

Governor Bhalla calls for unity and investment as Manipur’s future takes centre stage at North-East Seminar

Imphal, Jan 13: Discussions on Manipur’s future, stability and long-term growth took centre stage at the 2026 North-East Seminar held at the City Convention Centre in Imphal on Monday. The day-long seminar, themed “Resurgent Manipur: Framework for Stability & Sustained Growth,” brought together policymakers, security experts, academics and students to deliberate on the challenges and opportunities facing the state. Governor of Manipur Ajay Kumar Bhalla presided over the seminar and highlighted the steady progress made by the state despite difficult circumstances in recent years. In his address, the Governor stressed that reconciliation, social harmony and collective responsibility were key to ensuring peace and development in Manipur. He said Manipur’s rich cultural heritage, strategic geographical location and resilient people give the state a strong foundation for growth. According to him, sustained progress will depend on strong governance, improved border management and close coordination between the government, security forces and civil society. He underlined the need to rebuild trust among communities and strengthen social cohesion to move forward. The Governor also spoke at length

about Manipur’s economic potential. He said sectors such as agriculture, horticulture, handloom, handicrafts, eco-tourism and sports offer significant opportunities for livelihood generation and growth. Praising the achievements of Manipuri sportspersons at national and international levels, he said the state has earned global recognition through sports and youth talent. Calling for focused investment, Governor Bhalla emphasised the importance of education, skill development, better connectivity and youth empowerment. He noted that empowering young people with skills and opportunities would play a vital role in shaping Manipur’s future and reducing unrest. The seminar featured three plenary sessions, each focusing on different aspects of Manipur’s present situation and future roadmap. The first session, titled “Manipur at Crossroads,” was chaired by Lt Gen C A Krishnan. The discussion examined security challenges, governance issues and the impact of regional and geopolitical developments on the state. Anthropologist Rami N. Desai, Senior Fellow at the India Foundation, presented a paper on “External Dynamics as a Catalyst for Internal Turmoil in Manipur.” In her presentation, she spoke about



cross-border influences, illegal immigration, narcotics networks and demographic pressures, and how these factors have affected internal stability over time. Senior security officials, including Security Advisor Kuldiep Singh, Director General of Assam Rifles Vikas Lakhera, and Inspector General Assam Rifles (South) Ravroop Singh, shared

their views on security management and coordination. They highlighted the need for continued vigilance, co-operation among agencies and community support to maintain peace. Academic voices were also part of the discussion. Vice-Chancellor of Manipur University, Prof. N. Lokendra Singh, spoke on the role of education-

al institutions in promoting dialogue, research and inclusive development. Students and young participants actively engaged with speakers, raising questions about employment, education and peace-building. The interaction reflected a strong interest among the youth in contributing to Manipur’s recovery and growth.

In Brief

Mizoram CM inaugurates ginger processing unit at Sairang

Aizawl: Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma inaugurated a Ginger Processing Unit at the Sairang Horticulture Centre, highlighting the state’s growing recognition as the Ginger capital of India. He praised the Mizoram Agricultural Marketing Board and the Horticulture Department for their efforts. The Chief Minister noted that ginger cultivation has improved incomes and supports local businesses. He announced that ginger procurement will resume on February 2 and emphasized the importance of using collection centers for systematic procurement. He also stressed the government’s commitment to organic farming, transparency in procurement, and urged farmers to avoid independent sales. The event was attended by Minister for Horticulture C Lalsawivunga and other officials.

10 th armed force veterans day celebrations

Guwahati: Air Force Station Guwahati will observe the 10th Armed Forces Veterans Day on 14 January 2026, honoring the service and sacrifices of veterans from the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force. This day is particularly significant as it marks the retirement of Field Marshal KM Cariappa, the first Indian Commander-in-Chief. The program will begin with a wreath-laying ceremony at the War Memorial, followed by interactions addressing veterans’ welfare, healthcare, resettlement, and pension issues. Additionally, facilitation counters and information stalls will support ex-servicemen and veer naris regarding government welfare schemes. Senior Armed Forces officers and distinguished veterans will attend, reaffirming the nation’s commitment to veterans’ well-being. Air Force Station Guwahati emphasizes its dedication to uphold the legacy of valor and sacrifice among veterans.

Mizoram records highest tuberculosis-related deaths

Aizawl: Mizoram reported 145 tuberculosis-related deaths in 2025, the highest in six years, according to the National TB Elimination Programme. A total of 2,275 cases were diagnosed, including 911 women, marking a slight decrease from 2024. Notably, 1,900 cases were identified in government health facilities. The number of TB-related deaths has risen steadily since 2020, with significant increases each year. Aizawl district led in cases (1,569), followed by Lunglei (155) and Kolasib (138), while Serchhip reported the fewest (52 cases). Despite rising mortality, community participation in TB care has grown, with over 100 individuals using the ‘Nikshay’ platform to support patients under the Prime Minister’s TB Mukta Bharat Abhiyan initiative.

Nabard signs tripartite pact

Guwahati: NABARD’s Assam Regional Office has partnered with Assam Gramin Bank and 24x7 Moneyworks Consulting Pvt Ltd to implement the Electronic – Kisan Credit Card (e-KCC) scheme, aimed at enhancing digital lending in agriculture. The agreement was formalized in Guwahati with key officials present. The e-KCC Portal streamlines the Kisan Credit Card loan process, allowing farmers to apply and manage loans via a user-friendly digital platform that includes integrations with essential APIs. NABARD’s CGM, Loken Das, emphasized that this initiative will improve credit delivery for small and marginal farmers, enhancing financial inclusion in Assam.

Soubam Ibopishak takes oath as MnREC Chairman

Imphal: Soubam Ibopishak Singh was sworn in as the Chairman of Manipur Electricity Regulatory Commission (MnREC), today. Governor of Manipur, Ajay Kumar Bhalla, administered the oath of office to Soubam Ibopishak Singh in the Swearing-in Ceremony held at the Darbar Hall of Lok Bhavan, Imphal. MLAs, Chief Secretary, Security Advisor, and other senior officers attended the oath taking ceremony.

Namsai Students’ Republic Invite



Itanagar, Jan 13: Two Class 12 students from a remote school in Namsai district, Arunachal Pradesh, have been invited to attend the Republic Day parade in New Delhi for their innovative project on plastic waste management. Nang Sujata Jenow and Kusum Kumari Mishra, studying science at Government Higher Secondary School in Chongkham, excelled in the national School Innovation Marathon (SIM) organized under NITI Aayog’s Atal Innovation Mission (AIM). Their project presented practical solutions for managing plastic waste, aiming to contribute to a plastic-free future, and impressed national evaluators with its scientific approach and innovation. Guided by teacher Moirangtham Surchand Singh, the students’ work aligns with India’s sustainability goals. School principal Toni Pertin praised their achievement, saying, “Their stewardship and hard work not only brought laurels to our institution but have also proven that our youth are the key to achieving a sustainable India.”

Governor’s rule extended in Chakma Autonomous District Council for another six months



Aizawl, Jan 13: The Governor of Mizoram has extended Governor’s Rule in the Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC) for a further period of six months, citing continuing political uncertainty and administrative concerns in the council. According to an official notification issued by the District Council and Minority Affairs Department on January 12, 2026, the Governor had earlier taken over all functions and powers of the CADC on July 7, 2025. This initial period of Governor’s Rule was for six months. With that term now completed, the Governor has decided to extend the arrangement under provisions of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. The notification ex-

plained that after the earlier period ended, Lakkhan Chakma staked claim to be the third Chief Executive Member of the 11th CADC. As required under Para 20BB of the Sixth Schedule, the opinion of the Council of Ministers was sought. The Council of Ministers advised that the claimant should be given an opportunity to prove his majority on the floor of the council. It was also noted that during the past six months, there had been no visible political instability, and the same political party continued to claim majority support in the council. However, the Governor observed that the report of the Inquiry Commission related to the CADC is still awaited. The Governor further

pointed out that frequent changes in political allegiance by elected members of the District Council have created uncertainty. In view of this situation, it was felt necessary to continue Governor’s Rule for some more time to ensure stable administration. In exercise of powers under Para 16(2) read with Para 20BB of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India, the Governor has extended Governor’s Rule in the CADC for another six months or until further orders. As per the notification, all powers and functions of the council will continue to be exercised on behalf of the Governor by the Deputy Commissioner of Lawngtlai district with effect from January 7, 2026.

Governor’s Rule in Chakma Autonomous District Council Extended for Six Months

Lawngtlai, Jan 13: The Mizoram Governor has extended Governor’s Rule in the Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC) for a further period of six months, citing ongoing political uncertainty and administrative considerations. A notification issued by the District Council and Minority Affairs Department stated that the Governor had initially assumed all functions and powers of the CADC on July 7, 2025, for six months. With the expiry of that term, the powers have now been extended under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. The notification noted that after the previous term, Lakkhan Chakma staked claim to be the third Chief Executive Member of the 11th CADC. As per Para 20BB of the Sixth Schedule, the opinion of the Council of Ministers was sought, advising the Governor to provide the claimant an opportunity to prove his majority. Despite the lack of political instability during the past six months, frequent shifts in allegiance among elected members and the pending report of the Inquiry Commission prompted the continuation of Governor’s Rule. Under powers conferred by Para 16(2) read with Para 20BB of the Sixth Schedule, the Governor has extended the rule for another six months or until further orders. All functions and powers will continue to be exercised on the Governor’s behalf by the Deputy Commissioner of Lawngtlai district, effective January 7, 2026. The order was issued by Lalhmunsanga Hnamte, Secretary to the Government of Mizoram, District Council and Minority Affairs Department.

TSA releases list of leading schools in Sadar Hills after year-long evaluation

Kangpokpi, Jan 13: The Thadou Students’ Association (TSA), Sadar Hills, has published a fresh list of the ten best-performing schools in Sadar Hills, bringing focus once again to the quality of education in Kangpokpi District. The move is being seen as an effort to encourage schools to maintain steady academic standards while also supporting students beyond the classroom. Officials from TSA said the selection was based on a detailed review of school performance in 30 academic and co-curricular competitions organised over a period of more than one year, from October 5, 2024, to November 22, 2025. The assessment was carried out by the association’s education wing, following a uniform and transparent process to ensure fairness. As per the final ranking, the schools that made it to the Top 10 list are Apex Christian English School, St. Vincent School, Ideal Senior Secondary School, Omega Public School, TL Shalom Academy, MBC Higher Secondary School, Pathfinder Academy, Apple Buds, Elite Higher Secondary School, and Baptist English High School. TSA representatives said the ranking was aimed at recognising consistency



rather than one-time success. They explained that equal weight was given to classroom performance and participation in activities such as debates, sports, and cultural events, as these play a key role in shaping students’ overall growth. The association has been actively involved in educational activities in Sadar Hills for several years. Through regular competitions, monitoring programmes, and interaction with school authorities, TSA has worked to raise awareness about

the need for balanced education. Leaders of the association said such initiatives help schools review their own performance and make necessary improvements. Parents and teachers across the district have welcomed the announcement. Many said the ranking provides useful guidance and encourages schools to focus on discipline, teaching quality, and student support. Education observers also noted that the process promotes accountability among institutions.

Arunachal: Assam Rifles arrest two NSCN-K (Nikki Sumi) OGWs in Tirap

Dibrugarh, Jan 13: The Khonsa Battalion of Assam Rifles apprehended two Over Ground Workers (OGWs) of the NSCN-K (Nikki Sumi) faction during targeted operations on January 10, 2026. The operations were carried out in Khonsa Market and Deomali areas of Tirap district in Arunachal Pradesh under the Inspector General Assam Rifles (North). Based on specific and credible intelligence from ground sources received around 1430 hours, security forces learned about extortion activities in the Khonsa Market area.

Acting on this input, the Khonsa Battalion of Assam Rifles and the Arunachal Pradesh Police jointly launched a swift and coordinated operation. During the operation, one OGW of NSCN-K (Nikki Sumi) was apprehended near a wine shop in Khonsa Market while allegedly collecting extortion money from a local shopkeeper. The apprehended individual has been identified as Khechan Khetey (30), son of Khenyak Khetey, resident of Old Paniduria Village of Borduria in Tirap. He was an active OGW of the NSCN-K (Nikki Sumi) faction. “We have recovered one extortion note of NSCN-K (Nikki Sumi), one mobile phone, one SIM card, and CCTV footage related to the extortion activities,” said an official. Recovered items during this operation include cash of Rs 3,93,140, one smartphone, one keypad mobile phone, three SIM cards, and one handbag. Both



apprehended OGWs, along with the recovered items, have been handed over to Khonsa Police Station for further investigation and legal proceedings. The successful execution of these operations highlights the Assam Rifles’ steadfast commitment to maintaining peace and security and curbing insurgent-linked extortion activities in Tirap District, in close coordination with state police and civil authorities.

Further, based on information extracted from the apprehended OGW and specific intelli-

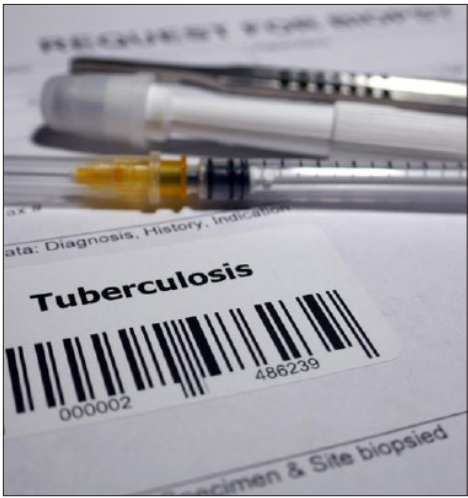
gence inputs received from our agencies, the operation was extended to the general area of Deomali. Another OGW of NSCN-K (Nikki Sumi) was apprehended while forcibly extorting money from a local shopkeeper in Deomali. The second individual has been identified as Danwang Maphouk, son of Kekho Maphouk, resident of Lazu Village, Tirap District, Arunachal Pradesh. He is a strong sympathiser and an active OGW of the NSCN-K (Nikki Sumi) faction.

Mizoram records highest TB deaths in six years with 145 fatalities

Dibrugarh, Jan 13: Mizoram recorded 145 deaths due to tuberculosis (TB) in 2025, the highest number in the last six years, according to official data released under the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP) of the National Health Mission. During the year, a total of 2,275 people were diagnosed with TB, including 911 women. While this marked a marginal decline from the 2,291 cases recorded in 2024, the death toll continued its upward trend. Of the total cases detected in 2025, 1,900 were identified at government health facilities, while 375 cases were detected in private centres. Official figures show a steady rise in TB-related fatalities in the state since 2020. The number of deaths stood at 31 in 2020, rising to 46 in 2021, 87 in 2022, 119 in 2023 and 136 in 2024, before reaching 145 in 2025. Among the new cases reported this year, 146 patients were diagnosed with multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB), while 267 were found to be suffering from both TB and HIV/AIDS. Data also revealed that 141 of the newly diagnosed patients were children below the age of 14. Health officials said that 84 per cent of the total patients were successfully treated. District-wise data showed that Aizawl recorded the highest number of TB cases at 1,569, followed by Lunglei with 155 cases and Kolasib with 138. Serchhip district reported the lowest number, with 52 cases.

Officials also highlighted growing community participation in TB care, noting that more than 100 people have registered through the online platform ‘Nikshay’ to adopt TB patients or provide financial support under the Prime Minister’s TB Mukta Bharat Abhiyan. The initiative aims to strengthen community involvement, improve treatment outcomes for patients and leverage Corporate Social Responsibility support as part of India’s commitment to eliminate TB.

Mizoram recorded 145 deaths due to tuberculosis (TB) in 2025, the highest number in the last six years, according to official data released under the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP) of the National Health Mission.



Assam Police arrest fake doctor in Cachar district



Guwahati, Jan 13: Continuing its crackdown on illegal medical practice, the Assam Police in Cachar district have arrested another individual for allegedly practising medicine using forged qualifications, officials said on Monday. The accused has been identified as Shamim Ahmed Laskar, a resident of the Bhaga area under the Dholai police station limits. He was apprehended following a complaint alleging that he had been running a medical chamber without valid medical credentials. According to police, the arrest was made after a written complaint was submitted by Dr Abhijit Neog, Anti-Quackery and Vigilance Officer of the Assam Council of Medical Registration (ACMR). Acting on the complaint, a police team conducted a raid at the accused’s medical chamber on Saturday and detained him on the spot. During the search operation, police recovered several forged MBBS certificates and other related documents from the premises.

Preliminary investigation indicated that Shamim Ahmed Laskar had been illegally practising medicine for a considerable period, allegedly misleading patients and

posing a serious threat to public health and safety. Police officials said the accused failed to produce any valid registration or authorisation to practise medicine. The seized documents have been sent for further verification, and a detailed probe has been launched to determine the duration of his illegal activities and whether any patients suffered harm due to his unauthorised treatment. Investigators are also examining the possibility of a wider network involved in the fabrication or circulation of fake medical certificates. Further arrests cannot be ruled out, officials added.

Notably, the Assam Police in Cachar district have intensified their drive against quackery and unqualified medical practitioners over the past few months. As part of the sustained campaign, around 20 individuals posing as doctors have been arrested from different parts of the district.

Authorities have reiterated their appeal to the public to verify the credentials of medical practitioners and report suspicious activities to the police or the ACMR to prevent endangering lives through unqualified medical practice.

IDPs hold protest rally in Imphal

Imphal, Jan 13: Manipur police backed by a large number of Central security forces armed with anti-riot gears stopped a crowd of protesters, mostly internally displaced persons (IDPs), advancing Imphal Lok Bhavan on Monday. No untoward incident was reported as police who were already alerted blocked the road to Lok Bhavan completely with temporary barricades and succeeded in convincing the protesters to air their demands to the Governor by allowing their representatives to proceed. The protesters were calmed down only after the Governor reportedly assured to give them a written response to the memorandums by tomorrow (January 13). The protest rally was carried out by IDPs languishing at various relief camps across the valley district backed by Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI) that sought to get the attention of the Lok Bhavan on Monday afternoon. Pressing the Governor for his immediate intervention and concrete measures for their resettlement, the IDPs sought a response from the state administration under President’s Rule to a number of memorandums they submitted to the Governor and other pertinent authorities regarding the unresolved issues of the IDPs, particularly the resettlement. Leaders and members of various CSOs also took part in the rally that originated from Imphal’s Kwakeithel and marched toward the Lok Bhavan along Tidim Road on Monday afternoon. The rally displayed a banner that read, “Respond to our December memorandums,” while referring to several memorandums submitted by the COCOMI and IDPs to the Governor and state chief secretary.

“Resettlement is a right, not a favour,” “Governor must respond to the people”, read other placards carried by the protesters. They also chanted slogans like “Let us return to our homes”, “Open the national highways”, “Manipur belongs to us,” etc. reflecting growing frustration over prolonged displacement and uncertainty. The key demand of the protest rally was the translation into action of the government’s three-phase plan for resettlement of all the IDPs by December, 2025. Under the plan, the PR ad-



ministration promised to close all the IDP relief camps by December 31, 2025 by resettling them to their original places and by providing temporary shelter houses for those of whom resettlement was not feasible for the time being. Pressing the government to translate into action the plan, the IDPs backed by the COCOMI had staged a month-long sit-in demonstration in Imphal in December last. Upon reaching Keislahmpat, a few meters short of reaching Lok Bhavan, the police backed by a large contingent of the Central security forces blocked the slogan chanting rally from advancing further. Amid the pressure to allow the protesters to march till Lok Bhavan, top police officials who arrived at the spot allowed a group of 11-member led by COCOMI convener Khuraijam Athouba to proceed and meet the Governor and chief secretary. The delegation first met state chief secretary Dr Puneet Kumar Goel at his office chamber at the South Block of state secretariat followed by a meeting with Governor Ajay Kumar Balla. The chief secretary and commissioner (home) also joined the meeting between the delegation and the Governor. “Governor assured us a written government response to our memorandums,” COCOMI convener Khuraijam Athouba told the

reporters while coming out of the Lok Bhavan.

He said that they met the Governor and top officials to secure a government’s concrete assurance regarding the unresolved issues of resettlement of the IDPs. During the meeting, the delegation highlighted the grievances of the IDPs languishing in relief camps for a long time and urged authorities to take prompt action on the memorandum submitted during the month-long protest. After a patient hearing, the Governor assured a written response to the memorandums COCOMI and the IDPs submitted during the month-long protest in December, he said.

The Governor further categorically stated that there was no “buffer zone” in Manipur, reaffirming the government’s position and calling for clarity to counter misinformation, Athouba said. To a query on the future course of the COCOMI and IDPs, he said that the future actions would be determined based on the Governor’s response to the memorandums. The COCOMI convener asserted that the protest rally held on Monday was a result of the government’s continued failure to provide a credible roadmap for rehabilitation and warned that public pressure would intensify if the demands of the IDPs are not addressed without further delay.

Pradyot Debbarma says Centre considering implementation of Tiprasa Accord Confidence ahead of ADC polls

Agartala, Jan 13: Tipra Motha Party (TMP) founder Pradyot Kishore Debbarma on Monday, January 12 said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah are actively considering the implementation of the Tiprasa Accord to safeguard the rights of Tripura’s indigenous communities, even as resistance persists within certain sections of the BJP’s state leadership. Addressing the media at Kamalpur in Dhalai district, Debbarma stated that while the Centre appeared committed to honouring the accord, “a few BJP leaders in Agartala seem opposed to the move.” The Tiprasa Accord was signed in March 2024 between the TMP, the Centre, and the Tripura government, with a stated objective of ensuring the overall development and protection of indigenous people. Tripura is home to nearly 15 lakh indigenous people belonging to over 40 tribes and sub-tribes, out of a total population of around 40 lakh, making tribal rights a central political issue in the state. Debbarma exuded confidence about his party’s prospects in the upcoming Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) elections, scheduled



for March. “We are 110 per cent sure of winning the ADC elections. I have been working for the Tiprasa people continuously for the past five years,” he asserted. Recalling the formation of the TTAADC under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution in 1982, the TMP chief said that then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had supported granting special status to tribal areas, despite opposition from certain Congress leaders in Agartala. “Ultimately, Indira Gandhi overruled the state leadership and ensured the inclusion of Tripura’s tribal areas under the Sixth Schedule.

The TTAADC was constituted on January 15, 1982,” he noted. Emphasising his political stand, Debbarma clarified that TMP was not opposed to any community. “We are not against anyone. Our sole objective is to secure the rights of the Tiprasa people. I entered politics to protect the rights of future generations,” he said.

Taking a swipe at Chief Minister Manik Saha, Debbarma also responded to remarks urging the regional party to behave like a “junior brother” within the BJP-led alliance. “I do not have an elder brother, only an elder sister. In politics, there is no big brother or younger brother — everyone is equal,” he remarked.

The Chief Minister had made the comment during a party programme at Baijalbari in Khowai district on December 23, amid tensions between the BJP and TMP following reported attacks on BJP workers. With the ADC elections approaching, Debbarma’s remarks underline the growing political churn within the ruling alliance and sharpen the focus on the future of the Tiprasa Accord and indigenous rights in Tripura.

Fuel station bomb attack case

Imphal, Jan 13: The central security forces and Manipur Police commandos arrested an underground cadre alleged to have links with the Group of Five (G-5), an alliance of five proscribed outfits, in a separate operation on Monday. The arrestee is accused of being involved in an explosion caused by a bomb attack at a fuel station in Moirang Thana Leikai in Bishnupur district of the state, officials reported on Tuesday. Hijam Manichandra Singh (35), a resident of Waikhong Chingdong Leikai in Kachhing district, was arrested from his hideout located at Komnao Makha Leikai area under Waikhong police station in Kakching district. Police said that Singh is an active cadre of the proscribed Kanglei Yaol Kanna Lup (KYKL), an alliance partner of the five underground groups collectively known as G-5. He was involved

in causing an explosion at M/S Elidas Fuel Station at Moirang Thana Leikai in Bishnupur district on the night of January 8, 2026.

The report further stated that following his arrest, other accomplices involved in the crime have been identified, and efforts to arrest them are under way. The Manipur Petroleum Dealers Fraternity (MPDF) has been on strike, shutting down all petrol pumps in the valley districts and surrounding areas since January 10 in response to the bomb attack at M/S Elidas Fuel Station.

Additionally, the Group of Five (G-5) is an alliance of five proscribed outfits comprising the Kangleipak Communist Party, Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup, People’s Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK-Progressive), and the United National Liberation Front (Koireng group).



Namsang EAC headquarters shifted to Yonglok to improve administrative reach: Rio

Kohima, Jan 13: Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio on Monday said the decision to relocate the Extra Assistant Commissioner (EAC) headquarters of Namsang Circle from Kongshong to Yonglok in Longleng district was taken after careful consideration of long-standing public demands and administrative needs. Addressing a public gathering at Yonglok, Rio said the move was aimed at strengthening governance and improving the reach of government services, especially in remote and border villages. He said the state government had taken note of repeated representations from local residents who had been seeking better access to administrative facilities.

In a post on X later, the chief minister said the relocation would help improve service delivery and make administration more accessible to people living in far-flung areas. He explained that while the establishment of the Namsang EAC earlier marked an important step in expanding administration, changing development requirements, population patterns and connectivity issues made it necessary to review the location of the headquarters.

Rio also praised the people of Namsang Circle for their active participation in the region's development over the years. He expressed hope that the relocation would open up new opportunities and contribute to steady growth, peace and prosperity in the area.

Deputy Chief Minister Y Patton and legislators B Bangtick Phom and A Pongshi Phom also addressed the gathering, along with Longleng Deputy Commissioner W Manpai Phom.

The programme was chaired by Dr Phongshak Phom. The invocation was delivered by Yonglok Baptist Church pastor Longshing, while the welcome address was given by Namsang Citizen Union president B Patong Phom. Words of appreciation were shared by Phom Peoples' Council president Y B Angam Phom.



Mizoram gets waiver on outstanding dues for vacated AR facilities

Aizawl, Jan 13: Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma has informed that the Central government has waived a sum of Rs 5.23 crore payable by the state government for vacated Assam Rifles facilities.

The payable amount was the depreciated cost that the Mizoram government was required to pay for buildings and infrastructure vacated by the Assam Rifles in Aizawl. Depreciated cost refers to the reduced value of buildings and infrastructure after accounting for wear and tear over time.

Lalduhoma said the Centre has responded affirmatively to the request made by him to Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Nitiyanand Rai in May last year to waive the sum. Fulfilling a long pending demand of the people of Mizoram, the Assam Rifles vacated the land under its control in Aizawl in March 2025 and shifted its establishment to Zokhawasang, around 15 km from the Mizoram capital.

Mizoram clears Rs 63.11 crore old dues in two years: CM Lalduhoma

Aizawl, Jan 13: Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma on January 12 said that his government has repaid committed liabilities worth Rs 63.11 crore within two years of assuming office in December 2023. He said the remaining dues would be cleared step by step in the coming years. The chief minister made the statement while addressing a programme at the office of the Zoram People's Movement (ZPM). He said that when the present government took charge, Mizoram was burdened with liabilities amounting to Rs 139.57 crore, which had accumulated during previous governments. "Out of the total Rs 139.57 crore inherited by us, we have already repaid Rs 63.11 crore in the last two years. The remaining Rs 76.46 crore will also be cleared in a phased manner," Lalduhoma said. The chief minister explained that the government faced serious financial pressure at the beginning of its term. He said many contract works had been taken up earlier



without proper administrative approval, expenditure sanction, or official work orders. According to him, these irregular practices were a major reason behind the piling up of unpaid bills and liabilities. Giving department-wise details, Lalduhoma said that under the Public Works Department, Rs 12.87 crore has been repaid out of a total liability of Rs 18.70 crore. In the Public Health Engineering Department, Rs 48.42 crore has already been cleared, while Rs 58 crore is still pending. He added that the Power

Mizoram CM inaugurates ginger processing unit at Sairang

Aizawl, Jan 13: Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma today inaugurated the Ginger Processing Unit established at the Sairang Horticulture Centre under the Handholding Scheme of the Mizoram Agricultural Marketing Board (MAMB). Minister for Horticulture C Lalsawivunga, was present as the guest of honour.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister expressed happiness that long-cherished aspirations are now gradually becoming a reality. He conveyed his appreciation to the Mizoram Agricultural Marketing Board and the Horticulture Department for their responsibility and efforts in establishing the processing unit.

He noted that although Mizoram has been a Union Territory/State for about 54 years and is predominantly an agrarian state, no particular crop had earlier brought significant recognition. Today, however, Mizoram has begun to be known as the Ginger capital of India. This growing recognition, he said, is a result of the hard work of farmers. He further stated that passion fruit also has strong potential, and efforts will be made to promote it on a larger scale.

Ginger cultivation has enabled many families to earn better incomes; increased purchasing power among the people has benefited businesses.

The Chief Minister announced that



■ Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma inaugurated a Ginger Processing Unit at the Sairang Horticulture Centre, aided by the Mizoram Agricultural Marketing Board.

ginger procurement will resume from February 2. Various locally produced machines for slicing and drying ginger are proposed to be placed at collection centres for use by farmers, which he said would greatly support ginger processing.

The Chief Minister highlighted that organic farming provides Mizoram a competitive advantage over other states, and therefore the government will place increased emphasis on organic practices.

He referred to irregularities noticed during ginger procurement last year, which prompted thorough inquiries. The government, he asserted, will not tolerate such irregularities and will ensure transparency and fairness in all processes.

10 th armed force veterans day celebrations at air force station Guwahati

Guwahati, Jan 13: Air Force Station Guwahati will commemorate the 10th Armed Forces Veterans Day on 14 January 2026 with solemnity and gratitude to honour the valiant veterans of the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force. Armed Forces Veterans Day is observed every year on 14 January in recognition of the selfless service and sacrifices of the nation's veterans. The day holds special significance as it marks the date of retirement of

Field Marshal KM Cariappa, OBE, and the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army, who laid the foundations of India's post-independence military leadership and later worked actively for veterans' welfare. The observance reaffirms the enduring bond between serving personnel and the veteran fraternity, who continue to inspire the present and future generations of warriors through their courage, discipline and devotion to duty. The programme will



commence at Air Force Station Guwahati with a wreath-laying ceremony at the War Memorial to pay homage to

the brave hearts who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty and will be followed by an interaction with the vet-

erans and their families. The issues related to Veterans' welfare, healthcare, resettlement and pensionary benefits will also be addressed in coordination with concerned agencies. In addition, facilitation counters and information stalls by the organisations dealing with veterans affairs have been planned to assist ex-servicemen and veer naris, along with outreach on various government and service-specific welfare schemes. Senior officers of the Armed Forces, distinguished veterans and representatives of civil administration are expected to grace the occasion, underscoring the collective commitment of the nation to the well-being of its veterans. Air Force Station Guwahati takes pride in hosting the observance of the 10th Armed Forces Veterans Day and reiterates its unwavering resolve to stand by its veterans, whose legacy of valour and sacrifice forms the bedrock of the Armed Forces' ethos.

Arunachal government plans strong digital ILP system to curb illegal migration

Itanagar, Jan 13: The Arunachal Pradesh government is working on a strong and fully technology-driven Inner Line Permit (ILP) system to check illegal migration and stop misuse of permits. Chief Minister Pema Khandu said protecting indigenous people and maintaining law and order remain the government's top priorities. The chief minister made the remarks on January 12 while chairing a review meeting at the civil secretariat. During the meeting, he said the new IT-enabled ILP system will help authorities closely monitor the movement of non-residents entering and staying in the state. According to Khandu, the proposed system will allow real-time tracking of entry and exit of outsiders. It will also help identify people who overstay beyond the permitted period, use expired permits, or show unusual travel patterns. The system is expected to plug gaps that existed in the earlier manual and semi-digital processes. In a post shared on social media platform X after the meeting, the chief min-

ister said the government is "working on a robust, IT-enabled ILP system to track overstaying, expired permits, unusual travel patterns, and real-time entry-exit data." Earlier, while addressing a press conference on January 6, Khandu said the existing ILP system had serious monitoring limitations. He explained that the lack of proper tracking made it difficult for authorities to ensure compliance with permit rules. To address this, the government has already migrated the ILP mechanism to a fully digital platform. "Earlier, the ILP system could not be properly monitored. We have now migrated to a digital platform. After Cabinet approval, new rules will come into force," the chief minister said. He added that the digitised system will help enforcement agencies take timely action against illegal migrants and those misusing permits. The new framework will also place greater responsibility on employers. Any employer bringing labourers from outside Arunachal Pradesh will have to formally inform the government.

Mizoram records highest tuberculosis-related deaths in six years

Aizawl, Jan 13: Mizoram has recorded as many as 145 tuberculosis-related deaths in 2025, the highest in the past six years, revealed official data released under the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP) of the National Health Mission.

During the year, 2,275 people, including 911 women, were diagnosed with tuberculosis. Even as there was a marginal decline from the 2,291 cases recorded in 2024, the death toll continued to escalate

Of the total TB cases detected in 2025, 1,900 of them were identified at government health facilities, while 375 cases were detected in private centres.

The number of TB-related deaths in the State has risen steadily since 2020, when 31 fatalities were reported. The toll increased to 46 in 2021, 87 in 2022, 119 in 2023, and 136 in 2024.

According to reports, Aizawl district recorded the highest number of cases at 1,569, followed by Lunglei with 155 and Kolasib with 138, while Serchhip district reported the lowest number at 52 cases.

The high mortality rate has been recorded even as there has been growing community participation in TB care, with more than 100 people registering through the online platform 'Nikshay' to adopt TB patients or provide financial support under the Prime Minister's TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyan. The initiative aims to strengthen community involvement, improve treatment outcomes for patients and leverage Corporate Social Responsibility support as part of India's commitment to eliminate TB.

Soubam Ihopishak takes oath as MnREC Chairman



Imphal, Jan 13: Soubam Ihopishak Singh was sworn in as the Chairman of Manipur Electricity Regulatory Commission (MnREC), today. Governor of Manipur, Ajay Kumar Bhal-la, administered the oath of office to Soubam Ihopishak Singh in the Swearing-in Ceremony held at the Darbar Hall of Lok Bhavan, Imphal. MLAs, Chief Secretary, Security Advisor, and other senior officers attended the oath taking ceremony.

Nabard signs tripartite pact for e-kcc portal with Assam Gramin Bank

Guwahati, Jan 13: In a significant move to accelerate digital lending in the agriculture sector and ensure timely credit support to farmers, NABARD, Assam Regional Office has signed an agreement with Assam Gramin Bank (AGB) and M/s 24x7 Moneyworks Consulting Pvt Ltd to implement the Electronic - Kisan Credit Card (e-KCC) scheme in the state.

The agreement was signed at NABARD, Assam Regional Office, Guwahati, in the presence of Loken Das, chief general manager, NABARD Assam Regional Office; Qamar Javed, general manager; Sunil Kumar Jha, DGM; Debashish Gangopadhyay, chairman, Assam Gramin Bank, and officials from NABARD and AGB.

The e-KCC Portal is a unified digital platform that simplifies the entire Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loan process - from



application to disbursement.

Designed for accessibility and efficiency, it enables farmers to easily apply for and manage their KCC loans through a seamless, multilingual, and

mobile-ready interface.

Supporting end-to-end digital KCC operations, the portal integrates with key APIs such as Aadhaar, eSign, PAN, SMS, and Land Verification. It is al-

ready onboarding farmers across multiple regional rural and cooperative banks in India, offering real-time dashboards and MIS tools for efficient monitoring and reporting.

Speaking on the occasion, Loken Das, CGM, NABARD Assam Regional Office, said: "This initiative marks a major step towards empowering farmers through technology. By leveraging the e-KCC platform, we aim to make credit delivery faster, transparent, and inclusive, ensuring that small and marginal farmers in Assam have easy access to timely financial support."

This strategic collaboration of NABARD with Assam Gramin Bank will help deliver faster, transparent, and more inclusive credit services to small and marginal farmers, thereby strengthening rural credit delivery and promoting financial inclusion in Assam.

Does the Anglosphere seek chaos in Eurasia

As the world inches towards the nuclear abyss, fundamental questions abound: “What is happening?”, “How did things come to this pass?”, and “How will the world pull back from the edge?” Explanations tend to be incomplete, inconsistent, or incoherent. Do we view the world incorrectly because we are conditioned by decades of terms such as “The West”, “International Community”, “Third World”, “Developing Countries”, “Emerging Market”, and increasingly “Global South”? It appears so. A more accurate perspective may be available if we set aside notions that have become so entrenched that they are almost genetically encoded in much of the world, through decades of sustained narrative building and consolidation. The non-Western idea is of “the West” as a cohesive group. Tens of millions of us absorbed and internalised this notion through conditioning in English language schools, the media and the global public discourse—again conducted largely through the languages of “the West”. In non-Western minds, “the West” is also white. The impression is of a West that has acted in seeming synchrony for most of history. This perception has constructed a worldview in the non-West that is inadequate to understand the world of today. Look a little deeper, though, and differences emerge. What is thought of as the West, in fact, comprises the Anglosphere (native English-speaking countries) plus the Eurosphere (the European Union) and some aspirants to either or both. (There is another set of white people, the Slavs—let’s call it the Slavosphere—which is alienated from the other two. But let us leave that aside for the purpose of this analysis.) In fact, the West is a common but non-uniform civilisational space, drawing upon a Greco-Roman (which they now consider “pagan”) and Judeo-Christian heritage. There is also a hierarchy in the West which emerged after World War II, where some states prevail as first among equals—a set apart. This became clearer when the USSR ceased to exist in 1991. The world became unipolar under the US, the leader of the Anglosphere. It is the most powerful group in the world, but surprisingly little analysis is done of its collective actions. The Anglosphere What exactly is the Anglosphere? It is the native English-speaking world, comprising the UK, the US, Canada, Australia & New Zealand. It is a single sub-civilisational space emerging out of the larger European Greco-Roman/ Judeo-Christian heritage. The Anglosphere shares historic, cultural, ritual and other affiliations amongst each other, and four of these countries (UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) have the same head of state: the British monarch. (The term “Anglosphere” was itself first used in 1995, in a science-fiction novel. The concept of “intercitizenship” between native English-speaking colonies was first proposed at the tail-end of the 19th century). The Anglosphere today has a population of about 422 million. It is the largest economic group in the world, with a GDP exceeding \$30 trillion per year. Informally known as the “Five Eyes”, because of their deeply integrated global surveillance and information collection platforms, they are more closely aligned geopolitically than most formal groupings, whether it is the G7, G20, Brics or any other of significance. At the head of the Anglosphere hierarchy, well above the rest in virtually every aspect of state power, sits the US—the global military superpower. Together the US and the UK have more than 800 military bases and installations around the world. The rest of the world put together has much less. With America as first among equals, the Anglosphere countries have a sibling relationship: the same language, deeply interconnected elite families, economically inseparable intertwining, and militaries so close that special forces soldiers from these countries often attend each other’s weddings. The culture is broadly homogeneous, albeit with strong local and sub-local characteristics. The Mindset These linkages reinforce the commonality of mindset, which also vibrates to the fact that these are all “island” states of a sort. The US/Canada is separated from the Eurasian landmass by the Atlantic/Pacific oceans, Britain by the English Channel & Australia/NZ by the Indian and Pacific oceans. None of these countries have a recent memory or real experience of a land invasion. They can only be attacked by air or sea, a huge strategic advantage—the associated disadvantage being they can also not attack others via land. That is why Britannia ruled the waves once, and why the US has the most powerful navy mankind has seen so far. It also explains the 800-plus military basing facilities overseas. This island mindset, combined with the historic memory of Great Britain and her colonies, her Empire, is shared by all native English speakers in some sense, and

certainly among the elites across the Anglosphere. That includes many people who have made it to the top as immigrants or other grateful additions and believers—mainly former colonials. The immigrants play a very useful role in broadcasting and showcasing the virtues of the Anglosphere. Many of them are located in and/or very well connected with the former colonies. After WWII, the strategic weight of the British Empire was substantially transferred to its cousin across the Atlantic—albeit not entirely willingly, and naturally after a brief sibling tussle. The US proceeded to become the biggest superpower the world has ever seen. This lived reality and memory of the elites of the Anglosphere—of secure distance, of great power and of the imposition of their will on the world—has given them a sense of both impunity of action and immunity from retribution. This sense underpins the common interest and mindset, apart from the civilisational and cultural commonalities. It enables and underpins a stable hierarchy (US>UK>Canada=Australia>NZ) to sustain the Anglosphere ruling class and its dependents. These are the Five Eyes, which survey the world and work relentlessly to shape it to their advantage. This approach to the rest of the world has become a habit, undeterred by setbacks now and then. Britain has faced no punishing recrimination for its centuries of colonial exploitation and slaughter, nor has America been questioned for the last three decades of warfare against other cultures. Both have done this in the name of a morally superior position in service of civilisation, democracy, human rights, etc. Unsurprisingly, hubris has accompanied the Five Eyes closely. Why the Anglosphere Prefers Chaos and How It Plays Out The Anglosphere’s foundational feature is that it harkens back to the British Empire, a thinking which continues to inform its present worldview. The Cold War was an interval (of sorts), but this view returned after the collapse of the Soviet Union. What we see playing out today on the Eurasian landmass is the natural outcome of imperial thinking. Through the 1990s and into the 2000s, with a weakened Russia in the throes of redefining itself, the core Anglosphere recalibrated its worldview for a unipolar world under “Pax Americana”. If understood in its essence, the Anglosphere’s objective is simple: direct or indirect control over the global resources that sustain humanity, in order to accumulate wealth and remain the most powerful group identity on the planet. To achieve this objective, the Anglosphere will continuously seed chaos on the Eurasian landmass. It is an unremarkable and instinct-based objective, and it is likely (if not certain) that anyone who replaces the US as a global superpower will have similar ambitions. But such thinking in others will be tempered by the reality of land borders. This is also why the Eurasian powers are more comfortable with a multipolar arrangement. Even the currently hapless EU countries are delicate on the subject. For the present though, nothing will be allowed to come in the way of the Anglosphere achieving its objective, and every applicable asset will be deployed to bring closer a reality of absolute supremacy. In the latest indicator of a preference for chaos, Ukraine, the divergence of strategic interest between the Anglosphere and the continental European part of “the West” is clear. The US and Brit ain—the latter in substance if not in form—will eventually pull out of Ukraine, blame its current leadership and move on. (Their territories are not physically at risk and will not be until the missiles and aircraft start flying into them – and then we will step outside the threshold of conventional warfare). For the EU member states, Ukraine is an abject lesson on the limits of racial brotherhood, the essence of lesson that has yet to sink in or even be acknowledged. Rather, the Eurosphere will continue to entertain this fantasy of a “collective West” because of a reflexive revulsion to pretty much every other alternative. They, after all, have land boundaries, old enmities, ancient hatreds and tribal inclinations within and outside their national borders. Despite their reluctance to recognise these realities, with the Ukraine debacle, continental Europe looks to be returning to its historical geopolitical norm. The exception was the half-century of relative peace between 1946 and 1999, when the US launched the illegal bombing campaign against Serbia. Prior to that, for at least about one and a half millennia, Europe was a battleground of ethnic, religious, imperial, tribal and other interests. These impulses are what the Anglosphere has revived through Ukraine, and it will nurture their growth. To the Five Eyes, the Eurasian landmass is a strategic playground. And only so long as things are under their near-absolute control will it be allowed stability.

I cannot be party to silencing writers, which is why I am resigning as director of Adelaide writers’ week

The Adelaide festival board’s decision – despite my strongest opposition – to disinvite the Australian Palestinian writer Randa Abdel-Fattah from Adelaide writers’ week weakens freedom of speech and is the harbinger of a less free nation, where lobbying and political pressure determine who gets to speak and who doesn’t.In the aftermath of the Bondi atrocity, state and federal governments have rushed to mollify the “we told you so” posse. With alarming insouciance protests are being outlawed, free speech is being constrained and politicians are rushing through processes to ban phrases and slogans. Now religious leaders are to be policed, universities monitored, the public broadcaster scrutinised and the arts starved. Are you or have you ever been a critic of Israel? Joe McCarthy would be cheering on the inheritors of his tactics. Artists have always been a problem for the state and interest groups but the confrontations have intensified as a consequence of the war on Gaza. Exploiting the rhetoric of social cohesion, crises have proliferated: the acceptance of Israeli government funding by the Sydney festival in 2022, the sanctioning of young actors in keffiyehs at the Sydney Theatre Company, Jayson Gillham’s cancelled concert by the Melbourne Sympho-

ny Orchestra, the initial removal of Khaled Sabsabi as Australia’s representative at the Venice Biennale, the State Library of Victoria’s cancellation of a teen writing program, the collapse of the Bendigo writers’ festival and a legion of arts organisations who have quietly yielded to pressure to program this artist and not program that artist.In my view, boards composed of individuals with little experience in the arts, and blind to the moral implications of abandoning the principle of freedom of expression, have been unnerved by the pressure exerted by politicians calculating their electoral prospects and relentless, coordinated letter-writing campaigns.In 2023 AWW programmed a handful of sessions devoted to contemporary Palestinian writers. Propagandists leapt to exhume, misrepresent and misquote social media posts to cultivate the conditions for cancelling writers. The South Australian premier, Peter Malinauskas, took exception to one writer’s tweets, expressing his personal distaste, as was his right as a citizen in a democratic country.It was heartening then to listen to his subsequent speech to a packed Town Hall audience. He shared his thinking about the arts, their role in society and the responsibility of the government of the day. He confessed that he

had thought of withdrawing our funding. And he concluded that if “politicians decide what is culturally appropriate ... it leads us to a future in which politicians can directly stifle events that are themselves predicated on freedom of speech ... it’s a path that leads us into the territory of Putin’s Russia”.His speech remains a model for political leaders confronted by art that might personally offend them, damage their electoral prospects or agitate noisy interest groups. The Adelaide festival board has now cancelled my invitation to Abdel-Fattah, who was to discuss her latest novel, Discipline, because of concerns about “cultural sensitivity” – and the premier has backed the decision. As a consequence, as at the time of writing, more than 180 writers have withdrawn. One can only assume that in due course these concerns might also be cited by opponents of free speech to demand the cancellation or silencing of others who have demanded justice for Palestinian people, writers who include Kenneth Roth, Francesca Albanese and Najwan Darwish. Many years ago the former premier Don Dunstan touted Adelaide as the “Athens of the south”. Now South Australia’s tourism slogan could be “Welcome to Moscow on the Torsens”.The board’s statement

cites community cohesion, an oft-referenced anxiety which should be treated with scepticism. This is a managerialist term intended to stop thinking. Who, after all, would argue in favour of social division? Presumably only a terrorist or a nihilist. The raison d’être of art and literature is to disrupt the status quo: and one doesn’t have to be a student of history to know that art in the service of “social cohesion” is propaganda.The arts have allegedly become “unsafe” and artists are a danger to the community’s psycho-social wellbeing. But, let’s be quite clear, the routine invocation of “safety” is code for “I don’t want to hear your opinion”. In this instance, it appears to apply only to a Palestinian invitee.The increasingly extreme and repressive efforts of pro-Israel lobbyists to stifle even the mildest criticism has had a chilling effect on free speech and democratic institutions. The new mantra “Bondi changed everything” has offered this lobby, its stenographers in the media and a spineless political class yet another coercive weapon. Hence, in 2026, the board, in an atmosphere of intense political pressure, has issued an edict that an author is to be cancelled.In the 65-year history of Adelaide writers’ week there have been no civil disturbances apart from the occasional harrumph about

When crowds direct offensive chants at Keir Starmer, who’s to blame? I’m afraid he is

It’s the world darts championships on the first day of the year, and a well-lubricated early-afternoon audience at London’s Alexandra Palace is belting out one of the more recent additions to its songbook.

Up on the stage, the then world No 20, Ryan Searle, briefly extracts himself from his quarter-final match to encourage the crowd, conducting it with his hands and briefly joining in a chorus of “Keir Starmer’s a wanker”.And the surreal part of all this is that from Searle’s gesture alone, you could scarcely guess what his own politics might be. Was he condemning Starmer from the nativist right or from the progressive left? Pro-farmer or pro-Palestine? Does he think the government’s reforms on workers’ rights go too far or not far enough? Perhaps Searle’s protest might even have come from the Burnhamite centre, less an ideological objection and more an implicit criticism of messaging and delivery.The hideous beauty of British politics in 2026 is that we have no idea.

You think Keir Starmer’s a wanker? Back of the queue’s that way, mate. And of course there is a rich irony in the fact that Starmer took office with the explicit aim of healing our divisions and bringing the country together, rendering this one of the very few election pledges he has actually managed to keep.His approval ratings, which began to go into freefall from pretty much the moment he moved into Downing Street, have dropped below 20%. A YouGov poll last week found that he was more disliked by Britons than Benjamin Netanyahu or Hamas.

At the weekend a far-right march against Starmer’s government in Bristol was met with a leftwing counter-protest bearing the slogan “We hate Keir Starmer more than you”. Meanwhile the song itself has become a kind of standard, the soundtrack to our lives, perhaps even a unifying balm in troubled times. As well as the darts, you hear it at football grounds up and down the country, in nightclubs at 2am, at music festivals, pretty much anywhere large groups of young people congregate in a public place. In a way it has become this generation’s Ghost Town, its Get Lucky, its Candle in the Wind



1997. Goodbye, England’s wanker.

There have of course been other useless prime ministers in our time: prime ministers who have started wars, killed thousands through neglect or cruelty, plunged millions into poverty, been duplicitous or corrupt, who have been turfed out in disgrace. But with the brief exception of Liz Truss, even the most divisive of them took years to become the focal point of mass rage. Starmer has managed to hit the sweet spot within barely a year. People genuinely, viscerally loathe this guy. Why him? Why now? And why like this?Let’s start with the word choice, which feels subtly telling in this case. If Boris Johnson was, as the darts crowd sang in late 2021 at the height of the Partygate scandal, a “cunt”, then somehow calling Starmer a “wanker” is altogether more piteously dismissive – insinuating not just degeneracy but a kind of bashful cowardice. The first word imputes a straightforward roguishness, perhaps even a grudging regard; the wanker, by contrast, is essentially beneath contempt.Clearly there is a hedonistic, nihilistic element to much of the sloganeering: a performative alpha masculinity that seems to have bled over from far-right spaces, via the sporting arena, into mainstream culture. Travelling football fans up and down the country slap “MORE GEAR LESS KEIR” stickers on trains, benches

and lamp-posts. And for these guys Starmer functions as basically the polar opposite of cocaine: sober, quiet, boring, right on, emotionally austere and medically incapable of banter.

But of course these same traits also damn him with the haunted, hope-starved left. Here, Starmer somehow manages to encapsulate a broader revulsion with traditional Westminster politicians – preoccupied with managerialism and triangulation over ideology and morality; the sheer reluctance to define a political mission beyond a vague obsession with “fixing things”, as if Britain were basically a damp garden shed.

With Tony Blair you were at least dealing with a human being, someone with a worldview and a discernible set of vertebrae. The reason Starmer makes such an infuriating adversary is because there is basically nothing there to oppose: a low-fat yoghurt standing in front of a union flag.And so the rage is loud, catholic and inchoate, a buffet at which all are welcome. Whatever sinks your boat, Starmer has something to offer you. Engaging with all the ways in which our system of representative democracy is broken, the macroeconomic currents that disenfranchise entire states, the failures of centrist politics to respond to sweeping technological change and increasing social alienation: hard. Singing

loudly about the prime minister’s manual pastimes: easy, and essentially able to make whatever point you want.It helps, of course, that Starmer rage is basically free. Starmer has no -ism, no natural constituency, no base beyond a couple of dozen weird technocracy stans on Bluesky. It helps, too, that voters have an innate genius for intuiting a politician’s worst fear and squeezing it mercilessly. Part of the reason I think people like kicking Starmer so much is that his entire political journey has been built around getting kicked as little as possible. Virtually everything he does – his piecemeal economic reforms, his cautious rhetoric, his editorials in the Sun – screams “smallest possible target”:

“I am mild and inoffensive. Please don’t hate me. Definitely do not sing with complete strangers in public places about me being a wanker.”And naturally we should be wary, even alarmed, at where this amorphous anger leads us in the long run. At the increasingly coarse and personal tone of our politics, the conflation of legitimate dissent with onanism discourse. But perhaps there is also a certain purifying clarity in this illudory moment of communion. We agree on little as a nation, but this unites us. Throughout history, the howl of change has come in many forms – this one just so happens to have six syllables.

ICICI Lombard investigates earnings leak employee

New Delhi: ICICI Lombard General Insurance, a unit of India's second-largest private lender, said an employee uploaded undisclosed information about third quarter earnings as a personal WhatsApp status, days ahead of the planned release. The worker, who broadcast the information after market hours on Friday, deleted the "status" within an hour, the ICICI Bank unit said in a filing to bourses. ICICI Lombard said it has started an internal inquiry. It

was the latest mishap in India's \$5.2 trillion stock market, after dairy-product maker Hatsun Agro Product this week flagged a similar case of an employee accidentally leaking a draft of quarterly results on WhatsApp. they reignite concerns over insider trading and information leaks in the world's fifth-largest stock market, following a string of alleged leaks of company earnings on WhatsApp groups in 2017 which triggered a Sebi investigation.

Vibrant Gujarat gets economic push as Marwadi University proposes Rs 1,000 cr investment with regional conference hosting

New Delhi: Gujarat's investment climate is set for a fresh boost as Marwadi University prepares to host the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conferences (VGRC) from January 11–12, 2026, organised by the Government of Gujarat. The move positions the state's education and innovation sectors as strategic economic growth drivers. In a key development, the university has submitted a ₹1,000 crore investment MoU proposal to the Education Department, Government of Gujarat. The planned investment includes advanced academic blocks, research laboratories, modern sports infrastructure, upgraded hostels, and a 10,000 sq ft innovation and start-up centre, along with a dedicated facility for continuing education. Analysts say such spending strengthens the knowledge economy and enhances Gujarat's competitiveness in global education markets. VGRC will operate under the theme "Vocal for Local" across four Gujarat zones, while attracting delegations from Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, the Netherlands, and organisations such as JETRO, ICBC, USISPF, World Bank, and the Russian Federation. This international interest signals growing investor confidence. Trustee Dhruv Marwadi and Provost R.B. Jadeja said the initiative aligns with Viksit Bharat@2047 and Viksit Gujarat@2047, linking education



growth with economic transformation. With seminars, exhibitions, MoU signings, B2B-B2G interactions, and sector-focused sessions on AI, sustainability, circular economy, engineering, MSMEs, start-ups, tourism, culture, and food processing, the conference is expected to generate wider economic spill-overs and reinforce Gujarat's position as a global investment hub.

AMFI Data: SIP inflows hit record Rs 31,002 crore in December 2025

New Delhi: AMFI Data: The Indian mutual fund industry reported a net outflow of Rs 66,591 crore in December 2025, even as total assets under management (AUM) stood at Rs 80.23 lakh crore at the end of the month, data from the monthly industry report showed. Gross fund mobilisation was Rs 14.66 lakh crore, while repurchases and redemptions were higher at Rs 15.33 lakh crore, leading to the overall net outflow. The industry had 1,908 schemes and 26.12 crore investor folios as of December 31, 2025. Even as the mutual fund industry saw net outflows in December 2025, systematic investment plans (SIPs) told a different story. Monthly SIP inflows rose to a record Rs 31,002 crore, up from Rs 29,445 crore in November, highlighting continued commitment from retail investors. The industry also added around 26.40 lakh new SIP accounts during the month, underlining steady long-term participation despite short-term volatility in debt and money market funds. Liquid funds alone recorded net outflows of Rs 47,308 crore, while money market funds saw outflows of Rs 40,464 crore. Ultra short duration and low duration funds also remained under pressure, reflecting short-term treasury movements by institutional investors. Debt-orient-



ed open-ended schemes witnessed sharp selling pressure. The category saw a net outflow of Rs 1.32 lakh crore during the month. Equity-oriented open-ended schemes reported net inflows of Rs 28,054 crore, offering some support to overall industry flows.

Flexi-cap funds led the category with net inflows of Rs 10,019 crore. Mid-cap and small-cap funds attracted Rs 4,176 crore and Rs 3,824 crore, respectively. However, ELSS schemes saw net outflows of Rs 718 crore during the month. Total equity AUM stood at Rs 35.73 lakh crore.

Hybrid funds attract steady money. Hybrid schemes continued to see healthy interest. The category recorded net inflows of Rs 10,756 crore in December. Multi-asset allocation funds were the biggest contributors, with net inflows of Rs 7,426 crore.

Will tax tweaks in FM Sitharaman's 9th Budget ease pressure on salaried middle class

New Delhi: As India gears up for the Union Budget 2026, to be presented on Sunday, February 1, expectations are building around possible income tax relief for the middle class. Ahead of the Budget, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has begun pre-Budget consultations with states and Union Territories, gathering suggestions that could shape fiscal priorities for FY27. This will be Sitharaman's ninth consecutive Union Budget — a rare milestone — and one that comes at a time when household finances are under strain from rising living costs and uneven income growth. For millions of salaried taxpayers, the central question is whether Budget 2026 will finally deliver meaningful tax relief.

Expectations on new and old tax regimes A Motilal Oswal report noted that the government's preference for the New Tax Regime is now unmistakable. By simplifying tax structures and reducing dependence on exemptions, policymakers aim to make compliance easier and widen the tax base. Rather than sweeping changes, the report expects Budget 2026 to introduce calibrated adjustments, particularly in light of the anticipated rollout of the 8th Pay Commission, which is likely to raise salaries and pensions in early 2026. With incomes set to rise, modest slab rationalisation could prevent taxpayers from slipping into higher tax brackets without a real increase in purchasing power. Possible measures include widening lower tax brackets and increasing the standard deduction to better reflect inflation. According to the report, the most effective relief would be targeted at urban middle-income earners, where higher disposable income has the strongest multiplier effect on consumption.

Tax experts broadly echo this view. CA Akshay Jain, Direct Tax Partner at NPV & Associates LLP, said Budget 2026–27 is expected to be a pivotal policy statement aligned with the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision. "Fiscal measures that stimulate demand growth, improve credit flows and generate employment will be crucial for sustaining India's high growth path," he said. Jain added that the Income-tax Act, 2025, which comes into force from April 1, 2026, has raised expectations for clarity on transitional provisions, compliance timelines and dispute resolution mechanisms. Stakeholders are also hoping for faster processing of returns, quicker refunds and a more taxpayer-friendly approach to scrutiny assessments. With Budget day approaching, the government faces a delicate balancing act — offering targeted relief to boost consumption while keeping fiscal discipline intact. For India's middle class, even modest tax tweaks could provide



timely breathing room in an economy navigating both growth ambitions and cost pressures.

While major changes to tax slabs may be unlikely, given that Budget 2025 already raised thresholds under the New Tax Regime and made income up to Rs 12 lakh tax-free through rebates, experts see room for targeted relief. Jain suggested that capital gains income could be included within the Rs 12 lakh rebate limit to ease the burden on small taxpayers.

He also flagged expectations for raising the standard deduction from Rs 75,000 to Rs 1 lakh, increasing the home loan interest deduction under the Old Regime to ₹3 lakh, and doubling the additional NPS deduction to Rs 1 lakh.

Anita Basrur, Partner at Sudit K. Parekh & Co. LLP, said there are currently two regimes for individual taxpayers — the Old and the New. "Under the old regime, while a number of deductions are available, the highest tax rate of 30% applies to income above Rs 10 lakh. Under the new regime, the highest rate applies to income above Rs 15 lakh. The tax slabs for senior citizens could be improved, especially as interest rates are falling. Higher slab

thresholds will bring greater liquidity and ease," she said. Basrur added that the government is gradually discouraging the old regime by making the new regime more attractive, and there is a possibility that the old tax regime could eventually be abolished. "There are expectations that the income threshold for the highest 30% tax rate should be raised from Rs 24 lakh to Rs 35 lakh," she said.

Easing the tax burden she said, adding that quicker refunds remain a key demand. Prof Prateek Bedi of IMI Delhi stressed the need for structural reforms beyond rate tweaks. He called for a simpler, more progressive tax system that aligns marginal rates with inflation and reduces compliance complexity. Bedi also highlighted the importance of expanding the tax base through better GST tracking, PAN-Aadhaar integration and real-time reporting systems to identify undeclared income. Basrur added that salaried taxpayers are also expecting the standard deduction to be increased to Rs 1 lakh and are seeking a revision in Section 80C limits. "There is a strong expectation that the deduction limit under Section 80C should be raised from Rs 1.5 lakh to Rs 3 lakh," she said.

DMart share price: Targets upped for Radhakishan Damani-led



New Delhi: Radhakishan Damani-led Avenue Supermarts delivered a strong beat on December quarter profit, led primarily by gross margin expansion, analysts said. After several quarters of elevated cost of retailing, DMart reported stable cost of retailing per square foot in the quarter, which drove a 50 basis point expansion in Ebitda margin to 8.4 per cent. While some analysts remained concerned about competition from quick commerce players, they raised their target prices on DMart following the company's December quarter results. "While DMart saw a margin recovery after several quarters, we believe increased pricing competition from QC could prevent margin sustainability and remains a key monitorable in the near term.

We believe DMart value-focused model and superior store economics would ensure its competitiveness and customer relevance over the longer term, despite QC's convenience-focused model," MOFSL said.

This brokerage upped its target on DMart to Rs 4,600 from Rs 4,300 earlier.

Systematix Institutional Equities said DMart is unlikely to compromise on its working capital management. It expects the company to maintain its inventory cycle at 34-35 days and net working capital cycle at 24 days.

Capex for FY25 stood at Rs 3,400 crore. Systematix is building in healthy store additions over FY26E-FY28E which would lead to a gradual increase in capex.

Amagi Media Labs IPO day 1 subscription status

New Delhi: The initial public offering (IPO) of Amagi Media Labs was off to a muted bidding from the investors on the first day of the bidding process, across all categories of investors. The issue, which kicked off on Tuesday, January 13, shall close for bidding on Friday, January 16, considering the market holiday on Thursday, January 15. Bharat Coking Coal is selling its shares in the price band of Rs 343-361 apiece. Investors can apply for a minimum of 41 shares and its multiples thereafter. It is looking to raise Rs 1,789 crore via IPO, which includes a fresh share sale of Rs 816 crore and an offer-for-sale (OFS) of up to 2,69,42,343 equity shares worth Rs 973 crore. According to the data, the investors made bids for 14,35,943 equity shares, or only 5 per cent, compared to the 2,72,66,589 equity shares offered for the subscription by 2.55 pm on Tuesday, January 13, 2026. The bidding for the issue shall continue for three trading sessions. The allocation for retail investors was subscribed 24 per cent, while the portion reserved for non-institutional investors (NIIs) saw a subscription of merely 3 per cent. However, the portion reserved for qualified institutional bidders (QIBs) was not even off the mark as of the same time. Founded in 2008, Bengaluru-based Amagi Media Labs is engaged in cloud-based broadcast and connected TV technology. Amagi provides end-to-end solutions for content creation, distribution, and monetisation across traditional TV and streaming platforms. Its suite of prod-



ucts includes cloud payout, content scheduling, ad insertion, and data analytics tools. Brokerage firms are mostly positive views on this IPO with some suggesting to subscribe to it for a long-term basis citing its strong market position, shift in consumer demand and niche business. On the other hand, rich valuations, low margins and inconsistent profits are key concerns for the issue. Amagi is a prominent SaaS player in the Media and Entertainment Industry offering cloud technology to the content providers and technology. Company is instrumental in reducing costs for their clients by almost 30-50 per cent and thus the industry is fast adopting the new technology (penetration is still low at only 10 per cent), said Nirmal Bang Securities.

The stickiness of the customers along with cross sell and upscale opportunities leaves immense scope for the company to continue its revenue CAGR growth of 30 per cent in the coming years as well. It has turned Pat positive in H1FY26 and we believe it can thrive well in the growing demand environment. We recommend 'subscribe' to the issue," it said. For the

period ended on September 30, 2025, Amagi Media Labs reported a net profit at Rs 6.47 crore with a revenue of Rs 733.93 crore. The company had incurred a net loss of Rs 68.71 crore with a revenue of Rs 1,223.31 crore for the financial year 2024-25.

At the current valuations, Amagi Media Labs is commanding a total market capitalization of more than Rs 7,800 crore. Amagi's long-term demand backdrop remains favorable as global broadcasting and streaming consumption continues to shift toward connected TV, FAST channels and cloud-based media workflows, which benefits cloud-native vendors with end-to-end capability across payout, distribution and ad monetization. Profitability has improved as losses narrowed, said DR Choksey Finserv.

"Amagi moved from an operational loss to a small operational profit as it achieved scale. The company is valued at approximately 7 times FY25 Price/Sales. Considering increasing technology penetration, expanding gross margins and visibility of future revenue, accordingly, we recommend long-term investors to 'subscribe' to the IPO," it adds.

INTERNATIONAL

Russia Affirms Support for Venezuelan Gov’t After Attacking Ukraine’s Second-Largest City Kharkiv



Paris: Russia has reaffirmed its support for the Venezuelan government, calling the U.S. attacks “extremely concerning and deserving of condemnation.” On Saturday, Russia’s Foreign Ministry wrote in a statement, “Venezuela must be guaranteed the right to determine its own future without destructive external interference, particularly of a military nature.” The statement came a day after a Russian missile attack on Ukraine’s second-largest city Kharkiv leveled a multistory residential apartment block, killing two people, including a 3-year-old child, while injuring 28 others. The U.S. military launched a large-scale attack on Venezuela Saturday to capture Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife Cilia Flores. Missiles rained down on army bases, airfields and key infrastructure across the capital Caracas and the surrounding region. By 2 a.m., U.S. special forces reached Maduro’s residence and abducted him along with his wife. They were then boarded onto a

U.S. warship and flown to the U.S. President Trump posted an image of Maduro bound and blindfolded aboard the USS Iwo Jima. Maduro and his wife were later held at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, New York, to face criminal charges of narcoterrorism conspiracy, cocaine importation conspiracy and weapons offenses. They are now being flown by helicopter to Lower Manhattan to appear in federal court today. Shortly after the operation, President Trump praised U.S. forces for abducting Maduro and his wife, and promised to run Venezuela and seize the country’s oil. Venezuela has the world’s largest reserves of crude oil. President Donald Trump: “The oil companies are going to go in. They’re going to spend money. They’re going to — we’re going to take back the oil that, frankly, we should have taken back a long time ago. A lot of money is coming out of the ground.”After the operation, Venezuela’s Supreme Court officially

designated the country’s vice president, Delcy Rodríguez, as interim president. On Saturday, Rodríguez denounced the abduction of Maduro and his wife and vowed that Venezuela was ready to defend itself against the United States. Vice President Delcy Rodríguez: “We demand the immediate liberation of President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores — the only president of Venezuela, President Nicolás Maduro. ... Everything within the Constitution, we learned it from Commander Chávez in the face of adversities, in the face of coup d’état, in the face of oil sabotages. We are ready to defend Venezuela. We are ready to defend our natural resources that must be for national development.”Soon after her comments, President Trump issued a warning to Rodríguez, telling The Atlantic, “If she doesn’t do what’s right, she is going to pay a very big price, probably bigger than Maduro.” By Sunday, Rodríguez posted a more conciliatory message on Instagram saying that her government is ready to work with the U.S. She wrote, “We invite the US government to collaborate with us on an agenda of cooperation oriented towards shared development within the framework of international law to strengthen lasting community coexistence.”Meanwhile, Semafor is reporting that The New York Times and The Washington Post knew of the secret U.S. raid on Venezuela before it was scheduled to begin Friday night, but held off on publishing the story to avoid endangering U.S. troops. A senior Venezuelan official speaking to The New York Times said that at least 80 people, including civilians and soldiers, were killed in the U.S. attack on Saturday. The Cuban government said 32 of its citizens had been killed, including military and intelligence personnel. This is Jonatan Mallora, whose home was damaged by U.S. airstrikes.

Ahead of Talks with Ukraine’s Zelensky, Trump Claims Russia Ukraine Succeed”

London: President Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky met at Mar-a-Lago Sunday, where President Trump announced that Russia and Ukraine were “maybe very close” to a peace deal. Ahead of the meeting, Russia launched a barrage of drones on Kyiv Saturday in a 10-hour attack, killing two people and injuring 44. Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians were left without heat as a result of the strikes. Speaking to reporters, Zelensky said that the U.S. had offered a security guarantee for 15 years, while he had asked for up to 50 years. Ahead of his meeting with Zelensky, President Trump spoke with Russian President Vladimir Putin by phone. President Donald Trump: “They’re going to be helping. Russia is going to be helping. Russia wants to see Ukraine succeed. Once — it sounds a little strange, but I was explaining to the president, President Putin was very generous in his feeling toward Ukraine succeeding, including supplying energy, electricity and other things at very low prices.” The U.S. launched airstrikes in Nigeria Thursday on Christmas Day, claiming to hit two ISIS camps in Sokoto state. The Nigerian Foreign Ministry acknowledged cooperation with the United States, including sharing intelligence. Speaking to WABC, President Trump cast the strikes as a Christmas present.President Donald Trump: “I said, ‘Hit them on Christmas Day. It’ll be a Christmas present.’ We hit ISIS, who have — terrible. They’re butchers.”The strikes came after President Trump repeatedly claimed that a genocide against Christians was taking place in Nigeria. But the village hat was bombed, Jabo in northwestern Sokoto state, has no recorded history of anti-Christian terrorism, according to locals. Meanwhile, Nigeria’s information minister said, “Portraying Nigeria’s security challenges as a targeted campaign against a single religious group is a gross misrepresentation of reality.” It comes as a suicide bomber detonated an explosive inside a mosque in Nigeria’s Borno state on Christmas Day, killing five worshipers and injuring 35. Jennifer Kavanaugh, a director of military analysis at Defense Priorities, said, “The U.S. action taken in Nigeria while Americans celebrated the Christmas holiday



is an unnecessary and unjustified use of U.S. military force that violates Mr. Trump’s promises to his supporters to put American interests first and avoid risky and wasteful military campaigns abroad.” This is Moromoke Saka, whose home was damaged in the U.S. airstrikes.Moromoke Saka: “I could have been killed by now if the wall of the house that broke had collapsed on me. Praise to God Almighty, I survived.”Meanwhile, the U.S. Africa Command confirmed airstrikes against ISIS targets in Somalia over four days, from the 22nd to Christmas Day. We’ll have more on U.S. airstrikes in the region later in the broadcast. In Gaza, a winter storm has compounded the misery of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians living in tents after Israel’s more than two-year bombardment destroyed or damaged most of the territory’s buildings. On Sunday, a 30-year-old woman was killed when a wall collapsed on her tent amid heavy rains. Several members of her family were injured. Others faced severe flooding, frigid temperatures and wind and rain that blew away tents. This is Wael al-Sheikh Khalil, a displaced Palestinian in Khan Younis.

US control of Venezuela’s oil may not be bonanza



London: In a press conference following the US attacks on Venezuela, and the capture of President Nicolás Maduro, US President Donald Trump announced that American oil and gas companies would invest in the Venezuelan oil sector and extract the ‘tremendous amount of wealth’ in the ground. On 7 January, Vice President JD Vance stated that the US will ‘control the energy resources’ in the country, with US Energy Secretary Chris Wright saying that ‘We’re going to market the crude coming out of Venezuela’.For the world’s leading military power to assert the right to develop the resources of another sovereign nation is extraordinary: a further step away from an international system based on rules and norms, towards one in which might makes right. But the American president sees economic opportunity. Venezuela is estimated to hold the world’s largest proven reserves of crude oil (19.4 per cent in 2024). But it is currently a minor producer, pumping 960,000 barrels of oil per day (b/d) in 2024 – around 1 per cent of global production – down from 3.3 million b/d in 2006. President Trump hopes to get Venezuelan oil flowing again. But this will not come cheap.Venezuela’s oil production infrastructure is in a state of severe disrepair after years of underinvestment, corruption and sanctions. Tripling Venezuelan production by 2040, from 1 million to 3 million barrels of oil a day (b/d), would cost an estimated \$183 billion, according to Rystad Energy. Falling oil pricesThe economics of Venezuelan oil are challenging. Extracting the viscous, sticky crude that constitutes most of the country’s reserves requires special processes, such as steam injection. And transporting through pipelines requires the addition of diluents to ease flow. This makes it more expensive to produce than lighter crudes, such as those originating in Saudi Arabia. Heavy crudes also tend to sell at a discount, due to the complex refining techniques needed to convert them into consumer products such as petroleum and diesel.

Nevertheless, given the scale of Venezuela’s oil reserves, this could be justified in a seller’s market: after all, the world consumed around 104 million b/d in 2025. The problem is that price trajectories increasingly point in the other direction, as supply outpaces demand. Since the highs of mid-2022, following the post-lockdown surge and the spike brought about by Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine, the price of Brent has been in gradual decline. Geopolitical shocks have caused violent swings, but there is a clear downward. Since the shale gas revolution of the 2010s, American oil and gas companies have prioritized shareholder returns over upstream investment. Low oil prices will not encourage them to change course.What is driving falling oil prices? Weak global economic growth is one reason. But this is not the only factor. While the imperative to reduce planet-warming emissions has slipped down the global policy agenda, low-carbon technologies, like solar panels and electric vehicles, have been progressively eating into fossil fuel demand, slowing oil and gas demand growth. This can be seen in Europe, where wind, solar and batteries are gradually eroding the need for gas to generate electricity. And in China, the on-going boom in electric vehicles – not just cars, but buses and trucks too – is reducing the need for oil in the world’s second largest oil consumer The proportion of electric and hybrid vehicles as a share of all new vehicle sales in China reached 50 per cent over Jan–Sept 2025, up from only 6.5 per cent in the same period in 2020. Consequently, oil demand in China’s transport sector has likely already peaked, with a peak in overall Chinese oil demand expected to follow soon. China is a frontrunner, but electric transport is growing sharply in many countries. One reason is that electric cars are becoming more appealing to drivers, with cheaper models entering the market, and as major improvements in battery capacity, coupled with better availability of charging infrastructure, ease ‘range anxiety’.

At the International Kite Festival, German Chancellor Merz and Prime Minister Modi flew a Lord Hanuman kite

London: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz on January 12, participated in the International Kite Festival 2026 at the Sabarmati Riverfront, where the two leaders were seen flying a kite depicting Lord Hanuman, highlighting the cultural warmth underpinning India–Germany ties.Chancellor Merz’s participation comes during his first official visit to India, lending diplomatic significance to the annual cultural event. Earlier in the day, PM Modi and Merz jointly inaugurated the festival and interacted with participants, as visuals showed the leaders enjoying the vibrant celebrations that draw kite enthusiasts from India and abroad.Held ahead of Makar Sankranti, the three-day International Kite Festival will conclude on January 14. This year’s event features participation from 135 international kite flyers from 50 countries, along with 65 flyers from across India and 871 local participants from Gujarat. Prior to the festival inauguration, Prime Minister Modi welcomed Chancellor Merz at the Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad. The two leaders paid floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi, and the German Chancellor signed the visitors’ book at the Ashram.Chancellor Merz arrived in India earlier on Monday for a two-day official visit from January 12 to 13, at the invitation of PM Modi. He was received at the airport by Gujarat Governor Acharya Devvrat, according to the Ministry of External Affairs.During the visit, the two leaders are scheduled to hold bilateral engagements at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar, where they will review progress in the India–Germany Strategic Partnership, which recently marked its 25th anniversary.



Discussions are expected to focus on strengthening cooperation in trade and investment, technology, education, skilling and mobility, as well as defence and security, science and innovation, green and sustainable development, and people-to-people ties. The visit coincides with the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between India and Germany. On January 13, Chan-

cellor Merz will visit Bosch and the Centre for Nano Science and Engineering (CeNSE) before departing for Germany. PM Modi and Chancellor Merz last met on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Canada, where they agreed to further broaden bilateral cooperation. The visit also comes ahead of the India–EU Summit scheduled for January 27. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Ger-

man Chancellor Friedrich Merz on January 12, participated in the International Kite Festival 2026 at the Sabarmati Riverfront, where the two leaders were seen flying a kite depicting Lord Hanuman, highlighting the cultural warmth underpinning India–Germany ties. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz arrived in Gujarat on Monday as part of his two-day visit to India and met Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the day. As part of the visit, the two leaders took part in the International Kite Festival at the Sabarmati riverfront. The event also showcased a striking banner based on the theme ‘Operation Sindoor’, flown high across the sky amid a spectacular display of kites. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz inaugurated the International Kite Festival 2026 at the Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad. The leaders also took part in the festival, enjoying the vibrant and colourful celebration.Visuals from the scene show both leaders interacting with participants.Before the inauguration, PM Modi, who is also in Gujarat for a three-day visit, welcomed the German Chancellor Merz to Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad.After the meeting, both leaders paid floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi.The long black banner, emblazoned with bold lettering and patriotic imagery, drew attention as it soared above the venue, symbolising strength, sacrifice, and national pride. The banner was accompanied by tricolour-themed kites and large aerial displays. PM Modi and the German chancellor were also seen flying a kite depicting Lord Hanuman, drawing attention to the cultural aspect of the program.

These 5 Meditative Practices Can Reduce Cognitive Overload As We Live In A Hyperconnected World

Stress, restlessness, and anxiety – your mind today is rarely at rest. Notifications and screens are constantly vying for your attention, boundaries between work and personal life are as blurry as the screens you strain to look at late in the night, and being hunched over your laptop has become the norm. From an Ayurvedic lens, this constant mental stimulation aggravates Vata dosha, leading to restlessness, scattered focus, and a persistent sense of inner noise. We speak to Dr Partap Chauhan, Ayurvedacharya, to understand how meditation can help us live a more grounded, calm life and that it is now not about escaping the world but about training the mind to remain steady within it. Cognitive overload isn't a personal failure but a result of the life we now lead. like the body, needs regular cleansing and rest. Meditation offers this reset. When practised daily, these techniques help you respond to life rather than react to it. These 5 meditative practices are rooted in Ayurvedic wisdom and can be easily integrated into daily life to reduce cognitive overload:

Breath Anchoring for Mental Reset

Before any deeper meditation begins, the breath must be steadied. This practice centres your awareness on natural inhalation and exhalation without controlling rhythm. You simply observe. Sit comfortably. Close your eyes. Notice how the breath enters and leaves. When thoughts wander, and they will, you bring attention back to breathing. Over time, this trains your mind to pause rather than react. It sounds simple, maybe too simple, yet its effects are quietly profound.

Trataka to Sharpen Focus

Trataka involves gazing steadily at a fixed point, traditionally a candle flame. In a distracted world, this practice builds single-pointed attention. After lighting a candle, sit at eye level and gaze softly at the flame for about one minute. Blink naturally. When the eyes close, visualise the flame internally. This practice strengthens concentration and calms visual overstimulation caused by the screens.

Body Awareness Meditation

Many of you live in your heads while the body waits patiently for attention. Body awareness meditation



restores that connection. You mentally scan from toes to head, noticing sensations without judgment. The mind begins to slow when attention moves into the body. Some days feel easier than others. That is fine.

Mantra Meditation for Mental Rhythm

Mantras introduce rhythm to the mind. Repeating a sound like Om or a personalised mantra aligns mental activity and reduces thought clutter. The repetition does not silence

thoughts instantly. It gently reorganises them. With consistency, mental chatter loses its urgency. You may feel this shift subtly, almost unexpectedly.

Silent Sitting for Emotional Balance

This practice involves sitting

in silence after meditation without technique or effort. You simply remain. Silence allows emotional processing that constant input often suppresses. Initially, discomfort may arise. Stay with it. Silence has its own intelligence.



UTIs In Working Women: Why Everyday Habits Matter More Than We Think

For many working women, urinary tract infections (UTIs) are dismissed as routine or unavoidable. Yet doctors increasingly point out that UTIs are less about sudden illness and more about the cumulative impact of everyday workplace habits, long hours, delayed bathroom breaks, inadequate hydration, and poor ergonomic routines.

According to Dr. D. B. Usha Rajinikanthan, Senior Consultant, Institute of Obstetrics, Gynaecology & IVF, SIMS Hospital, Chennai, UTIs in working women are often driven by modern work culture rather than infection alone. Extended desk hours, back-to-back meetings, and limited access to clean restrooms frequently result in delayed urination. “When urine is held for long periods, bacteria are given time to multiply in the bladder,” she explains, making infections more likely and recurrent. Hydration or the lack of it plays a critical role as well. Many women consciously reduce water intake to avoid frequent bathroom trips during work hours, unknowingly increasing their risk. Prolonged sitting further contributes to poor bladder health, creating conditions that allow infections to thrive. Dr Rajinikanthan also stresses the importance of breathable clothing,



recommending cotton underwear to keep the genital area dry and discourage bacterial growth. Hygiene habits, though seemingly basic, are equally important. Washing the genital area with mild soap and water, avoiding scented products such as sprays or douches, and maintaining proper hand hygiene after restroom use help preserve the body's natural pH balance. She also advises limiting bladder irritants like coffee, alcohol, and spicy foods, which can aggravate urinary discomfort. Simple practices such as wiping from front to back can significantly reduce bacterial transfer to the urethra.

The consequences of

ignoring UTIs extend beyond physical discomfort. Recurrent infections can disrupt productivity, increase absenteeism, and contribute to antibiotic resistance, making future treatment more complicated. “What starts as a manageable issue can escalate into something that affects long-term health and work performance,” cautions Dr. Rajinikanthan. Early recognition of symptoms is another critical factor in preventing complications. Dr. Jaishree Gajaraj, Head of Varam and Senior Consultant, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, MGM Healthcare, Chennai, emphasises that prompt medical attention can make treatment far

simpler and more effective. Symptoms such as burning during urination, frequent urges to urinate, and lower abdominal discomfort should never be ignored or self-treated. “Delayed care can allow the infection to travel to the kidneys,” Dr Gajaraj explains, “leading to fever, severe pain, and even hospitalization.” She strongly advises against self-medication, noting that inappropriate antibiotic use can worsen resistance and mask underlying issues. Preventive habits, she adds, need to be intentional and consistent. Not holding urine for long periods, drinking water regularly to flush out bacteria, maintaining intimate hygiene, wearing breath-

able clothing, and avoiding excessive sugary drinks can dramatically lower infection risk. Awareness, she believes, is just as important as action, recognising early symptoms and responding promptly can prevent long-term complications. As women's work patterns continue to evolve, so must conversations around health at the workplace. Both doctors agree that prioritising bladder health is not a luxury but a necessity. Small, mindful changes in daily routines, hydration, hygiene, and timely medical care can go a long way in preventing UTIs and ensuring sustained well-being, comfort, and productivity at work.

National Youth Day: Dermatologist Shares Ultimate Skincare Routine For Young Skin

National Youth Day is an important reminder that skin health is not just about looking good today but about protecting and strengthening the skin for the years ahead. Skin ageing begins earlier than most young people realise, which is typically after the age of 25 or 26. The choices made in adolescence and early adulthood play a defining role in how skin behaves later in life.

We speak to Dr Smriti Naswa Singh, Consultant – Dermatology, Fortis Hospital Mulund, Mumbai, on National Youth Day on the correct way to care for young skin. One of the most common concerns among youth is acne. Acne-prone skin can begin as early as eight years of age and commonly persists until the late 20s or early 30s. For those with oily or acne-prone skin, a simple, consistent routine works best. Using a cleanser formulated specifically for oily skin, followed by a non-comedogenic moisturiser, can help in reducing breakouts. Moisturising is not optional; even oily skin needs hydration to maintain its barrier function.

Dandruff is another frequently ignored issue, especially in winter. Untreated dandruff can aggravate acne on the forehead and even trigger body acne on the chest and back. Medicated anti-dandruff shampoos, as prescribed by a dermatologist, are essential for long-term control. Young people with normal skin are naturally fortunate, but they, too, need consistency. A basic routine of washing the face and moisturising twice a day is sufficient to maintain healthy skin. People with dry or sensitive skin, however, must be extra cautious during winter and in times of high pollution. Rising AQI levels and fine particulate matter damage the skin barrier, causing itching, irritation, and flare-ups, especially in dry skin types. Adequate moisturisation is non-negotia-

ble in such conditions. Sun protection is another cornerstone. Physical sunscreens are preferred when spending time outdoors. Along with sunscreen, protection like caps, scarves, goggles, and masks offer effective protection. On days with minimal sun exposure, a good moisturiser can suffice, as hydration remains the foundation of skin health. Serums can be incorporated selectively, but only after consulting a dermatologist. Whether the concern is pigmentation, dullness, or early signs of ageing, serums should be tailored to individual skin types and conditions rather than chosen randomly. Beyond topical care, lifestyle plays a decisive role in skin ageing. Diet, sleep, exercise, addiction control, social connection, and mental well-being form the 6 pillars of youthful skin. A balanced diet that is rich in seasonal fruits and vegetables, making up at least 50% of daily intake, provides antioxidants and nutrients which are essential for skin repair. Sleep between 10 PM and 6 AM aligns with the body's circadian rhythm, allowing melatonin-driven repair processes that keep skin, hair, and metabolism healthy. Exercise, especially strength training, helps counter muscle and collagen loss that accelerates after 30. Regular movement throughout the day prevents stagnation and supports circulation. Avoiding smoking, alcohol, vaping, and substance use is critical, as these significantly accelerate skin ageing. Finally, emotional, social, and spiritual health deeply influence skin quality. Meaningful relationships, hobbies, creativity, and acts of service help reduce stress and inflammation, which are two silent contributors to premature ageing. Healthy skin, ultimately, reflects a healthy life that is lived well.



The Rare Cases Of False Pregnancy: Symptoms, Causes and Emotional Impact

“As a gynaecologist, one of the rare yet deeply sensitive conditions I encounter is false pregnancy, medically known as pseudocyesis,” says Dr Nirmala M., Consultant, Obstetrician, Gynaecologist & Fertility Specialist, Motherhood Hospitals, Whitefield, Bengaluru.

False pregnancy occurs when a woman firmly believes she is pregnant and develops several physical signs of pregnancy, despite the absence of an actual

foetus. According to Dr. Nirmala, common symptoms include missed periods, abdominal enlargement, breast tenderness, nausea, fatigue, and in rare cases, even the sensation of foetal movements. “Hormonal changes may also lead to weight gain and milk secretion, further reinforcing the belief of pregnancy,” she explains. The causes of pseudocyesis are complex and multifactorial. Dr. Nirmala notes that the condition is often linked to intense emotional factors. “Women experiencing infertility, repeated miscarriages, strong social or familial pressure to conceive, or profound emotional stress may be more vulnerable,” she says. Psychological stress can influence the brain's hormonal regulation, triggering physical changes that closely mimic pregnancy. In some cases, underlying medical conditions such as hormonal imbalances, ovarian cysts, or uterine fibroids may also contribute

to misleading symptoms.

The emotional impact following a diagnosis of false pregnancy can be significant. “When investigations such as ultrasound scans and blood tests confirm the absence of pregnancy, patients may experience grief, embarrassment, anxiety, or even depression,” explains Dr. Nirmala. She emphasises that how the diagnosis is communicated plays a crucial role in recovery. “It is essential that this condition is

explained with empathy, sensitivity, and reassurance, ensuring the woman feels supported rather than judged.” With timely medical evaluation and compassionate psychological support, most women are able to process the experience and recover emotionally. As Dr. Nirmala highlights, understanding pseudocyesis as a medical and psychological condition rather than a personal failing is key to healing and restoring emotional wellbeing.



The Karnataka women’s board warns of Yash’s Toxic’s “obscene” teaser



Mumbai: The teaser for the upcoming movie Toxic: A Fairytale for Grown Ups, which stars Yash, has alarmed the women’s wing of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Karnataka. They have called for state authorities to step in and objected to what they called “obscene scenes” in the preview. Due to the glimpse’s explicit material, social activist Dinesh Kallahalli has also filed a complaint with the Censor Board of Film Certification (CBFC). The teaser, which

shows Yash having sex with a woman, was posted on January 8 and sparked uproar.The Karnataka State Commission for Women (KSWC) received the complaint on Monday, requesting prompt action about the content’s appropriateness for public access. Party representatives claim that the decision to seek the commission was spurred by the teaser’s depiction of graphic content.“The obscene and explicit content in the teaser of this movie is causing serious harm to the so-

cial well-being of women and children,” AAP state secretary Usha Mohan wrote in a letter outlining the party’s concerns. These scenes denigrate women’s dignity and disparage Kannada culture because they were made public without any age-related warnings.In addition, the letter mentioned the “adverse impact on society, particularly on minors” and requested that the commission “intervene and direct the state government authorities to ban the teaser and remove it from

social media platforms.” AAP women’s wing leaders met with KSWC representatives and formally filed their complaint, highlighting suspected decency issues and the possible effect on viewers. In particular, the party called for the teaser to be taken down from public venues.The KSWC responded by writing to the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), asking that the board look into the issue and take “appropriate action.” The necessity for authorities to protect the state’s moral and cultural values was emphasized by the AAP women’s wing. The letter stated, “We urge the women’s commission to treat the matter seriously and take immediate action to ‘uphold the cultural and moral values of the state,’” on behalf of the Aam Aadmi Party’s women’s wing.In a letter to the CBFC, the commission secretary cited the AAP appeal and said, “It is hereby requested to take further action on the subject mentioned in the petition after verifying it as per rules and to submit an action-taken report in this regard.”

Hema Malini’s Alleged Conflict With Sunny-Bobby Deol

Mumbai: Even after Dharmendra’s passing, people are captivated by the interpersonal relationships within the Deol family. Dharmendra passed away at his Mumbai home on November 24. The Deol brothers held a prayer gathering at the Taj Lands End hotel in Mumbai three days later.

The prayer meet was not attended by Hema Malini and her daughters, Ahana and Esha. On the same day, Hema Malini set up a Gita walk at her house. Hema Malini organized a another prayer gathering in Delhi two weeks later. Fans’ eyes were raised and rumors of a potential fracture were sparked by the separate prayer meetings. Hema Malini responded to the rumors once more, saying to The Indian Express, “It has always been very nice and cordial.” It’s still lovely today. I’m not sure why people believe we’re flawed. People want gossip, that’s why.

Why should I respond to them? Do I need to explain myself? Why ought I to? It’s my life. Our personal lives, my own life. We are really close to one another and extremely happy. That’s all. “I have nothing further to say regarding this. I have no idea what tales people are

inventing. It’s heartbreaking that some individuals take other people’s suffering to publish a few pieces. I don’t respond to (such conjecture) because of this,” Hema Malini continued.Hema Malini addressed the matter head-on and explained her position in an interview with The Times of India a few days ago.”Yeh humare ghar ka personal mamla hai. We conversed with one another. Because everyone in my

group is different, I held one prayer meeting at my house. Then, because I work in politics and it was crucial for me to hold a prayer gathering for my friends in that industry, I kept one in Delhi. The people in my constituency, Mathura, are furious with him. I thus held a prayer meeting there as well. “I am pleased with my actions,” Hema Malini stated to the newspaper.

Salman Khan, Rekha, Vidya Balan, Aishwarya Rai Bach-

chan, and numerous more celebrities were present for the Deols’ prayer meet. Amit Shah, Nirmala Sitharaman, Kiren Rijiju, Om Birla, Kangana Ranaut, Ranjit, Anil Sharma, and other politicians and movie stars joined the Delhi prayer meet at the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre in Janpath.Hema Malini broke down in tears during the prayer meeting in Delhi as she thought back to her time spent with the late actor.



Zeenat Aman Breaks Her 2023 Promise in a Gen-Z Styled “Meme-At Aman Series”

Mumbai: Another term for her is innovation. Zeenat Aman, who first appeared on Instagram in 2023, never fails to draw attention with her sharp sense of humor and clever one-liners. The diva addressed her broken 2023 pledge by launching a “Meme-at Aman” series in her most recent post. She had assured her Instafam that she would not collaborate on advertisements on the social media site.She apologized via a series of memes as she was unable to fulfill her pledge. Several cinematic stills of the seasoned actress are coupled with Gen-Z jokes in the carousel post.”Oops” appears on one slide. overindulged in cosmetics tutorials on YouTube. Zeenat Aman is seen wearing striking eye makeup in the accompanying photo. “How I feel when someone says I look like my



mom” is another slide.Zeenat Aman wrote the following in her comprehensive post:“I have to confess and apologize for something horrible I did before you find out.

Zeenat Aman remarked, “I went and unintentionally turned my Instagram grid into an advertising billboard after publicly promising that I wouldn’t do just that.”“That

promise can be found in a caption from March 2023 if you go far down my stream. My social media strategy hasn’t been the best these past several months for a variety of reasons. But don’t worry, I’m making things right,” she went on. “Here’s a Meme-at Aman series for you as an apology for breaking my promise. The actress continued, “These are completely inspired by the flurry of WhatsApp forwards I received for the New Year, many of which were in this lurid, kitsch style that is apparently an internet staple.”“I hope everyone has a successful and fulfilling year in 2026! Enjoy these jokes and affirmations now, and let me know which one is your favorite—or, more accurately, which one makes you think of “mood.” Zeenat Aman gave her approval.

A Japanese company purchases an 11-story Mumbai building from Jeetendra and Tusshar Kapoor

Mumbai: An affiliate of Japan’s NTT Group purchased a commercial property in suburban Mumbai from actor Jeetendra Kapoor and his son Tusshar Kapoor for Rs 559 crore, according to records released on Tuesday by a real estate consultant.According to registration paperwork provided by Square Yards, NTT Global Data Centers purchased more than 30,195 square meters of space at Balaji IT park from Tushar Infra Developers Pvt Ltd, which is controlled by Kapoor and Jeetendra’s Pantheon Buildcon Pvt Ltd, for Rs 559.24 crore.On January 9, the registration was completed.According to the paperwork, the purchase entails purchasing DC-10, a ground plus ten-story building in the suburban Chandivali IT park that houses a data center as well as a nearby four-story diesel generator facility. A 2024 government resolution said that a metro cess of Rs 5.59 lakh has been paid and



that stamp duty is not due on the transaction.According to the consultant, a contract of Rs 855 crore was also filed in May of last year.

Jaate Hue Lamhon is unveiled by Border 2 during a special occasion



Mumbai: At a lavish event on January 12 at Mumbai’s United Services Club, the producers of the upcoming movie Border 2 debuted the song Jaate Hue Lamhon. A pivotal point in the film’s pro-

motional push prior to its planned theatrical release on January 23, 2026, the launch gathered together members of the cast and crew alongside Naval officers.The ceremony comes after Ghar Kab Aaoge, a

song that resonated with listeners nationwide, was successfully released at Longewala-Tanot in Jaisalmer. At a lavish event on January 12 at Mumbai’s United Services Club, the producers of the upcoming movie Border 2 debuted the song Jaate Hue Lamhon. A pivotal point in the film’s promotional push prior to its planned theatrical release on January 23, 2026, the launch gathered together members of the cast and crew alongside Naval officers.The ceremony comes after Ghar Kab Aaoge, a song that resonated with listeners nationwide, was successfully released at Longewala-Tanot in Jaisalmer.

Ahan Shetty, Anyaa Singh, and Suniel Shetty made an unexpected appearance as part of the evening’s line-up of acts.

A lively band performance by Naval Officers and live performances of Jaate Hue Lamhon by singers Roop Kumar Rathod and Vishal Mishra enhanced the mood.

The presence of co-producers Shiv Chanana and Binnoy Gandhi, as well as producer Bhushan Kumar and Nidhi Dutta, during the premiere highlighted the project’s teamwork. Anurag Singh is the director of the movie, which has support from JP Dutta, Krishan Kumar, T-Series, and Gulshan Kumar.

Taapsee Pannu criticizes the “PR Game” in Bollywood

Mumbai: Taapsee Pannu, an actress, has made fun of the “PR game” in the business. She claimed in a media outlet interview that it has “gone to some other level.”“I was too busy doing my own things,” Taapsee Pannu said. However, over the past 1.5 to 2 years, I have deliberately slowed down. I’ve come to the conclusion that this PR game has advanced to a new level. Either way, you’re paying to challenge yourself. This was one form of public relations. Additionally, you are paying to dehumanize someone else.”“Since when did your success depend on someone else’s failure?” she continued. Due to a demand for relevance, people have begun to create new facades for their characters. I need to have a powerful voice, even if it isn’t yours, because I can’t just be in a successful movie. However, you must develop a voice. Additionally, the work you are doing does not align with the voice you are attempting to develop outside of movies. That disparity, then. Although your work conveys something different, you are speaking beyond your movies.” Additionally, she stated that she would rather spend money



on herself than on “planting articles,” saying, “Mereko paise khud pe kharch karne hai, meri travelling pe, meri family pe.” Merepas paise nahi hai apne plant karne ke liye. I’ve spent Rs 50,000 on a social media account that I really like. (I want to use my money for travel, family, and myself. I don’t have enough money to write my own articles or pay a social media account Rs 50,000 to have them write positive things about me. Regarding his career, Taapsee’s next project is Gandhari.

Yami Gautam remembers being unwanted in Bollywood , amid Haq’s compliments



Mumbai: Amid the success of Haq, a throwback interview of Yami Gautam has surfaced, bringing back a raw moment in which the actor discussed feeling “unwelcomed” in the film industry. Yami’s remarks from the past now highlight the tenacity of her path and the strength that got her through challenging times, as her performance in the Emraan Hashmi film continues to garner recognition.Yami’s subtle portrayal of Shazia, a character based on the real-life story of Shah

Bano, has been extensively praised since the release of Haq. The emotional depth, grace, and quiet strength she delivered to the part have been hailed by both audiences and reviewers; many have referred to it as one of her most potent performances to date. Yami talked about times when she felt alienated and emotionally overburdened in Bollywood in the resurfaced interview with film critic Bharadwaj Rangan for Galatta Plus. She talked about how these emotions were frequently expressed without words while holding back her tears. “There have been times when you felt unwelcome, when you felt like you are not a part of this,” she stated. You can read that you are not yet there, therefore you don’t need anyone to tell you that. However, I believe my family Not because of the voyage,

but rather because I feel so fortunate to have my family, it’s a very emotional thing for me. In the same discussion, Yami talked about the steadfast network of support that got her through those trying times. She disclosed that when she most needed comfort, her family—especially her husband, director Aditya Dhar—were there to support her. Regarding that connection, Yami stated, “I believe it would have been challenging if they hadn’t been there. All it takes is a phone call to my mother, sister, or Aditya to realize that we all have similar values. He’s not social on another level if I’m not. They say you find what you’re looking for, and in my case, that’s Aditya. In the same exchange, Yami talked about the steadfast network of support that got her through those trying

moments. She disclosed that when she most needed comfort, her family—particularly her husband, filmmaker Aditya Dhar—stayed at her side. “I think it would have been difficult if they weren’t there,” Yami stated in reference to that bond. All it takes is a phone call to my mother, sister, or Aditya to see that our values are similar. He’s not social on a deeper level if I’m not. They say you can find what you’re looking for, and for me, that’s Aditya. Vartika Singh, Sheeba Chadha, Rahul Mittra, Anang Desai, and Danish Husain all play significant parts in the movie. Yami Gautam’s flashback insight, which highlights a journey defined by tenacity, family support, and quiet resolve, provides a sad contrast to Haq’s current success as she continues to get praise.

“Every stray dog bite, death, you pay” is the Supreme Court’s stark warning to feeders and states



New Delhi, Jan 13: On Tuesday, the Supreme Court hinted that it would impose “heavy” liability on governments for each dog bite and death associated with it, as well as hold dog feeders accountable for assaults that have a “lifelong” impact. The Supreme Court questioned why stray dogs should be free to chase and bite people.”

We will probably fix significant compensation for states that fail to make necessary measures for each

dog bite and death. liability to dog feeders as well. Why should you let them wander around biting and chasing when you bring them to your home and keep them? When the Supreme Court heard the case involving stray dogs on Tuesday, it stated, “The impact of a dog bite is lifelong,” according to law portal Bar and Bench. The Supreme Court also questioned, “Who should be held accountable when a nine-year-old child is killed by dogs that are fed by a particular

organization?” during the case’s hearing. Can’t the organization be held accountable for damages?The Supreme Court stated that it is impossible to determine a dog’s mood during the previous hearing on January 7. Those opposed to the order on the threat posed by street dogs contended that treating animals with compassion prevents assaults.During the hearing on Wednesday, petitioners’ senior advocate Kapil Sibal stated that if one treats animals with empathy, they won’t attack.Sibal was quoted by LiveLaw as saying, “If you invade their space, they will attack.” With a three-judge panel consisting of Justice Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta, and NV Anjaria, the Supreme Court is considering a case involving stray dogs and livestock that raises grave issues about the safety of animals on streets and highways.

The Supreme Court ordered on November 7 of last year that stray dogs be removed from institutional locations, including schools, hospitals, sports complexes, bus stops, and train stations, and that they be placed in approved shelters following proper vaccination and sterilization.

Gautam Gambhir Receives “Shubman Gill Reminder” Regarding Washington Sundar’s Unfair Treatment

New Delhi: Many questioned the Gautam Gambhir-led management’s strategy when an injured Washington Sundar came out to bat in Sunday’s first ODI between India and New Zealand. In the series opener, KL Rahul completed the difficult chase of 301 runs in Vadodara, while Sundar stayed undefeated on 7 off 7. However, the spin-bowling all-rounder was eliminated from the series shortly after the game ended, and Ayush Badoni took his place. Citing Shubman Gill’s latest example, former India batter Mohammad Kaif criticized the management for its hypocrisy after witnessing Sundar being put at risk despite his ailment.When Gill was injured during the South Africa Test series, Kaif reminded Gambhir and the Indian team management that he was “protected.” “You will recall that Shubman Gill did not bat during the Kolkata Test due to an injury. He did not bat, despite the fact that it was a high-scoring game and many believed that even

20 or 30 runs from him may help India win. The athlete was given complete protection in order to prevent the injury from getting worse. However, Sundar was not treated in the same manner.

I believe it was the wrong decision because of this. It had an impact on KL Rahul’s running between the wickets. “I believe there were higher chances of aggravating the injury in yesterday’s game, even though India won,” Kaif posted on his YouTube account. Even though India won the game as a result of the Sundar prank, Kaif believes the choice was dangerous because it might extend the player’s absence from the squad.”You should try someone else first if he is hurt and you need runs at a run-a-ball. A player’s injury may get worse if you send him in under duress. Even when the ball was traveling to square leg or deep point, he was only able to manage singles and was unable to run doubles. I thought it was unsafe to send an injured player,



even though the required run rate was about a run-per-ball and the game was under control. He continued, “What could have been a one-week or ten-day injury could extend to twenty, twenty-five, or even thirty days.” “I think the call was incorrect. If

you only needed to play out the run-a-ball scenario, you could have sent Kuldeep or anyone else, including Siraj or Prasidh Krishna. “You should send Washington Sundar only at the very end, when it is absolutely inevitable,” Kaif declared.

Fans Are Shocked When Virat Kohli Signs His “Childhood Look-Alike”



New Delhi: Veteran Indian batsman Virat Kohli made a fan’s day ahead of Sunday’s first One-Day International match against New Zealand by looking like his younger self. Fans were buzzing about photos and

videos of Kohli interacting with his lookalike that went viral on social media. India defeated the Kiwis by four wickets thanks to the right-handed batsman’s outstanding innings of 93 runs. But one of the main features

The six-day closure of Delhi Airport would affect thousands of travelers



New Delhi, Jan 13: As if the discomfort caused by fog this winter wasn’t enough, travelers will have further challenges starting on January 21 because airspace over Delhi will be closed in observance of Republic Day safety regulations.A NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) ranging from 1020 to 1245 hours for six days starting on January 21 was published by the government on Tuesday. Thousands of aircraft will be affected by the two-hour and twenty-five-minute closure, which will interfere with connec-

tions and cause passenger delays and cancellations. The airlines will also have to deal with misconnected customers.This is for practice, dress rehearsal, and the actual Republic Day parade, which takes place every year along Kartavya Path and features a parade, flypast, and exhibition of military hardware and culture. With only eight days left to close, the NOTAM was made public today. This may cause airlines to scurry to modify their flights, confirm the mis-connecting passengers and reroute them,

or provide refunds and/or modifications, which will be costly for the airlines.A little more than 600 flights will be affected during this time, according to data provided by aviation analytics firm Cirium specifically for this piece. Inbound travelers from all across the nation arrive at Delhi during one of the busiest times of the day in order to connect to the afternoon bank of flights to Europe and other Indian destinations. Every day, thousands of travelers will experience disruptions, cancellations, and rescheduling as a result. For security concerns, such total closures are required to protect the dignitaries during the Republic Day celebration as well as the safety and security of the aircraft participating in the flypast. There’s no guarantee that the affected flights will be canceled. They would undoubtedly

experience a temporal shift, though. As an alternative, travelers will be able to board a different flight at a different time. Due to the fact that this time frame also falls around Delhi’s fog periods, handling as many flights and passengers in an even shorter operational window may get chaotic on a given day when visibility declines. Make sure your contact information is updated if you have a flight in or out of Delhi during the designated times and dates so that airlines can notify you of any changes or cancellations as soon as possible. Airlines usually offer a complete refund or other choices in the event of a cancellation. Because of the last-minute change, airfares are probably going to be more expensive than when the ticket was originally purchased, therefore it could be better to choose other options.

No more groceries in ten minutes? Claims for speedy delivery services are stopped by Blinkit and others

New Delhi, Jan 13: After labor minister Mansukh Mandaviya brought up the problem of growing strain on gig workers and difficult work circumstances, quick commerce companies like Blinkit and Zepto voluntarily chose to stop 10-minute delivery claims.According to reports, the government met with prominent platforms, such as Blinkit, Zepto, Zomato, and Swiggy, to discuss delivery timeline issues.According to insiders, Blinkit has already complied with the order and eliminated the 10-minute delivery guarantee from its logo. Other aggregators are anticipated to do the same in the days ahead. The action is intended to give gig workers better working

conditions, more safety, and security.Following days of gig workers and a segment of the public calling for improved compensation and working conditions, the companies took this significant measure. On December 31, New Year’s Eve, some gig workers went on a major strike over the same issue.Blinkit has revised its brand messaging as part of the transition, according to the aforementioned sources. According to the reports, the company’s main slogan has changed from “10,000 plus products delivered in 10 minutes” to “30,000 plus products delivered at your doorstep.” The December 31 walkout was denied by Deepinder Goyal, co-founder and owner of



Zomato, which eventually bought Blinkit. He claimed that Blinkit’s 10-minute delivery requirement does not promote reckless driving, pointing out that users

only travel an average of two kilometers at a speed of sixteen kilometers per hour. He had claimed that the business covers the cost of drivers’ insurance.

The adviser is infuriated by the ICC’s response to Bangladesh’s T20 World Cup security claim



New Delhi: Asif Nazrul, Bangladesh’s Sports Advisor, recently claimed that the International Cricket Council (ICC) had confirmed security concerns voiced by the nation’s board and administration, implying that his

anti-Indian narrative had been substantiated. Nazrul claimed at a news conference that the ICC has identified three particular situations that could endanger Bangladeshi players and spectators during the 2026 T20 World

Cup. The ICC quickly denied these allegations in a statement, stating that the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) had not received any such assessment. The ICC emphasized in their official response that the T20 World

Cup 2026 will go forward as planned. According to the governing organization, the tournament’s overall security risk in India has been rated as “low to moderate,” which is in line with the majority of significant international sporting events.According to reports, impartial risk assessments did not identify any direct or specific threats to the Bangladeshi team, its personnel, or any Indian match venues.Nazrul described what he claimed to be the ICC’s conclusions during the briefing on Monday. “We sent two letters to the ICC, after which their security team responded,” Nazrul said. “They asserted that if three requirements were fulfilled, the security risk to the Bangladeshi team would rise.

Mamadou Sakho, a former defender, has announced his retirement

New Delhi: Mamadou Sakho, a former defender for France, Liverpool, and Paris Saint-Germain, announced his retirement on Monday at the age of 35. Sakho, a center back, had not played for a team since departing Torpedo Kutaisi in Georgia in January of last year. After graduating from PSG’s academy, the 29-time international went on to lead the Parisians. He played for the team that won Ligue 1 in 2012–13. “I wanted to thank everyone,” he stated on the field prior to PSG’s match against Paris FC, another of his previous teams, in the French Cup round of 32. “I wanted to officially announce the end of my

career,” he stated.He relocated to Liverpool in 2013 and played there for four seasons before going on to Crystal Palace, Montpellier, and Torpedo Kutaisi. Sakho participated in the three group matches and Germany’s 1-0 quarterfinal loss while playing for France at the 2014 World Cup.



Juventus defeated Cremonese to move up to fourth place in Serie A



New Delhi: With a 5-0 victory over Cremonese on Monday, Juventus maintained their fourth-place standing in Serie A and continued their comeback under Luciano Spalletti. Gleison Bremer, Jonathan David, and Kenan Yildiz gave Juventus a three-goal lead at the break, and Filippo Terracciano’s own goal and Weston McKennie’s goal ensured a sweeping

fifth victory in six league games.After a strong performance in Turin, Juventus is only four points behind league leaders Inter and tied with champions Napoli and Roma at 39 points. However, because they are competing in the Italian Super Cup in Saudi Arabia, Inter, Napoli, and second-place AC Milan all have games scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday.

Tug-of-war transformed farmer's son Akshay Patil, changing his life and sporting career



Diu: Kolhapur's Akshay Patil has spent nearly two decades muscling his way through adversity and sweating it out in the tug-of-war arena. His efforts did not go to waste. Patil's career is a classic example of how sport can transform lives. Born into a small farming family, Patil's sporting journey began in his school days, when he competed in district tug-of-war trials. Selection meant his school would waive his Rs 1,200 annual tuition fee, according to a KIBG 2026 release. Patil was successful, marking a turning point in the life of the well-built young man. "I am associated with tug-of-war since my fifth standard. When the school waived off my tuition fees, it was a big relief to my family," said 29-year-old Patil, the assistant coach of the Maharashtra team at the Khelo India Beach Games 2026 in Diu. Years of perseverance paid off in 2021 when his commitment to tug-of-war earned him direct recruitment under the sports quota as a sorting assistant in the Postal Department. Though initially posted away from home, a subsequent transfer back to his hometown brought stability not just to Patil's career, but to his family. The impact was immediate and profound. Akshay Patil arranged his only sister's marriage the following year and invested in cat-

tle to help his ageing parents set up a small dairy business. My parents have worked tirelessly in the fields all their lives, and now I want them to rest. The job also helped me arrange my sister's marriage smoothly, and today I can say I am settled in life, free from financial insecurity," said Patil, who won a silver in the 2012 junior World Cup in Chennai. A product of a government school system, Patil continued his education while competing in several state and national-level tournaments. "Even after joining the service, I never stopped practising. Before that, I had already played district and state-level competitions and participated in various national-level competitions," he added. Patil, who boasts of two golds, four silvers and three bronze medals in the senior nationals held between 2011 and 2022, credited the constant support from former weightlifter-turned-tug-of-war athlete Madhavi Patil, who was once a part of the national weightlifting camp for the 1996 Centennial Olympics in Atlanta, US. In 2000, Madhavi quit weightlifting to pursue a career in tug-of-war and soon became the All India Inter-University champion for four consecutive years before representing India at the Asian Tug-of-War Championship in 2004. Now serving as a physical education teacher and a coach, Madhavi is preparing the next generation of athletes, as tug-of-war, initially a part of the Olympic movement till 1908, is eyeing readmission into the Summer Games. Praising the Khelo India initiative, Madhavi said that the sport's inclusion in the Khelo India Beach Games for two consecutive editions has attracted youngsters from across the country to take up the traditional sport professionally. She hopes tug-of-war will become a medal sport in KIBG next season. With proper government support, Indian tug-of-war athletes can perform very well at international events and even win medals at world championships," Madhavi added. "I am associated with tug-of-war since my fifth standard. When the school waived off my tuition fees, it was a big relief to my family," said 29-year-old Patil, the assistant coach of the Maharashtra team at the Khelo India Beach Games 2026 in Diu.

Shreyas Iyer on verge of surpassing Kohli, Dhawan's major batting record milestone

Shreyas Iyer nears fastest Indian 3,000 ODI milestone

New Delhi: Star India batter Shreyas Iyer is on the verge of surpassing a major record held by Virat Kohli and Shikhar Dhawan in the upcoming second ODI against New Zealand. Iyer made his comeback to international cricket during the series opener in Vadodara, where he scored a brilliant 49 off 47 balls, studded with four fours and a six. The ODI vice-captain now has 2,966 runs from 68 innings in the format at an average of 47.83, with five hundreds and 23 fifties to his name. He needs just 34 more runs to become the fastest Indian to reach the 3,000-run milestone in ODIs. Currently, Shikhar Dhawan holds the record, having achieved the landmark in 72 innings, followed by Virat Kohli, who reached it in 75 innings. If Iyer manages to complete the milestone in the second ODI, he will draw level with the legendary Viv Richards to become the fourth-fastest player in the world to the mark. Hashim Amla holds the world record, having completed the milestone in just 57 innings.



wicket off 76 balls, bringing India to the verge of victory while chasing a target of 301. Earlier, Iyer featured for Mumbai in the Vijay Hazare Trophy, where he proved his match fitness after recovering from a spleen injury suffered in Australia. Leading the side and batting at No. 4 against Himachal Pradesh, Iyer played a fluent knock of 82 off 53 balls. More importantly, he showed no signs of discomfort during or after the innings, easing concerns around his workload and physical readiness. Following his innings, the BCCI Centre of Excellence (COE) medical staff were satisfied with his recovery and match fitness, and decided to grant him clearance ahead of schedule. In the next fixture against Punjab, he played another good innings of 45 off 34 balls, albeit in a losing cause, as Mumbai went

down by one run while chasing 217. Meanwhile, having secured a four-wicket win in the first ODI, India will look to seal the series in the second ODI on January 14 in Rajkot. Shreyas Iyer has been declared fit for international cricket after receiving clearance from the Board of Control for Cricket in India Centre of Excellence (CoE), clearing the path for his return in the upcoming ODI series against New Zealand. The 31-year-old had been named in India's squad with a fitness clause, with selectors and the medical team keen to closely monitor his readiness after a lengthy injury layoff. His comeback depended on how his body responded to competitive cricket during the domestic season, particularly under match conditions. Iyer featured for Mumbai in the

ongoing Vijay Hazare Trophy. Leading the side and batting at No. 4 against Himachal Pradesh, Iyer played a fluent knock of 82 off 53 balls. More importantly, he showed no signs of discomfort during or after the innings, easing concerns around his workload and physical readiness. Initially, Iyer was expected to complete Mumbai's next match against Punjab on January 8 before being formally cleared. However, the CoE medical staff were satisfied with his recovery and match fitness and decided to grant him clearance ahead of schedule. Iyer has been sidelined since October last year after suffering a spleen injury during the third ODI against Australia in Sydney. The injury required hospitalisation and ruled him out for nearly three months, interrupting his international momentum and keeping him out of selection contention during that period. With his return, Iyer is set to slot back into the middle order and resume his role as India's vice-captain. During his absence readiness. Following his innings, the BCCI Centre of Excellence (COE) medical staff were satisfied with his head of schedule.

After WPL snub, Australia skipper Alyssa Healy shocks cricket world with retirement news

Healy retires before India series after WPL snub

New Delhi: Australia captain Alyssa Healy has announced her shock retirement from international cricket, revealing that the upcoming multi-format home series against India will bring the curtain down on a decorated 16-year career. The 35-year-old made the announcement on Tuesday during an appearance on the Willow Talk podcast, where she is a regular contributor. Healy admitted she has been contemplating retirement for several months, having felt her competitive edge slowly fade after years at the highest level. It's with mixed emotions that the upcoming India series will be my last for Australia," Healy said. "I'm still passionate about playing for Australia, but I've somewhat lost that competitive edge that's kept me driven since the start, so the time feels right to call it a day." Reflecting on the mental and physical toll of elite sport, Healy explained how the last few seasons had taken a significant toll. It's been a long time com-



ing. The last few years have been more mentally draining than anything else. There have been injuries, and it's getting harder to keep diving back into the well when it's not as full as it used to be," she said. Healy will finish her career having played close to 300 international matches, scoring over 7,000 runs across formats. Behind the stumps, she has been equally influential, registering 275 dismissals since making her debut as a teenager in 2010. For much of her career, Healy served as vice-captain under Meg Lanning, before taking over as full-time skipper in 2023. One of her standout moments as captain came when

she led Australia to a historic 16-0 whitewash of England. Across her career, Healy has been part of eight ICC World Cup-winning campaigns and has etched her name into the record books. Her achievements include the highest individual score in a World Cup final and the most dismissals by a wicketkeeper in women's T20 Internationals. She was also honoured with the Belinda Clark Award in 2019, twice named ICC Women's T20I Cricketer of the Year, and played a key role in Australia's gold medal-winning run at the 2022 Commonwealth Games. Healy's final appearance for Australia is set to be the one-off Test against India in

Perth from March 6 to 9. Far from anxious about the next chapter, she said she was looking forward to a fitting farewell on home soil. Her announcement comes only a couple of months after a surprising snub at the Women's Premier League 2026 auction. In one of the most unexpected moments of the event, Healy's name was the first to come up under the hammer, yet no franchise placed a bid. Despite expectations that she might be picked up during the accelerated round, her name went unsold. Healy had previously represented UP Warriorz for the first two seasons of the tournament before missing the 2025 edition due to injury. After 15 years as a cornerstone of Australian women's cricket, Healy will step away as one of the game's most influential wicketkeeper-batters. Healy served as vice-captain under Meg Lanning, before taking over as full-time skipper in 2023. Despite expectations that she might be picked up during the unsold.

Packers' Micah Parsons confident ACL recovery enables early season return

Ranchi: GREEN BAY, Wis. — Green Bay's Micah Parsons calls his torn anterior cruciate ligament "the most challenging thing that I think I've ever faced as a human." But the All-Pro defensive end believes he can recover in time to play early next season. Speaking to reporters for the first time since his Dec. 14 injury, Parsons said Monday that he hopes to be back for the start of the season, but added that a more realistic goal is "probably like Week 3, Week 4." "I wouldn't wish this on anyone," Parsons said. "I don't think people realize how much the knee is. It's the most challenging thing that I think I've ever faced as a human. When you talk about pain, can't sleep, can't move around. ... I can't remember the last time I slept through the night. My body's tired. My mind's tired. I'm exhausted, man. But it's going to be worth it once I'm going to be able to move and play again." Parsons and tight end Tucker Kraft both discussed their recoveries from torn ACLs as the Packers packed up their lockers two days after blowing a 15-point, fourth-quarter lead in a 31-27 wild-card playoff loss at Chicago. He remains optimistic about his recovery, noting that rehab is progressing well and he may even avoid starting the season on injured reserve. Parsons tore his ACL on December 14, 2025 during a game against the Denver Broncos. He described the injury as "the most challenging thing I've ever faced as a human", citing sleepless nights, exhaustion, and constant pain. - Parsons says he is "flying" through rehab and has received positive feedback from medical staff. - He admitted the recovery has been draining, but emphasized his determination to come back stronger. The Packers ended their 2025 season with a Wild Card loss to the Chicago Bears, and Parsons' absence was a major factor in their defensive struggles. Parsons was acquired in a blockbuster trade before the 2025 season and immediately became the centerpiece of Green Bay's pass rush. The 42-year-old has been the coach of Castilla since June 2025. He is highly regarded within Real Madrid's management, having spent his entire coaching career at the club's youth academy since 2020.



He took the Under-14s team under his wing from 2021 to 2022, the Under-16s during the 2021-22 season and the Under-19s from 2022 to 2025. French striker Kylian Mbappe penned a short message for Alonso following his ouster as the manager of Real Madrid. Taking to Instagram, he wrote, "It's been short, but it was a pleasure to play for you and learn from you." The Atlanta Falcons completed an interview with former Ravens coach John Harbaugh for its vacant head coach position on Monday, his first formal interview since his firing Jan. 6 after 18 seasons in Baltimore. There's been reported widespread interest in Harbaugh, who led the Ravens to 12 postseason appearances and a Super Bowl XLVII victory at the end of the 2012 season. Harbaugh, 63, ranks 12th for most wins by a head coach in NFL history with 193 including the postseason. Harbaugh told Fox Sports in an interview over the weekend that he would take some time to narrow his options before beginning interviews. He set the likely number of teams he will interview at three or four, with the New York Giants and Tennessee Titans being reported as other jobs which stand out to him. Harbaugh's agent told ESPN that he had received calls from seven teams including one in Miami which had not yet fired its head coach about Harbaugh's availability within 45 minutes of news of his firing breaking. Sports Illustrated reported Monday Harbaugh had preliminary calls with the Cleveland Browns, Arizona Cardinals, Miami Dolphins, Las Vegas Raiders, Giants and Titans to listen to teams' pitches and decide who to interview with. Atlanta finished in a three-way tie atop the NFC South this season. Falcons owner Arthur Blank elected to fire head coach Raheem Morris after two seasons and GM Terry Fontenot after five seasons despite the team winning its final four games this season after it had been eliminated from the post-season. Multiple programs are attempting to entice Alabama quarterback Ty Simpson with top-dollar offers to delay his decision to enter the NFL draft, according to multiple reports. The Tuscaloosa News reported Simpson, who declared for the 2026 NFL Draft last week, has not paperwork portal.

Nayar urges UPW cricket comeback

Navi Mumbai: UP Warriorz (UPW) head coach Abhishek Nayar credited the opposition Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) after facing a heavy nine-wicket defeat in their second Women's Premier League (WPL) 2026 season on Monday at the DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai. In the match, RCB had put UPW to bat first and had reduced them to 50/5 before Deepti Sharma (45*) and Deandra Dotin (40*) helped the team recover enough to reach a fighting 143/5, with Nadine de Klerk and Shreyanka Patil getting two wickets each. In the chase, Grace Harris displayed some excellent ball-striking in her 40-ball 85, while Smriti stayed unbeaten at towards the end.

The 45-minute revolution: FIDE rewrites chess history for 2026



The chessboard is shrinking at least in terms of time. In a landmark move, the International Chess Federation (FIDE) has officially approved a resolution that allows shortened time controls to count toward Standard (Classical) ratings and Title Norms starting in 2026. This shift marks one of the most significant structural changes to professional chess in decades, effectively bridging

the gap between "Rapid" and "Classical" play. Historically, "Standard" chess required hours of grueling concentration, often with time controls exceeding four hours per game. Under the new 2026 regulations: The New Floor: Tournaments with a time control of 45 minutes plus a 30-second increment (45+30) or 60 minutes plus a 30-second increment (60+30) can now be

rated as standard chess. Approval Required: This isn't a free-for-all. Only "major or traditional" tournaments approved by the FIDE Qualification Commission (QC) qualify. Two-Round Limit: To prevent "speed-running" tournaments, organizers are restricted to a maximum of two rounds per day. The decision follows a successful pilot phase in late 2025, which included the Women's World Team Championship in Linares. FIDE President Arkady Dvorkovich noted that the sport must adapt to the "pace of modern sport" to remain viable. We are adapting the pace of modern sport, while preserving the quality and essence of the game. This format allows for more dynamic chess events without Nepomniachtchi.

Kaif amazed by fan's devotion: Kohli century or fasting entire week without food in India star

New Delhi: Former India cricketer Mohammed Kaif was left impressed by the unwavering faith fans continue to place in Virat Kohli, after a moment in the stands during India's first ODI against New Zealand in Vadodara perfectly summed up the batter's larger-than-life stature. During the match at the BCA Stadium in Kotambi, a young fan caught the eye by holding up a placard that read he would not eat for a week if Kohli failed to score a century. Reflecting on the incident during a discussion on his YouTube channel, Kaif used the moment to underline the extraordinary expectations that follow Kohli wherever he plays. In yesterday's match, a kid came to the ground holding a placard that said, "If Virat Kohli doesn't score a hundred, I won't eat for a week," Kaif said. "Just look at Virat Kohli's stature. When it comes to him, people talk directly about hundreds. That child took such a big chance. This shows the level Kohli is at, the aura he carries. Without a hundred, people are not satisfied. Even if he scores 93, even if it's a match-winning knock, they still say he didn't score a hundred. That's the dominance he has shown with his batting. Honestly, he alone is enough." Kaif



went on to explain how Kohli is judged by a different scale compared to others, with even strong contributions often deemed incomplete unless they end in three figures. That kid came with hope, and just look at the expectation," Kaif added. "With someone else, you might say score 30 or 50, but with Virat Kohli, you say 'score a hundred' straight away. This is not child's play. Scoring hundreds, or even 50s and 60s consistently, isn't easy. Look at his consistency — top class. His aggression is top class too. Even when he got out, until then he was attacking. From the very first boundary, stepping out, then pulling, it was clear he had decided that whenever he bats in ODIs now, everyone should watch how he plays." On the field, Kohli came agonisingly close to delivering on that expectation. Chasing a target of 301 set by New Zealand, he appeared on course for a record-extending 54th ODI century. Batting fluently on 93, Kohli was dismissed by Kyle Jamieson after mistiming a shot that was safely taken at mid-off, leaving him just seven runs short of the landmark. India, however, went on to complete the chase and secured a four-wicket victory.