through intensive irrigation. I refer to this as the “Barind Paradox”: groundwater transformed a dry landscape into an agricultural powerhouse, yet overuse now threatens the sustainability of that success.

Groundwater abstraction has increased dramatically over the years. In the High Barind Tract and adjoining areas, the geological conditions limit additional recharge. In some areas, dry season groundwater levels now fall below the lifting

limit of traditional hand-operated wells (around seven to eight metres), making access to drinking water increasingly difficult. In several unions, seasonal shortages have become persistent, and in a few places, perennial. These realities demand serious policy attention. However, the gazette notification by the interim government, designating 4,911 villages across 25 upazilas in three districts (Rajshahi, Naogaon and Chapainawabganj) of the Barind Tract region as water-stressed for 10 years, introduced sweeping restrictions that may create new risks while attempting to solve existing ones.

The notification states, “The construction of new tubewells and extraction of groundwater for any purpose other than drinking water will be prohibited, and the abstraction of groundwater through existing tubewells for any purpose other than drinking water supply will be prohibited.” The notification also states that compliance with regulations is mandatory and that any violation will be considered a punishable offence under the Bangladesh Water Act, 2013.

Image This is a profound shift. The notified area covers roughly 5,000 square kilometres of irrigated land, where an estimated 100,000 shallow and deep tubewells operate officially during the Rabi season, according to the 2018-19 Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) Minor Irrigation

Report. Around 14 lakh farmers depend directly on groundwater irrigation in these 25 upazilas. An outright ban across such a vast area could destabilise one of the pillars of the country’s food security.

Three concerns arise due to this ban. First is the immediate economic and social impact. Farmers, agricultural labourers, agri-input suppliers and local businesses form an interconnected rural economy built around irrigated agriculture. A sudden ban risks disrupting livelihoods at scale, particularly in a region where alternative water sources and income opportunities are acutely limited.

The second is enforceability. Policing groundwater abstraction would be extremely challenging. Blanket bans often lead to unintended consequences, including informal or illegal pumping. Early indications suggest irrigation has not ceased in most areas, highlighting the difficulty of enforcing the ban. Regulation without realistic enforcement mechanisms can erode respect for policy, rather than strengthening it.

The third concern is about governance and trust. For decades, institutions such as the Barind Multipurpose Development Authority (BMDA), the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), and NGOs like BRAC have worked closely with farming communities to expand irrigation, improve productivity, and reduce poverty. A top-

down prohibition risks weakening that long-standing trust. Effective water management depends not only on regulation but also on cooperation between communities and local institutions.

The policy appears to draw heavily on a 2025 report commissioned by the Water Resources Planning Organisation (WARPO) and conducted by the Institute of Water Modelling (IWM), which assessed groundwater storage, recharge and safe yield in the Barind Tract region. While the comprehensive and technically robust study identifies areas of water stress and calls for improved water management, it did not recommend a blanket ban on irrigation. Some of its assumptions merit careful reconsideration in translating scientific findings into policy.

Groundwater recharge was estimated using a single-year (2017) water balance model, with 75 percent treated as the “safe yield” for each union. Yet, recharge in northwest Bangladesh is dynamic. Over the past three to four decades, intensive irrigation pumping has induced additional recharge—the “Bengal Water Machine” recognised in the WARPO report.

Using a one-year estimate to set long-term abstraction limits risks oversimplifying this evolving hydrogeological system. It also assumes groundwater levels must return to pre-irrigation conditions to achieve “safe yield,” over-

looking structural shifts in both water use and recharge since the 1990s. Under sustained irrigation, aquifers tend to adjust towards a new dynamic equilibrium over time rather than revert to their pre-development state. Groundwater depletion should not be ignored. In parts of the High Barind Tract, water stress is severe and targeted restrictions are justified. However, a blanket ban risks being disproportionate. If the same criteria were applied, Dhaka would also qualify as a highly water-stressed area. Yet, the strategy there has been a gradual transition and diversification, not prohibition, recognising the economic and political realities of managing a capital city. If Dhaka is managed through transition rather than bans, why should the Barind Tract be treated differently?

A more balanced and staggered approach in the Barind Tract would impose strict pumping bans on the most critically stressed unions, starting with those classified as very high water-stressed (47 unions fall into this category). Installation of new irrigation wells should not be permitted in high water-stressed zones (40 unions), and abstraction should be gradually reduced by 50 percent over the next five years. Irrigation, with close monitoring of groundwater levels, should be allowed in moderate to very low-stress areas (128 unions). Deficits could be addressed by redistributing irrigation demand, promoting the

conjunctive use of surface and groundwater where feasible, improving canals, and enhancing rainwater storage in pond-based systems.

Crop diversification must also be accelerated. Farmers are already gradually shifting from water-intensive rice to other, less water-demanding crops. High-value crops such as mango and dragon fruit—as well as alternative livelihoods like livestock, dairy, poultry, and small-scale enterprises—deserve policy support.

But transitions take time. Abrupt prohibitions can undermine adaptive change rather than facilitate it. Surface water use should be expanded where reliable, though its availability remains highly seasonal, and climate variability adds uncertainty. Strengthening local institutions such as BMDA, DAE services and NGOs will be essential to restoring trust and implementing context-specific solutions.

Groundwater has been central to Bangladesh’s agricultural transformation, lifting millions out of hunger. Yet, overuse in some areas now demands careful stewardship. The answer is not indiscriminate bans, but smarter zoning, groundwater and abstraction monitoring, and targeted regulation. The country does not need to choose between food security and environmental sustainability; both require science-based, proportionate and integrated water resources management.

Can we use private healthcare to improve health literacy

When a diabetic patient walks out of a hospital without understanding how to manage their condition between visits, the cost of that failure is economic as much as it is medical. The patient may return sicker, require more expensive intervention, and quite possibly push their family deeper into debt. Multiply that by millions of patient interactions every year in a country where nearly 69 percent of health expenditure is paid directly out of pocket, and the picture becomes systemic. Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), also known as chronic diseases, are conditions that demand sustained management, early intervention, and informed patient behaviour. In Bangladesh, due to the absence of structured health literacy, NCDs account for around 67 percent of all deaths, with nearly one in five people between 30 and 70 years of age at the risk of dying, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Currently, public health communication in Bangladesh remains largely campaign-driven: seasonal dengue awareness, immunisation pushes, and periodic chronic disease messaging. These efforts reach millions but are episodic, centrally designed, and constrained by a system where public health spending stays below one percent of GDP. So, families often find themselves in a position where they have to decide on what symptoms to act upon, when to seek specialist consultation, how to manage hypertension between visits, whether to trust health advice circulating on social media, with almost no consistent, credible source of guidance. This is a gap that can be bridged through a collaboration between public and private healthcare. The private healthcare sector, now responsible for over half of total healthcare demand, operates thousands of digital platforms, call centres, outreach programmes, and dedicated marketing teams that collectively reach millions daily.

The communication infrastructure produces an array of promotional content on a regular basis: physician profiles, equipment announcements, service advertisements, and patient testimonials. However, it fails to ensure a proper health education for the general people. This is not because hospitals are indifferent. It is because no policy connects private healthcare communication to public health objectives. There are no national standards defining what evidence-based health education from a private provider should look like. There is no incentive—through accreditation weighting, licensing consideration, or targeted tax benefits—that signals health literacy output carries institutional value. Without that signal, investing in health education remains commercially irrational. The gap is not one of intent but of policy. Health education does not have to mean national campaigns or expensive programmes. Much of it can be embedded in what hospitals already do. For example, a cardiologist’s pro-

file can include guidance on symptoms that warrant urgent evaluation. An endocrinology announcement can outline warning signs of uncontrolled diabetes. Discharge instructions can include standard follow-up messaging. Similarly, a doctor who takes two minutes to explain why completing an antibiotic course matters is delivering health education, as is the nurse who teaches a new mother to recognise danger signs in her newborn. These might not be grand interventions and may cost almost nothing individually, but across millions of patient interactions every year, they reshape how a population relates to its own health. For that to happen, a systematic change must be brought forth. Making it systematic means repositioning hospital communication teams to work alongside trained public health education and promotion specialists who can embed evidence-based guidance into routine outreach. This is not an additional burden on private providers. Hospitals that integrate health education into their communication build deeper community trust, attract patients earlier in their care journey, and differentiate themselves in an increasingly competitive market. The framework succeeds precisely because it aligns public health objectives with institutional self-interest and participation becomes commercially rational, not charitable. But this shift requires a professional workforce that barely exists in Bangladesh’s private healthcare sector: public health education and promotion specialists trained in behavioural science, health communication, and programme evaluation.

Currently, these professionals work mostly in government agencies, NGOs, and international organisations, not because they are irrelevant to private healthcare, but because there is currently no framework that generates demand for them there. Once the policy framework is created, the demand follows. And when the demand creates positions, it opens the door to measurable impact. The government does not need new bureaucracies for this. Its scope, however, has never extended to the private sector. Expanding the bureau’s authority to set standards for private-sector health communication, staffed by public health education professionals—not administrative generalists—would give this framework an institutional home. Three mechanisms would make it operational: national content standards for private providers, incentive structures tied to health literacy output, and a public-private health communication compact enabling government messaging to flow through private networks during outbreaks and health emergencies. If even a quarter of private healthcare communication incorporated structured health education, the effect on population health literacy would exceed what public spending increases alone could achieve. So, the question is not whether this would work.

Purchase PNB and Union PSU bank equities on a recent correction

New Delhi: Antique Stock Broking has turned positive on select PSU stocks such as Punjab National Bank (PNB) and Canara Bank following the recent correction. The brokerage, which analysed the historical performance of banking stocks during major global events and crude oil shocks, said PSU banking stocks tend to underperform their private banking peers on account of their higher treasury contribution to earnings. "In most instances, PSU banks have also more than reversed the losses within six months post the correction," it said.Since February 28, PSU banks have fallen an average 11 per cent compared with 7 per cent drop for private banks, a trend similar to that in the past. In the near term, Antique said PSU bank earnings may reflect the pressure of the steepening G-sec yields on their quarterly trading profits. "Whilst we remain conservative on PSU bank margins and retain our target multiple of 1 time FY28 book value, we upgrade PNB and Canara Bank to 'Buy' based on valuation upside from CMP," it said.Amongst PSU banks, Antique prefers State Bank of India (SBI) due to a strong liability franchise,



continued market share gains in both advances and deposits coupled with margin levers in the form of unsecured Xpress credit growth and strong CA growth. It also likes Union Bank of India due to expectation of strong return on asset (RoA) of 1.15-1.25 per cent in FY27. The brokerage suggested a target of R 140 on PNB, Rs 165 on Canara Bank, Rs 225 on Union Bank and Rs 1,210 on SBI. Given the intensifying deposit competition especially in the face of improving credit growth environment, banks with weaker liability franchises are likely to face higher headwinds, Antique said."In

that context, we believe that the strength of the liability franchise is reflected in (i) liability mix - lower bulk deposit share and lower share of high cost borrowings, (ii) funding cost resilience even in an increasing rate environment," Antique said The brokerage analysed the correction in the banking stocks post major geo-political events, wars and crude oil shocks such as World trade center attack, 26/11 and Pulwama terrorist attacks in India, Russia Ukraine conflict, commodity super-cycle peak in 2007-08 and Iran sanctions in 2017-18. In most of these periods, PSU bank stocks

corrected more in comparison to private banks, it said. "However, in 3-6 months post the corrections PSU banks have more than reversed the losses in each of these periods, even higher than their private peers. with the exception of the period of crude oil shock during Iran sanctions in 2018-19, as it coincided with the corporate asset quality cycle where PSU banks were more impacted than private banks," Emkay said.Going by previous trends and considering underlying growth trends, post stabilisation of the crisis, it expect PSU banks to revert back to pre-crisis multiples over the next six months.

Beyond Biscuits: Britannia is doubling down on Dairy Croissants

Mumbai: Packaged food major Britannia Industries is doubling down on premium products and expanding beyond biscuits as it seeks to sustain growth in a highly competitive market. At the same time, Britannia has increased the use of low unit packs (LUPs) priced at Rs 5– 10 to make premium products more accessible to price-sensitive consumers. These packs now contribute around 60% of total sales, compared with about 40% in 2019, as per the Antique Stock Broking report. unorganised in India, thereby it presents a long-term growth opportunity for branded players. The company has already seen traction in several adjacencies. For instance, it has built scale in the wafer cream segment, estimated at about Rs 10 billion in FY24 and growing at roughly 25% annually, while croissants developed in partnership with Chipita have

gained consumer traction nationally, the Antique Stock Broking report added. A new report by Antique Stock Broking initiates coverage on the company with a 'Buy' rating and a target price of Rs 7,000, citing strong growth potential driven by premiumisation, expansion into adjacent food categories and deeper distribution in underpenetrated markets. This implies 18% upside from current levels. The brokerage sees Britannia positioning itself as a "total food company" while maintaining leadership in its core biscuit business.Premium biscuits remain the backbone A major driver of Britannia's growth has been its expanding distribution network. The company's direct reach has increased from about 0.7 million outlets in FY14 to around 2.9 million outlets in FY25, adding roughly 200,000 outlets annually on average.Britannia has also

expanded its Rural Preferred Dealer (RPD) network, which covers smaller towns and villages. The number of such dealers has grown sharply from around 7,000 in FY15 to nearly 31,000 in FY25, the Antique Stock Broking report stated. Despite this expansion, there remains considerable headroom in the Hindi belt, which accounts for around 35% of industry volumes but only about 15% of Britannia's sales.Britannia's strategy is centred on upgrading its core biscuit portfolio toward premium offerings, according to the report. Premium products now account for roughly 65–70% of the company's sales, significantly higher than many industry peers. The shift has been driven by new product launches and a focus on value-added offerings under brands such as NutriChoice and Pure Magic, the report added.

Gold Rate Today 13th March 2026: Gold is down by 0.80%; check prices in Mumbai, Chennai

Mumbai: On 13 March 2026, the price of 24K gold at ₹159,260 per 10 grams, reflecting a loss of ₹1,290 compared to its previous close. Meanwhile, 22K gold is at ₹145,988 per 10 grams.Gold prices in India are largely influenced by international spot gold rates, US dollar fluctuations, and import duties on Gold among other things. Analysts expect gold prices to remain range-bound in the near term due to the prolonged Middle Eastern war, which is fuelling oil and energy prices. However, experts have noted that the undertone for the yellow metal remains bullish over sustained central bank buying and the use of the asset as a safe-haven hedge.Gold prices in India continue to remain higher than in Dubai. On 13 March 2026 the price of 24K gold in India is at ₹159,260 per 10 grams, while in Dubai it is ₹153,953, reflecting a difference of ₹5,307 or 3.45%. Similarly, 22K and 18K gold prices in India were also about 3.45% costlier compared to the price of gold in Dubai, not accounting for fees, duties, and taxes. Gold prices are trending down on the back of a rise in the dollar index, which has surged to its month-high record levels. A strong dollar makes



precious metals like gold more expensive for other currency holders, thereby denting demand.The yellow metal has extended declines over the week owing to inflationary concerns caused by rising oil prices, which came amid the ongoing

Iran war.The prolonged West Asia conflict has also reduced expectations of rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve. Markets now price in one rate cut by the Fed for this year. Non-interest-yielding assets like gold become less appealing

for investors when interest rates are high. Geopolitical uncertainties have failed to attract traction for gold prices, as analysts have pointed out that soaring energy prices have forced investors to liquidate their positions.

TTK Prestige and Stove Kraft could be key stocks to watch amid LPG shortage

Mumbai: The liquid petroleum gas (LPG) shortage is making a dent across the hospitality and restaurant segments, with many small-time food joints on the verge of temporary shutdown. The government has temporarily prioritised cooking gas cylinder supplies to some key sectors such as education and hospitals. This brings a spectrum of stocks under focus that are directly related to the news. Food delivery apps like Eternal and Swiggy are being directly impacted, and shares of both have been on a losing streak for the past two sessions. Furthermore, GAIL (India), Indraprastha Gas, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation, Reliance Industries, Oil And Natural Gas Corporation, and many other gas stocks continue to be on the investor's radar in Thursday's trade. The other big space to watch is the electric induction stove market. Induction oven makers like TTK Prestige, Stove Kraft rallied in trade on Wednesday and continue to be in focus on Thursday too, as the situation escalates in the Strait of Hormuz area. However, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas' Joint Secretary Sujata Sharma gave assurance that domestic LPG cylinders



will be delivered within nearly 2.5 days of booking and that the government has carried a major chunk of the cost increase. The inter-booking gap has been widened from 21 to 25 days as a demand management measure. Also, the oil ministry has constituted a three-member committee that comprises Oil Marketing Companies' (OMC) executive directors to review requests for LPG

supply from restaurants and hotels, and other non-domestic sectors.The government has asked refineries to raise LPG production. Authorities have also directed OMCs to prioritise domestic LPG connections over commercial users, emphasising that household consumers will remain the top priority. Reliance Industries said it is taking steps to maximise LPG production from its refinery at

Jamnagar. The company said that it will divert natural gas supply to key sectors. The refiner said, in an exchange filing, that natural gas produced from the KG-D6 Basin will be diverted to support supply to priority sectors, in line with national energy priorities and government guidelines. "Reliance Industries is taking proactive steps and, in line with the government guidelines, to maximise LPG production from our refining and petrochemicals complexes at Jamnagar, the world's largest integrated refining hub. Our teams are working around the clock to optimise refinery operations and enhance LPG output so that supplies to the domestic market remain stable and reliable," the company said.Prime Minister Narendra Modi appealed to the citizens not to panic over the LPG shortage triggered by the ongoing tensions in West Asia, and assured that the government will safeguard public interests. The Prime Minister said the conflict has disrupted global energy supply chains, leading to challenges in the availability of commercial LPG cylinders that are widely used by hotels and restaurants across the country.

YES Securities see up to 60% upside in stocks

Mumbai: Domestic brokerage firm YES Securities remains positive on solar cell manufacturers including Waaree Energies Ltd and Premier Energies Ltd. In its recent report dated March 10, 2025, the brokerage has maintained a 'buy' rating on both the stocks, suggesting up to 60 per cent upside in them. Shares of Premier Energies dropped over 2.7 per cent to Rs 768 on Thursday, against its previous close at Rs 789. Its total market capitalizations slipped below Rs 35,500 crore. Similarly, Waaree Energies' stock dropped more than 2.5 per cent to Rs 2,615.15 during the day, with its total market capitalization barely holding Rs 76,000 crore mark. The stock had settled at Rs 2,682.70 on Wednesday.Rooftop solar installations have experienced significant growth, more than doubling to 7.1GW in 2025, according to YES Securities. The firm attributes this expansion to improved subsidy execution and ongoing policy schemes, which together are expected to drive sustained medium-term demand growth and increase the share of domestically produced modules and cells in projects.According to YES Securities, Indian solar cell manufacturers are navigating a period of transformation, marked by ongoing supply constraints and margin pressures. The sector has traditionally depended on imported cells, but recent policy interventions, such as ALMM and PLI incentives, have spurred investment in local manufacturing capabilities. This shift remains critical as the industry moves towards adopting higher-eff

iciency N-type platforms like TOPCon and HJT, replacing older Mono PERC technologies. YES Securities observes that new capacity additions are increasingly driven by the adoption of advanced solar technologies, supported by developer preferences and policy-driven efficiency requirements. However, despite a bullish long-term view on domestic manufacturing and backward integration strategies, YES Securities has lowered its valuation multiples for Waaree Energies and Premier Energies in response to elevated near-term risks and margin pressuresThe domestic demand outlook for solar modules is robust, YES Securities highlights, anchored by utility-scale projects and increasing adoption in the commercial and industrial (C&I) and rooftop segments. Favourable power economics and corporate decarbonisation goals are supporting this momentum, while government initiatives such as PM Surya Ghar and KUSUM, coupled with expanding Green Open Access, continue to bolster demand across market segments LPG output so that supplies to the domestic market remain stable and reliable," the company said.Prime Minister Narendra Modi appealed to the citizens not to panic over the LPG shortage triggered by the ongoing tensions in West Asia, and assured that the government will safeguard public interests. The Prime Minister said the conflict has disrupted global energy supply chains, leading to challenges in the availability of commercial LPG

Israel bombards Beirut’s suburbs and southern Lebanon as the battle with Hezbollah grows



Iran: Israeli airplanes attacked Beirut’s southern suburbs and southern Lebanon after Hezbollah fired drones and rockets toward northern Israel on Wednesday night, further escalating the 10-day confrontation. On Wednesday night, Hezbollah launched multiple volleys of rockets and drone swarms toward Israel, wounding two persons, with the majority of the missiles intercepted or landing into open regions. Later, Iran’s Revolutionary Guards claimed to have conducted strikes against Hezbollah. According to a statement reported by the Fars and Tasnim news outlets, the Guards stated the “joint and integrated operation” included an Iranian missile assault combined with Hezbollah missile and drone fire. The operation aimed targeted “more than 50 targets” on Israeli soil, according to the statement, including Israeli military sites in Haifa, Tel Aviv, and Beersheva. The Hezbollah strike was the most intensive launched by the pro-Iran organization since it first fired rockets at Israel 10 days ago, starting Israel’s retaliatory military operation. The rockets were launched in unison with Iranian missiles, marking the first time the two countries coordinated strikes on Israel since the Iran conflict began. Hezbollah’s operation, dubbed “Operation Chewed Wheat” – a reference to a Quranic verse about reducing one’s enemies to chewed wheat – was a sharp escalation

by the group, believed to be battered by nearly two years of daily airstrikes by Israel. Lebanon was quickly becoming the most intense site of fighting in the region as the war in Iran, launched by Israel and the US two weeks prior, continued to consume the Middle East and beyond. Israeli warplanes began bombing Lebanon nearly immediately after Hezbollah’s strikes. The skies of Beirut were lit red and windows around the capital city shook as Israel unleashed its most powerful bombardment of the southern suburbs yet in this round of fighting. Videos showed collapsed buildings in southern Lebanon and streets choked with smoke illuminated by roaring flames. Israel also carried out a strike in the early hours of Thursday in the neighbourhood of Ramlet al-Baida in central Beirut, on the corniche where many displaced families had been sleeping rough for the last week. The strike hit the densely packed area, with videos showing at least two men lying dead on the seaside walkway. Lebanon’s health ministry said that at least seven people had been killed in the strike. Elsewhere, the health ministry said that at least 17 people were injured in the strikes on Beirut’s southern suburbs, though more casualties were expected from other strikes throughout the country. In southern Lebanon, Israel’s military spokesperson said that it was hitting Hezbollah’s missile launchers.

They warned residents that it would “soon act with overwhelming force” against Hezbollah and that residents should distance themselves from affected areas immediately, echoing displacement orders issued for vast swathes of the country earlier last week. Israeli strikes have killed at least 634 people and injured 1,586 in less than 10 days of fighting. More than 816,700 families have registered as displaced with the Lebanese state, but more are expected to have been displaced by Israeli airstrikes and displacement orders. Wednesday night’s escalation took place as Israeli officials signalled a possible widening of its campaign against Hezbollah in Lebanon. Israel’s security cabinet met on Wednesday night to discuss Lebanon, where officials sought to stop the group’s ability to launch rockets into Israeli territory. On Wednesday, Israeli military commander Lt Gen Eyal Zamir ordered troops to its northern border with Lebanon, redeploying the Golani Brigade from Gaza to the north. The Golani Brigade specialises in offensive field operations, and some believe its relocation might herald a bigger ground invasion of Lebanon. Hezbollah is apparently planning for an all-out Israeli assault on south Lebanon. Hezbollah militants have clashed with Israeli troops in south Lebanon, notably at crucial areas in the country’s east, such as hilltops

near al-Khiam. Small sections of Hezbollah’s elite Radwan force have been acting independently to ambush Israeli forces, who have been conducting in-and-out operations across southern Lebanon. Hezbollah allegedly spent the year and a half following the November 2024 truce with Israel upgrading its capabilities and reorganizing its organization. During the 13-month conflict, Israel assassinated the majority of the group’s top leadership and killed or crippled thousands of its militants, but the precise number is unknown. As violence raged in southern Lebanon, Israeli airstrikes increased during the last ten days. Israel hit an apartment building in central Beirut early on Wednesday morning, injuring four people. It was the second time in a week that Israel struck deep into the capital city, leaving locals scared and afraid of their safety. Lebanon’s government has called on Hezbollah to stop its firing into Israel, and has insisted that the state should hold the monopoly of violence in the country. But its understaffed, under-equipped army has so far been unable to confront the powerful armed group directly. The government also fears provoking civil strife in Lebanon, which has a long, painful history of sectarian division and violence. The Lebanese government, with French assistance, has appealed to the international community for a ceasefire in Lebanon, calling for negotiations with Israel while vowing to curb Hezbollah’s activities in the country. Israel and the US however, are sceptical that the Lebanese government can disarm Hezbollah, with the former seemingly determined to take on the group itself. Israel’s ambassador to the UN, Danny Danon, on Wednesday cast doubt on the Lebanese government’s efforts to confront Hezbollah. “If Hezbollah is being dismantled, what are the evidence? What are the operations against the launch sites? Where are the seizures of their weapons? Where is your military?” said Danon.

Israel and the United States are battling Iran jointly Are they on the same page, though



Israel: When the United States and Israel launched an attack on Iran, sparking a conflict that is now in its third week, it marked the beginning of something unprecedented: the first joint Israeli-American battle. Even though the United States has long been an important military supporter of Israel, this has never happened before. Unlike last year’s “12-day war,” in which Israel initiated a war that the US joined toward the conclusion with a single series of attacks on Iran’s nuclear facilities, this Israeli-American assault on Iran is closely coordinated at the operational level by both belligerents on a daily basis. That is precisely why clear, agreed objectives between Washington and Tel Aviv will be critical for the US to emerge from this war with a political triumph rather than merely the bill for massive damage across the region with no major change. Much of what we’ve seen thus far clearly implies that this is not the case; Israel and the United States have distinct interests here, if they even know what they are, and as a result, no clear conclusion can be envisioned, even as the war’s costs rise. From the outset the messaging around the war by Washington has been confused. Days before the war was launched, the president of the United States in his state of the union address touted low gas prices and the little he mentioned about Iran suggested he preferred a negotiated outcome. Once the war began, spiking gas prices shortly thereafter, the

administration couldn’t get on the same page about why the US was at war. Reasons given by administration officials and their allies spanned from saying Iran got to a place “where they could deliver 11 nuclear bombs”, Israel made the US do it, to prevent Iran from using a “conventional umbrella to continue [its] pursuit of nuclear ambitions”, Iran simply still had “nuclear ambitions” even though its sites had been obliterated, Iran has somehow been an imminent threat for 47 years and also regime change, to name a few. With so many reasons for why the US went to war, it is perhaps unsurprising that there is a range of different timelines coming from Washington on how long the war is expected to last. On 2 March, Trump said he expects the campaign to last four to five weeks but that it could “go far longer than that”. Two days later, war secretary Hegseth said it could be “six, it could be eight, it could be three weeks”. By 9 March, after oil approached \$120 a barrel, Trump said the “war is very complete, pretty much” and then said the war will end “soon” but not this week. On 11 March, Trump said it will end soon and that “any time [he] wants to end it [he] will end it”. We’ve also seen other indicators from US agencies suggesting a timeline. The treasury lifted Russian oil sale sanctions through 4 April and the Pentagon, Politico reported, is preparing for contingencies that the war will last “at least 100 days but likely through Sep-

tember”. Why is it so hard to figure out when objectives will be met? The primary reason why is that the US is a co-belligerent with another military in this war, Israel, which very likely has different objectives and it may be Benjamin Netanyahu, not Trump, that is in the driver’s seat. Trump has said that the decision to end the war will be a “mutual decision” with the Israeli prime minister, in effect giving the Israelis a veto over the use of the US military. So what happens if the US has seen enough of this war, a war most of the American public never wanted, even though Israel wants to continue? With the economic costs of this war of choice piling up, that seems to be the dead end we have inevitably arrived at, precisely because Netanyahu needs something else out of this war than Trump does. If you’ve been paying careful attention, you’ll see that this problem has been there since the beginning. A few days into the battle, Trump stated that following the initial Israeli attacks that killed Iran’s supreme leader, the US had identified other Iranian officials who may take control. Trump plainly favors a Venezuela-like outcome: a quick, showy, low-cost win that he can brag about rather than the long-term, messy, and costly regime change conflicts he campaigned against. However, there was a problem, as Trump admitted: “Most of the people we had in mind are dead.” He continued: “Now, we have another group. They may be

dead also, based on reports. So I guess you have a third wave coming in. Pretty sure we’re not going to know anybody.” What Trump leaves unsaid here is how his Venezuela-style exit strategy kept getting killed off. The answer is: Israeli strikes. It was not just human targets that seemed to divide US and Israeli war aims in this joint campaign; it was also certain infrastructure. Israel struck oil facilities in Tehran that led to apocalyptic scenes in the Iranian capital, heightened Iran’s resolve to target oil infrastructure in neighboring US allies, sent shockwaves into the oil market which puts the greatest pressure on Trump, and poisoned the environment in a city of 10 million people. Washington was unhappy with this and reports indicate it has made that clear to Tel Aviv. Confirming this, even Lindsey Graham, the US senator who has been the war’s biggest proponent in the US and who admitted to meeting with Israeli intelligence as part of an effort to sell the war to Trump, advised Israel against continuing to target such facilities. The differences between what Trump and Netanyahu want out of this war are increasingly starting to show and complicating how, when and on what terms it will end. Just like the strike with the B-2 bombers last year in Iran and with the Venezuela operation, Trump was hoping for a quick, low cost “victory”. Netanyahu needs something different.

According to analysts, European drivers would suffer a \$220 annual increase in fuel expenses as a result of the turmoil in Iran



Europe: Analysts warn that the rise in oil costs triggered by the conflict in Iran will cost European drivers an additional €220 (£190)

a year at the pump. In the UK, a different estimate puts the cost at an additional £140. A persistent oil price of \$100 per barrel, as ob-

served on Monday, would cost motorists in the EU €55 billion extra over a year, according to experts at the Transport & Environment

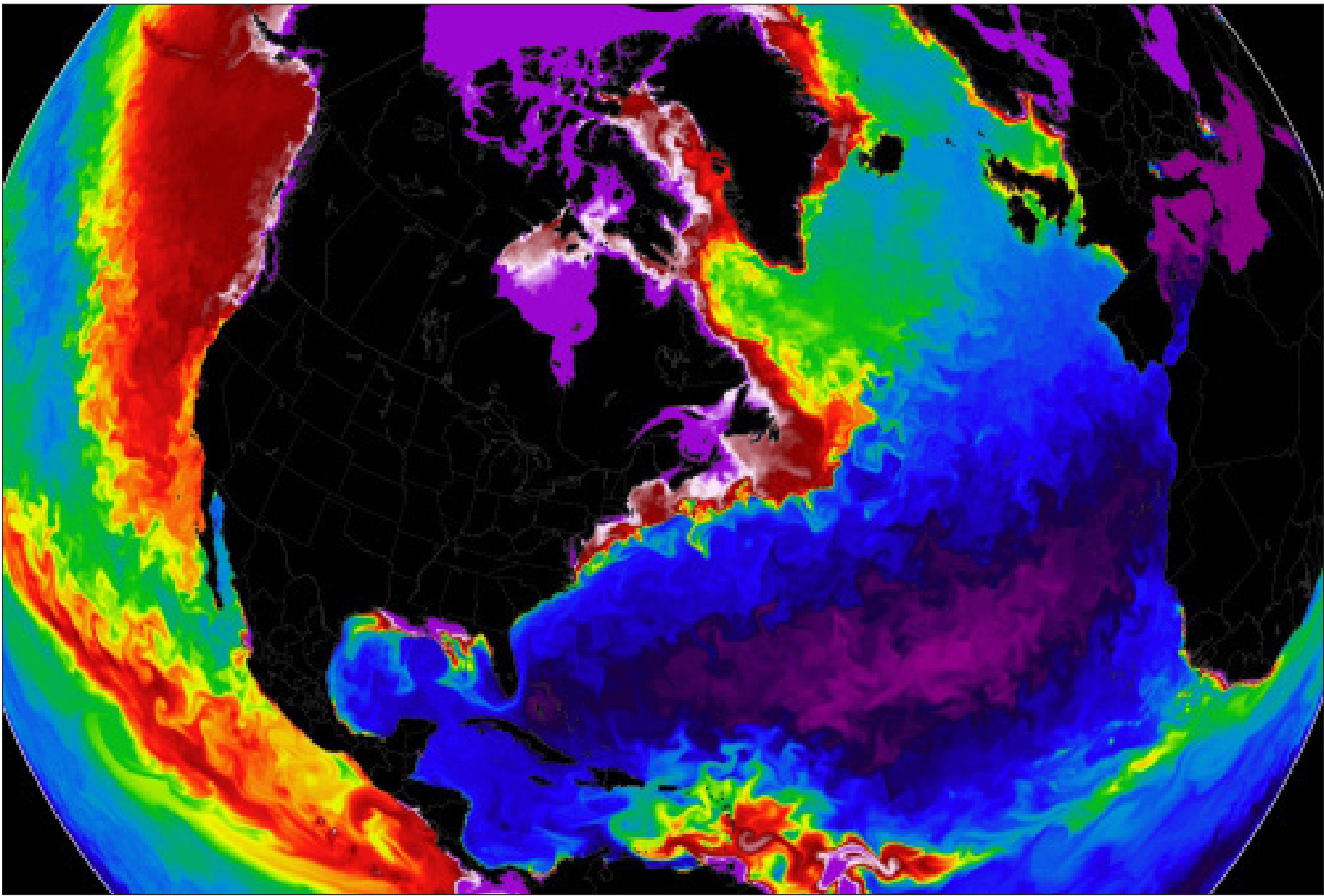
(T&E) thinktank. That equates to an average of €220 per driver, with higher-mileage drivers facing significantly larger increases. The evaluation was derived by comparing data from 2022, when Russia’s invasion of Ukraine drove the oil price beyond \$100, with data from 2017-2019. Analysts at the Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit (ECIU) estimate that at \$100 a barrel of oil, British drivers who travel 8,000 miles per year will face a £140 increase in annual fuel prices. This computation is based on fuel costs in early March, prior to the US and Israel’s attacks on Iran. Electric vehicles currently cost substantially less to fuel than gasoline or diesel vehicles, but the rise in oil costs is widening the gap even further. The yearly savings in the UK were already £870 per year, but with a \$100 oil price, the ECIU predicted that they would increase to more over £1,000 per year. The 7.7 million electric vehicles on the road in the EU today are already reducing oil use, but with a \$100 oil price, European electric drivers would save almost €40 million per day, according to T&E. Brent crude was trading at \$91 on Wednesday morning, with future prices contingent on how long the supply interruption lasts. “Europe’s oil dependency creates a geopolitical premium whenever there is global volatility,” said Antony Froggatt of T&E. “This will continue to put pressure on households and damage Europe’s economy until we eliminate our structural dependency on imported fossil fuels. Donald Trump and

his cronies in Russia and Saudi Arabia have enormous influence, but they have no control over the wind and sun. Europe must now prioritise electric vehicles, heat pumps and renewable energy to ensure this never happens again.” Colin Walker, at the ECIU, said: “It’s all too reminiscent of the oil price surge after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and a stark reminder that the UK has no real control over the price of oil. There’s been a lot of talk of energy security and North Sea drilling, but the clear lived reality is that won’t make these regular price shocks any more affordable for British drivers.” Oil price shocks are extremely lucrative for oil companies and petrostates. In 2022, with a \$100 a barrel oil price, the five biggest shareholder-owned companies – BP, Shell, TotalEnergies, Chevron and ExxonMobil – made almost \$200bn in profit. The oil and gas industry as a whole has made about \$1tn a year in pure profit every year for the last half century, and substantially more in years with higher prices. Energy windfall gains policy in the EU clawed back some earnings in 2022 and 2023, although this has now expired. T&E stated that the EU should be prepared to revive it quickly if energy costs rise in the long run. A windfall tax remains in force in the UK, and experts have cautioned the chancellor, Rachel Reeves, that reacting to corporate pleas to remove it will do little to help hard-pressed households.

Early warning indicator hidden within the Gulf Stream could signal the collapse of key Atlantic currents, study finds

The Gulf Stream holds tantalizing clues about when other key Atlantic Ocean currents could collapse due to climate change, a new study finds. Originating in the Gulf of Mexico and leaving the U.S. East Coast near Cape Hatteras in North Carolina, the Gulf Stream is a branch of the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC) — a giant system of ocean currents that brings heat to the Northern Hemisphere and Europe, in particular. A growing body of evidence suggests that the AMOC is weakening and speeding toward a “tipping point,” which could completely transform the climate in many parts of the world, including Northwest Europe and tropical monsoon regions. When the AMOC might collapse is uncertain, but an early warning signal hidden within the Gulf Stream could help scientists predict the event years before it happens, the new research shows. “First, you have this very gradual northward drift [of the Gulf Stream], which is related to some AMOC weakening, but apparently there is also this jump when the AMOC is getting too weak, which is this early warning indicator,” study lead author René van Westen, a post-doctoral researcher in climate physics at Utrecht University in the Netherlands, told Live Science.

Unlike other currents that form the AMOC, the Gulf Stream is wind-driven. After passing by Florida, it follows the U.S. East Coast northward to Cape Hatteras and then veers east into the North Atlantic Ocean. Although the Gulf Stream is a surface current, its position is controlled by much deeper currents that also belong to the AMOC and create tight vortices when they interact with the layers above. These spirals push the Gulf Stream as a whole southward — but as the AMOC weakens and the vortices loosen, the Gulf Stream may start to drift northward. To explore these effects further, van Westen and Henk Dijkstra, a professor of physical oceanography at Utrecht Univer-



sity, simulated an AMOC collapse in an ocean model with a very high resolution over the Gulf Stream. In the climate models typically used to study the AMOC, the Gulf Stream “is smoothed out, so you hardly see any features and the dynamics are not well captured,” van Westen said. The researchers triggered an AMOC collapse in the model that was much more gradual than the collapse humans may be causing by heating Earth and accelerating Arctic ice melt, which prevents the formation of deep ocean currents. They observed the Gulf Stream’s response in unprecedented detail, revealing for the first

time an extremely abrupt, northward shift of the current 25 years before the start of the collapse. The results were published Feb. 26 in the journal Communications Earth & Environment. The researchers found two stages in the Gulf Stream’s response, both measured off Cape Hatteras at 71.5 degrees west longitude. First, as the AMOC gradually weakened over 392 simulated years, the Gulf Stream inched northward by 83 miles (133 kilometers). Second, as the AMOC continued to weaken over two more simulated years, the Gulf Stream suddenly jumped north by 136 miles

(219 km). This abrupt shift happened just 25 years before the start of the AMOC collapse, suggesting it could be used as an early warning signal to predict the collapse. While the two stages may be realistic, it’s unlikely that the time lag between the abrupt Gulf Stream shift and an AMOC collapse would actually be 25 years in real life, van Westen said. That’s because the model didn’t account for global temperature rise, which is accelerating the collapse of the AMOC; the model only simulated an increase in fresh water in the North Atlantic. A northward drift of the Gulf Stream has implications for ocean ecosys-

tems that are presently north of the current in colder waters but may soon end up south of the current in warmer waters. The drift may also exacerbate sea level rise along the East Coast, van Westen said. Next, the researchers analyzed satellite data to determine whether the Gulf Stream has already begun shifting northward. “We found this relationship within our climate model, and now the next step was to look whether those results appear in observations,” van Westen said. “What we found in observations is that, yes, indeed, the Gulf Stream has shifted northward over the past three

decades.” This finding is more evidence that the AMOC is weakening and means we are in the first stage of the Gulf Stream’s response, van Westen said. Natural climate and atmospheric variability may have contributed to the slow drift, but those contributions are small relative to the AMOC’s weakening, he added. It is unclear when the transition to the second stage of the Gulf Stream’s response will occur, but satellites are in place to detect this switch if and when it happens. The next task for researchers is to work out the true lag time between this second stage and the AMOC collapse so that the second stage can serve as a robust warning indicator, van Westen said. The study is the most in-depth analysis of the potential impacts of an AMOC collapse on the Gulf Stream to date, but there are some caveats, said Maya Ben-Yami, a climate tipping point researcher at the Technical University of Munich and the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany who was not involved in the research. “This paper definitely points at Gulf Stream changes as a possible warning signal, but a lot more work would need to be done to confirm that, for example by looking across different models,” Ben-Yami told Live Science in an email. It’s possible that the abrupt northward shift could happen without the AMOC collapsing down the line, in which case it may not be an early warning indicator but rather a response to the weakening, she said. Additionally, the rate of AMOC weakening in the study was likely slower than what can be expected under future warming conditions, meaning that the 25-year lag time could shrink to “almost nothing” and come too late to be an actionable warning signal, Ben-Yami said. “Personally I think that it’s also useful to have a signal that just tells you ‘the tipping point has been crossed’ without earlier warning, but I’d say we still don’t know if Gulf Stream changes could be either type of signal,” she said.

World Kidney Day: Here Are 10 Do’s And Don’ts One Must Follow For Optimum Kidneys

Healthy kidneys are the pillars of an individual’s overall wellbeing. They filter waste products from the blood, regulate fluid levels, maintain electrolyte balance, and help control blood pressure. Unfortunately, in most cases kidney disease develops without noticeable symptoms, and patients often reach experts only after significant damage has occurred. Dr. Jatin Kothari, Principal Director, Nephrology & Chief Consultant, Renal Transplant Medicine, Nanavati Max Super Speciality Hospital, Mumbai, shares these few simple lifestyle measures to protect the kidneys and prevent long-term complications.

Stay Well Hydrated

Drinking adequate water throughout the day helps the kidneys remove waste products and toxins through urine. Proper hydration also dilutes heavy minerals that may otherwise crystallise and develop into painful kidney stones. Most healthy adults should aim for about 2–2.5 litres of water daily, although individual needs may vary depending on climate, activity level, and medical conditions. It is better to sip water regularly through the day rather than consuming large amounts at once.

Control Blood Pressure

High blood pressure is one of the most common causes of kidney damage. Over time, elevated pressure can severely damage the tiny blood vessels in the kidneys that filter waste from the blood. Because hypertension is often picked up at later or more



advanced stages, regular monitoring is a must. Maintaining blood pressure around 130/80 mmHg or lower, as advised by your doctor, can help reduce the risk of kidney disease and also protect the heart.

Keep Blood Sugar Under Control

Diabetes is the leading cause of chronic kidney disease globally. Persistently high blood sugar levels can damage the delicate filtering units of the kidneys, eventually leading to diabetic kidney disease. People living with diabetes should monitor their blood sugar regularly, follow medical advice on diet and medication, and undergo periodic kidney function tests to detect early signs of damage.

Reduce Salt Intake

Excess salt consumption increases blood pressure and forces the kidneys to work harder to maintain fluid balance. Reducing salt intake to less than 5 grams per day is recom-

mended for overall cardiovascular and kidney health. It is also important to avoid salt substitutes, especially those containing potassium, as they may be harmful for individuals with kidney problems or those taking certain medications.

Avoid Excess Painkillers

Frequent or long-term use of painkillers, particularly non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), can reduce blood flow to the kidneys and gradually damage kidney tissue. While occasional use under medical guidance may be safe, self-medicating regularly for headaches, joint pain, or body aches should be avoided. Always consult a healthcare professional before prolonged use of such medications.

Maintain a Healthy Weight

Excess body weight increases the risk of developing diabetes, hypertension, and metabolic disorders, all of which place additional strain on the kidneys.

Maintaining a healthy weight through balanced nutrition and an active lifestyle can significantly lower the likelihood of kidney disease while also improving overall metabolic health.

Exercise Regularly

Regular physical activity improves blood circulation, helps regulate blood pressure and blood sugar levels, and supports weight management. Engaging in 30–45 minutes of moderate exercise at least 4–5 days a week, such as brisk walking, cycling, or swimming, can contribute significantly to long-term kidney health.

Be Careful with Supplements and Herbal Medicines

Many over-the-counter supplements and herbal remedies are not strictly regulated and may contain substances harmful to the kidneys. Some herbal products may even interact with prescription medications. It is important to inform your doctor about any sup-

plements you plan to take, particularly if you have underlying health conditions.

Avoid Smoking and Limit Alcohol

Smoking reduces blood flow to the kidneys and accelerates damage to kidney tissue. It also increases the risk of high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease. Limiting alcohol intake and avoiding tobacco products altogether can help protect kidney function and improve overall health.

Get Regular Kidney Check-ups

Kidney disease often develops silently without obvious symptoms in the early stages. Regular screening tests can detect problems before they become severe. Important tests include serum creatinine, urine protein, and blood pressure monitoring. Individuals with diabetes, hypertension, or a family history of kidney disease should be particularly vigilant about periodic kidney health assessments.

Routine mammograms may help predict heart disease, study suggests

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women in the United States, and can affect people at any age. Typically, females are at a higher risk due to a combination of biological, hormonal, and anatomical factors, along with the potential difficulty of recognizing certain symptoms. Despite roughly 90% of women in the U.S. having at least one cardiovascular risk factor, appropriate management of heart disease risk in females remains a major opportunity gap. Many health experts support strategies to improve screening and awareness of cardiovascular disease in women. Mammograms are crucial for detecting breast cancer and often serve as a first-line method for routine breast cancer screening. Guidelines for screening usually vary depending on an individual’s risk.

However, recommendations may advise women receiving a mammogram every year or every other year. Most people may think that mammograms only identify breast cancer. However, new research published in the European Heart Journal, suggests an AI tool may be able to detect the risk of developing serious heart disease by analyzing routine mammograms. Researchers say the approach could turn a widely used breast cancer screening tool into a way to also identify those at risk of cardiovascular disease. In the new study, researchers developed an AI tool capable of measuring the amount of calcium in breast arteries from standard mammogram images. This condition is known as breast arterial calcification (BAC). It describes calcium buildup in the breast artery walls, which is associated with a higher risk of heart disease, such as heart attack, stroke, and heart failure. The researchers analyzed data from 123,762 women who underwent breast cancer screening and had no known cardiovascular disease at the start of the study. Using the AI tool, the team categorized the amount of arterial calcification visible in the mammograms as absent, mild, moderate, or severe. They then compared these findings with later records of cardiovascular events such as heart attack, stroke, heart failure, or death from heart disease. The results showed a clear relationship between the amount of calcification and the likelihood of developing serious cardiovascular disease. The association remained even after accounting for other known risk factors, such as diabetes and smoking. Lori Daniels, MD, FACC, a board-certified cardiologist and professor of medicine at UC San Diego

School of Medicine was not surprised by the strength of the association between BAC and future cardiovascular events. Her group previously published similar findings, highlighting an association between higher BAC levels and heart disease risk. “The present study is in that ballpark – their age-adjusted model is almost identical in magnitude,” Daniels said.

“Our 2024 UC San Diego study also showed that BAC was particularly informative in younger women. This is important because younger women are the ones least likely to already know that they are at increased cardiovascular risk.” Importantly, the findings of the study observe that the relationship between breast arterial calcification and cardiovascular risk is also present in females under the age of 50, a group often considered to be at lower risk of heart disease. The results indicate that the more calcium visible in breast arteries on a mammogram, the greater the risk of a future cardiovascular event. As many females already undergo routine mammography, the technique could reveal cardiovascular risk earlier than traditional screening methods and provide heart health insights without requiring additional tests or procedures. Implementing the approach would involve integrating the AI tool into imaging systems and developing guidelines for notifying clinicians and patients about cardiovascular risk findings. If integrated into clinical practice, AI-based analysis of mammograms could prompt earlier discussions between individuals and doctors about preventive strategies, such as cholesterol testing, lifestyle changes, or medication. “Excellent question, and the subject of an upcoming publication of mine – we are evaluating women with and without traditional cardiovascular risk factors.

The short answer is that I suspect BAC will be useful in both groups to further refine risk, though absolute risk is always higher in groups with higher baseline risk. One might argue that if a woman is already at increased risk, how can this be helpful? Although I think the biggest public impact will be in identifying risk in those women who do not already know they are at risk (bringing it to their attention, for instance, and perhaps then identifying other risk factors). I still see value in women who do know they are at risk. Simply seeing a visual image of the calcium buildup in the breast arteries could potentially sway younger women to take their cardiovascular health more seriously, and make positive changes.”

Main Vaapas Aaunga is the title of Imtiaz Ali and Diljit Dosanjh’s film

Mumbai: The first look poster for Imtiaz Ali’s upcoming drama “Main Vaapas Aaunga” has finally been released.One of the social media posters depicts Sharvani riding a bicycle in the middle of the fields while Vedang Raina, dressed as a sardar, is rushing behind her. The ads give off the impression of an old-fashioned romance.

Conversely, we observe Diljit Dosanjh standing in the center of the field, looking composed.Another image showed Diljit carrying a travel cup for a drink, implying that his role in the film may be from a large city or possibly overseas. It appears like “Main Vaapas Aaunga” is set in two distinct timeframes, even though it is hard to tell anything more about the plot from the first look posters.On Friday, the drama’s teaser will also be released by the producers. The film, which stars Diljit,



Naseeruddin Shah, Vedang, and Sharvari, promises to be a lovely tale of desire and love.On June 12 of this year, “Main Vaapas Aaunga” is scheduled to open in theaters. ”Imtiaz Ali’s next, a charming story of love and longing to release in cinemas on June 12th, 2026,” the producers wrote in a January social media post announcing the highly anticipated movie’s release date. A Window Seat Films Production is presented by Applause Entertainment. Diljit Dosanjh, Vedang

Raina, Sharvari, and Naseeruddin Shah are the main actors. Imtiaz Ali, director; A.R. Rahman, musician; Irshad Kamil, lyrics Applause Entertainment, Window Seat Films, and Mohit Choudhary are the producers. Oscar-winning composer A.R. Rahman, lyricist Irshad Kamil, and Imtiaz Ali return to the project, which is jointly supported by production companies Applause Entertainment, Window Seat Films, and Mohit Choudhary.

The Kapoor family protects Rishi Kapoor’s name by securing posthumous copyright

Mumbai: According to reports, the family of renowned Bollywood actor Rishi Kapoor has begun legal action to obtain copyright for his name in order to preserve his legacy. The action was taken to stop unapproved and commercial usage of the late actor’s name, according to media sources.The Kapoor family received the required authorization to posthumously copyright the actor’s name, an insider informed India Today. The ruling guarantees that any person or entity wishing to utilize Rishi Kapoor’s name in public, professional, or commercial settings must first get the family’s consent. According to the newspaper, the action is part of a larger worldwide practice in which the estates and families of deceased artists protect their public image and intellectual property. The source stated, “Anyone wishing to use the name Rishi Kapoor or mention it in any capacity would need prior permission from the family due to copyright.”After a protracted fight with leukemia, Rishi Kapoor passed away on April 30, 2020. With a career spanning more than 50 years and



more than 150 films in a variety of genres, he is still regarded as one of the most renowned characters in Indian cinema. The renowned Kapoor family of actors is where Rishi Kapoor was born. He was the grandson of pioneering actor Prithviraj Kapoor, who established the prestigious Prithvi Theatre, and the son of acclaimed actor and director Raj Kapoor. Rishi was introduced to filmmaking at a young age because he was raised in a home with a strong cinematic

heritage. His career as an actor was greatly influenced by his membership in one of Bollywood’s most powerful film dynasties. Growing up surrounded by movie sets, screenplays, and industry professionals, Rishi naturally gravitated toward acting and narrative. His roles in iconic films like Mera Naam Joker, Khel Khel Mein, Amar Akbar Anthony, and Hum Kisise Kum Naheen are among his most remembered performances. Mera Naam Joker (1970), a movie direct-

ed by his father Raj Kapoor, marked the beginning of Rishi Kapoor’s acting career. He won the National Film Award for Best Child Artist for his role in the movie. Later, he starred in Bobby, which was a huge financial success and earned him the Filmfare Award for Best Actor. Rishi won multiple awards during a career that spanned more than 50 years and more than 150 movies.

His breakout performance in Bobby earned him the Filmfare Award for Best Actor, while his critically lauded performance in Kapoor & Sons earned him the Filmfare Award for Best Supporting Actor. In 2008, he received the Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award in honor of his decades-long commitment to Hindi cinema. His roles in movies like 102 Not Out, Mulk, Student of the Year, and Kapoor & Sons continued to win him praise from critics in following years. Actress Neetu Kapoor was Rishi Kapoor’s spouse. Actor Ranbir Kapoor and businesswoman Riddhima Kapoor Sahni are the couple’s two children. He is the father-in-law of Alia Bhatt.

Soha Ali Khan shares her daughter Inaaya’s cute house rules

New Delhi:On social media, actress Soha Ali Khan frequently entertains her fans with sweet peeks of her daughter Inaaya Naumi Kemmu’s paintings, school activities, and small accomplishments. The “house rules” Inaaya has made for anyone visiting their home are beautiful and well-considered, as Soha recently revealed.Soha shared a picture of Inaaya’s handwritten message explaining the house rules for visitors on Instagram on Friday. Instructions like “Never pick Oreo if you don’t live here without consent” and “Don’t run on the stairs” were on the list. “Clean up the mess you make,” “Ask before touching anything,” “Always include people in what you are playing,” “Be kind to everyone,” and “Don’t hurt anyone” The note also featured a short quiz below the instructions to test whether the reader had understood the rules. It read: “Quiz: My house rules are: never __ someone, be __ to everyone, if __ don’t __.” “Hurry up and follow the rules,” “House rules,” and “Pay close attention” are some of the uplifting reminders that Inaaya in-



cluded at the bottom of the page. In response to the remark, Soha captioned the photo with the words “These are some good rules,” seemingly endorsing her daughter’s well-considered regulations. On January 25, 2015, Soha wed actor Kunal Kemmu in a small wedding that was seen by close

friends and relatives. In September 2017, the couple completed their family with the birth of their daughter, Inaaya Naumi Kemmu. Soha regularly posts adorable moments from her life with Inaaya on social media, providing admirers with an insight into their relationship. Soha discussed rais-

ing a Gen Alpha child in a previous interview with India Today. She disclosed how she deliberately tries to deviate from some conventional parenting techniques while fostering Inaaya’s curiosity. “The idea that children should always be seen and not heard was one pattern I consciously wanted to break,” she stated. I truly wanted to promote open communication with Inaaya, give her a voice in the family, and allow her to ask questions and express her emotions. Soha last appeared in the movie Chhori 2, which also starred Nushrratt Bharuccha.

Soha portrayed a nasty character in the movie. Although her acting was praised, the film was criticized for missing strong horror aspects other than a few jump scares and for being predictable. You can watch it right now on Amazon Prime Video.Her podcast, All About Her, is now keeping her busy. She hosted Saif Ali Khan and Kunal Kemmu on recent episodes, where they talked about a variety of subjects, including Deepika Padukone’s demand for eight-hour work shifts and pay parity in the film industry.

Thanking the audience, Aditya Dhar says “My heart is full”

Mumbai: Aditya Dhar, the director of “Dhurandhar” in New Delhi, said he is incredibly appreciative of the audience’s faith in his work over the years.As he prepares for the release of his movie “Dhurandhar The Revenge,” Dhar celebrated his 43rd birthday on Thursday and thanked his crew and supporters on Instagram.”As I spend my birthday adding the final touches on ‘Dhurandhar: The Revenge’, I find myself pausing for a moment and looking back at the phenomenal year that has gone by,” the author said. ”As I sit here today, I am incredibly grateful for the journey, the team that has always supported me, and the faith that so many of you have shown in my work over the years,” he continued.The director stated that his “heart is full” and that the audience’s trust is crucial.My heart is overflowing after reading all of your messages, tweets, anecdotes, and Aditya Dhar’s peak explaining memes. I wish I could reply to each of you directly, but please know how much I appreciate all of your support and affection.” ”If this year has taught me anything, it is to never lose faith in your dreams, no matter how big they may be. In an industry where nothing is guaranteed and every film is a leap of faith, the audience’s trust means everything.” The universe will respond if you show up with honesty, give your work your best, and have faith that every little step and every challenge is gradually guiding us to our destination,” he stated.

Amid the Iran-Israel War, Lara Dutta returns to Mumbai from Dubai

Mumbai: In a video posted on Instagram earlier this month, Lara Dutta discussed being stranded in Dubai with her daughter Saira due to the current upheaval in the Middle East. She has since reported that she has returned to India.The Partner actress stated in an interview that although she dislikes posting such recordings, this time it was also about her 14-year-old daughter’s safety.She went on to describe the trip as “dangerous” and “uncertain” as she drove to a different airport in order to return to India because the Dubai airport was under bombing. ”We lived about ten kilometers away from the Jebel Ali Port, which was being bombed every day,” stated Lara Dutta. I wanted to be with my spouse and my family, so we made the decision to take a chance. The port and oil refinery in Fujairah had been bombed the day before, and it took us two hours to get there. It was frightening. I made a joke about feeling



like I was a part of Airlift 2 with my co-star Akshay Kumar.”Hats off to the airlines, too,” she continued. After this incident, I have no doubt that my daughter will face some trauma.

She also described how, in light of escalating geopolitical tensions, they were told to stay inside. Lara had said that she heard explosions and missiles being intercepted as she was shooting. In a video posted on her Instagram, she described the past several days

as worrisome, saying, “Lots of fighter jets flying overhead, lots of loud booms.” The windows shake, the home and doors rattle, and it’s unsettling even though we live in a villa in a fairly safe neighborhood. However, I have never once felt in danger.” ”I just want to say that the UAE government has done an incredible job,” she continued, praising the government. I believe that each and every one of us—I won’t speak for anyone else—felt well taken care of.

Regardless of our ethnicity or place of origin, we felt protected and wanted. We believe that we are important and count. As residents of this city, I can attest that the UAE government is doing everything within its power to keep us safe and secure. I’m in awe.

Every day, my gardener comes to trim my grass and take care of the plants. The delivery riders are at work. They were looking at airfares back to India, but they weren’t available, Lara continued. “We’ll figure it out,” the Partner actress added with a cheerful attitude. Yes, but I just wanted to let you know that we were present. Naturally, I was in India during the conflict between India and Pakistan, and we witnessed firsthand how effectively our nation defended us. This is also the case here.Lara expressed optimism at the end of the video that better judgment and common sense would win out.

Santy Sharma, a hip-hop artist, supports Badshah in the face of Tateeree backlash

Mumbai: Indian independent hip-hop musician Santy Sharma has now endorsed rapper-singer Badshah’s most recent song, Tateeree, which has drawn criticism online due to its purportedly explicit lyrics and graphics.”Rap music is a genre where rappers write lines about their competitors as references,” Santy Sharma said in a lengthy Instagram post that included a photo of Badshah. The audio for a song can be produced much in advance of the video. Even well-known performers like Badshah might not even know what their video will look like because the video crew is independent. The ignorance of Indian fans with this hip-hop genre is a significant disadvantage for Badshah and other contemporary Indian singers. ”If a song’s lyrics are inaccurate, the lyrics should be updated or changed, but it is incorrect to judge Badshah without knowing the whole story,” he continued. I apologize if this post offends anyone, but this is the truth.

Badshah responded to the controversy a few days ago by sharing a video on his Instagram account. The rapper said that he had no intention of demeaning women or children.”I am from the hip-hop genre, where lyrics are often used to compete and bring down the opponent,” Badshah continued, elaborating



on the lyrics’ background. I will never do that, and the lyrics were never intended for any lady or child. I have always made an effort to bring as much of Haryana’s culture and language with me as I can. ”I hope that you will consider me as a son of Haryana, as your own son, and forgive me,” the rapper stated near the close of the video in an attempt to make up to anyone who had been offended by the song.Additionally, the dispute has taken a legal turn. The Haryana State Women’s Commission served Badshah with a notice re-

questing that he come before them on March 13 in order to make a statement. The warning came when Shiv Kumar, the leader of the Shiv Aarti Foundation, and Savita Arya, the president of Nari Tu Narayani Sanstha in Panipat, submitted a complaint. The song’s phrase “Aaya Badshah doli chaddhane, in sabki ghodi banane” was objected to by the complainants, who said it contained unpleasant language and images of young girls in school uniforms boarding a Haryana Roadways bus and hurling their school bags.

According to Ananya Panday, she significantly altered herself in previous relationships

New Delhi: Actor Ananya Panday recently thought back on her previous relationships while discussing the things love has taught her. She remembered how they frequently encouraged her to minimize aspects of herself in order to make someone else appear larger.Ananya disclosed in an interview with Harper’s Bazaar India that she was unable to remain by herself and constantly desired the company of her parents, friends, or lover. But her ap-

preciation for personal space increased when she moved out on her own. She claimed that the encounter changed her basic perspective on romantic relationships as well. ”In previous relationships, I would want the other person to shine more than me,” she remarked. I would drastically alter myself and become more like the other person at the expense of diminishing or denigrating myself. I wish I had realized sooner that I shouldn’t allow people

to significantly alter or influence me. I wish I had realized sooner that I felt like I had to be less of something.Ananya had previously dated Ishaan Khatter, but the two eventually broke up. On Koffee With Karan in 2022, Ishaan announced their split and expressed his hope that they would be friends. Aditya Roy Kapur and Ananya apparently dated for almost two years. Pictures from their holidays together appeared online, despite the fact that they never



disclosed their relationship. But in May 2024, a source informed ETimes, “They broke

up almost a month ago,” confirming their split. We were all shocked by the breakup

because they were doing very well. They get along well with one another. There is hurt, of sure, but Ananya is making an effort to move on. She is hanging out with her new animal companion. Aditya is also making an effort to handle the circumstance responsibly.There are now rumors that Ananya is seeing Walker Blanco, a former model. The two were first seen together in 2024 during Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant’s wedding festivities. Anan-

ya introduced Walker as her “partner” at the function, according to the Bombay Times.He was Ananya’s wedding date. She didn’t hide the fact that she had introduced Walker to everyone as her wedding companion. When a romantic song was playing, some others even witnessed them dancing together. According to a source who spoke to the portal, “the two are still too young to make it official.” They haven’t yet acknowledged the relationship,

though. Ananya last appeared in Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri, a production by Dharma Productions.

The movie didn’t do well at the box office and got mixed reviews. Her next film is the romantic drama Chaand Mera Dil, which also stars Lakshya Lalwani. The movie, which is supported by Karan Johar’s Dharma Productions, is slated to hit theaters on May 8, 2026. Additionally, she is working on the second season of Call Me Bae.

Maharashtra Mandates Permits for E-Bikes and Electric Rickshaws



Mumbai, Mar 13: Transport Minister Pratap Sarnaik stated on Friday that the Maharashtra government has decided to require permits for passenger-carrying electric rickshaws and e-bikes in order to guarantee uniformity in regulations in the industry. The decision coincides with the transport department’s announcement that it will no longer be giving new permits for autorickshaws (which have yellow-and-black license plates) in the state. Additionally, three operators’ permits to ride e-bikes have

been temporarily halted. According to an announcement from Sarnaik’s office, electric rickshaws were not previously required to seek a separate permit for passenger transport. However, in order to establish equal laws in passenger transportation, the state has decided to make licenses mandatory for e-rickshaws and e-bikes due to the growing number of electric vehicles. According to the most recent decision, which was made in compliance with a central notification dated June 30, 2016, passenger-car-

rying e-rickshaws and e-bikes must have number plates with green backgrounds and yellow writing.”This move would provide standard regulations to all passenger-transporting vehicles, including electric rickshaws, taxis, and traditional autorickshaws. The goal is to prevent irregularities and increase system transparency, according to Sarnaik.

According to the statement, requiring permits for all passenger transport vehicles will assist improve industry discipline, guarantee adherence to regulations, and offer commuters safer and more regulated services. According to the statement, the transportation department is getting ready to implement a “single window system” to streamline the permit process, including application submission, document verification, and approval processes.

“Time to Let Go of Rice and Wheat”: The Supreme Court Advocates for Pulses

New Delhi, Mar 13: On Friday, the Supreme Court requested that the Center reevaluate its long-standing emphasis on the production of wheat and rice and take into consideration a new policy framework that promotes the cultivation of other crops, particularly pulses. During the hearing of a petition submitted by the Kisan Mahapanchayat, the court made these observations. Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India (CJI), questioned whether the nation needed to produce as much wheat and paddy as it does now. “We have to see if we need as much paddy and wheat as we are producing,” he added, pointing out that the Center has previously been advocating for agricultural practice diversity. There are currently more options besides wheat. It’s time to give up rice and wheat. The bench emphasized the necessity of promoting pulses as an appropriate alternative to wheat and paddy, especially in northern and central India, and as a replacement for other crops in southern regions. To effectively encourage farmers to switch to pulses, the court noted that multiple ministries must collaborate with “better coordination and understanding” under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare. It emphasized that for crop diversification to be successful, departmental alignment and policy



support would be crucial. According to the Court, “It has been highlighted that different ministries of government of India need to have better coordination and understanding among them and also come under the ministry of agriculture and farmer welfare to promote pulses as a substitute of wheat and paddy in northern and central part of India and substitute for other crops in the south.

The Supreme Court also emphasized the need for sufficient incentives for farmers, particularly small-scale producers, to switch to alternate crops.

The Supreme Court stated that the incentive Minimum Support Price (MSP) should be sufficient for small-scale farmers to produce pulses,

including timely product sales and the fixing of the price of yellow peas in a way that does not negatively affect the farmers’ homegrown pulses. The Center’s decision to provide duty-free imports of yellow peas until March 2026 is contested in the court case. According to the Kisan Mahapanchayat, this policy directly impacts Indian farmers by lowering domestic prices and pushing them below the MSP. The Supreme Court has requested that the Center look into the issues brought up by the petitioners in light of these worries. The bench stated that in order to examine the current policy and create a better framework that encourages farmers who choose to switch from conventional crops, the Additional Solicitor General (ASG) must meet with all relevant parties.

The judge remarked, “We have impressed upon ASG to convene meetings of stakeholders so as to revisit existing policy framework and explore a better substitute under which farmers are incentivised for diversification of conventional crops to pulses along with certain benefits as illustrated above.” “We hope the ministry will be able to resolve the issue with a new policy regime,” the statement continued. Let the details of the decision be documented.”

Aston Villa defeats Lille in the Europa League



New Delhi: Aston Villa defeated Lille 1-0 in the first leg of their Europa League round-of-16 match on Thursday thanks to a header from Ollie Watkins in the second half. Ezri Konsa made a deep pass that Emi Buendia directed to Watkins in the home team’s box just after the hour mark. The England forward sent a looping header over goalkeeper Berke Özer and into the net after noticing that he was off his line. A few minutes later, Watkins missed to score in a one-on-one with the ‘keeper, squandering an opportunity to double the lead. Midtjylland, a Danish team, shocked Nottingham Forest 1-0. At 10-man Celta Vigo, Lyon managed a 1-1 draw thanks to a late goal from Brazilian attacker Endrick. Javi Rueda gave Celta the lead in the first half, and ten minutes

into the second half, attacker Borja Iglesias was given the second yellow. Bologna and Roma drew 1-1 in the opening leg of an all-Italian rivalry. Stuttgart was defeated 2-1 by Porto. Deniz Undav scored for Stuttgart prior to halftime, but Terem Moffi and Rodrigo Mora scored for Porto six minutes apart in the first half. Freiburg, another Bundesliga team, must overcome a 1-0 loss against Genk in Belgium. In a match where both teams were down to ten, Panathinaikos defeated Real Betis 1-0 in Athens thanks to a penalty kick from Vicente Tabor da two minutes from time. In Budapest, Ferencoros defeated Braga 2-0. In Nottingham, substitute Guesung Cho scored the game-winning goal in the 80th minute. Despite their best efforts, Forest was unable to score in the pouring rain at the City Ground. They will have a difficult second leg in Denmark and a pivotal Premier League match against Fulham on Sunday. Nottingham lost to Midtjylland at home in October, while Aston Villa became the first English team to win its first-leg European game this week.

Inside the Rs 590 Crore IDFC First Bank Scam: Forged Memos, Frozen Accounts



New Delhi, Mar 13: Investigators found that a sophisticated network of fictitious businesses and altered bank transactions were used to run the IDFC First Bank scam. The primary accused allegedly used fake bank statements, forged debit memos, and unauthorized transfers from several departmental accounts to redirect government monies into their accounts. When the Haryana government looked into the embezzlement of Rs 590 crore at IDFC First Bank, the Haryana Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) took significant action. Eleven people have been arrested by police thus far, including a government official. Along with recovering a number of case-related papers, the ACB has also seized a sizable quantity of both movable and immovable assets. Money was being transferred to fictitious businesses in order to commit this. Over 100 accounts have been frozen in this case. The primary suspect in the IDFC First Bank scam established multiple fictitious businesses and unlawfully moved government monies to different accounts, according to the inquiry. According to preliminary findings, money was unlawfully moved from government department accounts to these fictitious businesses. These businesses include Cap Co Fintech

Services and RS Traders. Swastik Desh Project, SRR Planning Gurus Pvt. Ltd. According to Charu Bali, the State Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau’s (SV&ACB) additional director general of police, a case was filed on February 23 at the SV&ACB police station in Panchkula against unidentified representatives of IDFC First Bank and AU Small Finance Bank under pertinent sections. Twelve bank accounts from eight departments—ten at IDFC First Bank in Sector 32, Chandigarh, and two at AU Small Finance Bank—have been implicated thus far in the probe. In this instance, extensive raids have been carried out at sixteen locations, and some of those places have also provided video evidence. Eleven people—six bank workers, four private citizens, and one government employee—have been detained in connection with the case thus far. One of these accused is on police remand, and the other ten are in court custody. During the inquiry, extensive raids have been carried out at sixteen different locations. Additionally, several locales have provided video evidence. Important records pertaining to the acquisition of real estate have been found. Additionally, over 25 electronic devices—including laptops and cell phones—have been confiscated and are being investigated by a cyber forensic lab. Both immovable and moveable items have been retrieved. In addition, six cars—three Fortuners, two Innovas, and one Mercedes—that are plausibly suspected of having been bought with money obtained through criminal activity have been confiscated. Thus far, requests to freeze debits on more than 100 bank accounts have been sent by the investigative agency. Eight government departments have been found to have unapproved transactions, according to the probe. The last phases of a comprehensive audit of the previous year’s finances are currently under progress. Numerous government employees and officials as well as ordinary citizens have been implicated in the probe.

The Vigilance Bureau will prosecute the offenders after confirmation. Ten houses that are plausibly suspected of having been bought with money obtained through criminal activity have also been discovered.

“Ring Roads A Big Flop”: Delhi’s Supreme Court Increases Truck Entry Fees



New Delhi, Mar 13: Following the Supreme Court’s approval of the Commission for Air Quality Management’s (CAQM) petition to increase the levy, trucks, vans, dumpers, and other heavy and light commercial vehicles entering Delhi would be required to pay higher Environment Compensation Charges (ECC) starting on April 1. Restoring the charge’s “deterrent effect” and discouraging large commercial vehicles from traveling through the nation’s capital are the goals of this action. CAQM’s application to raise ECC for light commercial vehicles and two-axle trucks from Rs 1,400 to Rs 2,000 was accepted by a court made up of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, Justices Joymalya Bagchi, and Vipul M. Pancholi. The fee would

increase from Rs 2,600 to Rs 4,000 for lorries with three axles and cars with four or more axles. The updated tariffs will take effect on April 1st, 2026. In a conversation on traffic in Delhi, Chief Justice Surya Kant said that the “concept of ring roads has become a complete failure.” A huge failure. In 2002, I argued against ring roads in this court. I told them it would fail, but they didn’t listen to me. At this point, ASG Aishwarya Bhati said, “Now your Lordship can rectify it.” When the tax was first introduced in 2015 to reduce pollution in the capital, the bench characterized the increase as “reasonable” and in line with the court’s original aim. Additionally, the commission’s recommendation for a 5% yearly increase in ECC rates was authorized by the court, which mandated that the escalation start on April 1, 2027. Senior attorney Aparajita Singh served as an amicus curiae in the protracted environmental lawsuit, while Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati represented CAQM.

The BCCI is planning a big move with Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma in mind for the 2027 ODI World Cup

New Delhi: The Indian cricket squad will concentrate on ODI cricket when the IPL concludes in May. In addition to winning the Champions Trophy, India has recently won two T20 World Cups.

But since 2011, the team has failed to win the ODI World Cup. When Australia defeated the Rohit Sharma-led side in the final in 2023, it came very close. As a result, the BCCI is heavily focusing on the 2027 World Cup. The Indian Express said that foreign boards have made numerous proposals to the BCCI “to slot additional ODIs in their away tours, which the Indian board seems to have accepted.” Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli exclusively play in ODIs. The two greats will be better prepared for the big event if they



have more matches under their belts. Following the IPL, India will go out to play three ODIs and five T20Is against England after hosting Afghanistan for one Test and three ODIs. On such tour,

India might also play Ireland. There are rumors that Sri Lanka Cricket would ask the BCCI for white-ball matches as well. Additionally, India is slated to play limited-overs series against New

Zealand, the West Indies, and Bangladesh (pending to approval). New Zealand has requested more ODI matches during the Tour, according to the previously cited story.

Videos of the former captain of Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) exercising in the nets have gone viral on social media, indicating that Kohli has started getting ready for the 2026 Indian Premier League season.

The 37-year-old was seen working hard during a practice session, concentrating on his batting as he prepares for the upcoming IPL season, in a video that Kohli posted on Instagram. Fans instantly took notice of the video and, in anticipation of the competition, flooded the comments with enthusiastic remarks.

Suryakumar Yadav Shares His Conversation With Sanju Samson



New Delhi: Sanju Samson had an incredible T20 World Cup performance. Samson recovered well and scored a hat-trick of half-centuries to lead India to the T20 World Cup 2026 victory despite missing the team’s opening several games. With his outstanding batting exploits, the wicketkeeper batter won Player of the Tournament. In a recent chat, India captain Suryakumar Yadav talked about Samson’s remarkable comeback and shared the exchange they had when he wasn’t on the team. Sanju had a lot going for him, including the ability to bat at the top. He once approached me and said, “Just tell me what you want from me in this team.” We expressed our desire for the same Sanju Samson that we

have witnessed tear apart attackers. He then informed the entire team, “We will continue to play what the team wants before what we want.” We won’t accomplish anything extraordinary until then, Suryakumar said. “This is a challenging phase, but you have to take it in stride,” I told him while he wasn’t playing. You will receive what God has written for you. He was getting ready; if the chance arises, seize it, and everyone will see it,” he continued. Suryakumar also recalled how the team’s management looked to all-rounder Hardik Pandya for motivation and support prior to crucial games. After the defeat to South Africa, Surya and Hardik had a long talk with the hitters, which turned out

to be a pivotal moment in their campaign. “You are the most seasoned big-match player in this group, share that with the others—talk to them about how to play in big games,” Suryakumar recalled telling Hardik during the Asia Cup. Then something changed following the South Africa match. Hardik and I had a lengthy discussion with the entire batting unit about how we should bat moving forward and what this team’s true identity was. Our tide shifted after that. Bumrah already knows how to work with the bowling unit, so he doesn’t require any instructions. In times of stress, he rushes to the players and strikes up a conversation. That was his best quality, in my opinion. Axar is the same.

Before the 2026 Indian Premier League, the BCCI has issued strict guidelines for all ten franchises

New Delhi: All ten teams have been given strong instructions by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) not to train on the same surface that a rival team utilized during their net session. According to the most recent criteria, which were released by the cricket board before to the 2026 Indian Premier League, clubs that practice consecutively must be assigned new pitches. “Each team should receive new nets for the practice period they have been assigned.

The first team is not allowed to use the other team’s nets (even for throw-downs) during simultaneous practice sessions or when one team practices after the other.

The other team is not allowed to use their range-hitting wicket if one side ends practice early. “If a team intends to play a practice match under lights, the duration of the match should not exceed three and a half hours,” the guidelines stated.

A maximum of two practice

matches may be held by the teams, but they must notify the BCCI in advance and cannot be held on the field that will be utilized for the actual game.” In order to prepare the pitch for the season, no practice sessions or practice matches may be played on the main square in the four days leading up to the relevant franchise’s first home match of the season,” stated the BCCI. “During this time, the State Association should provide the home franchise with a free alternative practice area

upon request. Two practice nets and one net on the main square for range hitting will be distributed to the two teams. The BCCI stated that it will give preference to the visiting team in the event of a schedule disagreement.

The away team’s request will be considered, especially if it has played a match the day before and taking into account the away team’s travel arrangements, even if the home team should have the first choice of a preferred session.”

Ollie Watkins’ header helps Aston Villa battle past Lille in the Europa League Endrick Saves Draw for Lyon



France: UEFA Europa League Round of 16: Midtjylland and Panathinaikos defeated Nottingham Forest and Real Betis, respectively. Ollie Watkins’ second-half header secured Aston Villa a 1-0 victory against Lille in the first leg of their Europa League round-of-16 contest on Thursday. Around the hour mark, Ezri Konsa fired a deep ball to Emi Buendia, who directed it to Watkins in the home team’s box. The England forward noticed goalkeeper Berke Özer was off his line and sent a looping header into the net. Minutes later, Watkins squandered an opportunity to double the lead when he failed

to score in a one-on-one with the goalkeeper. Nottingham Forest were defeated 1-0 by Danish team Midtjylland. Endrick, a Brazilian attacker, scored late to help Lyon draw 1-1 against 10-man Celta Vigo. Celta took the lead after Javi Rueda scored in the first half, but attacker Borja Iglesias was sent off 10 minutes later. In an all-Italian derby, Bologna and Roma tied 1-1 in the first leg. Porto beat Stuttgart 2-1. Porto’s Terem Moffi and Rodrigo Mora scored six minutes apart in the first half, while Stuttgart’s Deniz Undav scored just before halftime. Another Bundesliga team, Freiburg, must recover

from a 1-0 loss to Genk in Belgium. In Athens, Vicente Taborda scored from the penalty spot two minutes from time as Panathinaikos defeated Real Betis 1-0 in a game reduced to ten players. Ferencváros defeated Braga 2-0 in Budapest. Guesung Cho scored an 80th-minute winner in Nottingham. Forest pressed throughout but failed to score in heavy weather at the City Ground, and now have a difficult task in Denmark in the second leg, with an important Premier League encounter against Fulham looming on Sunday. Nottingham also fell to Midtjylland at home in the first round in October. This week, Villa became the first English team to win the opening leg of a European championship. Manchester City, Chelsea, Tottenham, and Liverpool were among the six English clubs eliminated from the Champions League. Only Arsenal and Newcastle drew. AEK Larnaca held Crystal Palace to a 0-0 draw in London in the third-tier Conference League. Villa was also helped by the return from injury of captain John McGinn, who came on as a substitute in the 77th minute. He had missed seven weeks due to a knee ailment. Federico Bernardeschi scored for host Bologna early in the second half, giving them a 1-0 lead over Roma. Lorenzo Pellegrini, who came on as a substitute, equalized only five minutes later. The tie is still open, but Roma will bring more experience into next week’s second leg. Roma finished second in this tournament twice, most recently in 2023, and coach Gian Piero Gasperini won the Europa League with Atalanta two years prior. The Europa League system, introduced last year, allows clubs from the same nation to face at any time during the knockout process. Previously, national derbies were only possible in the quarterfinals. Fiorentina, the two-time runner-up, defeated Polish team Rakow 2-1 with a stoppage-time penalty. AEK Athens is on the verge of the quarterfinals after a 4-0 victory against Celje.

Aryna Sabalenka and Jannik Sinner advance in straight sets to the semi-finals at Indian Wells



California : Elina Svitolina, the ninth seed from Ukraine, defeated second-seeded Iga Swiatek of Poland, 6-2, 4-6, 6-4. Aryna Sabalenka defeated Victoria Mboko 7-6 (0), 6-4, in the quarterfinals of the BNP Paribas Open on Thursday, putting the top-ranked women’s tennis player in contention for her maiden championship in Indian Wells. Sabalenka won every game in the first-set tiebreaker and required just one break to take the second set and advance to the semi-finals against 14th seed Linda Noskova of Czechia, who defeated unseeded Australian Talia Gibson 6-2, 4-6, 6-2. Elina Svitolina, the ninth seed from Ukraine,

advanced to the semi-finals for the second time at Indian Wells after defeating second-seeded Iga Swiatek of Poland 6-2, 4-6, 6-4. Svitolina broke to lead 5-4 in the third set and held serve to win the match. She was scheduled to play on Friday against the winner of Thursday night’s quarterfinal match between American Jessica Pegula and Kazakhstan’s Elena Rybakina. In the men’s bracket, second-seeded Jannik Sinner of Italy upset 25th-seeded American Learner Tien 6-1, 6-2, ending the streak of the youngest American – at age 20 – to reach a quarterfinal at Indian Wells since his mentor, Michael Chang, won in 1992. Sinner, who served ten aces

and double-faulted once, will face German Alexander Zverev, who defeated France’s Arthur Fils 6-2, 6-3, in the semi-finals on Saturday. Sabalenka has yet to drop a set in the competition, although she was tested by the 10th-seeded Mboko, a 19-year-old Canadian who won the 2025 Canadian Open and upset Sabalenka 6-1, 7-6 (1) in the fourth round of the Australian Open earlier this year. Mboko ended up “serving much better than she did in that match in Australia — definitely a bit more confident and was playing more brave,” according to Sabalenka. “I think that’s why the scoreboard was bit closer than in Australia.”

Sumit Antil wins gold at the World Para Athletics Grand Prix, living up to the hype



New Delhi: Sumit Antil, a double Paralympic Games gold medalist in javelin throwing, lived up to his fearsome reputation by finishing on top of the podium as India experienced another nail-biting day at the World Para Athletics Grand Prix on Thursday. The men’s javelin throw (F43/F44/F64) was unquestionably the highlight of the day, as Antil -- winner of back-to-back gold medals in the Tokyo and Paris Paralympics -- led the Indian charge by winning first place with a power-packed throw of 69.25 metres. Pushpendra Singh won the silver medal with a throw of 56.91m, while Poonam Ram finished third with a throw of 49.48m. Antil noted his winning throw exceeded his own expectations by a few metres. “This time, we have many competitions scheduled. I’ll aim to do well in the

forthcoming tournaments. It’s the off-season loading time for me. I wasn’t anticipating such a long throw; I expected approximately 67-68m, but the throw today was fantastic at 69.25m. So I’m thrilled, and so is my squad,” said Antil, 27, a three-time World Championship gold medalist from Sonipat, Haryana. “I am not changing my technique because we know we are moving in the right direction in our training. Right now, we just need the right conditions where the throw falls perfectly in place. That is why I am participating in tournaments so I can find those conditions somewhere.” Sumit Antil said he has now set his sights on the Asian Para Games later this year in Japan, with a target of breaching the 75-metre mark. “I am targeting the Asian Games, and the goal is 75m. I haven’t achieved it yet

in practice, and no athlete has done it yet, but I am working on whatever improvements are possible in technique or strength to reach that mark.” India also dominated the men’s 400m T13 event, with Subodh Bhatt winning gold in 51.88 seconds, followed by Priyanshu Kaushik (53.19 seconds) and Avnil Kumar (56.91 seconds). In the men’s 400m T46/T47 category, Bhavikkumar Din Bharwad won gold in 49.89 seconds, while fellow Indian Jasbeer finished second in 50.09 seconds.

Ivan Cvetkovic of Serbia won bronze in 50.93 seconds. India maintained its domination in the wheelchair division of the men’s 400m T53/T54 event, earning gold in 54.33 seconds, silver in 57.57 seconds, and bronze in 1:01.94. Indian competitors delivered great performances in the women’s competitions as well. Tejalben Amraji Darmor won gold in the 400m T11/T12 event in 57.53 seconds, followed by Lalitha Killaka in silver in 1:07.92 and Shalini Chaudhary in bronze in 1:16.79. Lakshmi won gold in the women’s shot put F36/F37/F40 with a throw of 7.76 metres, while Akutai Sitaram Ulbhagat took silver with 5.49 metres and Bhutan’s Chimi Dema earned bronze with 5.27 metres.

Suryakumar Yadav explains why India changed hotels at the last minute for the T20 World Cup



New Delhi: Team India overcame all odds to win their third T20 World Cup, defeating New Zealand in the final. While no one can deny that the Indian players gave their sweat and blood to produce a dominant performance, there was also a “good luck” factor that seemed to work in favour of Suryakumar Yadav and his team. The squad’s practice session in Mumbai was postponed due to a lunar eclipse just before the semi-final. Skipper Suryakumar Yadav also

claimed that the squad had changed hotels, leaving nothing to chance. “While on the aircraft to Wankhede for the semi-final, someone recommended we try a different hotel. Many teams have completed it. We did not want to leave anything on the table that may help us get closer to our goal. So if someone has won from there, let’s give it a shot,” Suryakumar told The Indian Express. SKY also discussed the alleged curse of playing in Ahmedabad’s historic Narendra

Modi Stadium. India lost the 2023 World Cup final to Australia, and their lone loss in the 2026 T20 World Cup against South Africa occurred at the same site. “People were saying India wouldn’t win in Ahmedabad... after the 2023 final.” But look at it now. We won in the same stadium. “Now we know there is no problem with the stadium,” Yadav stated. India made history on Sunday by winning the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2026, defeating

New Zealand by 96 runs. With this victory, India retained the championship they won in 2024, making it their third Men’s T20 World Cup trophy, and Indian T20 captain Suryakumar Yadav praised the feat, stating, “It feels great to win back-to-back titles.” Indian captain Suryakumar Yadav praised the feat, stating, “It feels great to win consecutively.” In an exclusive conversation with ICC, he discussed the team’s thorough preparations and strategic approach during the com-

petition. We knew the competition would take place in India, so we were well prepared. We knew how the conditions would be, what we needed to accomplish, and how we wanted to play. I believe care is the appropriate term, as I sensed it progressively seeping into this squad as the competition began, as they thought about each other and what the team needed at the time. “This was the mantra for this year’s edition,” Yadav explained.

UEFA Conference League 2025-26: AEK Larnaca holds Crystal Palace to a goalless draw in the opening leg of the round of 16

London: Palace generated several opportunities on a damp and windy night at Selhurst Park, but failed to score against its Cypriot opponent for the second time this season, after losing 1-0 to Larnaca in the league phase. Crystal Palace struggled to a 0-0 draw at home against AEK Larnaca in the first leg of their UEFA Conference League 2025-26 last-16 meeting on Thursday. Palace generated several opportunities on a damp and windy night at Selhurst Park, but failed to score against its Cypriot opponent for the second time this season, after losing 1-0

to Larnaca in the league phase. French forward Jean-Philippe Mateta came on as a late substitute for his first Palace appearance since January 25 after a move to AC Milan collapsed due to concerns over a knee injury. Oliver Glasner’s side will go to Cyprus next week seeking to keep alive its first full venture into European football. “It wasn’t a standout performance, but it was acceptable. “I believe we had enough chances to win the game,” Glasner told TNT Sports. “We understood it was difficult to create chances and score goals. It was Larnaca’s



ninth game in the Conference League, and they only conceded once. We had opportunities to score. But credit must also be given to the goalkeeper, who made two crucial stops in the first

half,” he said. Should Palace advance, it might face two-time runner-up Fiorentina in the quarterfinals. The Italians defeated Rakow Czeszochowa of Poland 2-1 in Florence courtesy to

a stoppage-time penalty.. Strasbourg, who finished first in the league phase, maintained its perfect record in Europe this season with a 2-1 victory over Croatian club Rijeka. Troy Parrott, a former Tottenham striker, scored both goals for AZ Alkmaar in a 2-1 win over Sparta Prague, while Rayo Vallecano triumphed 3-1 away to Samsunspor. AEK Athens advanced to the quarterfinals with a 4-0 victory against Slovenian club Celje, while Shakhtar Donetsk defeated Lech Poznan 3-1. Mainz of the Bundesliga drew 0-0 with Sigma Olomouc of Czechia.

India’s Yuki Bhambri Reached Indian Well Quarters With Andre Goransson In Men’s Doubles



California: Yuki Bhambri, India’s best doubles player, and his partner Andre Goransson progressed to the quarterfinals of the men’s doubles tournament at the Indian Wells Masters, defeating Sander Arends and Jiri Lehecka in straight sets. Bhambri and Goransson defeated Arends and Lehecka 6-4, 6-4, in the one-hour and 14-minute pre-quarterfinal match. They did not face a single break point in the

match and defeated their opponents twice. The Indo-Swedish pair maintained control through most of the match, securing a crucial break in each set to seal the contest in straight sets. Listen to the latest songs, only on JioSaavn.com. Bhambri and Goransson will take on Alexander Erler of Austria and Andrea Vavassori from Italy in the last-eight stage of the prestigious ATP Masters 1000 tournament.