

In Brief

Assam Rifles bust ₹16.65 Cr Drug Consignment

Aizawl: On Wednesday, police reported that the Assam Rifles detained a female drug dealer and seized methamphetamine tablets valued over Rs 16.65 crore in Champhai, near the Mizoram border. The operation occurred Tuesday night in the Venglai area following intelligence on drug trafficking. A search led to the discovery of 5.55 kg of methamphetamine, prompting the arrest of Zolianthangi, the woman involved. The Excise and Narcotics Department is now handling the case for legal action. This operation is part of on-going efforts to promote peace and protect youth in Mizoram from drug abuse.

BPF Gears Up for 2026 Assam Elections

Fakiragram: The Bodoland People's Front (BPF), led by Hagrama Mohilary, has begun special preparations in Fakiragram in anticipation of the 2026 Assam Assembly elections. A discussion meeting was arranged with Booth Level Officers (BLO 2) from Fakiragram to plan voter outreach and coordination prior to the polls. The session was attended by MLA Azamul Haque, BPF General Secretary Pulakesh Roy, and observer Jangkrikhang Brahma.BLO2 from the Fakiragram constituency attended a meeting where party representatives stressed the importance of daily voter interaction and seamless election procedures. In preparation for the assembly elections, the BPF is focused on strengthening its grassroots presence and rallying support. Officials underscored the necessity of preemptive planning and close coordination with BLO2 to effectively engage the electorate.

Unauthorized Five-Storey Building Pulled Down in Dibrugarh

Dibrugarh: Following several complaints and a terrible tragedy at the location, the Dibrugarh municipal officials razed a five-story building in Lohar Patra that was unlawfully constructed on Wednesday. Additionally, a 14-foot-wide under-construction building became the center of attention after a wall fell, killing Salma Begum, a resident. Bricks and pieces of the building's wall fell on the deceased when she was working close to her tube well.Yunus Khan, the building's owner, allegedly disregarded earlier directives to halt work in order to normalize the structure. Residents have complained to municipal authorities about the unauthorized development due to safety concerns. In response, the five-story building was demolished today by a large crew from the district administration with assistance from the municipal corporation. The action was intended to uphold local regulations and prevent additional hazards to the adjacent neighbors.

ED undertakes first-ever raids in Meghalaya registered PMLA case

Shillong: The Enforcement Directorate on Thursday conducted searches at multiple locations in Meghalaya as part of a money laundering probe into alleged misappropriation of funds at the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council (GHADC), officials said. These are the maiden raids undertaken by the federal probe agency's sub zonal office located in Shillong after registering a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in the state. The agency has conducted similar action in the state as part of cases registered in other states.

Mass protest in Haflong

Proposed ST Tag for Six Groups Sparks Massive Haflong Protest

Haflong, Dec 04: Under the auspices of the All Tribal Students' Organization of Dima Hasao, thousands of tribal students and community members protested the Assam government's proposal to grant Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to the six communities of Chutia, Koch-Rajbongshi, Matak, Moran, Tai-Ahom, and Tea Tribe (Adivasi) by taking to the streets of Haflong on Wednesday. One of the biggest protest rallies in the hill district in recent memory started at Lal Field, went through important town locations like the Council Rotary and Sambudhan Statue, and ended at the Deputy Commissioner Haflong's office. Strong statements like "No Dilution of ST Safeguards," "Protect Indigenous Tribal Rights," "Our Identity is Not Negotiable," and "Reject ST (Valley) Category – Save Hill Tribes" were displayed on banners and placards held by demonstrators. Speakers at the event cautioned that awarding ST status to these six communities would seriously jeopardize the limited resources and constitutional protections intended for current Scheduled Tribes, especially the Assamese hill tribes, even under the proposed new sub-category of ST (Valley). The current ST population in Assam, which is estimated to be between 38 and 40 lakh (or 12.4% of the state's total population), is significantly smaller than the six communities'



combined population of about 80 to 90 lakh, according to student activists. They worry that the previously recognized tribal tribes would have much less possibilities for education, government employment, political reserves, and access to welfare programs if these numerically larger and more developed communities were included. "This move will dilute the very purpose of ST reservation, which was created to uplift historically disadvantaged and marginalized indigenous

tribes," ADSU District Committee President Uttam Langthasa told reporters. The current STs, particularly the tribes in the hills, are far behind these six communities in terms of social, educational, and economic advancement. We shall not consent to the surrender of our rights in order to further political objectives. "Creating a separate 'ST (Valley)' category is nothing but a back-door entry," stated Mairing Johori, President of the ADSU Central Committee. In the end, it will result

in quota sharing and merger, leaving real tribal groups with nothing. "The combined population of these six communities is more than double the existing ST population," said Liengoujao Singson, General Secretary of the Kuki Students' Organization (KSO) Assam, who also participated in the demonstration. They will control every area once they are on the ST list, including government positions, college admissions, and Assembly seats. The identity and survival of tiny indigenous

● Thousands of tribal students and community members in Dima Hasao protested against the Assam government's proposal to grant Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to six communities, including Chutia and Koch-Rajbongshi.
● The rally, marked by banners declaring "No Dilution of ST Safeguards," highlighted fears that such a move would undermine existing protections for the Assamese hill tribes.

tribes are directly threatened by this. Through the Deputy Commissioner, a message was sent to Durga Das Uikey, Union Minister of State for Tribal Affairs, pleading with the Indian government to reject the Group of Ministers' recommendations and preserve the integrity of Assam's current Scheduled Tribes list. If the Center moves forward with the proposal, the demonstrators threatened to escalate unrest throughout the hill districts and beyond. Additionally, they urged all of Assam's acknowledged tribal communities—plains and hills alike—to band together in opposition to what they saw as "a dangerous dilution of indigenous rights." Growing concern among Assam's current Scheduled Tribes over the possible reorganization of one of India's most delicate constitutional protections was reflected in the protest, which remained nonviolent but unwavering.

Assam takes action against radical Islamic teachings, bans jihadi literature

Guwahati, Dec 04: The Assam Government has issued a sweeping ban on all forms of radical and jihadi literature linked to proscribed extremist organisations, invoking Section 98 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023. The notification, issued on December 3 by the Political (A) Department, prohibits the publication, circulation, sale, storage and digital sharing of any material associated with Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT), Ansar-Al-Islam/pro-AQIS and similar banned outfits. The order follows a communication from the Assam Police's Law & Order branch and observations from the Judicial Department, both warning that such literature poses a serious

threat to India's sovereignty, internal security, communal harmony and public order. Authorities highlighted that these organisations are already designated as terrorist groups under Section 35 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. The government noted that intelligence reports, cyber-patrolling inputs and recent investigations by Assam Police and the Special Task Force indicate continued circulation and possession of radical publications—both in print and digital formats. The banned content reportedly includes material glorifying violent jihad, providing ideological indoctrination, offering operational guidance and encouraging recruitment into extremist networks.

Two Congress workers released on bail after alleged attack on BLO

Lakhimpur, Dec 4: Two Congress workers from Assam's Lakhimpur, detained for allegedly attacking and obstructing a Booth Level Officer (BLO) during the electoral roll revision, were released on bail by a court today. Hem Baruah, President of the Lakhimpur Town Mandal of the Indian National Congress, and Dilwar Hussain, the secretary, were taken into custody by police on Wednesday afternoon. Speaking to this correspondent after securing bail, Hem



Baruah said that he and his co-party member were arrested on false accusations. According to him, the BLO's duty for SR evaluation was carried out by the local

ward commissioner of Ward No. 14 in a household in the East Channari area, which he objected to. Later, police arrested Hem Baruah and Dilwar Hussain following a complaint from the BLO. The two Congress workers have also lodged complaints against the BLO and the Ward Commissioner at the North Lakhimpur Sadar Police Station. Meanwhile, election officials have reiterated the importance of protecting BLOs from interference or intimidation during official duties.

CM Himanta to attend Gorkha Cultural Festival; event aims to uplift Gorkha culture through folk dances

Guwahati, Dec 04: A major cultural event is being organized in Assam—the three-day Gorkha Cultural Festival at Tingkhong in Dibrugarh district, scheduled for January 22-24, 2026. The Gorkha Development Council aims to uplift Gorkha culture and unite diverse Gorkha communities, with an expected attendance of around one lakh people. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma is slated to be the chief guest, symbolizing recognition of the Gorkha community's cultural identity, while Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang has also been invited.



Gorkha Development Council Chairman Prem Tamang highlighted that the festival serves as an important initiative for reviv-

ing and preserving traditional Gorkha practices, promoting cultural awareness among the younger generation. Traditional folk dances such as Maruni, Sangini, Dampuselo, Syaprup, Sakela Nritya, and Koda Nritya will be featured, showcasing the cultural heritage of various sub-groups within the Gorkha Mahajati. Tamang noted that, despite the existence of thirteen caste groups, there is limited awareness about each other's traditions, which the festival seeks to bridge through cultural exchange. An important pre-festival activity, the Kar-

masala, will educate participants in traditional dances, songs, and rituals, aiming to preserve cultural knowledge and ensure its continuation. Tamang emphasized that the festival fosters unity among the community's various caste groups, showcasing cultural awareness as a catalyst for strengthening Gorkha identity. Preparations are actively underway at Tingkhong, with local volunteers working on logistical arrangements including grounds setup and transport management to accommodate the expected influx of attendees.

Tripura partners with land port authority to launch skill training hubs for women in border areas

Agartala, Dec 04: The Tripura Directorate of Skill Development has entered into a new partnership with the Land Port Authority of India (LPAI) to expand skill training opportunities for women living in border areas. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on December 4 at the office of the Director of Skill Development. Under this agreement, the existing infrastructure at the Akhaura Integrated Check Post (ICP) will now be used to run dedicated training programmes for women. The facilities include a 30-seater conference hall, a smart classroom, meeting rooms and other training spaces. These will be made available from the last week of December. Officials said the aim is to conduct simple and practical training courses that can help women gain skills that can support employment or small income activities.



Pradip K., Director of the Skill Development Department, said the initiative will focus mainly on IT-based training and basic accounting courses. He explained that women will be able to learn subjects like Accounting Assistance, GST, and Tally in an organised and accessible setting. According to him, many women in the border areas do not have

access to formal skill training centres, and using the land port infrastructure will help reduce this gap. He said the department hopes the training will open up new opportunities for women who want to work or start small businesses. Debashis Nandi, Manager of the Tripura Integrated Check Post, said the collaboration will not stop with Akhaura. Similar facilities at

the Sabroom and Srimantapur ICPs will also be used soon for the same purpose. He said this will create a wider network of training hubs across the state, especially in areas where regular training centres are not available. The plan is to ensure that women in these regions can learn skills that are needed in today's job market.

Assam Rifles Bust ₹16.65 Cr Drug Consignment in Mizoram

Aizawl, Dec 04: According to police on Wednesday, the Assam Rifles detained a female drug dealer and found highly addictive methamphetamine tablets worth more than Rs 16.65 crore in the Champhai area, which borders Mizoram. According to a defense spokesman, Assam Rifles carried out an operation at Venglai regions in Champhai district on Tuesday night in response to reliable intelligence inputs regarding drug trafficking close to the India-Myanmar border.Unusual movement was observed in the Venglai area throughout the operation. 5.55 kg of methamphetamine tablets, a psychoactive drug with an estimated international



market value of Rs 16.65 crore, were found after a quick and exhaustive search. Zolianthangi, the woman, was also detained in relation to the narcotics recovery.The Excise and Narcotics Department in Champhai received the arrested woman and the seized contraband for a

thorough examination and potential legal action under the relevant legislation. According to an official release, this operation strengthens the continuing group efforts to preserve peace and security in the area and shield Mizoram's youth from the negative consequences of drugs.

Bengaluru techie commits suicide

Bengaluru, Dec 04: A techie named Murali in Bengaluru reportedly died by suicide due to harassment and extortion demands from two neighbors, Usha Nambiar and Shashi Nambiar.

His mother, Lakshmi Govindaraju, filed a complaint stating that the neighbors demanded ₹20 lakh over a property dispute related to a house Murali was building. After being subjected to mental harassment during multiple confrontations, Murali left home on December 3 and was later found dead by a carpenter at the construction site. Lakshmi has filed for legal action against the accused, and police are currently investigating the case.

In a separate incident, another tech professional, 34-year-old Shrinath K, who had been missing



since late October, was found dead in Andhra Pradesh. His body was discovered buried in an abandoned house in the Chittoor district, having been reported missing from Attibele.

Police investigations revealed that Shrinath was allegedly murdered by his cousin, Prabhakar, a known offender. Shrinath was last seen going to meet Prabhakar on the day he disappeared, prompting his wife, Neha MP, to file a missing person complaint with the police on November 1. The remains of Shrinath were exhumed on November 16, leading authorities to further investigate the circumstances surrounding his death.

“Very valuable for us”: Shashi Tharoor’s remarks about Putin’s trip to India

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 04: Congress MP Shashi Tharoor has characterized Russian President Vladimir Putin’s impending visit to India as “very valuable”, emphasizing its significance for bilateral relations. Scheduled to arrive in Delhi on Thursday evening, Putin’s trip will feature a private dinner with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and a meeting with President Droupadi Murmu.

Tharoor highlighted the importance of maintaining strong relationships with major nations such as Russia, China, and the United States, asserting India’s sovereign right to manage its diplomatic engagements independently without one relationship dictating another.

He remarked that ongoing discussions at expert levels have already paved the way for potential agree-



ments that might be finalized during Putin’s stay, indicating the substantial value these accords could bring to India. Ahead of the visit, heightened security measures have been implemented in Delhi, with SWAT, anti-terrorism units, and quick-reaction teams in place. This visit marks Putin’s first trip to India in four years and his first since the Ukraine conflict began. Over the course of his two-day visit, discussions are slated to cover a broad spectrum of topics,

■ *Putin’s upcoming visit to India will be his first in four years and the first since the Ukraine war began.*

■ *The leader emphasized that India has good relations with Russia, America, and China, noting that the focus may shift over time.*

Protest against Chhattisgarh coal mine turns violent

More than thirty police officers were hurt

Chhattisgarh, Dec 04: More than 30 police personnel were injured during clashes with villagers protesting the expansion of the Amera coal mine in Parsodi Kala, Chhattisgarh. The conflict, which occurred on a Wednesday, involved stone-throwing and resulted in injuries to both police and protesters. The South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL), a subsidiary of Coal India, asserted that some villagers were being influenced by individuals with vested interests who engage in coal pilferage. Despite ongoing protests, mining operations were resumed after intervention by officials.

Local government officials attempted to negotiate with the villagers, and urged them to allow authorized mining activities to proceed. Acknowledging some compen-

sation payments had been made, they noted that many villagers were resistant to accepting these payments, as they aimed to prevent further mining operations.

The Amera Opencast Mine, which began operations in 2011, was previously suspended in 2019 due to villagers’ resistance to the SECL’s activities beyond legally approved benefits linked to land acquisition. Resuming operations in 2024 per agreements made with the District Resettlement and Rehabilitation Committee.

However, as expansion efforts encroached upon Parsodi Kala, opposition grew, culminating in violent outbreaks on November 8. This prompted law enforcement and district officials to intervene at the mining site to negotiate an end to the hostility. Despite efforts, protesters re-

acted violently upon officials’ arrival, throwing stones and injuring personnel, which led to the mobilization of additional police forces to disperse the crowd.

Amidst the unrest, a protester named Leelavati expressed her determination to retain her land, highlighting concerns for future generations and livelihoods against the backdrop of industrialization. Alok Shukla, a vocal representative of the Chhattisgarh Bachao Andolan, condemned police actions and called for governmental intervention to halt the mine’s expansion, arguing that the situation violated constitutional protections and rights established for Scheduled Areas. In summary, the protests underscore deep-rooted tensions surrounding land, livelihood, and resource exploitation in the region.

Minor boy missing from Akola

Akola, Dec 04: Police traced a missing 14-year-old boy from Akola to Pandharpur, Maharashtra, after a 21-day search. The boy left home on November 11 following a scolding from his parents. They reported his absence to the police the next day, leading to an investigation. Despite lacking sufficient information, the parents cooperated with police, who gathered details from the boy’s school and neighbors. CCTV footage captured him boarding a Nagpur-Kolhapur express train that evening. The police covered 1,500 km, analyzing CCTV from multiple railway stations, ultimately locating the boy at Pandharpur railway station, approximately 500 km from Akola. He was found on December 2 at Sargam Chowk and subsequently reunited with his parents. The District Superintendent of Police, Archit Chandak, announced a ₹10,000 reward for the police team involved in the search.

Hyderabad-bound Indigo aircraft diverted over bomb threat

Hyderabad, Dec 04: As disruptions from mass cancellations persist, IndiGo faced another incident when Flight 6E 058, en route from Medina to Hyderabad, was diverted to Ahmedabad due to a bomb threat.

The flight, carrying 180 passengers and 6 crew members, landed safely at approximately 12:30 PM. An email claiming a bomb on board prompted the precautionary emergency landing, with thorough searches conducted without any suspicious findings.



Meanwhile, IndiGo canceled 250 flights on Thursday following previous cancellations due to stringent crew rostering rules, resulting in a decline in on-time performance to 19.7% from 35%. Significant cancellations were reported from major airports, including Delhi, Hyderabad, Mumbai, and Bengaluru.

Early pregnancy and pain are caused by child marriages Union minister during 100-day campaign kickoff

New Delhi, Dec 04: Union Minister of Women and Child Development, Annapurna Devi, emphasized the detrimental effects of child marriage, stating it strips childhood from girls and leads to early maternity and profound suffering. During the launch of the ‘100-day Intensive Awareness Campaign for a Child Marriage Free Bharat’, she called for a “zero tolerance” stance against child marriage, urging collaboration among states, civil societies, and community leaders to eradicate the practice.

Despite India’s “historic progress” in legislation, including the Sarda

Act of 1929 and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act of 2006, harmful social norms continue to persist. Devi acknowledged improvements from government initiatives like ‘Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao’, highlighting increased sex ratios and higher enrollment of girls in education.

At the event, grassroots NGOs shared successful community interventions that have prevented child marriages in high-risk areas. Anil Malik, Secretary of the Ministry, declared that merely criminalizing child marriage will not suffice, stressing the importance of aware-



ness and collective action. He noted significant progress in reducing child marriages, with about 47% of marriages involving minors two decades ago, decreasing significantly according to recent data. The campaign aims to raise awareness from November 27 to March 8, featuring school competitions, community

drives, and collaboration with local governance to declare areas child marriage-free, concluding ceremonially on International Women’s Day, while ensuring the movement continues beyond that date. Young advocates from various regions, such as Roshni Parveen and Jyotsana Akhtar, were recognized for their roles in battling child marriage within their communities.

Devi’s message underscored that the achievement of a child marriage-free nation is attainable, as exemplified by districts showing no child marriages for two consecutive years.

Karnataka HC rejects Prajwal Revanna’s request to postpone life sentence in rape case

Bengaluru, Dec 04: The Karnataka High Court denied bail to former JD MP Prajwal Revanna, who received a life sentence for one of four rape cases against him.

The bench emphasized the severity of the crimes, ongoing cases, and potential witness tampering as reasons for the decision.

Revanna’s defense argued the conviction was based on weak evidence and media bias, citing procedural issues and political motives. Opposing counsel expressed that releasing him could jeopardize the victim and witnesses.

The court upheld the trial court’s findings, scheduled the appeal for January 12,



2026, and confirmed that the victim’s testimony was sufficient for conviction, underlining that, post-conviction, incarceration is the norm. Revanna faces multiple serious charges, with evidence including video footage and DNA analysis, related to assaults recorded in 2021.

The cases escalated after

● *Revanna’s appeal is scheduled for final hearing on January 12, 2026, while the case involves incidents recorded during 2021 and evidence such as video footage and DNA analysis.*

explicit videos allegedly linked to him circulated ahead of the upcoming elections.

Delhi is on high alert ahead of Putin’s arrival

Snipers and SWAT units are stationed across the capital

New Delhi, Dec 04: Delhi has been placed under high alert ahead of the forthcoming visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin, who is scheduled to arrive on Thursday evening for a two-day official trip to India. The visit includes a private dinner with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the PM’s residence, along with participation in the 23rd India-Russia annual strategic summit. Security measures in the national capital have been intensified, with SWAT teams and extensive deployment of law

enforcement personnel to ensure safety during his stay. Senior police officials have confirmed that every aspect of the president’s movement will be closely monitored and coordinated by multiple security units. Over 5,000 police officers will be involved in maintaining effective surveillance.

To streamline the visit, all planned routes for the VIP’s movement have been secured ahead of time, with traffic advisories set to be issued periodically to lessen disruptions for residents and commuters. Anti-drone sys-



tems will also be deployed to enhance security. A comprehensive multi-layered security grid has been established, incorporating

SWAT teams, anti-terror units, snipers, and rapid response teams stationed at strategically important locations.

In addition to the private dinner with PM Modi, President Putin is expected to meet with President Droupadi Murmu. Economic discussions will likely focus on trade and industrial cooperation, involving “promising projects” in various fields, including innovative technologies, transport, peaceful space exploration, mining, healthcare, and programs related to labor migration.

Petitioners fearing property demolition in UP are granted temporary protection by the SC for one week

New Delhi, Dec 04: The Supreme Court provided interim protection for one week to two petitioners in Uttar Pradesh whose properties faced demolition, instructing all parties to maintain status quo during this period. During the proceedings, Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta emphasized that the petitioners should approach the Allahabad High Court for proper recourse regarding the partial demolitions already undertaken. The bench reiterated that the interim protection would not influence the High Court’s evaluations of the case based on its merits.

The Supreme Court, addressing the urgency ex-



pressed by the petitioners’ counsel—a 75-year-old man who claimed he had not received any notice prior to the demolition actions—highlighted the necessity to follow due legal processes. The Court rejected the petition under Article 32 of the Constitution, allowing the applicants the liberty to file under Article 226 at the High

Court, which has mechanisms to expedite urgent petitions. The bench stressed that any actions taken by authorities must adhere to procedural requirements, referencing its prior ruling that mandated property owners be given a notice period of 15 days before demolition.

In a landmark decision from November, the Court

The Court refused to entertain the petition under Article 32 of the Constitution but allowed the petitioners to approach the High Court under Article 226.

established guidelines prohibiting demolitions without proper notice and criticized executive overreach in executing demolitions without judicial due process, characterizing such actions as arbitrary. The previous ruling indicated exceptions only for unauthorized structures in public areas or under court orders. This recent order reflects ongoing concerns over ‘bulldozer justice’ and emphasizes the need for legal protections against arbitrary property demolition.

29 trafficking victims from Myanmar return to the country

Chennai, Dec 04: On November 18th and 19th, 29 individuals from Tamil Nadu were repatriated after being rescued from a trafficking network in Myanmar, as reported by the state cyber-crime wing. This effort, part of operation ‘Blue Triangle’, led to interrogations revealing the involvement of multiple agents throughout Tamil Nadu, prompting the registration of three FIRs at different cybercrime investigation centers. The Tamil Nadu Cyber Crime Wing emphasized its ongoing fight against cyber trafficking in Southeast Asia, stating that recent operations resulted in the rescue of 395 individuals from various parts of India during raids conducted by the Myanmar Junta Army.

The investigation uncovered a sophisticated international job fraud and human trafficking scheme involving



agents in India, Thailand, and Myanmar, specifically pinpointing one individual as a key agent who posed as one of the returnees. This agent and his associate had lured a victim with false offers of employment in Bangkok, which led to the victim being kidnapped at gunpoint, subjected to physical abuse, and forced to create fraudulent social media

accounts for scamming purposes. Additionally, the victim’s family was extorted for ₹5.40 lakhs for his release back to India.

Led by Superintendent of Police I Shahbaz, the operation has implemented special teams for field investigations, forensic examinations, and interviews of returnees in both Delhi and Chennai. Recent arrests included four individuals from Tamil Nadu on trafficking charges. Investigations are ongoing to trace the associates of the key agent and financial channels related to the organized trafficking of Indian citizens to cyber scam centers abroad. The Cyber Crime Wing’s efforts also resulted in the repatriation of one victim after a complaint from his wife, which prompted action from both the Tamil Nadu and Union governments.

BPF Gears Up for 2026 Assam Elections

Fakiragram, Dec 04: The Bodoland People's Front (BPF), led by Hagrama Mohilary, has begun special preparations in Fakiragram in anticipation of the 2026 Assam Assembly elections. A discussion meeting was arranged with Booth Level Officers (BLO 2) from Fakiragram to plan voter outreach and coordination prior to the polls. The session was attended by MLA Azamul Haque, BPF General Secretary Pulakesh Roy, and observer Jangkhrikhang Brahma.BLO2 from the Fakiragram constituency attended a meeting where party representatives stressed the importance of daily voter interaction and seamless election procedures. In preparation for the assembly elections, the BPF is focused on strengthening its grassroots presence and rallying support. Officials underscored the necessity of preemptive planning and close coordination with BLO2 to effectively engage the electorate.

Tanuska Borah wins Gold on national stage, brings pride to Assam

Guwahati, Dec 04: Assam's young karate player Tanuska Borah has brought honour to the state by winning a gold medal at a major national event. Tanuska achieved this milestone at the All India Inter Zonal Karate Championship 2025, which was held at the Talkatora Indoor Stadium in New Delhi. The event saw the participation of players from different zones of the country, and Tanuska stood out with her strong performance. Tanuska trains at the Shadow Martial Art Academy in Nagaon. According to her coaches, she has been working hard for several months, balancing her studies and sports practice. Her dedication paid off when she reached the finals of the championship. In the final match, she faced a tough player from Telangana. Tanuska kept her focus throughout the bout and finally defeated the Telangana player to secure the gold medal for Assam. This is not the first time Tanuska has shown such strong performance. Before the Delhi event, she had also won a gold medal at the North East Zone Karate Championship. In that competition, she managed



to beat a player from Arunachal Pradesh and took the top position. Winning two important championships back-to-back has made her one of the most promising young karate players from the region. With these achievements, Tanuska has now become the first official national gold medallist from both Shadow Martial Art Academy and the Kaliabor area. Her success has been praised by her coaches, teammates and local residents, who feel that her hard work and discipline have set an example for other young sportspersons.

Conflict and Poverty Drive Record Expansion of Opium Cultivation in Myanmar

Staff reporter, Dec 04: Opium cultivation in Myanmar has expanded to its highest level in a decade, according to the Myanmar Opium Survey 2025 released on Wednesday by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The report estimates that poppy is now grown on 53,100 hectares — a 17% increase from last year and the largest area recorded since 2015.

UNODC noted that Myanmar has also become the world's leading producer of methamphetamine, which is easier and cheaper to manufacture than opium and is trafficked across Asia and the Pacific in both tablet

and crystal form. While meth dominates regional drug markets, opium remains a crucial source of income for farmers struggling with deepening poverty and insecurity. The country has been gripped by civil conflict since the military seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021.

Strong global demand and rising prices have further fuelled the resurgence of poppy cultivation. Fresh opium now fetches about \$329 per kilogram, more than double the average price in 2019. UNODC estimates that Myanmar's opium economy is worth between \$641 million

and \$1.05 billion, representing up to 1.4% of its GDP. Although average yields fell by 13% because of fighting in major producing regions, the expansion of farmland pushed total output to approximately 1,010 metric tons, slightly higher than last year. The report notes that this rise continues a trend seen since 2021.

UNODC's regional representative, Delphine Schantz, described the findings as a warning signal, saying the opium economy has "reasserted itself" amid conflict and social breakdown. She cautioned that cultivation could spread further as long as alternative livelihoods remain out

of reach for rural communities. The survey also suggests that a small but notable share of Myanmar-produced heroin may be entering European markets as Afghanistan's output collapses, with recent seizures involving travellers from Southeast Asia pointing to shifting supply routes.

Much of the poppy cultivation is concentrated in Myanmar's remote northeast, part of the notorious Golden Triangle bordering Laos and Thailand. The region's long-standing mix of armed groups, poor governance and illicit trade continues to make it one of the world's most resilient drug-producing zones.

ED undertakes first-ever raids in Meghalaya registered PMLA case



Shillong, Dec 04: The Enforcement Directorate on Thursday conducted searches at multiple locations in Meghalaya as part of a money laundering probe into alleged misappropriation of funds at the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council (GHADC), officials said. These are the maiden raids undertaken by the federal probe agency's sub zonal office located in Shillong after registering a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in the state. The agency has conducted similar action in the state as part of cases registered in other states.

Consultative committee reviews progress of the PM-DevINE scheme for NE region

Aizawl, Dec 04: The Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER) met on December 3 under the chairmanship of the Union Minister of Communications and Development of North Eastern Region, Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, at the Parliament House Annexe in New Delhi. The Union MoS for Education and Development of North Eastern Region, Sukanta Majumdar, also participated in the meeting. Scindia welcomed Members of the committee from Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and stated that the meetings of the Committee form an integral part of the continuous dialogue on investment and development progress in the North Eastern States. He also thanked Members for their active participation and valuable insights during the meetings of the Consultative Committee. Terming PM-DevINE (Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North East Region) as the most important scheme of the Ministry, Scindia informed that the scheme was conceptualized in the Union Budget 2022-2023. The scheme has a total outlay of Rs. 6600 crores

for the period 2022-2023 to 2025-2026. As of 31st October 2025, 44 projects worth about Rs 5,700 crore have been sanctioned. Three out of the sanctioned projects worth about Rs 176 crore have been completed and 41 projects worth about Rs 5,500 crore are currently under progress. Further, projects worth Rs 111 crore have been approved in-principle, with more projects worth Rs 625 crore in the pipeline. The Ministry is therefore on course to fully utilize the scheme outlay.

Responding to points raised by Members of the Committee, the Union Minister provided specific details of projects under implementation in Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram and Tripura.

On a suggestion for tourism sector projects in Tripura, the Minister informed that tourist circuits with world class facilities will be developed in each of NE state, at selected locations identified in consultation with State Governments. To begin with, Sohra Circuit in Meghalaya and Matabari Circuit in Tripura are being taken up on pilot basis. Foundation stone for the Meghalaya-Sohra Circuit has already been laid,

while the Tripura-Matabari Circuit is at advance stage of approval. Besides strengthening of infrastructure, tourist circuit project will have a strong focus on capacity building to ensure availability of good quality skilled manpower to support the growth in tourism and for a better tourist experience.

Scindia highlighted that PM-DevINE projects are monitored through a rigorous and multi-layered mechanism. Weekly reviews are conducted and each project is tracked against expected versus actual timelines. During these reviews, physical progress is assessed through time-stamped photographs. Officers from MDoNER & North Eastern Council (NEC) also conduct on-ground inspections, supplemented by third-party assessment mechanisms to ensure accountability.

The Minister reiterated the Government's commitment to ensuring rapid, transparent, and outcome-oriented development in the North Eastern Region, with PM-DevINE serving as a key catalyst for infrastructure and socio-economic transformation.

Sivasagar Admin Clarifies Electoral Roll Issue

Sivasagar, Dec 04: In response to claims made by 96-Sibsagar LAC MLA Akhil Gogoi citing inconsistencies in the constituency's electoral record, the District Election Officer and District Commissioner, Sivasagar, has formally clarified the situation. The administration was prompted to confirm the statements when they appeared in a number of media sites and were featured in a NorthEast Now video on December 2. The clarification states that the accusations are related to the Final Electoral Roll of Polling Station No. 163 (Executive Engineer Office, Sivasagar Water Resource Department) under 96-Sibsagar LAC, which was released on January 6, 2025, with reference to the January 1, 2025 qualifying date. The voter services webpage of the Election Commission of India makes the roll accessible to the general public. The two households described in the claim are already registered under two different house numbers—House No. 12 and House No. 12-Ka—according to a thorough analysis of the voter list. Anwara Begum, the late Jiaur Rahman's wife, and nine other electors make up House No. 12, whereas Gita Devi, the wife of Gautam Sahu, and three other electors make up House No. 12-Ka.

Gita Devi and her family were already registered under House No. 12-Ka in the Final Electoral Roll 2025 and had not been added, the District

Election Office stated. On Tuesday, the Booth Level Officer (BLO) of PS-163 was present when the Circle Officer of Sivasagar, who is also the AERO of 96-Sibsagar LAC, carried out an instant field verification. Both families live in two different homes inside the voting station area, according to the verification. Photographs with geotagging have been documented as proof. The administration further stated that a comprehensive verification of homes with more than ten people was carried out between August and October 2025 in accordance with directives from the Election Commission of India (ECI) and the Chief Electoral Officer, Assam. The Draft Photo Electoral Roll 2026, which will be released on December 27, 2025, will include any discrepancies found by BLOs. During the ongoing house-to-house inspections under Special Revision 2026, which will end on December 20, voters have been asked to confirm their information. After that, voters can check their details in the integrated Draft Electoral Roll 2026. The qualifying date is January 1, 2026, beginning on December 27. Forms 6 for new enrollment, 7 for objections or deletions, and 8 for corrections or shifting may be used to submit claims and objections between December 27, 2025, and January 22, 2026. Submissions can be made online via VHA, ECINET, VSP, and other ECI platforms, or through BLOs.

After Two Decades, Subansiri Lower Dam Finally Starts Generating Electricity

Guwahati, Dec 04: After a wait of two decades, the Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project has finally begun generating power. At 6:12 pm yesterday, one of the project's units was synchronised with the national power grid. Implemented by NHPC, the 2,000-MW project comprises eight units of 250 MW each, and the second unit also came online yesterday. Three more units are expected to be commissioned within this month, while the entire project is slated for completion by March 2027. Project consultant A.N. Mohammad said that synchronising the first unit with the national grid marks a milestone in India's hydropower development. He noted that Units 1 and 2 completed their mechanical runs earlier, and testing of the remaining units is underway, with an additional 1,000 MW likely to be added by December 2025.

Conceptualised in 2005 at Gerukamukh along the Arunachal-Assam border, the project faced an eight-year suspension due to protests and legal battles in Assam over dam safety and downstream ecological concerns. To address these issues, the Centre set up several expert panels, which recommended strengthening the dam structure, widening it, installing seepage-control barriers, enhancing foundation grouting, and ensuring earthquake-resilient design. A Central Water Commission study mandated a minimum environmental flow of 240 cubic metres per second to preserve the river's ecology.

The reservoir, with a capacity of 1,365 million cubic metres and a 15-metre flood cushion, along with 60 km of downstream riverbank protection, is expected to play a significant role in flood moderation. Once fully operational, the project will generate 7.421 billion units of renewable energy annually. Assam will receive an additional 300 MW of power along with 25 MW free, while Arunachal Pradesh will get 12 per cent free power. Owing to construction delays, the project cost has escalated to around ₹26,000 crore.

Unauthorized Five-Storey Building Pulled Down in Dibrugarh

Dibrugarh, Dec 04: Following several complaints and a terrible tragedy at the location, the Dibrugarh municipal officials razed a five-story building in Lohar Patra that was unlawfully constructed on Wednesday.

Additionally, a 14-foot-wide under-construction building became the center of attention after a wall fell, killing Salma Begum, a resident. Bricks and pieces of the building's wall fell on the deceased when she was working close to her tube well. Yunus Khan, the building's owner, allegedly disregarded earlier directives to halt work in order to normalize the structure. Residents have complained to municipal authorities about the unauthorized development due to safety concerns. In response, the five-story building was demolished today by a large crew from the district administration with assistance from the municipal corporation.

JNC Seeks Halt To Shree Cement Hearing



Shillong, Dec 04: The Jaintia National Council (JNC-CEC), under the leadership of President Sambormi Lyngdoh, has taken decisive action against a potential violation of tribal land laws linked to the proposed M/S Shree Cement Integrated Plant at Daisitong, East Jaintia Hills. The JNC submitted a detailed complaint and stay petition to the Commissioner & Secretary, Revenue and Disaster Management, Matsiewdor War Nongbri, IAS, Government of Meghalaya, on Thursday, December 4, demanding the immediate suspension of the December 2025 public hearing. The complaint highlights concerns over the legality of the land transfer. According to the EIA report (Page 54 & Table 3.18), the project land belongs to tribal landowner Syrapibha Sukhlain but has been purchased by Bharat Sharma, a non-tribal. This transfer appears to violate Section 2 of the Meghalaya Transfer of Land (Regulation) Act, 1971, which prohibits the transfer

of tribal land to non-tribals without written permission from the Deputy Commissioner. No such permission is included in the EIA. JNC identified several major gaps in the project's documentation: Land Legality Not Proven: While the EIA claims the land has been "purchased" for Shree Cement, no DC permission, mutation records, or JHADC approval are attached, and no proof of a legal tribal-to-non-tribal transfer exists. Forest and Wildlife Violations: The project site lies 6.35 km from the Saipung Reserved Forest, yet no Forest or Wildlife Clearance has been submitted. A DFO letter (08.10.25) is cited in the EIA but is not attached, making verification impossible and weakening the project's environmental credibility. JHADC Jurisdiction Ignored: The land is in Elaka Nongkhlieh Doloiship, but there is no NOC from JHADC, no certification from the Doloi, and no consent from the Village Durbar, constituting a direct violation of the Sixth Schedule.

Hornbill Festival day-3 mesmerises visitors with grand showcase of Naga cultural heritage

Hornbill Festival

● The third day of the 26th Hornbill Festival at Naga Heritage Village showcased Nagaland's rich cultural traditions through various dances and performances.

Kohima, Dec 04: The third day of the 26th Hornbill Festival unfolded into a vibrant cultural panorama at the Naga Heritage Village in Kisama, drawing visitors into an enchanting journey through the diverse traditions, dances and folk histories of Nagaland's tribes. According to the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), the cultural segment for Day-3 was hosted by deputy chief minister Y. Patton and co-hosted by advisor K. Tokugha Sukhalu. The event was graced by several prominent dignitaries, including Thinlye Namgyal, Consul General of Bhutan in Guwahati; Air Marshal Surat Singh, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Air Command; Lt. Gen. Mohit Wadhwa, GOC 101; Simon Lee Broughton, founding editor of Songlines; and other distinguished guests. The sequence of traditional per-

formances began with the Zeliang troupe's Akoina Lin, setting the tone for a day of rhythmic storytelling. This was followed by the Yimkhiung troupe's Kha Kiaklak Rhimo, and the Tikhar women's folk dance, Tainang Jong Paihi Ai, each reflecting distinct cultural identities and age-old traditions. One of the highlights of the day came from the Sumi troupe, which showcased Akikiti, the traditional kick-fighting sport historically practised by young boys in the morning. The performance drew wide applause for its precision and athletic display. The Sangtam artistes presented Shangrū Tshaba Khi, a melodious friendship song celebrating unity and companionship. The Rengma troupe brought the energy of the Igada Festival alive through Kūnyēin, a war dance steeped in ritual significance. The Pochury performers added a solemn touch with Kūzhegwī, a chant invoking loyalty to customs and ancestral values. Preserving the spirit of migration folklore, the Phom troupe performed Ho Ho Shou, telling the story of the tribe's ancestral jour-



ney. This was followed by the Lotha troupe's Myingthung Sharū, a dance honouring the village chief. The Kuki troupe presented Lenchonghoi La, a poignant tale of abduction and loss, capturing the emotional depth of tribal legends. The performances continued with the Konyak troupe's Gan-rin Boa, a pre-war ritual song, and the Kachari troupe's Bagurumba, the famous butterfly dance celebrated for its graceful movements. The Khamniungan performers depicted the harvest season through Beoyam Kinya, while the Garo troupe staged the symbol-

ic Quarrel Dance, highlighting inter-clan rivalry and reconciliation. The day also featured traditional sports and agricultural songs, including the Chang troupe's Khuyubū, a wrestling sport, and the Chakhesang Sūte Li, which pays tribute to millet cultivation. The Ao troupe thrilled the audience with Keyi Asabha Yimya (The Tiger's Hunt), a dramatic portrayal from tribal folklore. The cultural showcase concluded with the Angami troupe's Lübo-Tati, featuring the single-stringed Tati, bringing a soothing musical finish to the lively celebration.

Vedanta rallies 10% in 8 days, hits new high

New Delhi: Domestic brokerage Nirmal Bang has retained its optimistic perspective on the Indian automobile market after what it termed a good November 2025 performance across passenger vehicles (PVs), two-wheelers (2Ws), commercial vehicles (CVs) and tractors. The brokerage said most major OEMs reported double-digit year-on-year volume increase, supported by seasonal spillover, GST 2.0-led affordability, improved rural sentiment and healthy export demand. According to the brokerage’s report, “India’s auto sector delivered strong performance in Nov-25 across passenger vehicles, two-wheelers, commercial vehicles, and tractors, with most major OEMs achieving double-digit Y-o-Y growth supported by festive spillover, GST 2.0-driven affordability improvements, strengthening rural sentiment, and further aided by healthy export traction.” Yash Agrawal, research analyst at Nirmal Bang, retained Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) and Maru-



ti Suzuki India as top picks in the four-wheeler space. In two-wheelers, he prefers Eimco Elecon (India) and Hero MotoCorp. Among auto-component makers, ASK Automotive remains the brokerage’s preferred idea, while CEAT is its top bet in the tyre

segment. The brokerage highlighted broad-based momentum in the domestic market, with MHCVs and tractors leading the uptrend, rising 31.3 per cent Y-o-Y and 29 per cent Y-o-Y, respectively. LCVs, 2Ws and 4Ws also posted healthy growth of

23.4 per cent, 20.4 per cent and 17.8 per cent Y-o-Y, respectively. Exports across segments remained strong. Citing Vahan data, Nirmal Bang said TVS reclaimed the No. 1 position in e-2W retail in November on the back of strong demand for the iQube

and Orbiter models. Bajaj followed, while Ather ranked third. Hero overtook Ola, which saw a sharp Y-o-Y decline.

November was the second-strongest EV retail month of 2025, with year-to-date volumes up nearly 10 per cent Y-o-Y. Tata Motors is still in the lead in electric PVs, but as Mahindra and other OEMs expand their EV portfolios, the level of competition is increasing. Global unlisted players such as Vinfast, Tesla and BYD are also accelerating their push in India. “Bearing this in mind, our top recommendations are M&M and Maruti in 4Ws and EIM and Hero in 2Ws. ASK Automotive and CEAT continue to be our favored option in auto components and the tyre space, respectively,” the brokerage added. Two-wheeler demand remained buoyant in November, aided by post-festive and wedding-season buying, improved rural liquidity and GST 2.0-driven affordability, particularly in the commuter segment. Retail traction was strong

across regions, with exports performing well in Asia, Africa and Latin America. While the premium motorcycle segment maintained steady despite weaker demand in the above 350cc category following higher GST rates, scooters continued to gain market share due to the introduction of new ICE and EV models. Nirmal Bang forecasts 8–10 per cent Y-o-Y industry growth in FY26E. Passenger vehicle sales remained robust, driven by wedding-season demand, GST 2.0 benefits and elevated discounting. The shift of small cars into the 18 per cent GST slab has improved mass-market affordability.

The brokerage expects 6–8 per cent PV industry growth in FY26E.

The 10% GST decrease, infrastructure activity, freight availability, and rural logistics all contributed to the strong Y-o-Y gains in CV wholesales throughout the LCV and MHCV categories. Nirmal Bang anticipates 5–7 per cent CV industry growth in FY26E.

EV production scheme sees low response as OEMs await clarity on India-EU FTA

Mumbai: The proposed India–EU free trade agreement (FTA) could play a decisive role in shaping the trajectory of electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing in India, the ministry of heavy industries has informed Parliament. The ministry’s admission comes after its flagship incentive scheme for promoting domestic EV production did not garner a response before the October 21 deadline. Earlier this year, the government unveiled a scheme to promote manufacturing of electric passenger cars in India with the objective of positioning India as a competitive EV manufacturing hub. The scheme offered a concessional customs duty of 15 per cent for five years on imports of completely built units (CBUs), provided participating firms set up manufacturing plants in the country. In addition, manufacturers were required to commit a minimum investment of ₹4,150 crore and meet domestic value addition (DVA) norms of 25 per cent within three years, increasing to 50 per cent within five years. However, the ministry noted that



original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) have cited three primary concerns for not applying. These include uncertainty over the outcome of the ongoing India–EU FTA negotiations, restrictions on rare-earth magnets that could hinder localisation targets, and high investment thresholds and strict compliance timelines associated with the incentive scheme. OEMs have

communicated that participation decisions are contingent on greater clarity around tariff structures, technology sourcing and supply chain rules expected under the FTA. The ministry, however, said that during recent stakeholder consultations, OEMs have conveyed that they may take a decision regarding participation in the scheme post finalisation of the India-EU FTA. The Union

government has acknowledged that global automobile manufacturers have refrained from submitting any application under the Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Electric Passenger Cars in India (SPMEPC-ICI), despite extensive outreach by the Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) ahead of the October 21 deadline. In a written reply to Parliament, the ministry said original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) have conveyed that their decision to participate in the scheme is contingent upon the outcome of the ongoing India–European Union (EU) free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations, which could influence their investment and localisation plans for India. The ministry confirmed that no application has been received under the scheme so far. It added that companies have raised concerns about restrictions on the use of rare earth magnets, a critical input in electric vehicle (EV) motors, as this could affect their ability to meet the scheme’s stringent domestic value addition (DVA) requirements.

Hornbill–Mia partnership shows alignment between cultural economy and market policy trends

Aizawl: Mia by Tanishq’s participation in the Hornbill Festival 2025 as the Official Style Partner signals a broader alignment with national and regional cultural-economy policies that encourage private sector participation in heritage-driven events.

The introduction of “Mia x Hornbill” pendants and the establishment of an engagement zone highlight how consumer brands are contributing to tourism, artisan visibility and regional economic activity. Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio emphasized that such collaborations honour craftsmen and support cultural industries—a key priority area in many Northeast development policies.

For Aizawl’s consumers and policymakers, the partnership shows how cultural platforms can be leveraged for economic diversification, market expansion and creative-industry promotion.



TCS, Tata Technologies, stocks log-digit losses

Mumbai: Shares of Tata Group’s information technology (IT) firms such as Tata Elxsi, Tata Technologies and TCS have clocked double digit losses this year. The weakness in the IT sector emanates from subdued quarterly earnings, a fall in discretionary spending by global clients, geopolitical tensions, and continuous selling by foreign institutional investors (FIIs). While Tata Elxsi has lost 23%, Tata Technologies shares have fallen 24.44% in 2025. Another Tata Group stock TCS is down 22.62% during the period. The fall in the IT stocks is also reflected

in the correction in IT indices on bourses. BSE IT index has slipped 15.15% in 2025. Similarly, the Nifty IT index has lost 13% in 2025 Tata Elxsi Meanwhile, Tata Elxsi shares were trading marginally higher at Rs 5173 today. Total 0.13 lakh shares of the firm changed hands amounting to a turnover of Rs 6.90 crore. In terms of technicals, the Tata Group stock is neither oversold nor overbought on charts with a RSI of 37.5. Tata Elxsi shares are trading lower than the 5 day, 10 day, 20 day, 30 day, 50 day, 100 day, 150 day and 200 day moving averages.

IndiGo denies reports of DGCA probe amid widespread flight cancellations

Mumbai: IndiGo on Thursday issued a clarification denying reports that the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has launched a probe into its recent wave of large-scale flight cancellations. As of Thursday, more than 200 IndiGo flights have been cancelled across major airports in India as the airline continues to grapple with widespread operational disruptions. Out of the total flights, around 191 flights were cancelled in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Ahmedabad, causing chaos at airports. Cancellations were reported in Delhi (95), Mumbai (85), Bengaluru (73), Hyderabad (68), Pune (16), Ahmedabad (5) and Kolkata (4). In a filing to the Bombay Stock Exchange, InterGlobe Aviation Limited, the parent company of IndiGo, said it was “not aware of any probe by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)”. The airline added, however, that the regulator had “sought certain information” related to the disruptions and that the company was in the process of providing the requested details. The clarification came in response to media reports suggesting that IndiGo shares fell 3 per cent as DGCA launched a probe into the airline’s massive flight cancellations. The airline said it had already issued a detailed press statement a day earlier and reaffirmed that it had disclosed all material information that could affect its share price or trading volumes. In the attached statement from December 3, IndiGo attributed the

severe nationwide disruptions to a combination of “unforeseen operational challenges”, including minor tech glitches, winter schedule changes, adverse weather, increased aviation congestion, and updated crew rostering rules under Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL). These factors had a “negative compounding impact” on operations, the airline said. To stabilise the situation, IndiGo said it has implemented “calibrated adjustments” to its schedules for 48 hours to restore normalcy and improve punctuality. The airline added that customer support teams were working round the clock and that affected passengers were being offered alternative travel arrangements or refunds. IndiGo advised passengers to check updated flight statuses before heading to the airport. At Delhi’s IGI Airport, IndiGo has cancelled 95 flights since morning, including 48 departures and 47 arrivals across domestic and international routes. In Kolkata, 24 IndiGo flights — 10 arrivals and 14 departures — were delayed due to operational issues, including two international services to Singapore and Siem Reap. Bengaluru’s Kempegowda International Airport reported 41 arrivals and 32 departures cancelled on Thursday for similar reasons. In Pune, airport authorities said eight arrivals and eight departures were cancelled, 11 aircraft remain grounded, and 19 flights are delayed by over an hour.

Nectar Lifesciences surges 18% on fixing buyback record date

New Delhi : On the BSE, Nectar Lifesciences shares surged 17.5%, reaching an intraday high of ₹21.15 per share. The corporation set December 24, 2025 as the share buyback record date, which sparked the buying demand. A buyback of shares, also known as a share repurchase, is a corporate operation where a firm buys back its own outstanding shares from the open market or directly from its shareholders. The share price of Nectar Lifesciences was up 13.17 per cent at ₹20.28 per share on the BSE at 9:57 AM. In comparison, the BSE Sensex was up 0.17 per cent at 85,254.35. The company has a total market capitalisation of ₹454.8 crore. Its 52-week high was at ₹44.9, and its 52-week low was at ₹13.25. The board approved a buyback of equity shares worth ₹81 crore at ₹27 per share. The company

will buyback up to 30 million shares, which represents up to 13.38 per cent of the company’s total paid-up equity share capital. The buyback will take place through a “Tender Offer” on a proportionate basis, meaning that if more shares are offered than the company wishes to purchase, they will purchase a portion from each eligible shareholder. The offer is open to all shareholders, with the exception of the promoters and promoter group, based on who owns shares on a specific “record date.” Brokerage, taxes, and other repurchase-related expenditures are not included in the ₹81 crore buyback amount. One of India’s top producers of active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) is Nectar Lifesciences. Nectar Lifesciences is one of the most integrated firms in the worldwide cephalosporin arena



within the anti-infective treatment segment, having started off as a modest domestic API player. In almost 45 countries, the company is well-represented in both formulations and APIs.

In addition to a dedicated final dosage formulations (FDF) facility in Himachal Pradesh, the firm runs 13 production facilities: four units (Oral-A, Sterile-A, B, C) in Unit 1 and nine

units (Oral-B, C, D, E, F, G, H, and Sterile-D, E) in Unit 2, all of which are situated in Punjab. These facilities meet with global current Good Manufacturing Practice (cGMP) guidelines and severe Environment, Health and Safety (EHS) standards. Across all businesses, the corporation employs a sizable number of highly qualified and skilled workers.

India–Russia trade: Piyush Goyal pushes for balanced

Mumbai: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Thursday set the tone for a renewed push in India–Russia economic engagement, stating that both countries have “huge opportunities” to expand bilateral trade and work toward a more balanced partnership. Speaking at the India–Russia Business Forum organised by FICCI, Goyal stressed that while trade is nearing USD 70 billion, India cannot afford to remain complacent. “We need to grow, we need to balance that,” he said, underscoring the urgent need to reduce the sharply skewed trade equation. Goyal highlighted several sectors that hold strong potential for expanding Indian exports to Russia. These include consumer goods, food products, automobiles, tractors, heavy commercial vehicles, smartphones and other electronics, industrial components, and a wide range of textiles. He added that India’s services sector—already a global strength—can also contribute significantly to enhancing trade with Russia. Currently, India’s exports to Russia stand at USD 4.9 billion, compared with imports of USD 63.8 billion in 2024–25. This leaves a massive trade deficit of around USD 59 billion, driven largely by energy imports.

Redmi 15C 5G with 6.9-inch display, 6,000mAh battery released in India

New Delhi : With the release of the Redmi 15C, Xiaomi has updated its affordable C-series in India. The smartphone is the replacement for the well-liked Redmi 14C, which debuted last year, and it offers notable improvements in the battery and display. In the sub-₹15,000 pricing range, it will face competition from devices like the Realme P4x, Infinix Hot 60i, and Oppo K13. Moonlight Blue, Dusk Purple, and Midnight Black are the three color options for the Redmi 15C.

The gadget has storage options of 4GB+128GB, 6GB+128GB, and 8GB+128GB. The phone is priced at ₹12,499 for the base variant, ₹13,999 for the 6GB RAM/128GB storage variant and ₹15,499 for the 8GB

RAM/128GB storage variant. Amazon, Mi.com, and retail stores will start selling the phone on December 11. The Redmi 15C includes a polycarbonate back with a squirrel camera module and a waterdrop type notch on the front.

The smartphone weighs in at 211g and is 8.05mm thick while having a huge battery.

It comes with an IP64 grade for dust and water resistance, a side-mounted fingerprint scanner, and it retains the 3.5mm audio connection. The phone has a 6.9-inch HD+ display with a peak brightness of 810 nits, a refresh rate of 120 Hz, and a touch sampling rate of 240 Hz.

TÜV Rheinland certificates for Low Blue Light, Flicker-Free,



and Circadian Friendly viewing are also included with the phone. Under the hood, the Redmi 15C

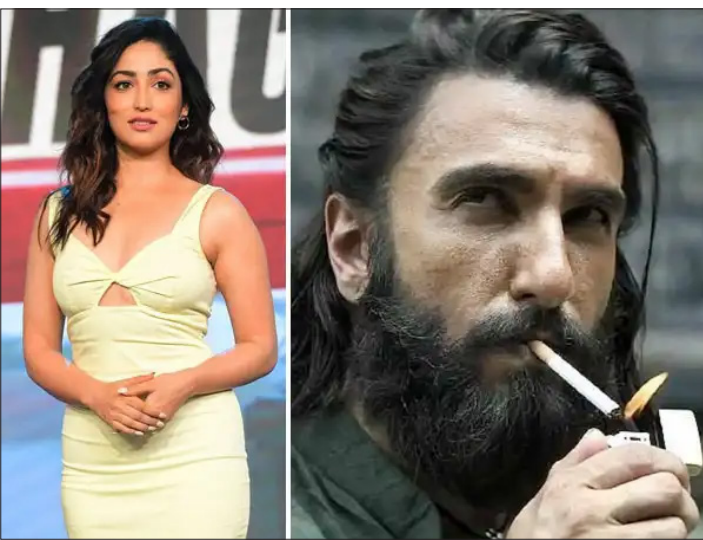
is powered by the MediaTek Dimensity 6300 processor and is paired with LPDDR4X RAM and

UFS 2.2 storage. Additionally, up to 16GB of virtual RAM expansion is supported by the device.

Yami Gautam Lashes Out at Paid PR Ahead of Dhurandhar

Mumbai: Aditya Dhar’s Dhurandhar, starring Ranveer Singh, is set for release in theaters tomorrow. While the film has been amongst the talks, some individuals have expressed concerns about the level of violence shown. Also, there has been a lot of negative sentiment surrounding the film before its release. In response to this, Aditya Dhar’s wife, actress Yami Gautam, has publicly addressed the ongoing trend of paid PR.

On her Instagram, Yami wrote a detailed note describing the paid PR trend as “a plague that will affect the future.” She started with, “There is something I’ve been wanting to express for a really long time. I feel today is that day,



& I must. This so-called trend of giving money, in the disguise of

marketing a film, to ensure good ‘hype’ for a film is created, or else ‘they’ will continuously write negative things (even before the film is released), until you pay ‘them’ money, feels nothing but kind of extortion. Just because this arrangement is accessible to anyone, whether to ‘hype’ a film or spread negativity against another actor/a film, is a plague that is going to affect the future of our industry in a big way.”

She further added, “Unfortunately, if anyone feels it’s harmless & let’s do it because it’s the new ‘normal,’ they are mistaken. This monster of a ‘trend’ is eventually going to bite everyone. If the truth is exposed about a mil-

lion things under the garb of who & what ‘success’ is over the past 5 years especially, unfortunately, it’s not going to be a pretty picture for many. In South, no one can dare do such things because the industry stands united on a lot of fronts. I urge our esteemed producers, directors & actors to come together in order to arrest this termite of a culture at this stage itself & discourage it.” Yami Gautam concluded her note by requesting everyone to not “kill the joy of filmmaking & presenting it to the world & letting the audience decide what they feel.” She attached this note with a comment that included “#Dhurandhar #SeeYou-InCinemasTom.”

Turbaned Kapil Sharma Romances Hina Warina in New Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon 2 Song

Kapil Sharma’s 2015 hit gets sequel

Mumbai: Kapil Sharma is set to rule audiences’ hearts once again with Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon 2. This time, he isn’t juggling just three but four marriages, promising loads of confusion, laughter, and classic Kapil-style chaos. Recently, the makers dropped the teaser of Ranjhe Nu Heer, a love song capturing the innocence of brewing romance between Hira Warina and Kapil Sharma, leaving audiences wanting more.

Now, the makers unveiled the soulful track Ranjhe Nu Heer, a song that instantly transports you back to the simplicity and sweetness of your early romance days. Kapil Sharma’s warm, humble nature and Hira Warina’s effortless grace, elevates the entire mood and feel of the song, making it a heartfelt listen. Sung by Jubin Nautiyal, the soothing song is composed by DigV, with beautiful lyrics penned by Lavraj. Ran-



jhe Nu Heer is for every Ranjha wanting to pour his heart out to his Heer. Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon 2 is the sequel to Kapil Sharma’s 2015 hit. It features Sushant Singh, the late Asrani, Akhilendra Mishra, Vipin Sharma, Jamie Lever, Smita Jaykar and Supriya Shukla in key roles. The recently released trailer shows Kapil juggling three wives

with different identities and trying to prevent any of them from discovering the truth. While the previous film was directed by Abbas-Mustan, the sequel is written and directed by Anukalp Goswami.

Previously, in an exclusive chat with News18, Kapil Sharma revealed that after Zwigato, he received a host of film offers that required

him to play ‘serious’ roles. Talking about it, he told us, “After the trailer of Zwigato released, I was offered nine films. And all these films were in the serious zone. But (it was evident that) many of those writers weren’t serious about their own work (laughs).” Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon 2 will hit theatres on December 12, 2025.

Vanga and T-Series seal huge three-film deal

Agency: If reliable sources are to be believed, new-age director Sandeep Reddy Vanga has reportedly secured a massive agreement in the Hindi film industry. A source reveals that Vanga has become the first Telugu director to sign a three-film deal with a leading Bollywood banner, a privilege usually extended only to top stars like Akshay Kumar. According to the source, “Sandeep will direct three films for Bushan Kumar of T-Series over the next three to three years.”

The deal kicks off with the much-anticipated film Spirit, starring Prabhas. This project will mark Prabhas’ return to a Hindi-language film after Saaho, which was released several years ago. Given the pan-India popularity of both the actor and the director, Spirit is being planned as a multilingual release to cater to audiences across the country. The film features Tripti Dimri in the female lead, along with sev-



eral prominent Bollywood actors, and is set against the backdrop of a cop drama. Sandeep Reddy Vanga, who made a sensational debut in Telugu cinema with Arjun Reddy and later remade it in Hindi as Kabir Singh with Shahid Kapoor, cemented his position in Bollywood with the blockbuster Animal, a gritty gangster drama. His rising popularity and global following have significantly boosted his market value. The source concludes that this three-film deal is a clear reflection of the strong confidence that major Bollywood producers have in the bearded filmmaker. ‘The industry will be keenly watching to see what bold and uncompromising stories emerge from this powerful new alliance.

Zootopia 2 Holds Strong in India, Closing in on ₹12 Crore

Mumbai: Disney’s Zootopia 2 is having a slow but steady run at the Indian box office. The film made around Rs. 85 lakh on its first Wednesday (December 3), showing a small jump from Monday but slightly lower than Tuesday. With this, the movie’s total in India has reached around Rs. 11.50 crore. It is likely to finish its first week at just over Rs. 12 crore.

The film was released in India on November 28. Animated films generally don’t draw very big numbers in India, except for a few popular sequels like Frozen 2, Incredibles 2 and Spider-Verse 2. Even then, the audience for animation remains limited, which affects weekday collections.

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tion remains limited, which affects weekday collections. Zootopia 2 seems to be aiming for a similar long run, even if the daily numbers remain low. For Indian viewers, there is an added attraction: Shraddha Kapoor has voiced the Hindi version of the lead character, Judy Hopps. The film was directed by Jared Bush and Byron Howard, who also worked on the first Zootopia movie. While the movie is not doing big business in India, it is performing extremely well in several global markets, especially China. Reportedly, Zootopia

2 has already crossed USD 600 million worldwide, making it the 9th highest-grossing film of 2025 so far. It is almost certain to cross USD 1 billion, and it may even become the year’s biggest Hollywood release. Zootopia 2 opened with Rs. 1.65 crore on Friday, followed by Rs. 3.35 crore on Saturday and Rs. 3.80 crore on Sunday, as per Pinkvilla. The numbers dipped on weekdays, with Rs. 0.75 crore on Monday, Rs. 1 crore on Tuesday, and Rs. 0.85 crore on Wednesday. With this, the film’s total stands at around Rs. 11.40 crore.

Rashmika Mandanna Addresses Vijay Deverakonda Wedding Reports

Mumbai: Rashmika Mandanna and Vijay Deverakonda continue to maintain silence over their rumoured relationship. While their gestures at various filmy dos hint at their bond, there’s a bit of mystery surrounding the rumoured couple. But in her latest interaction with The Hollywood Reporter, India Rashmika tried to clear some air about her impending marriage.

Amid reports that Rashmika Mandanna and Vijay Deverakonda will get married in Udaipur, the actress seems to have given some direction to the buzz. Speaking with The Hollywood Reporter India, she neither confirmed nor denied the reports but appealed to everyone to wait patiently. Rashmika further added that she will talk about it (wedding) at the right time. Meanwhile, our sources confirm that Rashmika and Deverakonda’s wedding will indeed happen at a destination wedding in Udaipur. Apparently, the location was a collective choice. Rashmika, Vijay and his parents have already visited

Udaipur a few times. They found the place to be romantic – the beautiful palaces, lakes, and scenic landscapes – all create a magical and unforgettable experience for the couple and guests. Moreover, the Vijay and Rashmika felt the place was according to their tastes and flagged off immediately.

Vijay is presently working on two films - one under director Rahul Sankrityan and another film, Rowdy Janardhan, directed by Ravi Kiran Kola. The actor will take a two-week break from work in February for the wedding.

He is expected to return to work quickly after marriage, Rashmika too will take a three-week break from her film, Mysaa, for the wedding. The plan and schedule for a wedding in the fourth week of February is in place, and the preparations would commence in the third week. The wedding invitation would be extended to only the near and dear ones of the couple.



Kareena Kapoor Explains Her Epic Journey: ‘From Khalapur to Bhiwandi to Birar’

Mumbai: Kareena Kapoor Khan is currently busy shooting for her upcoming project, Daayara. She will star opposite Prithviraj Sukumaran in the crime-drama film directed by Meghna Gulzar. Recently, the 45-year-old posted a picture teasing about the movie’s shooting locations.

Taking to her Instagram stories, Kareena Kapoor Khan shared a mirror selfie, alongside an intriguing update about her upcoming movie, Daayara. The actress was seen dressed in comfy attire, including a grey sweatshirt and a pair of loose-fitting denim pants. Below the picture, she wrote, “@meghnagulzar taking me from Khalapur to Bhiwandi to Birar...Quite enjoying the ride.” In September this year, Kareena Kapoor Khan shared the first look video of her upcoming project alongside Prithviraj Sukumaran and Meghna Gulzar. It featured an array of behind-the-scenes from their shoot schedules – from a sneak peek at the meticulously written script to many other shots. Alongside this, the actress wrote, “Day 1, 68th film, Daayara with the most amazing @meghnagulzar and @therealprithvi ... Send love and blessings.” The video received immense love from her fans and industry friends, including Neha Dhupia, Ali Fazel, and others.

Khan also posted a few postcards from her humble meeting with the legendary Gulzar Sahab at the opening puja ceremony of her film. “One for the books. Meeting Gulzar saab chalo for



me sab kuch ho gaya,” read her caption. Daayara is described as a gritty exploration of crime, punishment, and justice, with an intense focus on societal realities. The movie marks Gulzar’s next project after her 2023 film Sam Bahadur. While announcing the movie, the director posted a couple of pictures on Instagram, captured alongside the lead stars. Besides this, she wrote, “When the lines of Law and Justice cross. Thrilled to embark on DAAYRA with Kareena Kapoor Khan and Prithviraj Sukumaran. A much-anticipated journey with Jungle Pictures and my co-writers Yash Keswani and Sima Agarwal.”

The Box Office Love Story: De De Pyaar De 2 Crosses Rs 70 Crore Mark in Three Weeks!

Mumbai: The film De De Pyaar De 2, starring Ajay Devgn, R Madhavan, Rakul Preet Singh and Gautami Kapoor, opened in theatres on Friday, November 14. The romantic comedy is directed by Anshul Sharma and produced by T-Series and Luv Films. The sequel to the 2019 smash De De Pyaar De started quite strong but have eventually faced stiff competition from new releases. The picture is expected to close its theatrical run soon.

As per Sacnilk.com, the film has earned Rs 27 lakh on Day 20, Wednesday. This is a slight increase from its number earlier this week. The total stands at



Rs 72.27 crore so far. The film had a 7.92 per cent occupancy on Wednesday with night shows recording the highest footfall (10.33 per cent) followed by evening shows (8.63 per cent). Afternoon shows had a footfall of about 7.75 per cent and Morning Shows had 4.98 per cent. De De

Samberg took Lee role for Scherman’s respect for Miller



Agency: Lee releases on Lionsgate Play exclusively from December 5, and ahead of its streaming debut, actor Andy Samberg spoke to News18 Showsha about stepping into the role of celebrated LIFE Magazine photographer David Scherman. The film chronicles the extraordinary life and wartime legacy of legendary photojournalist Lee Miller — and for Samberg, the chance to portray Scherman was both creatively exciting and deeply personal.

Reflecting on the dynamic between Miller and Scherman, Samberg said their first meeting in the film captures a spark that defined their relationship, “The first scene of David and Lee meeting, you immediately see that they have rapport and that they’re going to help each other out because they have the same goals,” he said. “If they both get a good shot, it goes to two different places and they both win.” “I would assume it was nice that they had that foundation for their friendship, that they got along but also looked out for each other professionally,” he explained. “Just the incredible amount of respect he had for her and her work... even when so many people were awful to her or turned her away because she was a woman, he saw the work she was doing and said, ‘No, this is good, you should be here.’” That clarity of vision, Samberg said, was a major reason he was drawn to the role. “It’s a huge reason why I have so much respect for him and wanted to play him, frankly.”

One of the most unforgettable images from World War II — Miller and Scherman in Hitler’s Munich apartment, photographing Miller in Hitler’s bathtub — also becomes one of the film’s most emotionally charged moments. Samberg recalled how filming it brought a wave of reflection. “I think Lee and Davie saw all of each other, having lived through something incredibly intense and harrowing and coming out the other side,” he said. “That’s really worth something in life.” For Samberg, the scene symbolised not just the end of the film’s narrative arc, but a closing chapter in their shared history. “This was the end of our journey and of theirs to a certain extent, but it is reassuring that their legacy remains and will remain.” As Lee prepares for its OTT premiere, Samberg’s portrayal adds texture and humanity to a story that continues to resonate — a story about courage, partnership, and two artists who witnessed history together.

Kapil Show Season 4 date and platform revealed

Mumbai: The Great Indian Kapil Show has returned with another promising season, and fans are pleased with the surprise announcement. Netflix has confirmed the exact release date for season 4 of The Great Indian Kapil Show, which will air sooner than expected. The streaming service launched the new season with a hilarious teaser.

A new buzz has emerged among watchers. The show, which has kept viewers entertained with back-to-back seasons, is due to return on December 20. The announcement teaser was shared on the streaming platform’s official Instagram page. The trailer begins with the humorous duo Krushna Abhishek and Kiku Sharda costumed as female airport police officials. They update viewers about the show’s upcoming season. The video then shows glimpses of Archana Puran Singh, Sunil Grover, and Navjot Singh Sidhu. The teaser revealed the return of Archana and Sidhu as judges on the show. While the teaser indicated the show’s opening date, it did

not divulge additional specifics such as the guest list. The teaser’s standout moment was Sunil Grover’s hilarious impersonation of Shah Rukh Khan as Navjot Singh Sidhu. Sharing the promo, Netflix wrote, “Humne socha ek ‘save the date’ hum bhi bhej de. Season 4 of The Great Indian Kapil Show, streaming from 20th December, only on Netflix!”

Fans of The Great Indian Kapil Show were taken aback when reports emerged that Kiku Sharda had left the popular comedy series. Speculation suggested that the comedian, who can currently be seen in Ashneer Grover’s Rise and Fall, chose to leave Kapil Sharma’s Netflix show after a disagreement with Krushna Abhishek. However, Archana Puran Singh has emphasised that the rumours are false. Meanwhile, a source told Screen, “Kiku is not quitting the show, you are going to see him in the upcoming episodes too. He has wrapped up shooting for the show before starting his next project. Kiku is very much a part of The Great Indian Kapil Show.”

HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Samantha Ruth Prabhu Sets The Night Ablaze In Fiery Saree And Corset Glam By Kresha Bajaj

“Last evening...” with just two words, Samantha Ruth Prabhu set Instagram ablaze. But it was her captivating look that did all the talking. Draped in a stunning saffron-orange saree by Kresha Bajaj, the actor delivered a fashion moment that blended contemporary sensuality with timeless Indian grace. The saree itself was a beautifully fluid silhouette, reimagined with bold textures and clever styling. The soft chiffon fabric flowed effortlessly, featuring cascading fringes along the pallu and hemline. But the true show-stopper was the intricately embroidered corset blouse, a structured masterpiece adorned with bold florals in maroon, black, and muted metallics, perfectly cinched to enhance her form. The beadwork and floral thread embroidery lent the piece a couture finish, with state-mint fabric buttons running down the centre like a vintage detail brought into



2025. The colour palette of rust-red and burgundy, offset by Samantha’s glowing complexion, created a regal yet fierce mood. The styling struck a perfect balance, the saree was neither overly traditional nor trying too hard to be edgy. It was poised, feminine, and unabashedly bold. Her makeup, like the ensemble, played up balance and contrast. With softly sculpted cheekbones, muted nude lips, and perfectly shaped brows, Samantha opted for a minimalist approach, allowing her expressive eyes to take

centre stage. A subtle brown smokey eye with winged liner added intensity, while glowing, dewy skin kept the look fresh and radiant. The makeup enhanced her natural beauty without overpowering the look, embodying that “soft glam” aesthetic that feels both red-carpet ready and editorial. Her hair, styled in flowing, soft curls swept to one side, added to the old-Hollywood-meets-modern-India vibe. The voluminous waves framed her face with a romantic softness, offsetting the structured blouse

beautifully. Minimal jewelry just dainty hoops and a single bracelet kept the attention on the saree and her confident presence. Set against a European-style corridor and natural gold-



en light, Samantha looked like she had stepped out of a modern-day fairytale. Whether she was owning the frame solo or caught candidly mid-laugh, the entire look radiated poise, power, and personality.

Strength Training Isn’t Just For Men, Here’s Why Women Should Lift Weights Too

For the longest, people believed that strength training was just meant for men. And women were advised to lift weights moderately to stay slim and maintain a toned physique. But the times have changed. Strength training, today, is recognised as one of the most effective ways for women to enhance their overall health and increase their strength. However, some women hesitate to lift weights due to some age-old myths, such as that it will make them bulky and muscular. However, reality is different. Check out the myths and facts surrounding strength training for women and learn why it is beneficial for their overall health. One of the most common myths about women and strength training is that it would bulk them up. That’s why a major section of women avoid lifting heavy weights because they are afraid that they will develop big muscles like men. The truth is that women generally can never bulk up like men because they don’t have enough testosterone. While lifting weights would definitely make muscles more defined and toned, it would take years of training, strict dieting, and supplements to build muscular bodies like those of men. For most women, lifting weights a few times a week can help build lean and strong muscles. Strength training builds muscles, and they burn more calories than fat,

even when you are resting. Cardio only burns fat during a workout, but strength training helps burn calories around the clock. Many think that lifting heavy weights can cause serious injuries or is not safe for women who are in the older age bracket. However, the truth is that if strength training is done properly under the correct guidance, it is safe and very protective. It strengthens muscles, bones, tendons, ligaments, and joints, and reduces the risk of fractures and joint pain. It is also, in fact, a great way to fight osteoporosis. Strength training is great for the mind as well. It helps in balancing hormones like insulin, cortisol and estrogen. For those who have conditions like PCOD or hormonal imbalance, lifting weights can be the best solution. It also helps release the “feel-good” hormone endorphins, which can also impact your overall mood in a good way. Does Strength Training Require Fancy Gym

Equipment? Absolutely not. Strength training doesn’t require fancy equipment. You can start with exercises like squats, push-ups, lunges, and planks at home. A pair of dumbbells or a resistance band is helpful, but you can always use water bottles or grocery bags as a replacement. What really matters is your consistency. Lifting weights regularly can help reduce the risks of arthritis, heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and even certain types of cancer. Building muscles is effective in improving insulin sensitivity and cholesterol levels, as well as reducing inflammation and strengthening the cardiovascular system. It also keeps the brain sharp. Not at all. Strength training is for everyone, regardless of age, gender, body type and fitness level. It is especially beneficial for women after the age of 40 when muscle and bone density start to decline.



Keep Your Cholesterol In Check: Here’s What Doctors Wish You Knew About High LDL Cholesterol

Across the country, episodes of heart-related conditions like heart attacks are becoming increasingly common. But doctors are raising an alarm: high LDL cholesterol (also known as “bad cholesterol”) is showing up more frequently in India’s younger population and it’s a silent threat. Heart disease remains one of the leading causes of death in the country, accounting for nearly 7.8% of total mortalities. Behind many of these cases lies high LDL cholesterol, which plays a critical role in blocking arteries and triggering conditions like atherosclerosis and strokes. Dr. Sarita Rao, Senior Interventional Cardiologist and Director of Cathlab, Apollo Hospital, Indore, says, “The role of LDL cholesterol (LDLC) in the development of atherosclerosis is well documented, where LDLC tends to accumulate and form

plaque, creating blockages in the arteries and restricting blood flow. What makes it even more concerning is that high LDLC, like most heart conditions, doesn’t show any symptoms. By the time there is chest pain or any warning sign, a cardiac event could already be underway and it may be too late. So, bringing high LDL cholesterol down to target levels is the primary objective for preventing serious heart conditions.” When compared to Western populations, Indians have been found to have higher levels of LDL cholesterol and lower levels of HDL cholesterol (the “good” cholesterol that helps remove LDL from the bloodstream). This is why doctors recommend that cholesterol screening begin as early as 18 years of age. Early testing helps in detecting silent threats



and allows one to take action before things escalate. People who may appear fit can still have high LDL cholesterol. “I’m in my 30s, I work out regularly and eat clean,” shares Delhi-based Ajay. “I was confused and surprised when a routine test showed that I had high LDLC. My cardiologist explained that elevated LDL cholesterol could have various reasons and encouraged me to continue

medical therapy alongside my healthy routine.” We know that lifestyle modifications like a healthy diet, regular exercise, and stress management are essential but they’re not always enough. Doctors emphasize that medical therapy should not be delayed or skipped, especially if your LDLC numbers are beyond the target range. Each patient’s treatment journey is unique. Factors such as

age, family history, diabetes status, or previous cardiac events all influence an individual’s LDLC targets. This is why personalized treatment plans are crucial. It’s important to seek professional medical advice and actively participate in treatment. However, in India, it’s observed that only about 60% of patients adhere to their prescribed medication, a worrying trend. Miscon-

ceptions often lead people to stop their medication, which causes a rebound in LDL levels and heightens cardiovascular risk. Moreover, stress, poor sleep, and metabolic imbalances can also elevate LDLC levels. These factors contribute to chronic inflammation, prompting the body to produce more LDL cholesterol, thereby increasing the risk of a heart attack or stroke. For patients who don’t respond well to conventional statins, advanced therapies are increasingly being prescribed. Targeted treatments like PCSK9 inhibitors, siRNA therapy, or inclisiran show great promise in helping patients reach their target LDLC levels when standard options fall short. Always remember: high LDL cholesterol may not show symptoms but its consequences can be fatal. Whether you’re a gym regular or someone who’s never thought twice about your cholesterol, it’s time to get screened, stay informed, and stick to your treatment plan for a healthier heart.

Mrunal Thakur’s Latest Look:

Mrunal Thakur knows how to make an entrance, and her recent OOTD is yet another proof. For her appearance on Netflix’s The Great Indian Kapil Show, the actor made a striking statement in an outfit that combined elegance, edge, and effortless charm. She took to her social media to share pictures of her latest look. Taking to her Instagram, Mrunal Thakur shared a series of studio pictures of her latest look. She commanded attention in every frame with her confidence, panache, and elegant style. Sharing the pictures, she wrote, “Lo main aa gayi.” Mrunal looked every bit the modern fashion muse in a bold all-black ensemble. Her dress, a sleeveless black raw silk number from Gauri and Nainika, featured thick straps tied halter-style around the neck, giving a subtle nod to vintage silhouettes with a contemporary twist. The fitted bodice of the black dress sculpted Mrunal’s frame perfectly, before flaring out into a voluminous tulle midi skirt – offering a whimsical contrast of texture and movement. She kept the monochrome theme going with her choice of accessories. A pair of circular statement earrings encrusted with diamonds and onyx brought sparkle to her look, while a diamond-studded infinity ring added a delicate, symbolic touch. Finishing off the outfit were sleek patent leather black pumps that elongated her silhouette and kept the visual palette clean and impactful. Mrunal’s hair was styled in voluminous, salon-finish waves parted to the side, channelling old Hollywood glam with a modern freshness. Her makeup look was all about understated drama: charcoal-grey smokey eyes, balanced by softly filled brows, a flush of peach blush, and a muted nude lip. Fashion-wise, Mrunal clearly dug deep into her style archives and came out with a winner. Her black midi dress was a masterclass in how to do dark romance the right way. From screen to street-style, she’s showing no signs of slowing down – and we’re here for every look.



Celebrate World Chocolate Day With Curated Indulgences Across Delhi-NCR

There’s something about chocolate that transcends taste, it’s mood, memory, and a moment of pure escape. As World Chocolate Day returns on 7th July, it brings with it an invitation to pause and indulge in the ingredient that has long stirred imagination and comfort alike. Across Delhi-NCR, some of the city’s finest hotels are reimagining chocolate through handcrafted desserts, immersive dining experiences, and candy-counter couture. Whether you prefer it silky

or spiced, sculpted or molten, this year’s celebrations are crafted to tempt, thrill, and transport. At the elegant Emperor’s Lounge, World Chocolate Day turns into a week-long celebration of chocolate artistry. A special pop-up menu brings together intricately layered pastries, elegant gateaux, and a luxurious selection of handcrafted chocolates. Expect flavour-forward pairings, fine textures, and creative flair that reflect the timeless sophistication of Taj’s culinary philosophy. The handcrafted chocolate

selection is nothing short of exquisite—an artful blend of bold flavours and delicate textures. Highlights include Black Cardamom & Caramel, Milk Chocolate with Saffron, Raspberry & Ruby, and Dark Chocolate with Ginger. From sugar-free Almond Rocher to indulgent bites like Amarula Milk Chocolate, Peanut Butter & Caramelized Chocolate, Pistachio Nougat, Honeycomb, and Tumako, each piece offers a moment of pure, curated indulgence. Qmin, Ambassador, New Delhi – IHCL SeleQtions celebrates

World Chocolate Day with a vibrant showcase of artisanal chocolate candies that are as delightful to look at as they are to taste. From velvety pralines to jewel-toned

bonbons and playful, bite-sized confections, this limited-edition curation transforms chocolate into a gourmet gift. Every candy is handcrafted with attention to detail featuring smooth ganaches, crunchy textures, and surprise fillings making this the perfect destination for take-away treats, curated hampers, or simply a joyful moment of indulgence.



How To Improve Stamina At Home: Your Ultimate Guide To Endurance

Do you feel tired after just a short walk or a quick trip up the stairs? That might be your body’s way of telling you it’s time to work on your stamina. Stamina is the strength and energy that helps you sustain physical or mental effort over time.

When your stamina improves, so does your ability to handle stress, discomfort, and daily tasks without feeling drained. It not only helps reduce fatigue but also boosts productivity by letting you do more with less effort. The good news? You don’t need a gym to get started. Staying physically active reduces stress, improves health, prevents weight gain, and ensures you have enough endurance to get going. If you’ve been living a sedentary lifestyle, start with small amounts of exercise

and gradually increase your activity level. Don’t go overboard right away; instead, focus on making moderate, consistent growth. Dehydration can cause weakness, weariness and mental exhaustion. Staying hydrated before, during, and after exercise can improve performance, delay fatigue, and reduce injuries. You should always drink the recommended amount of water throughout the day, and sometimes you can consume low-sugar health drinks as well.

Eating nutritious, mindful meals is always a good idea, especially if you’re trying to get back in shape and boost your stamina. One simple approach is to aim for balance on your plate: include something from every food group. Nuts and seeds, for instance, are



packed with essential nutrients and can be a great addition to your diet. Make the most of seasonal produce, which is often fresher and

more nutrient-rich. Rather than relying on energy drinks, choose whole foods that naturally boost your energy. Cut back on highly

processed or packaged foods, which often do more harm than good. Whether it’s sleeping late, sleeping longer, or taking extra naps. It’s crucial to return to your normal routine if you want to build your stamina. Maintaining regular sleep cycles may keep you healthy in the long run. Make sure to go to bed and get up at the appropriate hours, and you might be ok without daytime naps. Both yoga and meditation are holistic practices that help us build strength and clear our minds. Yoga and meditation, when practised consistently, can lower stress causes, improve mental clarity, and boost stamina and performance levels. In addition, it boosts your immunity. As a result, make it a point to set aside 15-20 minutes for meditation.



A vintage ride on the British Isles’ only electric mountain railway

Our train was crawling slowly up a steeply pitched valley that felt hidden from the rest of the world. To the right of the tracks, the Laxey River dropped suddenly, turning south to vanish into the Irish Sea. Here and there, sheep grazed and the soft scent of gorse wafted into the carriage. I gazed out as the vegetation disappeared and we rattled higher – higher – as the train spiralled around the mountain’s bald summit. A howling wind greeted our arrival at the top station, and I looked out to a sea that had turned to thrashing waves. The view stretched even further. According to folklorists, the summit is where one can glimpse seven kingdoms, including those that aren’t acknowledged by any map. I could see England, Ireland, Wales, Scotland and the Isle of Man, but up there you can also see that of Manannán mac Lir, son of the sea and king of the otherworld in Gaelic mythology, and the kingdom of heaven. For believers, the journey is an imagined pilgrimage. Snaefell, or “Snow Mountain”, is no ordinary peak and the Snaefell Mountain Railway is no ordinary train. I was on the Isle of Man, atop the island’s highest peak, having ridden the only electric mountain railway in the

British Isles. The tradition to ride to the top is a profound one, but, equally, to learn about the train is to build a vivid portrait of the Isle of Man. For the railway’s story is one of unemployment and migration, engineering milestones and the rise of Victorian-era tourism, and it still looms large in the legend of the island, revealing the independent character at the very heart of Manx life. The day had begun at the Manx Museum, the Isle of Man’s national museum in Douglas. The former hospital building is a nostalgic place by nature, with galleries dedicated to Viking silver hoards, Celtic crosses and Tynwald (the oldest continuous parliament in the world) helping distil the island’s 10,000-year history into bite-sized nuggets. Chiefly, I was interested in the railway’s timeline, which led me to the social history galleries and an encounter with Katie King, the museum’s curator of art and social history. “In the mid-19th Century, the Isle of Man was in a mess,” she said, as we symbolically slipped back in time. “There was low population growth, no employment, exponential immigration and the island’s coal industry was collapsing. The [Isle of] Man government was alarmed by all of

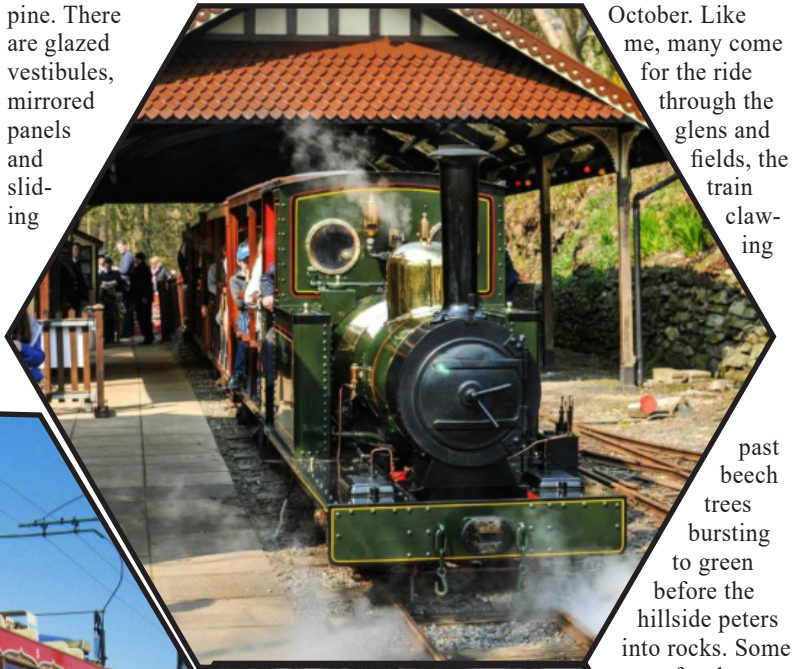
this.” At the time, this was a familiar lament across many communities in the British Isles. But the Isle of Man, a UK Crown Dependency, had a secret weapon: its influential lieutenant governor, Sir Henry Brougham Loch, 1st Baron Loch. In office from 1863 to 1882, Loch realised the island’s potential as a destination for spa tourism. Seaside holidays were booming in Queen Victoria’s era and the Isle of Man, with sandy beaches and bracing waters, was primed to reap the rewards. In one sense, the island’s capital, Douglas, was sacrificed to tourism. A glossy marketing campaign appeared on the London Underground in the 1870s, featuring idyllic sailing boats and beautiful women in swimming costumes, transforming the working-class port town into a glamorous holiday destination. The journey to get there, from ports including Blackpool, Whitehaven, Silloth, Ardrossan and Greenock by the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company, the world’s oldest continuously operating passenger shipping company, was also portrayed as an exotic sea crossing to a mystical island. The speed at which things changed was astonishing. At its peak, 11 steamer ships made the crossing from Liverpool daily; and,

by 1880, nearly 350,000 visitors were arriving every summer. A staggering 1,500 hotels opened, and, within a decade, Douglas had been transformed with a seafront promenade, pier and the largest ballroom in Europe. Despite moral outcry from the influential Methodist community, the island attracted legions of unchaperoned single men and women. And with liberal drinking laws, it was once described, as King puts it, as “one of the most debauched places in Britain”. “But the gover-



nor wasn’t content with stopping there,” added King. “All those visitors only spent time in Douglas because there weren’t opportunities to explore the island. So, building a train was the next obvious step.” Enter the Manx Electric Railway at the northern end of the Loch Promenade. First opened to the coastal town of Grouldle in 1893, it is now the oldest electric tram line in the world with its original rolling stock still in service. Then, two years later, the Snaefell Mountain Railway arrived as part of a further tourism push. Remarkably, the two connecting lines still run with much of their original Victorian-era infrastructure. Both feel like museums on wheels. If it’s fascinating to hear these stories, it’s more thrilling to ride to Snaefell, all while peering out of the world’s oldest operational electric tram cars. While the epic views mean that comfort is secondary, the enjoyment of the three-hour return journey to the summit comes from riding on period piece Victorian tram cars doing what they were built to do. First, the Manx Electric Railway rattles, stutters and sways along the seven-mile track from Derby Castle Station to Laxey; then it’s a quick switch onto the Snaefell Mountain Railway as it pushes uphill for a further five miles to 621m. Inside, the shallow arched carriages are polished ash and pitch

pine. There are glazed vestibules, mirrored panels and sliding



October. Like me, many come for the ride through the glens and fields, the train clawing

past beech trees bursting to green before the hillside peters into rocks. Some come for the rare experience of driving the tram itself, with one day



train-driving tutorials available. And those of a more spiritual bent

come to savour the seven kingdoms. Before dusk, I reflected on much of this as I scrambled to Snaefell’s true summit above the rail tracks. Ireland lay in front of me, with Wales, Scotland and England at my back, facing east. Above, so Manx folklore says, was the domain of “otherworld”, a legend more difficult to ignore because of the remains of a Victorian-era observatory at the summit. Around me was the watery kingdom of Manannán mac Lir (fun fact: he’s reputedly buried under a grassy knoll behind the walls of Peel Castle on the island’s west coast). All of this was a confusion of the real and make-believe. And yet, looking out at this island full of stories made me realise that my short journey onboard the Snaefell Mountain Railway had taken me to more places than I ever could’ve imagined. It seems an ordinary train, but the tracks of this tiny electric mountain railway continue to keep both fantasy and so much of Manx history and culture alive.

How to experience Italy like a local this summer

Does it seem like everyone is in Italy right now? Italy has been ranked as the top destination for American travellers in 2024 and 2025, according to a study by Price Waterhouse Cooper and the United States Tour Operators Association, but the honour should come as no surprise. The nation welcomes 80 million international visitors annually, drawn by its pastel-coloured villages, Renaissance treasures and Roman ruins. From the Etruscans to the Romans to the Byzantines, each civilisation that has passed through this boot-shaped nation has left their own unique architectural stamp on the land, transforming its cities into open-air museums. Italy also enjoys a reputation for a deliciously laid-back lifestyle – especially in summer, when everybody’s in the piazza and beach umbrellas stud the coastlines. “Italy doesn’t ask you to be a tourist; it invites you to feel something,” says Ruben Sanpietro, CEO and founder of Visit Italy. “It’s a country where chaos meets elegance, where silence in a mountain village can be as powerful as an opera at [Milan’s] La Scala [theatre]. You can visit 10 times, and the 11th time still surprises you, not with something new, but with something ancient you hadn’t noticed before. Italy doesn’t entertain you. It transforms you.”

A 2024 study by TourismA found foreign visitors stick to the same few popular cities – equaling just 1% of Italy’s territory. Here are our favourite ways to explore the other 99% this summer. There are a million reasons to visit. Here are some of our favourites. The Palio of Siena attracts history buffs with its recreation of a medieval horse race (2 July and 16 August), while Milan Fashion Week and opera season in Shakespeare’s fair city of Verona are musts for culture vultures. Sports fans can experience the Giro d’Italia (9 May to 1 Jun in 2025) or the Formula One Grand Prix held in Imola (spring) and Milan (late summer). Hack: Upwards of 30 million pilgrims are expected to head to St Peter’s Basilica in Italy’s already-overtouristed capital city to celebrate the Jubilee year for Roman Catholics. Visitors dreaming of Rome in 2025 would do well to skip summer and come during the shoulder months of October to March, avoiding the religious holidays of Easter, the Immaculate Conception (8 December), Christmas and the Epiphany (6 January). For a detour from the bucket list art cities, visit the Dolomites. This limestone mountain range – spanning the Veneto, Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol and Friuli-Venezia Giulia regions

– is beloved by Italians for its epic skiing and hiking, and lacks the tourist crowds of Rome, Florence and Venice. “Limited time is an issue,” admits Fiorenza Lipparini, DMO of Milan & Partners, which runs the website YesMilano. “There are no close international airports and a lack of accommodation – we’re talking about very small villages.” The Dolomites, with their wild valleys, gorges and lakes offer thrilling hikes year-round. “They really are the most beautiful mountains in the world, from the Swiss Alps to [the valley of] Val Gardena,” says Lipparini. “They’re good in the summer almost as much as in the winter.” Meanwhile, Agrigento, Sicily is Italy’s 2025 Capital of Culture. Explore its Unesco-listed Valley of Temples, and unwind on the stunning Scala dei Turchi beach. Italian food is one of the most beloved cuisines in the world, but its superpower is its deep regional diversity. Tasting a familiar favourite like pizza in its homeland is a holy pilgrimage, but failing to try the deep culinary cuts is sacrilege. When in Rome, enjoy pasta alla carbonara (pasta with egg yolk, pecorino Romano cheese and pork cheek) at Da Teo in romantic Trastevere or pasta cacio e pepe at Felice a Testaccio in Rome’s ex-slaughter-



house district. Bistecca alla fiorentina – rare, ultra thick T-bone steak – in Florence is iconic (get a great one at Trattoria Mario on Via Rosina). Venice is famous for its cicchetti, baguette bites topped with a variety of seafood, meats and vegetables; they’re delectable at Bar All’Arco in San Polo. Try traditional Milanese cuisine at Trattoria Masuelli San Marco, like osso buco (braised veal shanks) and risotto alla milanese (saffron-flavoured risotto). Seaside Naples is the birthplace of pizza; get a perfect pie at the historic Antonio Starita. Bologna is the epicentre of stuffed pastas such as tortellini and lasagna bolognese; try them at generational pasta maker Sfoglina Rina on Via Castiglione. Be sure to sample artisanal products at the source; visit a caseificio (dairy) like the Caseificio di Biagio Staiano in Ravello to sample – and make! – fresh mozzarella, or one of

Italy’s 26 stunning national parks for the zero-kilometre culinary experience of a lifetime. Oenophiles, you’d do well to venture past Tuscany. Sip volcanic island wines like the Bianco della Ischia, or travel to the Russo family’s Cantina del Vesuvio, at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, to try Lacryma Christi (“Tears of Christ”), an ancient wine produced from Vesuvius’ indigenous grapes, said to have been drunk in Roman times. Italy’s monuments have attracted a lot of misbehaving tourists in recent years – don’t be one of them. Keep your shoulders covered when visiting religious sites, and keep your hands off historical treasures. Tipping is not expected or enforced in Italy (regardless of what the cheeky waiter might suggest). Stick to traditional Italian mealtimes and food customs: a light breakfast of a pastry and espresso or cappuccino, lunch at 13:00,

aperitivo (happy hour with snacks) from 17:00-19:00 and dinner after 20:00. Ask for a cappuccino after 11:00 and risk a wince from your barista. Few are truly prepared for the magnificence of doomed Pompeii, and few visitors know that nearby Herculaneum was also destroyed – and preserved – by the eruption. Further south, the ruins of Paestum display exquisite temples and rare painted Greek tombs. Art lovers usually head straight to the Sistine Chapel in Rome, but Renaissance masterpieces abound throughout Italy, like Leonardo da Vinci’s The Last Supper at the Basilica di Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan. “The Last Supper, like the Mona Lisa, is universal,” says Lipparini. “[It’s] an unparalleled theatrical scene where love and anticipation, suspense and betrayal emerge from the collective interaction of the masterful portraits of Jesus



Christ and the 12 apostles.” In Naples, find the Baroque Cappella Sansevero and Giuseppe Sanmartino’s reality-defying masterpiece, il Cristo Velato, depicting the slain, shrouded Christ. The incredible realism of what appears to be a thin veil sculpted in marble has confounded admirers for centuries. Soaring mountain passes and centuries-old forests mean incredible hiking and cycling. “Cycling is an ideal way to discover the

city and experience a day out on two wheels,” says Lipparini. Try tackling a tract of the Via Francigena, an ancient 6th-Century, 1,700km pilgrimage trail snaking from Canterbury, England to Puglia in Italy’s deep south, or check out YesMilano’s Lombardy-based bike routes. Trekkers hit the rainbow-hued expanse of the Cinque Terre National Park and skyscraping Path of the Gods on the lemon-perfumed Amalfi Coast.

Tom Brady, Shaquille O’Neal to FIFA World Cup 2026 draw

Mumbai: Sports legends from outside of football, including American football’s Tom Brady, basketball’s Shaquille O’Neal, hockey’s Wayne Gretzky and current All-Star baseball player Aaron Judge, will assist with the FIFA World Cup 2026 draw on Friday in Washington, D.C. FIFA announced on Wednesday the lineup of current and former sports stars, as well as entertainers, for the event at the Kennedy Centre. The show will reveal the group-stage matchups for the first-ever 48-team World Cup. The FIFA World Cup, expanded from 32 teams, is being hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico from June 11 to July 19, 2026. Matches will be played at 16 venues, including three in Mexico and two in Canada. The draw will sort the teams into 12 groups of four. The top two teams from each group and the eight best third-place teams will



advance to the knockout stage. With 42 teams already qualified, 22 others will be competing in playoffs for the final six berths in the coming months. English Premier League Hall of Fame member Rio Ferdinand, a former Manchester United captain with 81 England caps, will conduct the draw. The co-conductor is broadcaster Samantha Johnson.

“Soccer has a unique power to unite people from all over the world and create a positive

Sports legends from outside of football, including American football’s Tom Brady, basketball’s Shaquille O’Neal, hockey’s Wayne Gretzky and current All-Star

impact, and I cannot wait to see this happening in North America next year and beyond, when we host the biggest-ever FIFA World Cup,” Gretzky, a four-time Stanley Cup champion and record-setting NHL player, said in a FIFA news release.

Yash Thakur I keep faith in Gambhir’s advice, and that is still helping me

Mumbai: Over the past few months, pacer Yash Thakur has had a steep learning curve, shuttling between different levels of cricket while also spending a considerable amount of time warming the bench. Since the Indian Premier League (IPL) this year, where he played all of two matches in Punjab Kings’ run to the final, Thakur has played in the Duleep Trophy and Irani Cup and was part of the India ‘A’ setup for the series against Australia ‘A’ and South Africa ‘A’, as well as the Asia Cup Rising Stars T20 tournament. Currently featuring

in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, Thakur has picked nine wickets in four matches for Vidarbha, including a career-best 5/16 that stopped Kerala in its tracks at the Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow on Tuesday.

Thakur’s two-year stint with IPL franchise Lucknow Super Giants has sharpened the 26-year-old, both in terms of strategy and mindset. Thakur’s two-year stint with IPL franchise Lucknow Super Giants has sharpened the 26-year-old, both in terms of strategy and mindset.

City beat Fulham in 9-goal epic as Haaland seals Premier League ton

Mumbai: Manchester City secured remarkable 5-4 win at Fulham that also saw Erling Haaland join the Premier League 100 club and Phil Foden bag another brilliant brace. Haaland’s brilliant 16th minute opener at Craven Cottage saw the Norwegian – who also twice struck the post – become the quickest player in Premier League history to achieve the feat, the 25-year-old reaching the three-figure mark in just 111 games, 13 quicker than previous record holder Alan Shearer. With Pep Guardiola’s side in sumptuous first half form, Tijjani Reijnders (37) and Phil Foden (44) extended City’s lead before Emile Smith Rowe’s first half injury time header narrowed the deficit. However, Foden struck again soon after the restart to claim a second successive brace with Jeremy Doku’s deflected strike off Sander Berge then



making it five on 54 minutes. At 5-1 up, that should have been that. Instead Fulham roared back, staging a grandstand finish in what served as one of the most remarkable Premier League games in years. In what was a veritable goal frenzy, Alex Iwobi a goal back for Fulham on 57 minutes before substitute Samuel Chuckwueze struck twice on 72 and 78 minutes to set up a frantic and nervy finale. However, City held on, Josko Gvardiol clearing off the line on 96 minutes, with victory seeing Pep Guardiola’s men narrow the gap on Arsenal to two points though the Gunners have a game in hand. The victory moves City to within two points of leaders Arsenal who are not in action until tomorrow night. The Blues now have 28 points from 14 games. The Gunners have 30 from 13 matches and they play host to Brentford tomorrow evening.

La Liga Barca beat Atletico to pts clear

Mumbai: Goals by Raphinha, Olmo and Ferran help FC Barcelona beat Atletico Madrid 3-1 to move four points clear at the top of La Liga. Raphinha cancelled out the opener before halftime, and Dani Olmo put Barcelona ahead in the 65th minute. Ferran Torres added a late third to seal the points. Barcelona finished with injury concerns after Olmo appeared to suffer a shoulder problem and Pedri also limped off, while Lewandowski was doing well at holding up the ball and bringing others into play, culminating in a shot that went over the bar from Raphinha. Barca grew stronger through adversity and the equalising goal soon followed, Pedri was purring again, and his long ball to Raphinha saw the Brazilian keep his composure to round Oblak and make it 1-1.

Ruturaj Gaikwad Reveals Gautam Gambhir’s Message After Shift From Opening To No. 4

Mumbai: Despite twin centuries in the 2nd ODI against South Africa, India endured a defeat as the tourists levelled the series 1-1. While Virat Kohli followed up his hundred in the Ranchi match with another triple-digit score in Raipur, Ruturaj Gaikwad gave him company in the middle, slamming his maiden ODI hundred on Wednesday.

However, it wasn’t an easy task for Gaikwad, who is primarily an opening batter, but had to shift to the middle-order. The right-handed batter played a fantastic knock of 105 runs as the Men in Blue posted a mammoth 358 on the board. However, India lost to South Africa in the last over by 4 wickets. During the post-match presentation,

Gaikwad called his maiden ODI hundred as his best yet across formats, given the challenge of batting at number four. “Yes (if it was his best knock). Batting at number four is a challenge for me.” Gaikwad opened up about the message from head coach Gautam Gambhir as he made the switch from opening to No. 4.

Mitchell Starc Equals Wasim Akram’s Record 2 England Stars Out For Ducks Australia vs England, 2nd Ashes

Mumbai: Australia vs England, 2nd Ashes Test LIVE Updates: Australia pacer Mitchell Starc gave Australia the ideal start to the pink-ball second Ashes Test at The Gabba, dismissing England opener Ben Duckett and top-order batter Ollie Pope for ducks. Starc equalled Pakistan great Wasim Akram for the most wickets by a left-arm pacer in Test cricket (414 wickets). England captain Ben Stokes won the toss and opted to bat. While Pat Cummins did not make it to Australia’s playing XI, the hosts sprung a surprise by going for an all-pace attack, dropping veteran spinner Nathan Lyon for all-rounder Michael Neser. Josh Inglis also replaced the injured Usman Khawaja. England also made one change from the first Test, with spin-bowling all-rounder Will Jacks replacing pacer Mark Wood. England are aiming to bounce back and prove their ‘Bazball’ approach can



withstand the Australian conditions. The visitors were in the front foot for most of the first Test, but ended up on the losing side thanks to heroics from Travis Head and Mitchell Starc.

Jagadeesan named Tamil Nadu stand-in captain after Varun’s India T20I selection

New Delhi: The Tamil Nadu Cricket Association (TNCA) on Wednesday announced that the State Senior Selection Committee has made N. Jagadeesan the captain of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (SMAT) squad. TN, playing its matches in Ahmedabad, will have B. Sai Sudharsan as the vice-captain. Regular skipper Varun Chakaravarthy’s inclusion in the India T20I squad for the five-

match series against South Africa triggered the said changes. Varun Chakaravarthy’s inclusion in India’s T20I squad for the South Africa series prompted the change. Varun Chakaravarthy’s inclusion in India’s T20I squad for the South Africa series prompted the change. The Tamil Nadu Cricket Association (TNCA) on Wednesday announced that the State Senior

Selection Committee has made N. Jagadeesan the captain of the Vijay Hazare Trophy in Bengaluru. Then, Tamil Nadu became the first team to breach the 500-mark in List A cricket before winning the Group C match by 435 runs, making it the biggest victory margin at this level. The previous record was Somerset’s 346-run win over Devon in 1990.

by hammering a 141-ball 277 against Arunachal Pradesh in the Vijay Hazare Trophy in Bengaluru. Then, Tamil Nadu became the first team to breach the 500-mark in List A cricket before winning the Group C match by 435 runs, making it the biggest victory margin at this level. The previous record was Somerset’s 346-run win over Devon in 1990.

Syed Modi International 2025: Treesa-Gayatri retain women’s doubles title, Srikanth falls short at finish line

New Delhi: Kidambi Srikanth’s wait for a maiden World Tour title continued, the Indian coming agonisingly close before falling short at the Syed Modi India World Tour Super 300 in Lucknow, losing 21-16, 8-21, 22-20 to Jason Gunawan in the final on Sunday, the latter’s first win in their three face-offs so far.

The much younger Gunawan was quickly off the mark and made full use of both his superior physicality and strength in the initial stage for a 21-16 win even as Srikanth tentatively probed around for his opponent’s weaknesses and his own rhythm. He found it in the second game, relying more on strategic placement, deception at the net and experience to preserve his energy and raise his game only when needed. The result was a one-sided 21-8 win to take the match into the decider. The only bright spot for the vociferous fans at the BBD Up Badminton Academy courts was Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand successfully defending their title against Kaho Osawa and Mai Tanabe in three games. It was Srikanth’s second runner-up finish this year on the tour and the more painful, given he was within reach of the title despite an early reversal in the first game. There was every-



thing to play for and the two stayed close before Srikanth opened up a three-point lead twice, first at 14-11 and then at 17-14. But Gunawan was relentless and closed the gap before Srikanth went a little too wide.

Treesa-Gayatri, meanwhile, were taken by surprise by the Japanese pair and were found wanting with gaps in their defence and errors before

overhauling their game. The Indians became a lot more attacking and quicker, specially Treesa at the back with her smashes and Gayatri manning the fore court. The increased pace and quick returns rattled the opposition, often leaving them undecided. Osawa and Tanabe tried to keep the shuttle in play more with longer rallies going their way but the Indians managed to fight through.



Kohli, Gaikwad tons in vain as SA level ODI series

New Delhi: India’s batting brilliance, highlighted by Virat Kohli’s record extending 53rd ODI century and Ruturaj Gaikwad’s maiden ton, was overshadowed by South Africa’s determined run chase as the visitors clinched a four wicket victory in the second ODI at Raipur on Wednesday, levelling the three match series 1-1. Opting to bat first, India posted a formidable 358 for five, built on the foundation of a massive third wicket partnership between Kohli and Gaikwad. Kohli, in sublime touch, scored 102 off 93 balls with seven boundaries and two sixes, while Gaikwad matched his senior partner stroke for stroke, compiling 105 off 83 deliveries with 12 fours and two sixes. Their 195 run stand set a new record for India’s highest third wicket partnership against South Africa in ODIs. KL Rahul provided the finishing flourish with an unbeaten 66 off 43 balls, striking six fours and two sixes. His quick-fire knock ensured India capitalised on the platform laid by Kohli and Gaikwad. Despite continued experimentation with the batting order, with Rahul promoted ahead of Washington Sundar, the hosts looked well placed with a daunting total on the board. Chasing

359, South Africa’s innings was spearheaded by Aiden Markram, who produced his maiden century against India. Markram’s 110 anchored the chase, combining brute force with elegant stroke play. He shared a crucial 101 run stand with skipper Temba Bavuma (46) for the second wicket after Quinton de Kock fell early to Arshdeep Singh. responded strongly. Dewald Brevis injected momentum with a blistering 54 off just 34 balls, hammering five sixes and a four. Partnering with Matthew Breetzke, who compiled a composed 68, the duo added 92 runs off 64 balls, effectively tilting the contest in South Africa’s favour. Brevis fell after his explosive cameo, but Breetzke’s steady knock marked his second successive half century, further consolidating the chase. India attempted a late fightback with Prasidh Krishna dismissing Breetzke leg before and Arshdeep Singh removing Marco Jansen cheaply. However, Corbin Bosch (29 not out off 15 balls) and Keshav Maharaj (10 not out) held their nerve, steering South Africa home with four balls to spare. India’s bowlers found conditions challenging, particularly with the heavy dew neutralis-

ing spin. Prasidh Krishna endured a tough outing, conceding 79 runs in his 10 overs despite claiming two wickets. Arshdeep Singh was more effective with figures of 2/54, but the lack of breakthroughs at crucial junctures hurt India’s chances. Kuldeep Yadav and Harshit Rana also struggled to contain the Proteas’ batting surge. This defeat marked only the second time India have lost an ODI after scoring in excess of 350. The previous instance was against Australia in March 2019 at Mohali, where India posted 358/9 but still went down by four wickets. Markram’s innings was not without fortune—he was reprieved on 53 when Yashasvi Jaiswal dropped a catch at long on off Kuldeep Yadav. Capitalising on the lifeline, Markram continued to dominate, piercing gaps and clearing boundaries with ease, especially against India’s spinners who struggled under heavy dew. His dismissal to Harshit Rana’s off cutter at 110 briefly raised India’s hopes, but South Africa’s middle order The Raipur loss underlined the challenges of defending big totals in modern ODI cricket, especially under lights with dew playing a decisive role.