

In Brief

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Mizoram district gears up to prevent spread of measles from Bangladesh

Aizawl, Apr 16: At a time when a measles outbreak has killed nearly 100 children in Bangladesh, a border district in Mizoram is taking measures to prevent the spread of the virus from the neighbouring country. In this regard, a meeting was held at the DC office chamber in Lawngtlai under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Donny Lalruatsanga to discuss preventive measures and preparedness to safeguard the district from the measles outbreak in Bangladesh.Donny Lalruatsanga expressed his appreciation to all attendees. He highlighted that more than 100 lives have already been lost due to the measles outbreak in Bangladesh. He emphasized that taking timely preventive actions and preparedness measures is of utmost importance. Since Lawngtlai district shares an international border with Bangladesh, there is a high possibility of the disease entering the district. Therefore, apart from the medical teams, the public must remain vigilant and cautious.

Governor Honours NCC Cadets in Kohima

Kohima: Nagaland Governor Nand Kishore Yadav on Wednesday felicitated NCC cadets of the state at Lok Bhavan, commending their discipline, dedication and outstanding achievements.The Governor was received by Brig. Shantanu P. Mainkar, Group Commander of NCC Kohima. The programme commenced with the National Song and National Anthem, followed by a welcome address by the Master of Ceremony and NCC cadets. In his welcome note and update, Brig Mainkar highlighted key initiatives undertaken by NCC Nagaland, including youth engagement programmes, structured training activities, and adventure expeditions. A visual presentation on Mount Saramati and NCC festivals added vibrancy to the event.A major highlight of the programme was the felicitation of the Mount Saramati Expedition Team, which successfully scaled the peak on March 19, 2026. The Governor was presented with a Saramati Expedition souvenir, while team members were awarded Certificates of Appreciation in recognition of their achievement.

15 arrested in connection with murder of man in East Garo Hills

Shillong, Apr 16: Fifteen persons have been arrested in connection with the murder of a man at Dagal Nachikol village under Songsak Police Station in East Garo Hills, with police launching a search operation to nab the remaining accused. The action was taken after a written FIR pertaining to a murder case was received at Songsak Police Station following an incident that occurred on April 8, 2026, where one person viz. (L) Talseng T Sangma, resident of Dagal Nachikol, was physically assaulted by a group of persons inside his residential compound. The victim sustained grievous injuries and later succumbed to his injuries while en route to Civil Hospital, Williamsnagar. The assailants reportedly entered the compound unlawfully and also threatened the victim’s family with dire consequences.

Mizoram Governor launches housing census drive

Aizawl, Apr 16: Mizoram Governor, General Vijay Kumar Singh, (Retd), formally marked the commencement of the intensive Houselisting and Housing Census operations under the Census of India 2027 at Lok Bhavan in Aizawl on Thursday. With this event, Mizoram has joined the rest of the country in commencing the House Listing and Housing Census operations. The Governor urged all census field functionaries to discharge their duties with utmost dedication and sincerity, ensuring that no household is left behind. He instructed them to explain the process clearly to those who may have difficulty understanding, so that every individual and household can be properly enumerated. Describing this as India’s first-ever digital census, he expressed confidence in its successful completion and appealed to the public to extend full cooperation to the census officials and enumerators. On the occasion, H. Lalremruati, appointed as Enumerator for Lok Bhavan, successfully entered the required details using the Self Enumeration ID (SE ID) generated from the Governor’s Self Enumeration exercise conducted on April

7. With this entry, the Governor has formally completed his own Houselisting and Housing Census. The event was attended by senior officials from the Directorate of Census Operations, including Joseph H. Lalramsanga, Municipal Commissioner & Principal Census Officer, Irene Zohlimpuui Chongthu, Additional Secretary, GAD & Additional State Nodal Officer and other officials. The Census 2027, India’s first digital census, will be conducted in two phases. The first phase -- the Houselisting and Housing Census - began on April 1, 2026. The second phase, Population Enumeration, is scheduled for February 2027. Under the first phase, self-enumeration was carried out across the country from April 1-15 . The Houselisting and Housing Census operations will continue from April 16 to May 15, 2026. Following the enumeration of the Governor, Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma was successfully enumerated today by the concerned enumerator. The process was conducted seamlessly after the Chief Minister had completed his self-enumeration on April 1. Other dignitaries enumerated today included by-Home Minister.

No Breakthrough in Taj Umiam Talks, Hunger Strike Persists

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to proceed with the project at the existing Umiam Orchid site.Speaking to the media after the meeting, foundation general secretary Ritre Lyngdoh expressed disappointment, stating that the organisation had expected a clear commitment from the government—especially regarding their key demand to scrap the project on Lumpongdeng Island.“We waited for more than six days hoping for a meaningful outcome. Environmental concerns were discussed, but the Tourism department remained firm and refused to remove Lumpongdeng Island from the project,” Lyngdoh said. He added that the foundation will now intensify its protest. “The hunger strike will continue, and we will strengthen our democratic agitation,

as guaranteed under the Constitution of India,” he said. Lyngdoh also mentioned that earlier, the district administration had urged the foundation to meet the Director of Tourism. Although no written assurance was initially provided, a formal invitation was later issued for a meeting at the Nokrek Building in Lower Lachumiere. Despite reservations, the foundation agreed to attend.On the FIR filed against its members, Lyngdoh declined to comment, reiterating that its withdrawal remains a precondition for meaningful dialogue. Meanwhile, Nonglang, who could not attend the meeting due to worsening health, addressed supporters at the protest site and urged them to remain peaceful.“This

issue has gone beyond the foundation and now concerns the entire Khasi-Jaintia community. We must continue peacefully without creating unrest,” he said.He acknowledged growing anger among supporters but appealed for restraint, stressing that decisions would be taken collectively at the appropriate time. Doctors have warned that Nonglang’s health is deteriorating and advised immediate hospitalisation. Despite this, the protest continues to gain support from political leaders and civil society groups.Earlier in the day, KHNAM leader Thomas Passah and VPP JHADCD MDC Deivi Tongper visited the protest site and expressed support, opposing the project over environmental concerns.

Governor Launches First Phase Of Mizoram’s Digital Census In Aizawl

Aizawl, Apr 16: Mizoram on April 16 formally launched the house listing and housing census operations, marking the beginning of the first phase of the country’s digital census exercise in the state. With the launch, Mizoram joined the nationwide rollout of the census process, which is scheduled to continue until May 15. The programme was inaugurated by Governor Vijay Kumar Singh at Lok Bhavan, where he underscored the importance of accuracy and inclusiveness in the exercise. Addressing officials, he called for dedication and sincerity in carrying out the enumeration and directed field staff to ensure that no household is left out.n The Governor also emphasised the need for

public cooperation, urging citizens to actively participate in the process so that every individual and household is properly documented. As part of the event, an enumerator completed the Governor’s official entry using a Self Enumeration ID (SE-ID), generated through his online self-enumeration conducted earlier on April 7. The step highlighted the integration of digital tools in the census process. Senior officials from the Directorate of Census Operations, including Census Commissioner Joseph H. Lalthanzama and Additional GAD Secretary and State Nodal Officer Zothanliani Chhangte, were present at the launch. He urged all census officials in the state to make all-out efforts to ensure that no

citizen is left behind. He also appealed to citizens to take the exercise seriously by registering themselves in the census and to extend full cooperation to the enumerators. The Governor instructed officials to reach even the remotest corners of the state, ensure the process remains as hassle-free as possible for citizens, and conduct the entire exercise in a clear, transparent, and doubt-free manner. Recognising the unique social fabric of the state, Singh called for a “strong collaboration” between census officials and Local or Village Councils, relying on the Mizo tradition of community support to ensure the fieldwork is executed smoothly. Senior officials from the Directorate of Census Operations

briefed the Governor on census preparedness, strategies, and progress in the state during the self-enumeration. The 2027 Census, India’s first digital census, is being rolled out in two strategic stages. The first phase — Houselisting and Housing Census — began on April 1, while the second phase, Population Enumeration, is scheduled for February next year. According to officials, the self-enumeration window is open from April 1 to April 15, 2026. This will be followed by the House Listing and Housing Census across Mizoram from April 16 to May 15, they said. He urged all census officials in the state to make all-out efforts to ensure that no citizen is left behind.

Mizoram district gears up to prevent spread of measles from Bangladesh

Aizawl, Apr 16: At a time when a measles outbreak has killed nearly 100 children in Bangladesh, a border district in Mizoram is taking measures to prevent the spread of the virus from the neighbouring country. In this regard, a meeting was held at the DC office chamber in Lawngtlai under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Donny Lalruatsanga to discuss preventive measures and preparedness to safeguard the district from the measles outbreak in Bangladesh. Donny Lalruatsanga expressed his appreciation to all attendees. He highlighted that more than 100 lives have already been lost due to the measles outbreak in Bangladesh. He emphasized that taking timely preventive actions and preparedness measures is of utmost importance. Since Lawngtlai district shares an international border with Bangladesh, there is a high possibility of the disease entering the district. Therefore, apart from the medical teams, the public must remain vigilant and cautious.He pointed out that children below 5 years are especially vulnerable, and stressed the importance of taking the MR (Measles-Rubella) vaccine. Parents

were urged to ensure that their children receive vaccination on time. Further, he urged the concerned departments to issue advisories in advance in order to strengthen and effectively implement preventive measures. The Deputy Commissioner further stressed that villages along the border need to be extra cautious and urged community leaders to actively participate in preventive efforts. He mentioned that symptoms of measles include fever, runny nose, red eyes, and skin rashes. Anyone showing such symptoms should immediately seek medical attention. Early detection is crucial to prevent outbreaks, and he urged the Health Department and World Health Organization (WHO) to continue their proactive efforts. He also stated that both the District Level Task Force and Block Level Task Force are actively working to prevent measles and other diseases. The public was urged to cooperate in preventing the spread, and the district administration assured that it will continue to take all necessary measures with support from village councils, NGOs, churches, and the general public.

lic. Dr. Lalmuanawma Jongte, Senior Chief Medical Officer, explained preventive measures against measles. He stated that vaccination is the most effective protection and emphasized the need to achieve over 95 per cent MR vaccination coverage. The vaccine is administered in two doses to children aged 9-12 months and 16-24 months. He explained that measles is caused by the measles/Rubella virus and spreads through the air, making it highly contagious. “Strong surveillance measures are being implemented. Rapid Response Teams have been activated at PHCs and CHCs, and Mobile Vaccination Teams are also on standby,” Dr Jongte said. He also confirmed that adequate stocks of MR vaccine and Vitamin A are currently available for the district. Dr. Lalhlipmui from the World Health Organization (WHO) shared an overview of their activities. She noted that measles cases had previously been reported in Lawngtlai district during January and February last year, but no fatalities

occurred due to effective response. She pointed out that incomplete vaccination remains an issue, and intensified efforts are ongoing. She also confirmed that no measles cases have been reported so far this year, and preventive measures will continue. Dr. Remlalnghaki, DIO, presented data on MR1 and MR2 vaccination coverage among children under one year of age along with HPV Vaccination over the period April 2025 to March 2026. While MR1 coverage is satisfactory, MR2 coverage remains low, and efforts are being intensified to improve it. She further stated that special initiatives are currently being actively carried out in the area of HPV vaccination. The meeting was attended by the Senior Chief Medical Officer, Project Director (DRDO), Deputy CMO, representative of DMS, SDO (PHED), representative of District Social Welfare Officer, District Civil Supplies Officer, Block Development Officer, President of CYLA, representative of Bazar VC, representatives from UNDP, and representatives from the World Health Organization (WHO).

Mizoram Tightens Border Vigilance Over Deadly Measles Outbreak In Neighboring Bangladesh

Lawngtlai, Apr 16: A meeting was held on Wednesday at the Deputy Commissioner’s office chamber in Lawngtlai under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Donny Lalruatsanga to discuss preparedness and preventive measures in view of the ongoing spread of measles in Bangladesh. The Deputy Commissioner stated that over a hundred deaths have been reported in Bangladesh due to measles and stressed the need for timely preventive action. He noted that Lawngtlai’s proximity to the international border increases the risk of disease transmission. He called for vigilance among both medical teams and the public, with particular attention to children below five years of age. He urged parents to ensure timely administration of the Measles-Rubella (MR) vaccine and directed concerned departments to issue advisories in advance to strengthen preventive measures. Border villages were asked to remain cautious, with community leaders encour-



Aged to support awareness and prevention efforts. Symptoms of measles, including fever, runny nose, red eyes, and skin rashes, were highlighted during the meeting. Residents showing such symptoms were advised to seek immediate medical attention. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized early detection and continued coordination with the Health

Department and the World Health Organization. Officials informed that District and Block Level Task Forces are actively engaged in monitoring and prevention activities. The district administration stated that it will continue measures in coordination with village councils, NGOs, churches, and the public. Senior Chief Medical Officer

Dr. Lalmuanawma Jongte said vaccination remains the most effective preventive measure and stressed achieving over 95 percent coverage of the MR vaccine. He stated that the vaccine is administered in two doses to children aged 9–12 months and 16–24 months. He added that measles is a highly contagious airborne disease and confirmed.

BJP to go solo in Shillong Lok Sabha by-poll

Shillong, Apr 16: In a bold and confident statement, BJP spokesperson M. Kharkrang has made it clear—the party is gearing up to go solo in the upcoming MP elections, riding on strong support from its grassroots. Speaking candidly, Kharkrang revealed that from mandals to booths, BJP karyakartas are united in one demand: *’BJP should contest the MP elections.’*’ He firmly shut down rumours of any pre-poll alliance, saying no discussions or consultations have taken place so far despite media buzz. When asked about candidates, he hinted at intense internal competition, with “plenty of applicants” already in the race. The final call, however, will come from the party’s central leadership in Delhi after a screening process. But what truly stood out was BJP’s strong pitch for 33% reservation for women in Parliament. Calling it a long-neglected issue, Kharkrang said the proposal had been “gathering dust for decades,” with past governments only talking but never acting. He credited the BJP-led government for finally bringing it into the spotlight, stressing that women are key to building a *Viksit Bharat*. “If India has to grow, it needs equal participation—especially from women,” he said. Drawing from the success of reservations in Panchayati Raj systems, he expressed hope that by the 2029 MP elections, India could see a historic shift with one-third seats reserved for women. With no alliances on the table and big promises in play, BJP seems ready to turn the upcoming elections into a high-stakes political showdown.



AJP opposes Delimitation Bill, flags threat to representation and identity

Guwahati, Apr 16: The Asom Jatiya Parishad (AJP) has voiced strong concerns over the proposed national delimitation exercise, warning that it could have far-reaching implications for Assam's political representation and cultural identity. In a statement, party president Lurinjiyoti Gogoi and general secretary Jagadish Bhuyan said that while delimitation is a constitutional mandate, it must not be implemented in a manner that undermines the state's unique demographic and cultural character. The party expressed apprehension over reports of expanding the Lok Sabha to around 850 seats based on the 2011 Census, arguing that such a move could significantly enhance the political influence of populous states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. It cautioned that this may reduce the voice and relevance of smaller regions, particularly the Northeast, in national decision-making. Raising cultural concerns, the AJP warned against what it termed "Hindification", stating that the growing presence of candidates from outside the state—



who may lack familiarity with the Assamese language and local traditions, could erode the linguistic and cultural fabric of Assam. It further alleged that allowing non-indigenous candidates to contest from multiple Assembly constituencies risks sidelining local communities and weakening indigenous political representation.

The party also reiterated its opposition

to the delimitation exercise carried out in Assam in 2023, claiming that constituency boundaries were redrawn to favour electoral considerations rather than administrative efficiency. It argued that the exercise adversely impacted indigenous communities, particularly in upper Assam, and failed to safeguard the interests of "Khilonjiya" people. Outlining its propos-

als, the AJP called for the implementation of Clause 6 of the Assam Accord to ensure reservation of seats for indigenous people in both the Assembly and Parliament. It also suggested that delimitation should not be based solely on population, and that states which have effectively controlled population growth should be given due consideration.

The party further recommended that candidates contesting from indigenous or unreserved seats should be proficient in the Assamese language and have a verifiable history of residence in the state. In addition,

it advocated for a legal framework to clearly define and recognise indigenous Assamese people in order to safeguard their political representation and land rights. Calling for a united stand, the party leadership urged regional political forces to oppose the proposed delimitation exercise in its present form, stressing the need to protect Assam's long-term interests.

Govt open to talks as protests grow over Umiam Lake project

Shillong, Apr 16: Meghalaya Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong has said the state government remains open to dialogue amid growing protests over a proposed tourism project at Umiam Lake and Lumpomgeng Island. His remarks come in the backdrop of an ongoing hunger strike by the Green Tech Foundation, which has been demanding cancellation of plans to develop a five-star Taj resort and spa, citing concerns over potential ecological damage. Responding to the protest, Tynsong said there was no need for a formal invitation for talks, asserting that the government is accessible and willing to provide clarifications on the project. The Foundation has alleged that the proposed development could harm the fragile ecosystem of Lumpomgeng Island while benefiting only a limited section of people. Addressing these concerns, the Deputy Chief Minister said the government has no plans to allow permanent structures on the island. Instead, he said efforts would focus on enhancing its natural appeal without compromising the environment. He added that beautification measures similar to those undertaken at Ward's Lake—such as plantation drives and steps to improve scenic value—would be implemented to develop the island as a tourist destination. Tynsong said the broader objective of the project is to boost Meghalaya's tourism sector and generate employment opportunities for local youth.

Assam CM Himanta retorts to allegation on abusing power to harass opponents

Guwahati, Apr 16: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma called Congress leader Rahul Gandhi a 'crazy person' and challenged him to make his passport details public. His scathing remarks come after Rahul Gandhi accused him of 'abusing state power to harass his political opponents and critics'.

Earlier, Rahul Gandhi had also termed Sarma as the 'most corrupt person' in the country. He had also expressed that the Congress stood with Pawan Khera. Khera had alleged that the Assam CM's wife has multiple passports and offshore properties, which were not declared in the chief minister's election affidavit. The Sarmas have rejected the allegations as false.

In a post on X, Gandhi had said, "The present CM of Assam is the most corrupt in the country. He will not escape the law. His abuse of state power to harass his political opponents and critics is against the Constitution. The questions that are being raised have to be probed. Transparency, accountability of power and the rule of law are the basis of our Constitutional values. The Congress stands with Pawan Khera. We will not be intimidated." Respond-



ing to reporters' questions over Gandhi's remarks, Sarma said, "Let me make it very clear, neither I nor any member of my family has a golden visa, as alleged. Rahul Gandhi is a crazy person." "I challenge Rahu Gandhi to present his passport in front of the media, and I will bring mine

and those of my family members. Let the media know who is visiting which country," Sarma added. The Assam chief minister also said that Rahul Gandhi "is not God". "If I make allegations against him, will he be ready for a probe into those? He should know that others, too, have the right to ask him questions,"

he expressed. Asked about the Supreme Court staying the Telangana High Court's order granting Kehra one-week transit anticipatory bail in the case registered for levelling allegations against Sarma's wife, the BJP leader said he was not aware of it. "However, according to me, the Telangana High Court cannot grant transit bail to Khera as he is not a resident of that state. The law will take its own course," Sarma said. The senior BJP leader said he would join his party's election campaign in West Bengal from Thursday.

Athletics Federation of India adopts 'Kohima Declaration' to boost Northeast athletics

Athletics Federation of India (AFI)

Kohima, Apr 16: Introduced the 'Kohima Declaration' as a roadmap to boost athletics in Nagaland and the region through focused measures, better infrastructure, and by promoting the area as a host for major sporting events. The announcement came after the federation's two-day general body meeting in Kohima, where officials agreed on steps to better connect the region with the country's sports system and open up more opportunities for young talent to compete at top levels. Speaking to reporters, South Asian Athletics Federation president Lalit K. Bhanot said the meeting included detailed discussions and resulted in several important steps to improve athletics nationwide. He added that the declaration stresses the importance of sports in strengthening national unity and development. As part of the new measures, AFI has made SRY gene testing compulsory for athletes competing in national

events, with expenses to be shared by the federation and the government. The federation will also begin DNA testing on a selected group of around 100 athletes for research purposes and to analyse performance patterns. To widen participation at the grassroots level, AFI plans to reorganise district units to include more representation from rural areas. This step is aimed at reducing the concentration of influence in district headquarters and encouraging involvement from villages and block-level bodies. In an effort to increase public participation, the federation will conduct an annual two-kilometre run across nearly 700 districts every year on August 30.

AFI Vice-President and World Athletics President Adille J. Sumariwalla announced action against state units that have failed to perform, stating that existing bodies in Chhattisgarh and Arunachal Pradesh will be dissolved and replaced with temporary



committees. He also said that Tripura and Manipur have been put under observation and reduced to associate membership status without voting rights, warning that further steps could be taken if there is no improvement. Sumariwalla also said that international experts have been appointed to guide both senior and junior athletes, with the aim of raising India's competitiveness in global events.

Spiny ant discovered Reserve Forest

Guwahati, Apr 16: Amid growing concerns over habitat loss and urban expansion in Assam, a recent discovery indicates that ants are not disappearing. Scientists have identified a new species of spiny ant thriving in the fragmented forests on the outskirts of Guwahati. This finding shows the ecological value of urban green spaces. The new species, *Polyrhachis garbhangaensis*, commonly known as the "Assamese Spiny Ant", was found in Garbhanga Reserve Forest. This 117 sq km green corridor borders the city and is contiguous with Rani Reserve Forest. This discovery counters narratives of widespread insect decline in the region. It also shows that even pressured forest patches continue to support undocumented biodiversity and complex ecological interactions. The research was led by Ankita Sharma, a PhD scholar at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bengaluru. The team included Paul Antony Mangaly, Suraj Kumar Singha Deo, Sangavi D, and senior researcher Prof. Anindya Sinha. Field sampling using pitfall traps was conducted in August 2023. This was part of a broader study on the impacts of urbanisation on ant and spider assemblages in South Guwahati.



A preprint was posted on bioRxiv on August 19–20, 2025. The formal description was later published in the international journal *Asian Myrmecology* (Volume 19: 019001, pp. 1–9) on January 30, 2026. The ant measures about 5.6 mm. It belongs to the rare *Polyrhachis mucronata* group and is only the third species recorded from India. It has a glossy black body, a vivid yellowish-orange abdomen (bright in life and turning yellow-brown when preserved), and distinctive curved spines on the petiole and propodeum. These features likely serve as defence against predators.

Assam LoP alleges major security lapses in strongrooms storing election materials

Leader of Opposition in the Assam Assembly, Debabrata Saikia, has written to the Election Commission alleging a "serious breach" of norms in securing strongrooms meant for storing election materials for several constituencies, including Nazira, where he is contesting as a Congress candidate. In a letter addressed to Chief Electoral Officer Anurag Goel, Saikia claimed there were "severe and alarming violations" of Election Commission guidelines in the handling, storage, and security of post-poll materials. He also submitted photographic and video evidence to support his allegations. Polling for all 126 Assembly constituencies in Assam was conducted on April 9, with counting scheduled for May 4. He urged immediate intervention, calling for an inquiry, stricter compliance with guidelines, enhanced security arrangements including a dedicated sentry post, and action against officials responsible for the alleged lapses.

Notably, Assam recorded a high voter turnout of 85.96 percent, with participation from its 2.51 crore



electorate in the single-phase election held on April 9. Referring to the strongrooms located at Sibsagar Govt HS & MP School, Saikia said that during his visit to the Material Safety Cell on April 14, he found Rooms 11, 12, and 13 not being maintained as per prescribed norms. He alleged that the condition of access points showed "serious non-compliance" with security protocols. Of the doors inspected, only one was secured with

a padlock, and even that was not properly sealed. Several doors were either loosely latched or shut from inside, making them easily accessible. "In multiple instances, doors were either single-locked or internally locked, without following the mandatory double-lock system," Saikia stated. He further noted that among three rooms designated for storing election materials, only one of six doors had a proper double-lock system in place.

One of the doors storing materials for the Nazira constituency could reportedly be opened with slight external pressure. The Congress leader also share video clip showing him pointing out these lapses to concerned officials. Saikia alleged that sensitive election documents were inadequately secured, thereby compromising the sanctity and transparency of the electoral process. He also pointed out the absence of a dedicated sentry post near the storage area. According to him, personnel from the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) indicated that their deployment did not include guarding the election material rooms, which he described as a serious lapse. "The absence of proper sealing, double-locking, and security arrangements creates a significant risk of tampering or misuse of critical election materials," he said. Citing Election Commission rules, Saikia emphasised that such materials must be stored either in a treasury, sub-treasury, or a properly secured strongroom with a double-lock system under authorised supervision.

Arunachal Governor seeks Centre's support to boost sports, agri-horticulture

Imphal, Apr 16: Arunachal Pradesh Governor K T Parnaik met Union Minister Jyotiraditya M. Scindia in New Delhi on Wednesday, April 15, and sought greater support from the Centre to improve sports infrastructure and strengthen the agri-horticulture sector in the state. As per an official release, the Governor pointed out the strong sporting abilities of young people in Arunachal Pradesh and stressed the need to build modern and easily accessible infrastructure to help them grow and succeed. Parnaik also sought assistance from the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) for constructing a full-scale football facility in Itanagar. He further recommended developing multi-purpose sports centres and training institutions across the state, covering both eastern and western areas, to ensure development reaches all regions evenly. In addition, the Governor drew attention to the agri-horticulture sector, describing it as an important area for driving economic progress and providing livelihood opportunities in



Arunachal Pradesh. The talks mainly focused on improving infrastructure and expanding opportunities for youth by seeking focused support from the central government, in line with the state's development goals.

NIA arrests five in Bishnupur blast case

Imphal, Apr 16: Manipur Home Minister K Govindas Konthoujam on Wednesday, April 15, said that five suspects have been arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in relation to the Bishnupur mortar blast, which resulted in the deaths of two children and left their mother injured. Speaking to reporters at the New Secretariat in Mantripukhri, the Minister stated that those arrested are members of the United Kuki National Liberation Army (UKNLA), a banned armed outfit that is not part of the Suspension of Operations (SoO) pact with the Centre. He said the state government is maintaining close coordination with the NIA and confirmed that all five accused belong to the Kuki community. He added that questioning of the suspects is currently in progress. Responding to another incident involving a clash between locals and security personnel in Thüngei on Tuesday, Konthoujam explained that the situation arose due to confusion. He said a group of Assam Rifles personnel, dressed in plain clothes, was heading towards Kwakta to recover illegal drugs and weapons based on information obtained from

a drug trafficker previously detained at Imphal Airport. According to the Minister, residents in Thüngei stopped the team, suspecting them of carrying illegal arms. The misunderstanding quickly escalated, resulting in physical confrontation and injuries on both sides. During the clash, eight firearms were reportedly taken from the Assam Rifles personnel. However, Konthoujam said all the weapons have since been retrieved.

He added that the government is aware of public concerns and appealed to people to cooperate with the authorities. The arrests are linked to the mortar attack that took place on April 7 in Bishnupur district, which sparked strong public reaction after the deaths of two minors, including a five-year-old boy and a five-month-old infant. On Chief Minister N Biren Singh's outreach efforts in the hill districts, the Minister said the response from the Kuki community has been encouraging, with multiple development projects currently underway.

Several legislators from Bishnupur, along with top officials, were present during the media interaction.

Assam RGU Becomes First NE Private University to Partner with Indian Navy

Guwahati, Apr 16: In a significant stride towards reinforcing its commitment to nation-building through education, Assam Royal Global University (RGU) has signed a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Navy on Monday at the office of the Navy Welfare and Wellness Association (NWWA), Chanakyapuri, New Delhi.

The agreement was formally signed by Shashi Tripathi, President, NWWA, and Commodore S.M. Urooj Athar on behalf of the Indian Navy, while Prof. D. N. Singh, Registrar (Academics), RGU, signed on behalf of the university.

This historic collaboration marks RGU as the first private university from Northeast India to partner with the Indian Navy, opening new avenues of educational support for the wards and dependents of defence personnel.

Speaking on the occasion, Shashi Tripathi, President, NWWA stated, “This collaboration is more than just an agreement, it’s a promise to our community. Through this initiative, NWWA has secured substantial educational concessions ranging from 100 percent to 50 percent for the wards of naval personnel, be it serving, retired or under Sahara support, across a wide spectrum of undergraduate and postgraduate programs.”

Commodore S.M. Urooj Athar said, “At NWWA, we believe that education is empowerment. By forging such meaningful partnerships, we are actively creating pathways for our children to access quality education



without financial barriers. Every such step strengthens our community and honours the sacrifices of our naval families”.

Expressing his pride on the occasion, Prof. D. N. Singh said, “It is a matter of immense honour and privilege for our university to sign this first-of-its-kind MoU with the Indian Navy.”

Under this collaboration, RGU will introduce two dedicated scholarship categories — Royal Shaurya and Royal Suraksha — designed to provide quality higher education opportunities to eligible dependents and wards of defence personnel, including serving personnel, ex-servicemen, personnel with disabilities, and those who died in harness.

The university will offer ‘Royal Shaurya’, a 100 percent scholarship for the families of martyrs and gal-

lantry awardees, and ‘Royal Suraksha’, providing 50 percent tuition fee support for the wards of serving and retired defence personnel.

As part of the MoU, the Indian Navy will facilitate admissions by disseminating information about the scholarship scheme across its schools, ranks, and institutions, while ensuring timely forwarding of eligible candidates.

It will also nominate a single point of contact officer to coordinate policy and administrative matters, verify the eligibility of prospective students, and provide necessary service documentation for credential verification.

Youth, Education Key to Growth: Meghalaya CM

Shillong, Apr 16: Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma on Wednesday said investment in youth and education is important for sustainable development.

“It is not just about building school and educational buildings or providing educational infrastructures and amenities but our every decision is a part of the larger vision and goal we have for the state,” Sangma said after inaugurating the RMSA School at Mawlieh.

The Chief Minister said that government focuses on suit-

able development throughout the state to ensure that development touches individual lives hence social sectors like education are the focussed sectors for the government.

He also emphasised on the importance of communities and its culture and traditions and the integration of grassroots communities in the developmental journey of the state. Expressing satisfaction at the RMSA Mawlieh school building he urged the teachers of the school to remind themselves each day of the difference and impact that

they can have on a student’s life. “Every moment you spend with you students, you are shaping the child’s future and will define what they will become and I encourage you to look beyond the challenges and look at the larger purpose of you being a teacher, shaping the future of Meghalaya,” he said. In his message to the students, the Chief Minister said that there are still many villages and students who do not have access to a proper educational infrastructure and stated, “Many schools still function from dilapidated

schools consider yourselves fortunate to be studying in a school with a building, furniture and teachers like you have in this school and work hard to be successful,” he said. The RMSA School Mawlieh was first established purely as a private school run by a community of seven villages in 1961 to provide education to the people of the area. It is one of the oldest educational centres in West Khasi Hills District especially in Rambrai Area and was later provincialized to a fully Government UPS.

Villagers Meet CM, Seek Retention of Pambei UNLF Camp

Imphal, Apr 16: A delegation of 25 representatives from 28 villages of the peripheral areas of Khomidok Hill Range, Imphal East, urged the Manipur government not to relocate or replace the designated camp of the Pambei-led United National Liberation Front (UNLF) at Nungshum village, citing concerns over security and stability.

The delegation met Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh at the Secretariat in Imphal on Wednesday and submitted a memorandum in this regard.

In the memorandum, the representatives highlighted the vulnerability of peripheral regions, particularly areas such as the Khamenlok Hill Range in the Uyumpok-Nongshum belt, which they said have been severely affected since the onset of the ongoing crisis in the state.

They alleged that the presence of armed groups, including those operating from the so-called Sinai Camp and associated with Kuki militant factions under the Suspension of Operations (SoO) arrange-



ment, has contributed to a deteriorating security environment.

However, the villagers noted that the situation witnessed a marked improvement following the establishment of the Pambei-led UNLF camp in the area.

The Chief Minister, after hearing the delegation, said, “The matter is under careful and serious con-

sideration of the government. I assure that no hasty decision will be taken, keeping in mind the paramount importance of peace, stability and security in the region.”

“All aspects will be thoroughly examined to ensure that the safety and protection of the villages are fully safeguarded,” he said.

Governor Releases Zoramthanga’s Memoir: From Guerrilla Fighter To Chief Minister

Aizawl, April 16 : Mizoram Governor, General (Dr) Vijay Kumar Singh, PVSM, AVSM, YSM (Retd), Today formally released the memoir of former Chief Minister Zoramthanga titled “From Guerrilla Fighter to Chief Minister”, at the Aijal Club in Aizawl. Speaking at the launch event, the Governor described the book as far more than a mere personal narrative. He lauded it as a significant and reliable historical document that provides valuable insights into important phases of Mizoram’s political history.

“The book chronicles the author’s remarkable journey from insurgency to responsible democratic governance and statesmanship,” he said. The Governor noted that the memoir serves as a powerful reminder that dialogue, understanding, and perseverance can overcome even the most difficult challenges. He praised Pu Zoramthanga’s dedication and lifelong desire to learn, saying these qualities reflect exceptional political

acumen and true statesmanship. “It shows that if there is a will, there is a way,” he remarked. General (Dr) Vijay Kumar Singh highlighted that Mizoram’s history is unique – a journey from struggle and conflict, through reconciliation, to lasting peace and progress.

He commended the author for documenting history based on his own lived experiences and expressed hope that the memoir would help the younger generation better understand the complexities of conflict while appreciating the true value of peace and the strength of democratic institutions. The Governor believes the book will prove to be a valuable resource for students, scholars, policymakers, and citizens alike. Author and former Chief Minister Zoramthanga described the release of the book as a deeply significant milestone in his life. He revealed that he had meticulously maintained personal diaries for 50 years, which.

Governor Honours NCC Cadets in Kohima, Praises Mount Saramati Expedition

Kohima, Apr 16: Nagaland Governor Nand Kishore Yadav on Wednesday felicitated NCC cadets of the state at Lok Bhavan, commending their discipline, dedication and outstanding achievements.

The Governor was received by Brig. Shantanu P. Mainkar, Group Commander of NCC Kohima.

The programme commenced with the National Song and National Anthem, followed by a welcome address by the Master of Ceremony and NCC cadets.

In his welcome note and update, Brig Mainkar highlighted key initiatives undertaken by NCC Nagaland, including youth engagement programmes, structured training activities, and adventure expeditions. A visual presentation on Mount Saramati and NCC festivals added vibrancy to the event.

A major highlight of the programme

was the felicitation of the Mount Saramati Expedition Team, which successfully scaled the peak on March 19, 2026.

The Governor was presented with a Saramati Expedition souvenir, while team members were awarded Certificates of Appreciation in recognition of their achievement.

Addressing the gathering, Governor Yadav expressed immense pride in the cadets and lauded their spirit of unity and commitment. He particularly appreciated the participation of girl cadets and lady Associate NCC Officers, describing it as a strong example of women’s empowerment.

He further commended initiatives such as Vibrant Village visits, Yuva Aapda Mitra training, Youth and Alumni Festival, National Integration Camps, and collaborations with organi-



zations like NIELIT and ICAR, noting that these contribute significantly to skill development and national integration.

Meghalaya govt it's no permanent structure being built at Lumpondeng Island for Taj Project

Shillong, Apr 16: The state government has appealed to Green Tech Foundation (GTF) to withdraw their hunger strike, stating there is no permanent construction project on Lumpondeng Island and shares the foundation’s aim of preserving its natural environment.

The appeal came after the Director of Tourism BL Pakyntein held a meeting with the GTF leaders who are on an indefinite hunger strike demanding the scrapping of a tourism project on Lumpondeng Island.

“We appeal to withdraw the protest because we feel that their mandate and what they want is also what we want, that is preservation, upliftment, and to keep the nature there intact for people to enjoy,” Pakyntein said.

She reiterated that the department does not intend to build permanent structures on the island.

“So, what they want is also what we want: no permanent structure there and to give prominent attention to the nature in Lumpondeng,” she said.

“Their main focus is Lumpondeng, and in no uncertain terms have we said that there will be no permanent construction in Lumpondeng. We will continue, and we are open to any dialogue, discussion, or consultation with them,” the Director added.

SCERT Nagaland Marks ECCE Day Celebrations in Kohima

Kohima, Apr 16: The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), Nagaland on Thursday celebrated Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Day in Kohima.

The programme was organised by the ECCE Cell of SCERT in collaboration with Dipl



ration with Diploma in Foundational Stage in-service teacher trainees as part of their course-based learning experience.

The event aimed to promote the importance of early childhood care and education and strengthen awareness on foundational learning.

Additional Secretary of the Department of School Education, Vikhweno Chale, graced the occasion as the special guest.

She highlighted that the department, along with SCERT, has taken initiatives to train teachers with ef-

fective teaching techniques, skills, and methodologies.

She encouraged educators to apply their training in classrooms to unlock students’ full potential and appealed to communities and parents to support government schools in nurturing children’s academic, emotional, and social development.

The keynote address was delivered by Kerüüpfü Rupreo, Director of SCERT Nagaland.

The programme featured presentations by teacher trainees, including a Konyak lullaby performance, speeches by participants, and a screening of project work undertaken during the course.

The celebration brought together educators, trainees, and officials, highlighting the growing focus on ECCE as a critical foundation for quality education in the state.

Mizoram To Include Refugees And IDPs In Ongoing Digital Census

Aizawl, Apr 16: Refugees from Myanmar and Bangladesh, along with internally displaced persons (IDPs) from neighbouring Manipur, taking shelter in Mizoram will be included in the country’s ongoing general census, according to census officials. Data from the state Home Department indicates that nearly 40,000 people displaced by internal crises in Myanmar, Bangladesh, and Manipur are currently taking shelter across different parts of Mizoram. Speaking to reporters at a

press conference here on Wednesday, officials from the Directorate of Census clarified that any displaced individuals living in rented houses or relief camps at the time of the exercise will be counted. They emphasised that the ongoing census targets population enumeration rather than citizenship registration. Since the general census is primarily a population enumeration and not related to citizenship documentation, all refugees taking shelter in Mizoram will be recorded at their respective

residences or villages,” officials stated. They added that it is essential to include these groups to accurately account for the state’s resource consumption. The first phase of the census, covering house listing and housing data, was launched on April 1.

A digital platform for self-enumeration was also made available for Mizoram residents from April 1 to April 15. The “canvasser method” for the first phase will commence on Thursday (April 16) and will continue un-

Protests in Imphal Over UNLF Camp Relocation

Imphal, Apr 16: Protests broke out across parts of Imphal district in Manipur on Wednesday as local residents opposed the proposed relocation of camps belonging to the United National Liberation Front (Pambei faction) (UNLF-P). Demonstrations were reported in Phayeng in Imphal West and Nungsum in Imphal East, where residents cited security concerns and urged authorities not to shift the camps. The protests were triggered by a directive issued on April 13 from the group’s general headquarters, instructing members stationed in these camps to return by April 15. The move is linked to a peace agreement signed between the Government of India, the Manipur government, and the Pambei-led UNLF faction. Following the agreement, some members had been placed in designated camps at Phayeng and Nungsum. Residents of Phayeng said their village

lies close to Kuki-dominated areas and that security concerns have intensified amid ongoing ethnic violence in the state. According to them, the presence of UNLF-P members has helped maintain stability and deter potential threats. Protesters demanded immediate withdrawal of the April 13 directive and opposed any attempt to dismantle or relocate the existing camps. They also decided to submit a memorandum to the authorities, calling for formal recognition and upgradation of the Phayeng camp. Some demonstrators alleged that central security forces had failed to provide adequate protection during the ongoing conflict. They expressed fears that the removal of UNLF-P members could expose their villages to renewed violence. Residents of Nungsum echoed similar concerns, stating that the armed group had been offering protection against possible attacks.

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Migration and the Search for Dignity

Migration, both internal and external, is often driven by a simple aspiration—the search for a better life. Yet, for many migrants, this journey is marked by uncertainty, exploitation, and lack of dignity. Workers moving from rural to urban areas frequently find themselves in informal sectors, with low wages and poor living conditions. They remain excluded from social security systems and often lack access to basic services such as healthcare and education. The pandemic highlighted their vulnerability, as thousands were left stranded without income or support. Despite their crucial role in sustaining urban economies, migrants continue to remain invisible in policy frameworks. Migration should not be a story of survival alone. Policies must ensure portability of benefits, safe working conditions, and inclusion in urban planning. Dignity must be central to the discourse on migration.

Unlocking the Northeast’s bioeconomy potential

The BioE3 (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment & Employment) policy pushed by the central government prioritising the Northeast region can open the door to a thriving bioeconomy in the region. Earmarking 10% of the Union budget for the ‘Bio-manufacturing and Biofoundry Component’ of the Biotechnology Research Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development (Bio-RIDE) scheme for the region is a strategic push to promote biotechnology startups and industry-led innovation to realise its potential in the sector. As the Bio-RIDE scheme is aimed at transforming the country’s biotechnology landscape and contributing towards achieving a 300 billion-dollar bioeconomy in the country by 2030, it brings an opportunity for the region to play a crucial role in achieving the national goals while positioning itself as a key global hub for bio startups.

Official data highlights that India’s bioeconomy has surpassed 195 billion dollars in 2025, up from 165 billion dollars in 2024, which reflects an 18% annual growth rate. The ‘India Bioeconomy Report 2026’ published by the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) indi-

cates a promising trend in India’s biotechnology startup ecosystem. The cumulative number of registered biotech startups rising to 11,855 from 10,075 in 2024 reflects “sustained entrepreneurial activity across therapeutics, diagnostics, agricultural biotechnology, industrial biotechnology, and digital life sciences”, it adds. The report further highlights that biotechnology startup formation remained concentrated in leading innovation hubs such as Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Telangana, while Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu also played important roles in nurturing new ventures. This puts into perspective the significance of biotechnological startups in the northeast region. As the region is a biodiversity hotspot, bio-tech-based growth driving its economy is not unfamiliar to farmers and entrepreneurs.

The main bottlenecks in unlocking the potential are lack of commercial and industry-scale innovation and research. BIRAC being mandated to implement a range of programmes to support research, technology development, and commercialisation through incubation, funding, mentoring, and industry partnerships, this

public sector undertaking under the Department of Biotechnology can play the most crucial role in pushing biomanufacturing and biofoundry in the region under the BioE3 policy.

A network of biotech hubs established across the region for providing necessary infrastructure in universities, colleges and institutions and imparting training in sophisticated technologies to support and promote biological science, education and research has laid the required foundational base for promoting biotechnology startups in a big way. Traditional knowledge of the indigenous communities on forests, ecology, biomedicines, etc., is very rich, which is an added advantage. Compilation of People’s Biodiversity Registers in the region is a visionary initiative to document these traditional knowledges in addition to documenting the rich biodiversity and how the indigenous communities, who are the guardians of the biodiversity, apply their traditional knowledge for sustainable growth. The challenge remains formalisation of the traditional knowledge through formal education so that they are not lost. In the traditional way of life in the region, traditional knowledge

such as traditional medicine, preservation of climate-resilient seeds, and carbon-neutral practices are passed on from one generation to the next orally and by making those integral to their customary practices, traditional farming and other daily activities. The spread of modern education has led to the shrinking of the space for the continuance of traditional knowledge, as the syllabus and course curriculum are not aligned with traditional knowledge.

The persistence of this gap calls for reviewing the syllabuses at the school, college and university levels in the region to ensure that traditional knowledge, which can play a crucial role in the strengthening of bioeconomy and biotechnological innovation and research, continues to be passed from one generation to the next even through the formal education system. Encouraging students right from their school days to make use of their traditional knowledge and their application for natural resource and biodiversity use in their daily life can motivate them to explore the larger economic potential and nurture the entrepreneurial ambition to leverage the opportunities created by central government initiatives like

the Bio-RIDE scheme or similar schemes adopted by state governments in the region. Supporting the educational institutions to establish biodiversity laboratories, providing adequate grants to academic and research institutions to undertake research in a big way and roping in pharmaceutical and other biotechnological companies to impart skill training for industrial innovation in the biodiversity sector is crucial to give a big push to the formalisation of traditional knowledge. Educational and research-based activities on biodiversity knowledge enhancement can be meaningful only when they are taken to the next level of commercial-scale economic activities to augment the income of farm households and generate employment avenues and new livelihood opportunities around sustainable use of biodiversity resources of the region. Creating the forward linkage for biotechnological products from start-ups in the region is central to turning laboratory inventions and industry-driven biotech ideas from prototypes to industrial products. Judicious and timely utilisation of the earmarked budget is essential for biotech startups to thrive beyond incubation.

Can anyone stop Jordan Bardella in France? A crowded field could gift the election to the far right

Wanted: politician capable of appealing to the moderate right, centre and moderate left to beat hard-right populist Jordan Bardella in the run-off of France’s 2027 presidential election. The search began in earnest after last month’s municipal elections, in which the left held on to most big cities while conservatives or the far-right National Rally (RN) hoovered up smaller towns. This year will be a marathon race to select a single candidate to face Bardella, 30, or his patron, Marine Le Pen, 57, in the final round. Le Pen remains ineligible unless an appeals court in July overturns her sentence for embezzlement of EU funds.

All opinion polls give the anti-immigration, Eurosceptic RN a sizeable lead in voting intentions for the first round. Bardella, the party’s smooth-talking but inexperienced leader, is polling as high as 38%. Barring a miracle, he seems sure of a place in the run-off. That leaves only one slot for a candidate who can reconcile mainstream conservative and liberal centrist supporters of outgoing President Emmanuel Macron, and then win over sufficient socialist, green and even radical-left voters.

The next year will be a battle to decide whose name will be on the ballot paper. The left is hopelessly divided between radical France Unbowed leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon and other centre-left groups from the socialists to the greens and com-

munists. The chances of them uniting behind a single progressive candidate are close to zero. Mélenchon, 74, dug deeper trenches during the municipal campaign, being accused of “intolerable antisemitism” by leading figures in the Socialist party, and refusing to dissociate himself from a militant group implicated in the videoed kicking to death of a young far-right activist. He seems certain to make a third presidential run next year. Polls suggest he would win enough votes to prevent any other leftwing contender reaching the second round, but not enough to reach the run-off himself unless the centre right is splintered, too. All surveys show Bardella defeating Mélenchon by a wide margin if the leftist firebrand were his opponent, since many centrist or moderate left voters would abstain.

On the centre left, there is no natural candidate, but both Raphaël Glucksmann, 46, and ex-president François Hollande, 71, are considering running. The intellectual Glucksmann, who led the socialists’ campaign for the European Parliament elections in 2024, appeals to urban professionals but not to working-class and rural voters. Hollande’s biggest handicap is his mediocre record in office from 2012-2017, which left him so unpopular that he was eclipsed by Macron, his former aide and economics minister, and decided not to seek a second term.

On the centre right, one candidate



emerged with his fortunes enhanced by the municipal voting – former prime minister Edouard Philippe, 55, leader of the centre-right Horizons party, who was re-elected mayor of Le Havre. A couple of recent polls have suggested that Philippe would narrowly beat Bardella in a run-off. No one else comes close. That puts the former Gaullist, who was Macron’s first premier, in the perilous position of early frontrunner in the presidential race. French politics, much like the Tour de France cycle classic, rarely sees the early leader end up wearing the victor’s yellow jersey by the time the race reaches its climax on the Champs-Élysées. There are

hazardous mountain stages in between. Given that the French were in a sullen, anti-establishment mood even before the inflation shock from the Iran war kicked in, it’s safer to be an outsider than the man to beat at the front of the race at this stage. So instead of building on his momentum from the local elections, Philippe has postponed plans to start national campaigning and decided to bide his time till after the summer. He is diligently performing mayoral duties while occasionally commenting on national or international affairs to remind voters he is “en réserve de la République” (on call for the republic). That, however, leaves

space for other centre-right wannabes to push themselves forward. The ambitious leader of the centrist Renaissance party, Gabriel Attal, 37, another former prime minister, is preparing a presidential bid that could split Macron’s much-diminished centrist camp, though polls suggest he lags well behind Philippe. Bruno Retailleau, 65, who leads the rump of the once-mighty Gaullist party, now known as Les Républicains, threw his hat in the ring in February. A conservative, Roman Catholic, law and order politician who sought to crack down on irregular migration during a stint as Macron’s interior minister, Retailleau wants his party to nominate him in an internal referendum this month. But he faces opposition from his eternal rival, Laurent Wauquiez, 51, the party’s parliamentary floor leader, and from several other Gaullist presidential hopefuls. Wauquiez has proposed staging a primary to pick a single candidate from the centre to the far right (except the RN), but at this stage, only second-rank figures such as far rightist Sarah Knafo, 32, and her anti-Islam companion and former presidential candidate Éric Zemmour, 67, have shown interest. Philippe dismissed the idea as absurd. The centre right and centre left have held primaries before, but as French politics has become more fragmented and polarised, such contests no longer offer the same unifying legitimacy as in previous elections. Meanwhile, a

couple of elder statesmen are using TV punditry to tout their credentials as potential “hommes providentiels”. Dominique de Villepin, 72, still cuts a swashbuckling figure as the former foreign minister who dared to say “non” to the US invasion of Iraq at the United Nations in 2003. Since leaving office as prime minister in 2007, he has made money as a consultant to a Chinese private investment group, but returned to the domestic scene last year, creating a micro-party called Humanist France to back his presidential ambitions. Thierry Breton, 71, ticks several boxes as a providential outsider. He drove Europe’s tech regulation and defence effort as an energetic EU commissioner before being forced out by commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, who is disliked in France. He clashed with Elon Musk on tech regulation and was banned by the Trump administration from entering the US. In an earlier life, he was a chief executive of technology and telecoms companies, and finance minister under President Jacques Chirac. But he lacks a political machine of his own. Picking a single champion to keep the RN out of the Élysée Palace is a conundrum French politicians seem incapable of resolving. The more of them that choose to contest the first round rather than unite behind the best-placed candidate, the more likely it is that Bardella will be the next president.

Shoplifting rife, police overwhelmed, an angry public – the trail leads back to one person: Theresa May

No, the world isn’t going to hell in a handcart. But yes, a good many items are being stolen – in plain view, with apparent impunity – from the shelves at Tesco, M&S and all the major high-street stores. It’s a huge loss for the shops, and as political types discuss whether Britain is broken, a hot potato: a coming-to-a-store-near-you symbol of a nation in which so many feel that law and order is just a US cop show on Channel 5.

As a former police officer, having been a chief superintendent during 30 years in the Met and having sat on the London policing board, I often reflect with former colleagues on why we are where we are in terms of policing and public confidence – and how we dealt with shoplifting during our time in the force.

When I was a probationer PC in Tottenham, north London, I regularly attended calls to shops to arrest shoplifters. It was called GIC: given into custody. New PCs cut their

teeth on policing based on shoplifting offences: arresting, reciting the caution, recording property, escorting a prisoner to the police station, booking them into custody, interviewing them, charging them and then going to court. It was valuable experience for new officers, good for the shops and good for society.

Where we stand today shows how deterioration and decline has set in, and were you to ask when and how it started and who is responsible, my reply would be unequivocal: j’accuse Theresa May, now Baroness May, the longest-serving home secretary of modern times. May, who was in the post from 2010 to 2016, and her governmental band of ill-advised advisers, made five key decisions that have had a profound and deleterious impact on policing today.

First, the reduction of police numbers in England and Wales by almost 22,000 officers and more than 20,000

police staff – which included police community support officers (PCSOs) – was plain wrong. These huge reductions meant that police leaders had to make some difficult decisions on where the cuts were going to be implemented. In the end, most forces decided to gut their neighbourhood police teams in order to maintain capacity to answer 999 calls. This meant that safer neighbourhood teams – such as those I introduced in Tower Hamlets, east London, consisting of one sergeant, two police constables and three PCSOs – were reduced to a model of shared supervisors and teams required to simultaneously fulfil other roles. The opportunities for officers to work with local people and identify problems that would be jointly solved were reduced – and communities’ confidence in policing suffered.

May’s second offence was the hyper-politicisation of policing, with the introduction

of police and crime commissioners (PCCs) in England and Wales in 2012. PCCs – whose positions are soon to be abolished – are elected officials whose role is to oversee local policing, set budgets and select chief constables. The first election of PCCs attracted just 15% of voters, and once in position, the incumbents largely sided with their respective home secretary or shadow home secretary, regardless of local issues.

The chair of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, Donna Jones from Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, said about the far-right rioters in the summer of 2024: “The commonality among the protest groups appears to be focused on three key areas: the desire to protect Britain’s sovereignty, the need to uphold British values and, in order to do this, stop illegal immigration. The government must acknowledge what is causing this civil unrest in order to prevent it.

Arresting people, or creating violent disorder units, is treating the symptom and not the cause.” Neither this nor the clarification she later released amounted to the necessary endorsement of the hardworking officers in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight who were being attacked. Third on the charge sheet: the introduction of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. This legislation decreed that in England and Wales the shoplifting of goods valued at £200 or less would become a “summary-only offence”. Now, in practice, offenders are charged via a letter in the post and have the option of a fine instead of custody. With that, police have lost the opportunity to arrest and search suspects, as well as vehicles and properties they are associated with. Hardened criminals play the system by stealing items under £200 and ignoring letters and fines. May and her team fundamentally misunderstood that this



feeble attempt to change how police dealt with shoplifting – by looking at it through a “best value” lens as opposed to a policing one – would only embolden thieves to steal with impunity. Fourth, May failed to listen to the experts who said that reductions in policing would result in an increase in crime. At the Police Federation of England and Wales’s annual conference in 2015, she said: “So please – for your sake and for the thousands of police officers who work so

hard every day – this crying wolf has to stop.” No surprise, the wolf is here.

Finally, the shake-up of police leadership meant that, for a period, the most senior officers chosen by crime commissioners lacked experience of working in different forces. So PCCs with little experience were choosing leaders who themselves had limited experience. The politicians’ yen to introduce an officer class meant that people with no background in

policing were able to join as direct entrants. People who in my humble opinion were totally unsuitable were contacting me about becoming direct-entry superintendents. My daughter suggested that I might just as well contact my local hospital and ask for direct entry into heart surgery. So what now? We’ve fallen a long way, but some simple things should help. Introduce stability in police numbers. Do not reduce the rank and file and assume there will be no adverse impact on crime figures. Invest again in neighbourhood policing, and ensure that a ringfenced allocation of local officers and PCSOs can work in partnership to problem-solve and start rebuilding confidence among local communities and businesses.

We must have confidence in police officers. Politicians and their advisers need to work in tandem to restore public faith in policing, starting with a drive against shoplifting. As for the May era: never again.

APAs may remain relevant despite expanded safe harbour regime

New Delhi: Following the expansion of the safe harbour regime in Union Budget 2026, experts say advance pricing agreements (APAs) will continue to remain relevant. This could particularly be the case for large corporations with complex structures, as they offer flexibility, multi-year certainty, and alignment with foreign tax jurisdictions. An Advance Pricing Agreement (APA) is an arrangement wherein a company and the tax department agree in advance on how prices will be set for transactions between related companies across countries (also called transfer pricing), so as to avoid disputes later.

The Centre in Budget 2026 rationalised the safe harbour regime by introducing a uniform mark-up of 15.5 per cent on oper-



ating costs for all Indian entities providing information technology (IT) services (including software development, IT enabled services or ITeS, knowledge process outsourcing or KPO, and software-related contract research & development) to associated enterprises, along with a significantly relaxed revenue threshold of ₹2,000 crore and a simplified single-category approach valid for five years. The safe harbour regime features a pre-determined profit mar-

gin for certain transactions. Complementing this, a new safe harbour provision of 15 per cent on costs has also been introduced for resident Indian entities rendering data centre services to their related foreign enterprises, typically supporting global cloud operations. In addition, on March 24, the Centre also issued an office memorandum allowing taxpayers to opt for the revised safe harbour regime from their APA framework, adding flexibility to the system.

Suzlon, BHEL, Tata Power, Waaree Energies, JSW Energy, others: Buy, sell or hold



Mumbai: According to the latest sector update from JM Financial, the country is likely up for a surge in electricity consumption, driven by the arrival of El Niño and a pre-monsoon heatwave expected to kick off by mid-May. The brokerage noted that on March 10, the country recorded its highest-ever March peak, touching 238GW during solar hours and 224.6GW in the evening. “A sudden weather disturbance (1,000km rare cloud formation) dampened solar/non-solar hours peak demand by 40/20GW within a period of 10 days,” JM Financial said.

IEX Real-Time Market recorded clearing prices as low as Rs 0.0002 per unit on March 22—the lowest seen since the market’s inception in June 2000, it noted. JM Financial anticipates a shortfall in hydro generation (negative for NHPC Ltd, SJVN Ltd) and an increase in coal-fired generation (positive for NTPC Ltd, Adani Power Ltd), noting that “extension of Section-11

(Tata Mundra) and high merchant prices (Adani Green, Adani Power), subject to downside risk from any slowdown due to the prolonged West Asia conflict.”

Target price & ratings Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) and Suzlon Energy Ltd both have a ‘Buy’ call with targets of Rs 345 and Rs 64, respectively. ACME So-

lar Holdings (ACME) and Emmvee Photovoltaic Power (Emmvee) also land ‘Buy’ ratings with target prices set at Rs 289 and Rs 291, while CESC Ltd gets a ‘Buy’ with a target of Rs 196.

JM Financial suggested an ‘Add’ on the Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) with a target of Rs 145, NHPC Ltd, ‘Add’ rating at Rs 84,

Inox Wind Ltd also has an ‘Add’ rating with a target of Rs 120, and Vikram Solar Ltd (‘Add’, Rs 202). Conversely, the brokerage has assigned a ‘Reduce’ rating on Coal India Ltd with a target of Rs 420, Torrent Power Ltd at Rs 1,410, Waaree Energies Ltd (Reduce) target at Rs 2,815, and Premier Energies Ltd at Rs 865. SJVN Ltd has been given a ‘Sell’ rating with a target price of Rs 67.

Among the power generation and transmission giants, the brokerage holds a ‘Buy’ rating on NTPC Ltd with a target price of Rs 420, Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd with a target of Rs 314, and Tata Power Company Ltd with a target of Rs 429. JSW Energy Ltd is also rated ‘Buy’ with a target of Rs 614. The Adani group’s energy pack features, with ‘Buy’ calls on Adani Power Ltd at a target of Rs 177, Adani Green Energy Ltd at a target price of Rs 1,204, and Adani Energy Solutions Ltd at Rs 1,199.

IMF cuts West Asia, North Africa growth forecast to 1.1%

Mumbai: According to the latest sector update from JM Financial, the country is likely up for a surge in electricity consumption, driven by the arrival of El Niño and a pre-monsoon heatwave expected to kick off by mid-May. The brokerage noted that on March 10, the country recorded its highest-ever March peak, touching 238GW during solar hours and 224.6GW in the evening. “A sudden weather disturbance (1,000km rare cloud formation) dampened solar/non-solar hours peak demand by 40/20GW within a period of 10 days,” JM Financial said.

IEX Real-Time Market recorded clearing prices as low as Rs 0.0002 per unit on March 22—the lowest seen since the market’s inception in June 2000, it noted. JM Financial anticipates a shortfall in hydro generation (negative for NHPC Ltd, SJVN Ltd) and an increase in coal-fired generation (positive for NTPC Ltd, Adani Power Ltd), noting that “extension of Section-11 (Tata Mundra) and high merchant prices (Adani Green, Adani Power), subject to downside risk from any slowdown due to the prolonged West Asia conflict.”



Target price & ratings Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) and Suzlon Energy Ltd both have a ‘Buy’ call with targets of Rs 345 and Rs 64, respectively. ACME Solar Holdings (ACME) and Emmvee Photovoltaic Power (Emmvee) also land ‘Buy’ ratings with target prices set at Rs 289 and Rs 291, while CESC Ltd gets a ‘Buy’ with a target of Rs 196.

JM Financial suggested an ‘Add’ on the Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) with a target of Rs 145, NHPC Ltd, ‘Add’ rating at Rs 84, Inox Wind Ltd also has an ‘Add’ rating with a target of Rs 120, and Vikram Solar Ltd (‘Add’, Rs 202). Conversely, the brokerage has assigned a ‘Reduce’ rating on Coal India Ltd with a target of Rs 420, Torrent Power Ltd at Rs 1,410, Waaree Energies Ltd (Reduce) target at Rs 2,815, and Premier Energies Ltd at Rs 865. SJVN Ltd has been given a ‘Sell’ rating with a target price of Rs 67.

Among the power generation and transmission giants, the brokerage holds a ‘Buy’ rating on NTPC Ltd with a target price of Rs 420, Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd with a target of Rs 314, and Tata Power Company Ltd with a target of Rs 429. JSW Energy Ltd is also rated ‘Buy’ with a target of Rs 614.

The Adani group’s energy pack features, with ‘Buy’ calls on Adani Power Ltd at a target of Rs 177, Adani Green Energy Ltd at a target price of Rs 1,204, and Adani Energy Solutions Ltd at Rs 1,199.

Apple almost banned the Grok app; xAI was compelled to correct infractions

Mumbai: xAI’s Grok was close to getting banned from Apple’s App Store after its controversy over sexually explicit deepfakes generated by the chatbot. According to an NBC report, Apple found X and Grok AI chatbot violating App Store guidelines, and also threatened the company to take down the Grok app from its App Store listing. However, all of this happened behind the scenes, and Apple did not issue a public statement regarding the violation of its App Store guidelines by the AI chatbot. The company reportedly reached out to the teams behind X and Grok after complaints and media reports about the controversy. Apple asked the teams to build a clear plan to control and moderate harmful content on the app. While xAI submitted an updated proposal, Apple rejected it, stating that the content moderation improvements did not go far enough. X again submitted a revised proposal, but only one of them was approved. The report quoted Apple’s letter to US senators saying, “Apple reviewed the next submissions made by the developers and determined that X had substantially resolved its violations, but the Grok app remained out of compliance. As a result, we rejected the Grok submission and notified the developer that additional changes to remedy the violation would be required, or the app could be removed from the App Store.” “Following further engagement and changes by the



Grok developer, we determined that Grok had substantially improved and therefore approved its latest submission,” the letter added. The aftermath of the Grok deepfake controversy drew attention from three U.S. senators: Ron Wyden, Ben Ray Lujan, and Edward Markey urged Apple and Google to remove the X app and the Grok chatbot from their app stores.

In addition, the Indian government also issued a strict notice to X, which led to the removal of 3,500 posts, and the platform also blocked 600 accounts. However, the government was still not satisfied with X’s earlier response to a notice. Similar actions were reported from the UK, Malaysia and Indonesia, where X faced a temporary ban.

Investors should decide whether to buy, sell, or keep Tata Motors PV shares

New Delhi: Tata Motors Passenger Vehicle Ltd (TMPV) continues to demonstrate strong growth momentum in the domestic market, supported by a robust product pipeline and leadership in the electric vehicle (EV) segment. ICICI Direct said, “Tata Motors’ domestic passenger vehicle business is entering a structurally stronger growth phase supported by a robust product pipeline, improving market share, and leadership in India’s fast-growing EV segment. The company delivered record quarterly volumes in Q4FY26 with a 37% YoY growth and improved its market share to end FY26 with 13% share, reflecting strong traction for key models such as Nexon and Punch. Recent launches of Sierra, refreshed Punch and petrol version of Harrier & Safari continue to see progressive growth in customer traction, across bookings, enquiries and deliveries. In addition, Tata Motors remains the dominant player in India’s EV market with roughly mid-40% market share, supported by a diversified EV portfolio across price points and increasing consumer acceptance, leading to the highest-ever EV volumes of ~27K, a 69% YoY growth in Q4’26. With EV penetration in its portfolio rising and continued expansion of charging infrastructure and value propositions such as lifetime battery warranties, Tata Motors is well positioned to benefit from India’s long-term electrification trend.” On the global front, JLR’s performance has faced temporary setbacks due to external factors,



though recovery signs are emerging. Balancing strong domestic growth with global uncertainties, ICICI Direct maintained a neutral outlook. It said, “Given uncertain demand & margin recovery at JLR despite robust volume growth at Indian operations as well as increasing leverage on B/S, we assign HOLD rating on the stock and value it at Rs 370 on SOTP basis (10x/1.5x EV/EBITDA to India/JLR business FY28E).”

The brokerage noted, “While JLR’s near-term performance has been impacted by the cyber incident, global macro pressures, and weakness in China’s luxury auto market, the underlying brand strength and product strategy remain intact. The production disruption in Q3 resulted in temporary volume and profitability pressure; however, management indicated that production across key plants has

already normalised and as a result, Q4 volumes rose significantly with a 61% QoQ growth. Importantly, JLR is entering a significant product cycle over the next two years, including the launch of Range Rover Electric, new Jaguar models, and vehicles based on the next-generation EMA platform. In addition, core models such as Range Rover, Range Rover Sport.

Defender continue to command strong global demand and maintain high average selling prices, reinforcing the brand’s premium positioning. Over the medium term, however, given the global geo-political tensions, supply chain issues and rise in key commodity costs, we expect volumes & margin recovery to lag the ambitious capex cycle embarked by JLR, thereby straining the B/S and limiting the upsidess.”

Air India seeks funds Tata, Singapore Air after ₹22,000 crore loss

New Delhi: Air India Ltd. racked up a wider-than-expected annual loss of more than ₹22,000 crore (\$2.4 billion), prompting the company to seek financial aid from its shareholders, according to people familiar with the situation.

The loss for the fiscal year ended March 31 — a period punctuated by the deadly crash of a Boeing Co. 787 Dreamliner, the closure of Pakistani airspace to Indian carriers and West Asia conflict — is larger than \$1.6 billion internal company loss estimate reported by Bloomberg News in January.

Air India’s controlling shareholder, Tata Group, as well as Singapore Airlines Ltd. — which owns 25.1 per cent in the carrier — are in talks to inject some much-needed cash, said the people, who asked not to be identified discussing private information. The size of the infusion is still being discussed but may be less than what the carrier needs, meaning Air India would have to look for other financing options, the people said. Representatives for Tata Group and Air India didn’t respond to an email seeking comments while



Singapore Air declined to comment. The record loss comes at a critical juncture for Air India. Chief Executive Officer Campbell Wilson last week announced his intention to step down later this year. The airline was ranked worst for safety issues in the aviation regulator’s latest annual audit, and despite ambitious fleet expansion plans has struggled to lift yields and improve service to desired levels. The airline had started the fiscal year on a positive note, posting operating profits in the first few weeks of April 2025, the people said. That turned after Pakistan closed its

airspace to Indian airlines following a brief conflict in May, forcing them into longer routes to the US and Europe. A deadly crash in June of a Boeing Dreamliner, which killed more than 240 people, sent the carrier reeling, prompting it to reduce international and domestic services.

US President Donald Trump’s punitive tariffs on India and a crackdown on foreign worker visas also hit the carrier’s bottom line, the people said.

The rolling crises have thwarted the airline’s target to break even operationally in the fiscal year ended March 31. Air India has

also been one of the foreign carriers most affected by the outbreak of hostilities in West Asia — a region which accounts for 16 per cent of its total capacity and which is now largely grounded, the people said. The conflict has further impacted flights to Europe and America, which now must take longer, more costly routes at a time when jet fuel prices have surged. Singapore Air, which took a minority stake in Air India after merging local affiliate Vistara with the carrier in 2024, has seen its own earnings dragged down by the worsening performance.

The US Department of Justice files to reverse the convictions of members of far-right groups on January 6



Washington: Members of the far-right organizations Proud Boys and the Oath Keepers were convicted guilty of seditious conspiracy in connection with the violent siege of the US Capitol in 2021. The US Department of Justice has asked a federal appeals judge to reverse these convictions.On Tuesday, Jeanine Pirro, the US attorney for the District of Columbia appointed by Donald Trump, signed separate motions to overturn convictions for a number of people, including Stewart Rhodes, a former lawyer who founded the Oath

Keepers militia, and Ethan Nordean and Joseph Biggs, leaders of the Proud Boys. The documents are the most recent action taken by the Trump administration to clear the January 6 rioters, who stormed the US Capitol in a last-ditch effort to overturn Joe Biden’s victory over Trump in the 2020 election. The rioters were mostly Trump supporters. Following their attempts to prevent a peaceful transfer of power, a number of members of the two far-right factions received prison sentences. Enrique Tarrio, the former chair-

man of the Proud Boys, received the longest prison sentence—22 years. However, Tarrio was released from prison in January 2025, when Trump, on the first day of his second term, issued sweeping pardons and commutations to roughly 1,600 people who had been charged related to the Capitol mob attack. Several Proud Boys and Oath Keepers’ leaders were granted clemency as part of that action.Tuesday’s filing would erase the convictions from their records. The move to abandon the convictions represented a stunning reversal from

the Biden administration, which hailed the guilty verdicts as a crucial victory in its bid to hold accountable those responsible for what prosecutors described as an attack on the heart of American democracy. The Trump administration has sought to re-write the history of that attack, portraying the rioters as patriots and peaceful protesters, being used as pawns by his political rivals, and repeating baseless claims of widespread election fraud.“In truth, it was the Democrats who staged the real insurrection by certifying a fraud-ridden election, ignoring widespread irregularities, and weaponizing federal agencies to hunt down dissenters,” reads a paragraph from the White House’s web page on January 6.Over 100 law enforcement officers were injured during the attack, including one who suffered a heart attack after being tased by a stun gun and one who was stabbed with a metal fence stake, according to a 2021 bipartisan Senate report examining the January 6 security response.

Four officers who responded to the attack later died by suicide.

Why apartheid victims’ families are still looking for answers

Africa: On June 27, 1985, darkness descended as Fort Calata, Matthew Goniwe, Sicelo Mhlauli, and Sparrow Mkonto began the 150-mile journey back from an anti-apartheid gathering in Port Elizabeth, now known as Gqeberha, South Africa. They were never able to return home.Three white security police officials stopped the four guys about an hour into their trip as the route curved north from the coast towards their hometown of Cradock (now known as Nxuba). After being handcuffed, they were driven back to Gqeberha. Following a scuffle with one of the officers, Mkonto was shot. The other three took a blow to the head from behind. To create the appearance of a vigilante attack, three black officers joined their colleagues and repeatedly stabbed their bodies. At last, the bodies were burned. One of Mhlauli’s hands was absent when his body was discovered.The deaths of the four men, who came to be known as the Cradock Four, served as a metaphor for the brutality and callousness of apartheid. In 1994, democracy was established, but it did not provide the families with the justice they were looking for or information regarding whether the murders were approved by the highest authorities.The families are still fighting more than 40 years later, and their battle has come to represent the shortcomings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), whose hearings started on April 15, 1996, 30 years ago.The purpose of the TRC, which was headed by the late Nobel Peace Prize winner Desmond Tutu, was to expose human rights abuses by the apartheid government and the organizations that opposed it. It either granted or refused amnesty to those who admitted their crimes. Successive governments led by the African National Congress liberation movement failed to pursue hundreds of cases referred to state prosecutors by the TRC. Victims’ families have accused the former presidents Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma of striking a deal with apartheid generals to bury the cases in exchange for atrocities committed by ANC members during the struggle not being pursued in court.Mbeki, who was president from 1999 to 2008, has denied stopping the TRC cases. He and Zuma, who was president from 2009 to 2018, have tried to halt a judicial inquiry into whether there was political interference with prosecutions. In the case of the Cradock Four, a 1987 inquest concluded they were killed by “unknown persons”. A second inquest in 1993 said “members of the security forces” were responsible but did not name any specific perpetrators.It was only at the TRC that the three white police officers admitted to the murders, in an attempt to evade prosecution, and another three admitted to planning or ordering them. All



were denied amnesty by the TRC and all have since died. The three black police officers were killed by security forces in a car bombing in 1989 amid fears that they would reveal the truth about the murders.A third inquest into the Cradock Four killings opened in June last year, after the families had put the government under sustained pressure for years. Their question remained: why, when they had been denied amnesty by the TRC, were the killers not prosecuted decades earlier? The TRC’s first hearings were in East London (now KuGompo City), 180 miles up the coast from Gqeberha. For many victims and their relatives, this was their first chance to speak publicly about their suffering. On the second day of hearings, Nomonde Calata, the widow of Fort Calata, broke down. Her cries of anguish were watched by millions via the national broadcaster SABC.After her husband’s death, aged 28, Calata had stopped herself from crying. “[I thought] the enemy will laugh at me when they see my sadness,” she said in an interview on 22 March, sitting with her son Lukhanyo in a Gqeberha hotel before a week of hearings in the third inquest. “So when I went to the TRC, I just couldn’t hold the cry in me and the pain.”The National party came to power in 1948, enforcing racial discrimination and segregation and pushing white Afrikaner nationalism. But the TRC only covered 1960 to 1994. Nonetheless, it took the testimonies of about 21,000 victims, of whom 2,000 testified publicly. In dozens of hearings that lasted until June 1997, they spoke of torture, abduction, disappearances and killings. The process gripped South Africa.So too did the appearances of some apartheid security police, who admitted to violations in an attempt to escape prosecution. They included Eugene de Kock, who led the Vlakplaas assassination squad and was known as “Prime Evil”.In October 1996, De Kock was convicted of six murders and sentenced to 212 years in prison. A year later, he testified at

the TRC, expressing bitterness that apartheid generals and politicians had not also taken responsibility. The hearings for amnesty continued until 2000. 849 of the more than 7,000 amnesty petitions were approved.The SABC’s weekly Sunday evening TRC Special Report was hosted by Max du Preez. As the editor of the progressive weekly Vrye Weekblad, an Afrikaner himself, he had revealed many of the atrocities of apartheid during its final years.After 1994, we anticipated a denial of apartheid. However, we never had it. And I believe it was greatly influenced by witnessing the amnesty seekers confess to all of these offenses,” he stated. “You couldn’t later deny that apartheid was a brutal, evil system if you were any kind of sensible person. That was crucial, in my opinion. However, Yasmin Sooka, a TRC commissioner and human rights lawyer, said the commission did not properly expose the systemic nature of apartheid. “The politicians, from the outset when they appeared, made it clear, particularly Mr De Klerk [Fw de Klerk, the last apartheid president], that he was not going to take responsibility for their actions,” she said. “That did mar the process. It certainly affected the questions of disclosure.”The TRC provided powerful moments of catharsis, truth-telling and accountability. But, as disappointment with the ANC has grown in the 32 years it has led South Africa amid persistent inequality, poverty and corruption, so too have criticisms of the TRC’s scope.Zanele Mji was just eight years old when hearings began, absorbing an idealised version of reconciliation as promoted by Tutu. But as she grew up, becoming an investigative journalist, she realised the TRC’s limitations. “The violence was how [apartheid] was enforced,” she said. “But what it actually was, no one was ever tried for that. Land, education, housing – all these things that still really hold South Africa back today.”

According to a think organization, Cuba could overcome the US energy blockade by investing \$8 billion in renewable energy



Cuba: With just a \$8 billion investment in renewable energy, Cuba could permanently overcome the US’s crushing energy blockade. And it should be paid for by the rest of the globe.These are the audacious assertions of a think tank examination of the troubled communist republic’s energy program, which asserts that Cuba may lead its neighbors in the Caribbean to a sustainable energy future.According to the analysis, about \$8 billion (£5.9 billion) could be used to build out enough renewable energy to meet 93.4% of Cuba’s electricity generation needs. Cuba has the potential to become the first Caribbean nation with a fully renewable energy grid for less than \$20 billion. The ideas coincide with the United States’ weeks-long

energy boycott on Cuba and its communist government, which Washington says has a “malign influence” on the area.After Donald Trump imposed an executive order imposing trade tariffs on any countries that delivered oil to the island nation, Cuba has only received one cargo of oil from Russia since January.Ten million people were subjected to frequent blackouts as a result of the failure of the country’s electric grid by March.As Trump proclaimed, “I do believe I’ll be... having the honor of taking Cuba,” transportation and industry came to a complete stop and hospital intensive care units lost power. Analysis by the Common Wealth thinktank’s Transition Security Project (TSP) outlines how Cuba could gain complete energy inde-

pendence from its volatile neighbour by transforming its grid to run from renewable energy, which would not only eliminate its vulnerability but also serve as a model for the region.“The US’s energy dominance strategy seeks to entrench dependence on fossil fuels, stall the green transition and strengthen US power,” said Kevin Cashman, a researcher with TSP, who wrote the analysis. But increasingly cheap and scalable solar power and battery storage weaken such a strategy.“For countries like Cuba – with enormous renewable potential, but suffering blackouts and widespread suffering under a cruel and illegal US-imposed energy blockade – a transition to green electricity would reduce US leverage and provide a shining example to the world.”Modelling four different scenarios, the TSP analysis found that a fully renewable grid for Cuba would cost \$19.2bn, but an \$8bn investment would be sufficient to end the country’s reliance on imported fossil fuels. Even a \$5bn rollout would reduce Cuba’s reliance on fossil fuels to just a fifth of electricity generation. Under the most ambitious proposal, three-quarters of electricity generation would be provided by solar, with a

fifth coming from wind and the remainder provided by hydropower and bioenergy. Cheaper scenarios would have greater reliance on bio-energy and wind.“Electricity is cheaper in every renewable investment scenario than in business as usual: the cost per unit of energy falls from 14.3¢ per kWh in the baseline scenario to 12.1¢ with \$1bn of investment, 7.3¢ with \$5bn, 6.5¢ with \$8bn, and 9.9¢ in the fully renewable case,” the report said.The transition would require a society-wide transformation, but Cuba has managed that before: after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 90s, the country rapidly transformed its agricultural system towards agroecology and self-sufficiency.In the past year, the Cuban government has already brought more than 1,000MW of solar online with Chinese financing and assistance. This raises the question of who would foot the bill. According to the paper, “financing this transition should... be understood as reparative climate finance.” The change “would set an important example of a rapid energy transition under conditions of external constraint,” in addition to allowing Cubans to repay investments through savings on less expensive electricity.

Sheinbaum, incensed with Trump for the deaths of migrants, promises to “defend Mexicans at every level”

Americas: Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum has expressed opposition to the Trump administration’s intention to enforce an energy blockade on Cuba, and the Mexican government has expressed concern over the deaths of its citizens in US custody.In an attempt to counter threats of tariffs and US military action against gangs, the progressive Mexican leader has been walking a delicate line with Trump for more than a year, responding to provocations with a measured tone and complying with US requests to crack down on cartels more so than her predecessors.However, Sheinbaum has adopted a tougher stance in response to the growing number of Mexican nationals dying while in the custody of immigration officials and the United States’ blockade of Cuba, a crucial ally of Mexico. Sheinbaum’s latest rebuke came on Tuesday, a day after 49-year-old Mexican citizen Alejandro Cabrera Clemente died in an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency detention centre in Louisiana. The incident was the fifteenth death of a Mexican citizen in US custody in little over a

year.Mexico’s government quickly called the deaths “unacceptable” and the ICE detention centres “incompatible with human rights standards and the protection of life”.Sheinbaum said on Tuesday that she requested investigations into the deaths of the 15 migrants, and instructed Mexican consulates to visit detention centres daily.Her government would raise the deaths in detention centres to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and was considering appealing to the UN, she said. “We are going to defend Mexicans at every level,” Sheinbaum said, adding that “there are many Mexicans whose only crime is not having papers”. The White House offered no comment on Tuesday about Sheinbaum’s tougher stance, nor did it comment on the rising number of deaths of Mexican nationals in ICE custody. Sheinbaum has maintained what she has described as a “cool head” to provocations by Trump, who has exerted more pressure on Latin America than any US leader in decades. In just a few months, the Trump administration deposed Venezuela’s president, imposed

an oil blockade on Cuba and threatened military intervention against Mexican cartels.She has had to balance maintaining a strong relationship with Trump while repeatedly stressing Mexico’s sovereignty to appease her own base. Her government has come down harder on cartels than her predecessor and bolstered trade relations ahead of renegotiations of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA, free trade agreement.While Trump has taken public jabs at Sheinbaum – at one point suggesting cartels have greater control over Mexico than her government – he’s also regularly made nods to their amicable relationship. “She is really a nice person, I like her a lot,” he said last month.The main point of contention between the two governments has been Cuba. Solidarity with the US adversary has been a cornerstone of Mexico’s political ethos since the Cuban revolution.The relationship hit a hurdle in late January, when Trump announced he would slap tariffs on any country that sends oil to Cuba. The move directly affected Mexico, which for years

has shipped oil to Cuba. While Sheinbaum reluctantly paused oil shipments to Cuba, she has continued to challenge the Trump administration’s push for regime change.“Mexico has every right to send fuel, whether for humanitarian or commercial reasons,” Sheinbaum said earlier this week. She has accused the US administration of “suffocating” Cubans with sanctions and called Trump’s energy blockade of Cuba “unjust.”According to Carin Zissis, vice-president of content strategy for the Council of the Americas, Sheinbaum’s recent bolder tone suggests a calculation that her administration can push back on some politically significant fronts as long as they are also making progress on strengthening trade and satisfying Trump administration requests on security and migration.She and other observers noted that the US has become more reliant on Mexican partners as a result of rising energy prices brought on by the Iran War, which has caused Washington to reconsider any extreme actions against Mexican cartels or Cuba, at least temporarily.

A UN watchdog says that North Korea is quickly developing its nuclear weapons capabilities

North Korea: The chief of the UN’s nuclear inspector has stated that North Korea has made “very serious” progress in producing more nuclear bombs, which is another indication that the dictatorship is attempting to utilize its arsenal to secure its survival.Although some experts doubt North Korea’s assertions that it can miniaturize nuclear warheads to attach them to long-range ballistic missiles, the country is believed to have constructed approximately 50 of them.Rafael Grossi, the president of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), confirmed allegations of a sharp increase in activity at North Korea’s main nuclear site, Yongbyon, during a visit to Seoul, the capital of South Korea, on Wednesday. According to Grossi, Yongbyon is thought to have several dozen nuclear warheads, and development at its 5MW reactor, reprocessing facility, light water reactor, and other facilities has accelerated.The Pyongyang dictatorship has developed what some observers believe is a feasible nuclear capability, including intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) that may reach the US mainland, since executing its first nuclear test in 2006.In spite of UN sanctions, North Korea has advanced its nuclear weapons program under Kim Jong-un, who took office in 2011. This is seen by analysts as an effort to lessen the possibility that the US could one day target the country for regime change. Grossi’s comments came as a US thinktank said North Korea appeared to have complet-

ed a building intended for uranium enrichment at Yongbyon.Beyond Parallel, at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies, said this week that satellite imagery indicated the new facility was nearing operational readiness, South Korea’s Yonhap news agency reported.The thinktank said the suspected new enrichment facility at Yongbyon and another at a site in Kangson near Pyongyang had not been declared to international nuclear authorities.It said production of enriched uranium “would significantly increase the number of nuclear weapons North Korea could possess”.The report matched an assessment issued by the IAEA in June last year in which it said Pyongyang was building an enrichment facility at Yongbyon that could be used to produce weapons-grade material. In March, Grossi said there was no evidence of “significant change” at the North’s main nuclear testing site at Punggye-ri, but added that it was still capable of supporting nuclear tests.He called North Korea’s nuclear programme a “clear violation” of UN security council resolutions, and the agency “continues to maintain its enhanced readiness to play its essential role in verifying [North Korea’s] nuclear programme”.North Korea has not conducted a nuclear test since 2017, but it has demonstrated advances in its missile technology and increased its stockpile of weapons, in line with Kim’s vow last August to pursue a “rapid expansion of nuclearisation”.

6 Delicious Indian Curries That Go Perfectly With Butter Naan



If there is one match made in food heaven, it has to be hot butter naan paired with a rich, flavour-packed curry. Few things in life compare to the comfort of that combination: the naan with its soft, slightly chewy layers and golden, buttery edges, and the curry packed with spices that warm the soul. From creamy paneer butter masala to spicy chicken curry, every bite feels indulgent yet familiar, just like a taste of home. Making these recipes at home is simple, but when it comes to festive gatherings or casual dinners with friends, no slip-ups are necessary. Your favourite food delivery app can come to the rescue and deliver lip-smacking food to your doorstep with just a couple of taps. For those who enjoy cooking and are unsure what to serve with this universal favour-

ite, here are some options that pair beautifully with butter naan.

6 Indian Curries That Taste Incredible With Butter Naan

- 1. Paneer Butter Masala Recipe** A favourite among vegetarians, paneer butter masala is a creamy, tomato-based curry with chunks of soft paneer. The velvety gravy wraps around each bite of naan, offering the perfect balance of tangy, buttery, and mildly spiced flavours. It is indulgent without overwhelming the taste buds, ideal for both vegetarians and non-vegetarians seeking a comforting curry.
- 2. Dal Makhani Recipe** Few vegetarian dishes are as iconic as dal makhani when paired with butter naan. Slow-cooked overnight using whole

black lentils and kidney beans, dal makhani is a Punjabi classic. Its richness from cream and butter mirrors the buttery naan, making each bite feel indulgent. Serve it with a sprinkle of fresh coriander for extra flavour.

3. Chicken Tikka Masala Recipe Globally loved, chicken tikka masala features smoky, charred chicken pieces in a spicy, tangy gravy. The richness of butter naan balances the spiciness while adding a touch of sweetness. For a filling and vibrant meal, this combination is hard to beat. Add a swirl of cream on top to make it restaurant-style.

4. Rogan Josh Recipe Originating from Kashmir, Rogan Josh consists of tender mutton slow-cooked in a yoghurt and spice base. Its strong flavours, deep red colour, and aromatic spices pair perfectly with the mild taste of butter naan. Together, they create a truly indulgent experience. Garnishing with freshly chopped coriander elevates both presentation and aroma.

5. Chhole Recipe This spicy, tangy chickpea curry is a North Indian staple that pairs wonderfully with naan. The slight chewiness of butter naan complements the hearty chickpeas, creating a satisfying, protein-rich meal. Found at roadside dhabas and restaurants alike, this pairing is a classic.

6. Kadai Mushroom Recipe For vegetarians seeking an alternative to paneer, kadai mushroom is a perfect choice. Earthy mushrooms absorb the masala of onions, peppers, and tomatoes, creating a smoky and spicy flavour that works beautifully with butter naan. Lighter than cream-based gravies, it is ideal for an everyday indulgent meal. Garnishing with freshly chopped coriander enhances the flavour and presentation.



Pot Pie Recipes the Whole Family Will Love

From classic chicken pot pie to hearty beef pot pie, these one-pot meals are the definition of hearty comfort food. Pot pie is always delicious—it's comforting and full of complex textures. Filled with hearty meat (like chicken, beef or turkey) and packed with nutritious vegetables, it's a full dinner all in one, and pie crust or puffed pastry adds buttery flavor and flaky texture. Regardless of how you make it, this filling dinner is the definition of family-friendly comfort food. Better yet? It's a classic one-pot meal that cuts down on cleanup. These recipes, which range from traditional to twists on the classic (pretzel topping, anyone?) all share one thing in common: they're sure to satisfy the whole family. This classic dish is as hearty and wholesome as it gets. It's creamy and meaty with bold flavor from fresh thyme, bay leaves and black pepper. Mushrooms, peas, carrots and pearl onions add fresh, vegetal flavor to help round out the rich filling. A buttery, crunchy topping gets baked until golden and

crispy. Prepare the crust. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough with a floured rolling pin into a 12-inch square. Transfer to the prepared baking sheet, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate while you make the filling. Cook the chicken. Combine the chicken broth, peppercorns, thyme sprigs, bay leaves and quartered onion in a large pot over high heat. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer 30 minutes. Add the chicken to the pot. Increase the heat and return to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer until the chicken is just cooked through, 10 to 15 minutes. Using tongs, transfer the chicken to a plate to cool. Strain the stock through a fine-mesh sieve. You'll need 2 1/2 cups for the filling; reserve the rest for another use. When the chicken is cool to the touch, cut it into bite-size chunks and set aside. Make the filling. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Melt the butter in a large skillet over medi-

um heat. Add the pearl onions and carrots and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the mushrooms and peas and cook until softened, another 5 minutes. Stir in 5 tablespoons flour and cook, stirring, 1 more minute. Add 2 1/2 cups chicken stock and the milk, stirring constantly. Cook until thickened, about 5 minutes. Remove the skillet from the heat. Add the chicken and chopped thyme; season with salt and pepper. Form the pot pies. Set out four 2-cup ovenproof bowls or ramekins. Transfer the pastry to a floured surface. Using a paring knife, cut out 4 rounds of dough that are slightly larger than the mouth of the bowls. Place the bowls on a baking sheet and spoon in the filling. Place 1 dough round on each pot pie, pressing the pastry against the side of the bowl to seal. Brush the dough with the beaten egg using a pastry brush. Cut a slit or hole in the center of the dough to vent. Bake until the pastry is puffed and dark golden brown, about 35 minutes.



ins are lightly browned on top and a cake tester comes out clean.

Breakfast Recipes That Make It Easy To Rise and Shine

Start your day right with delicious options like waffles, omelets, granola and more. Maybe it's just us, but the thought of syrup-drenched pancakes (and some bacon and eggs on the side!) make it so much easier to spring out of bed and tackle the day. So, it's no wonder that we've got more than a few great ideas for your morning meal. You'll find something for everyone in this roundup, from healthy breakfasts that'll keep you full and fueled to ones that you can make on the fly and enjoy as you're running out the door. With easy recipes for muffins, French toast, breakfast casseroles and more there's no reason you should ever have to skip breakfast again. Wondering where to start? Try a chaffle. A chaffle is a low-carb, cheese-and-egg-based waffle that's taken the world by storm. One look at its fluffy texture and crispy edges and it's easy to see why. Preheat a waffle iron to medium-high. Whisk the eggs in a large bowl until well beaten and smooth. Whisk in the Cheddar, scallions, parsley, 1/4 teaspoon salt and a few grinds of pepper. Coat the

waffle iron with nonstick cooking spray, then ladle a heaping 1/4 cup of batter into each section. Close the lid and cook until well browned and fluffy, 4 to 5 minutes. Use a small offset spatula or tongs to transfer the chaffles to a serving plate. Repeat with the remaining batter. Top each chaffle with a pat of butter and drizzle with maple syrup. **Blueberry Coffee Cake Muffins** Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Place 16 paper liners in muffin pans. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. With the mixer on low speed, add the eggs 1 at a time, then add the vanilla, sour cream, and milk. In a separate bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. With the mixer on low speed add the flour mixture to the batter and beat until just mixed. Fold in the blueberries with a spatula and be sure the batter is completely mixed. Scoop the batter into the prepared muffin pans, filling each cup just over the top, and bake for 25 to 30 minutes, until the muf-

Kids can eat healthy tiffin options like idli and chapati.



Parents always struggle to pack the proper school lunch. It must be easy to consume in between classes, nutritious, and satisfying. Idlis and chapatis are two popular options in Indian homes. While both are vital, which is the superior school tiffin? Let's make a comparison. A fermented batter of rice and urad dal is used to make idli. It is easy to digest, light, and fluffy. Probiotics that are good for the gut are produced through fermentation, which also improves nutrient absorption. Idli is a good option for kids who require a mild yet stimulating supper because a typical serving is low in calories and fat. Chapati, on the other hand, is made from whole wheat flour and is rich in complex carbohydrates and fibre. It provides slow-releasing energy, keeping children full longer and preventing mid-morning hunger pangs. Chapatis are also a good source of iron and B vitamins. For school lunches, practicality matters. Idlis are bite-sized, non-messy, and easy for children to eat quickly without the need for extra accompaniments. Chapati usually requires a curry or sabzi, which may spill or turn soggy in the lunchbox, though dry curries or a roll-style chapati can work well. While chapati is more filling, it may feel heavy for some children, especially if eaten in a rush. Idlis, being steamed and soft, are lighter on the stomach and easy to digest even when eaten cold. For very active kids who need sustained energy, chapati might be more suitable, but for younger ones, idli is often the easier choice. Both idli and chapati have their place in a healthy school lunch. If you want a light, gut-friendly, quick-to-eat meal, idli is the winner. But if your child needs a filling, energy-packed option to stay full till afternoon, chapati works best. A smart way is to alternate between the two. Pack idlis with chutney or podi for one day and chapati rolls with vegetables the next. This not only balances nutrition but also keeps your child's tiffin exciting.

Cucumber Raita Vs Boondi Raita: Which Is Lighter On The Stomach?

For many of us, raita is a daily staple that complements Indian meals perfectly. It's a great way to balance the spiciness and richness of curries, biryanis and parathas. The best part? There are several different varieties of raita to choose from. Among the many options, cucumber raita and boondi raita are two popular choices. Whether you make them at home or order them via an online food delivery app, they're a great addition to meals. Both have unique flavours and textures, but when it comes to being gentle on the stomach, there are differences worth noting.

Is Cucumber Raita Good For Health?

Cucumber raita is a simple and healthy side dish that combines the freshness of cucumber with the creaminess of curd. Here's why it's good for you: **High Water Content:** According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), cucumbers comprise approximately 96% water, making them one of the most hydrating fruits. This high water content helps keep the body hydrated and supports overall health.

Low In Calories: Cucumber raita is naturally low in calories and fat, making it a lighter choice for those looking to manage their weight. **Aids Digestion:** Additionally, cucumbers are rich in fi-

bre, which aids in smooth digestion and prevents bloating. The cooling effect of cucumber raita on the stomach makes it an ideal side dish, especially after spicy or heavy meals.

Is Boondi Raita Good For Health?

Boondi raita, made by adding fried boondi to yoghurt,

of protein from gram flour, which can be beneficial for overall health. However, the deep-frying process may reduce some of the nutritional benefits. To make healthier boondi, consider baking or air-frying instead of deep-frying them.

Potential Digestive Issues: The combination of fried boondi and yoghurt can cause slight indigestion or bloating in sensitive stomachs. While yoghurt helps balance some of the heaviness, boondi raita may not be as easy to digest as other raita options.

Cucumber Raita Or Boondi Raita? Which Is Lighter On The Stomach?

From the info above, it's clear that between the two, cucumber raita is definitely lighter and easier to digest. Its high-water content, low calorie profile and cooling nature make it ideal for meals or for people with sensitive digestion. Boondi raita, while delicious, is comparatively heavier due to the fried boondis, making it better suited for occasional indulgence rather than daily consumption. So, if you're looking for a guilt-free side dish, cucumber raita is the way to go! Ultimately, whether you choose cucumber raita or boondi raita, the key is to enjoy these delicious side dishes in a way that suits your taste preferences and dietary needs.



Kangana Ranaut Supports Deepika Padukone’s Request for an Eight-Hour Shift

Mumbai: Actor-BJP MP Kangana Ranaut recently said about the issue surrounding the eight-hour work discussion, which was sparked by Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone’s departure from Spirit and the Kalki 2898 AD sequel in 2025.Many celebrities got involved in the months-long controversy by sharing their thoughts on the entertainment industry’s need for set working hours. Kangana Ranaut has expressed support for Deepika Padukone almost a year after the scandal, saying that the Padmaavat star has earned the authority to make decisions, particularly now that she is a new mother.”I don’t think there should be an issue created out of this because if you see where she (Deepika Padukone) is coming from, she has earned that place,” the Queen actress stated. She is the best actress, a mother, and the mother of a daughter. She has earned it if she is eager to put in eight hours of labor today. While working on an Imtiaz Ali movie, Kangana Ranaut remembers a chat she had with Deepika Padukone. When we were together, Deepika mentioned that they were working on Imtiaz’s movie or something. “We have a 12-hour shift,” she stated. I replied that I merely put in ten hours of effort. “That’s amazing,” she says. Because we were fierce at the time, we wouldn’t accept anything less than 12 to 14 hours. We desired it. We were working on it. We were determined to succeed. We desired all of these things and wanted to succeed,” she continued. According to Kangana Ranaut, an actor must first struggle mightily to gain recognition in the



film industry. She added that it was excessive to expect women to work greater hours while taking care of their families and kids.”When you’re new, you’re emerging, and you might be replaced. Your location is unique. Given her current situation, Deepika Padukone is a mother. She needs to take care of her family. Additionally, she has earned the spot where people will remark, “Wait a minute, I want her.” We’ll accommodate her schedule, so it’s acceptable if she arrives for eight hours. “So why not? What are we doing with all the rhetoric about the fertility rate, marriages failing, and everything else? With the kids, we are forcing our ladies to work twice as much, which puts a lot of pressure on them,” she continued. After leaving Sandeep Reddy Vanga’s Spirit because to certain working conditions, such as a request for an eight-hour workday, Deepika Padukone made news. Her withdrawal from the project was also confirmed by the producers of the Kalki 2898

AD sequel months later, claiming that a movie like Kalki part two requires a greater degree of “commitment.” Later, Deepika Padukone addressed the topic, pointing out that because she was a woman, the 8-hour shift was being portrayed as a problem.”It doesn’t matter if being a woman comes across as demanding or anything else. However, it’s no secret that many male superstars in the Indian film industry have been working eight hours a day for years without any media attention! ”It is well known that many male performers have been working eight hours a day for years; I don’t want to mention names now and turn this into a big deal. Many of them just put in eight hours a day, Monday through Friday. “They don’t work on the weekends,” she stated.Deepika Padukone revealed that she will be reuniting with Shah Rukh Khan in Siddharth Anand’s King following her departure from Spirit and Kalki 2898 AD. She also starred alongside Pushpa star Allu Arjun in the film Raaka.

After rejecting Kuch Kuch Hota Hai, Javed Akhtar called Karan Johar Adamant and strange

Mumbai: Javed Akhtar was asked to provide the lyrics for Karan Johar’s first film, Kuch Kuch Hota Hai, prior to lyricist Sameer Anjaan.

After a fight between Karan and Javed, Akhtar left the project.In a recent conversation, Sameer, the lyricist who ultimately wrote the songs for the movie, uncovered the old tale and revealed what really happened between Johar and Javed Akhtar. According to Sameer, Javed Akhtar referred to Karan Johar as “weird” and “adamant” after their argument. ”I see him as a father figure.

I even had a phone conversation with him. “Javed sahab, I hope you don’t feel bad because you are senior to me and I found out that you were supposed to write for this film,” I said to him. Are you writing for it, or are you not?

I would like your permission. “I am not writing it, and I would advise you too not to write for it because the director is strange and stubborn and he doesn’t listen,” he declared. I promised to speak with him later, but if you are doing so, do let me know. “He said, “No, I am not at all doing it, Sameer,”” the lyricist recalls saying to Akhtar.

It’s interesting to note that Sameer received the offer for the Shah Rukh-Kajol movie from Yash Chopra



rather than Karan Johar.”After hearing the narrative, I really enjoyed it. Nothing about the title bothered me. The narrative was excellent. And I was really impressed when I was able to relate to the director’s perspective during the two and a half or three-hour narration. I thought I ought to make this movie. The star cast was excellent. He was also receiving help from Yash (Chopra) ji (Karan). He had spent half of his childhood in Yash ji’s house. He also played a little part in Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge, starring Aditya Chopra. And it was Yash Chopra, not Karan Johar, who called me for the movie. He stated that he only has two lyricists—Bakshi Sahab and me—since Javed Sahab

isn’t writing it, and Karan requested a youthful writer because he doesn’t want to collaborate with a buzurg writer. Karan quickly consented to see me after Yash ji recommended my name, Sameer remarked. ”I obtained the movie in this manner. I made an effort to produce some quality work. It is a gift from God and has been deemed the greatest music of the century,” he continued.

Over time, Kuch Kuch Hota Hai became a pop culture phenomenon after becoming a hit. The movie’s catchy soundtrack is another thing that many remember. Karan Johar’s first significant success as a director came from the love triangle between Kajol, Shah Rukh Khan, and Rani Mukerji.

Daisy Shah reveals that a South African filmmaker forcibly assaulted her

Mumbai: Actor Daisy Shah, who debuted in Bollywood alongside Salman Khan in Jai Ho (2014), has talked candidly about an awkward situation that happened in Mumbai when a filmmaker visited the city to hold auditions.

In an interview with The Free Press Journal, the actor recounted how the director’s actions made her uneasy. ”I was deeply moved by one of the filmmakers in South,” she remarked. He was in Mumbai for a casting. We went to meet him as a group of six or seven girls. He was getting to know everyone of us on an individual basis. However, I didn’t like that he held my hand and caressed me.”I’ve always been nervous about people touch-



ing me,” she continued. I don’t get massages because I dislike being touched, even by women.

It’s a whole other thing when it comes to men. That simply turned me off. I promised to get back to him, but I never did.The actor did not identify the director she was referring to. Before

going into acting, Daisy worked as a choreographer Ganesh Acharya’s assistant and performed as a background dancer in a number of Bollywood songs. She first starred in Kannada films with Bhadra and Bodyguard before becoming well-known in Bollywood with Salman Khan’s Jai Ho

(2014). She went on to participate in dancing reality programs, television appearances, and movies including Hate Story 3 (2015). Daisy most recently appeared in Amjad Khan’s online series Red Room, which also starred Reeva Chaudhary, Amit Gaur, Anuj Sachdeva, and Reena Aggarwal.

In addition to acting, Daisy is highly active on YouTube, where she uses vlogs to share her everyday activities with her followers. At the moment, she has about 50,000 subscribers. In terms of her career, Daisy will play the lead role in a forthcoming thriller helmed by Palash Muchhal that has not yet been given a title. Shreyas Talpade also appears in the movie.

According to Yash, Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Adults is as distinctive and original as the Hollywood movie Sinners



Mumbai: One of the most anticipated movies of the year is Toxic: A Fairytale for Grown-Ups. On June 4, the movie will be released in theaters, marking Kannada star Yash’s big-screen comeback after a four-year hiatus. In an interview with The Movie Report on their YouTube channel, Yash and Ramayana producer Namit Malhotra stated that Yash is eager to introduce Toxic to the public. When asked

about Toxic during the conversation, Yash responded, “Toxic is another unique film, and I think it also has a similar ambition [like Ramayana].”

Namit and I have the same goal of showcasing our skills and narratives on a global scale, and Toxic was founded with the same goal in mind. We also shot it in English for this reason. He elaborated that while “Toxic” may appear to be a

gangster film at first glance, it possesses significant depth and complexity. The narrative delves into individual dilemmas and the darker aspects of human nature through the use of metaphors, which contributes to its distinctive storytelling. The film includes commercial elements and showcases strong performances from many well-known stars from the country, highlighting the rarity of collaboration among five leading actresses from various successful industries. Directed by Geetu Mohandas, “Toxic” stands out as a large-scale action film and is branded as an original intellectual property (IP), which is increasingly difficult to find in today’s cinematic landscape preoccupied with franchises. The film is positioned as a unique

and refreshing take on the gangster genre, reminiscent of the previous successful project “Sinners,” which was similarly original and well-received by audiences. Nayanthara, Kiara Advani, Huma Qureshi, Rukmini Vasanth, and Tara Sutaria play the main parts in Geetu Mohandas’ film Toxic. Sinners, a 2025 film, recently made history by earning an unprecedented 16 Oscar nominations. For his two roles in the movie, Michael B. Jordan received his first Oscar for Best Actor. The picture, which was directed by Ryan Coogler, features Jordan in twin roles as brothers who return to Mississippi in the Jim Crow era of the 1930s in an attempt to escape their past, only to run into vampires and a supernatural evil.

On set, the Dhurandhar actor refers to Aditya Dhar as “calm” and Ranveer Singh as a “bundle of energy”

Mumbai: In Aditya Dhar’s Dhurandhar and Dhurandhar: The Revenge, Ashwin Dhar portrayed Arshad Pappu, the head of the Pathan gang in Lyari, Pakistan. The actor recently talked about Ranveer Singh’s attitude, Aditya Dhar’s method, and the energy on set.Ashwin Dhar told ANI about Ranveer Singh, saying, “I always feel good with him.” He exudes so much vitality. People are always amused by him.

When you collaborate with him on his movie, he ensures that everyone has a good time and is composed. He maintains a lighthearted environment. He greets everyone with affection and gives them all hugs.”

Even if a fight breaks out on the sets, amid the shooting with so many actors and big stars, he would always



remain very calm,” Ashwin Dhar added, referring to Aditya Dhar as a “calm” director. He was thinking about the movie’s script. He is an excellent person other from it. He also discussed how much people enjoyed his most talked-about scene from the movie, in which Uzair Baloch (Danish Pandor) ruthlessly slashes Ashwin Pappu’s head.With a gross

of Rs 1,316.45 crore, Dhurandhar’s domestic receipts after 28 days, or four weeks, are Rs 1,099.72 crore. On Day 28, the movie earned Rs 0.50 crore abroad, bringing its total foreign earnings to Rs 416.75 crore thus far. According to Sacnilk, this raises the global gross to Rs 1,733.20 crore. The ascension of Ranveer Singh’s Hamza Ali Mazari as Sher-e-Baloch and the unchallenged king of Lyari is followed in the Dhurandhar sequel.

It also follows his transformation from Jaskirat Singh Rangti to Hamza, the spy who infiltrates Pakistan to exact revenge for the country’s terrorist acts.The gifted supporting cast, which includes Arjun Rampal, R Madhavan, Sanjay Dutt, Rakesh Bedi, Danish Pandor, and Sara Arjun, returns for the spy-action thriller.

The Indian actor in TIME’s list of the 100 most influential people in the world is Ranbir Kapoor

Mumbai:Time magazine has released its yearly list of the world’s 100 most powerful individuals. For many years, the so-called TIME 100 has served as a reliable indicator of the widespread appeal and influence of any well-known person. Bollywood actor Ranbir Kapoor, the only name from the biggest film industry in the world, is among the few Indians who have made the cut this year. Celebrity chef Vikas Khanna has joined him on the list.TIME published its list of the 100 Most Influential People of 2026 on Wednesday. It include titans, leaders, and pioneers from around the world in addition to innovators, artists, and symbols. Ayushmann Khurrana, another Bollywood star, wrote Ranbir Kapoor’s profile for TIME. “Some actors become one through their craft, while others pursue a legacy. The latter is Ranbir Kapoor, according to Ayushmann. Ayushmann emphasized in his article that Ranbir has transcended the talk of Bollywood box office and weekend earnings. ”We frequently gauge brilliance in decibels-box office statistics, fan hysteria, and opening weekends in a business as vibrant and prolific as Indian cinema. Occasionally, however, an actor modifies something more subdued but much more persistent: our audience’s emotional lexicon. Ranbir has been acting in movie after movie. Ranbir internalizes in a society where performances are frequently magnified. He uses modest restraint to demonstrate our culture. According to the bi-

ography, “He represents the India that is finally learning to listen to itself and leaves a mark through simple authenticity.” It further stated that performers like him serve as crucial cultural intermediaries. “Ranbir is more than just a movie star; he’s a storyteller who tells tales to a worldwide audience about a legendary nation where epics like The Ramayana have influenced other cultures and civilizations.”Alongside names like Ralph Lauren and Victoria Beckham, celebrity chef Vikas Khanna was considered a visionary in the fashion, artistic, literary, and culinary arts. ”His generosity extends far beyond the kitchen, reaching communities across the world with compassion, dignity, and a deep sense of responsibility,” said Eric Ripert, co-owner of Le Bernardin and a James Beard Award-winning chef, in his TIME profile of Vikas Khanna.

Vikas’s ability to establish connections with individuals from all walks of life by using food as a common language to promote understanding is what makes him so special.Global leaders like US President Donald Trump, Pope Leo XIV, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and commander of the 2026 Artemis II Reid Wiseman are among those on the list. The honorees on the list are “changing culture in unprecedented ways,” according to TIME.

Shah Rukh Khan’s former security chief alleges that Salman Khan and Shah Rukh Khan’s bodyguards are paid in crores

Mumbai:Salman Khan’s bodyguard Shera and Shah Rukh Khan’s assistant Ravi are reportedly earning crores, according to rumors circulating about the staggering pay of superstar security staff. Shah Rukh’s former security chief has now revealed the true monthly salary, shattering the bubble. Yaseen Khan, Shah Rukh’s former security chief, recently made an appearance on a podcast that Hindi Rush posted, offering his thoughts on the continuous controversy surrounding the high salary that superstar security staff are said to receive.According to Yaseen, the claims that bodyguards make between ₹2 and ₹2.5 crore annually are untrue. Yaseen stated, “Aisa nahi hota (It is not like that),” in response to these assertions.He explained that the majority of bodyguards receive a set monthly salary. While some people might receive additional compensation while filming, this isn’t the case for everyone. According to Yaseen, the real salary is significantly less than what is frequently stated online. He claims that, depending on their position and level of experience, even seasoned security officers usually make about ₹1 lakh per month. “I think social media



spreads the wrong message,” he stated. People don’t make ₹2-2.5 crore. A big star’s bodyguard receives a certain wage. In addition, a separate contract is created each time a movie is being produced.

The sum paid to the producer for that movie varies. He questioned the large numbers frequently shared online while discussing well-known figures like Shera and Ravi Singh. “I don’t believe they make that much money

every year. It’s different if a celebrity compensates them directly on the basis of mutual understanding. However, pay is not very high. Who pays Rs. 10 lakh a month, Kon deta hai? He said during the discussion that in the past, producers would not pay bodyguards during movie shoots. He disclosed that he felt the need for more after he began working with Shah Rukh. He then went to producers to demand appropriate compensation, which ultimate-

ly resulted in a broader change in the business. From 2001 until 2011, Yaseen spent ten years working for Shah Rukh and his family. Yaseen went on to launch his own business after working with Shah Rukh for more than ten years.

He started a security company in Mumbai in 2015. His organization has worked with celebrities like Sachin Tendulkar and Virat Kohli and currently manages VIP protection and events.

Kanyakumari, PM Modi Push: BJP Seeking Advantage in the Coastal Struggle



Chennai, Apr 16: The BJP’s vigorous effort in Kanyakumari, one of the few areas in Tamil Nadu where it has a comparatively greater footing, was signaled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s high-profile roadshow in Nagercoil on Wednesday.

There is a distinct electoral challenge in the southern coastal district. The Indian National Congress still maintains a lot of power, despite the BJP’s steady growth. The district’s sizable population of fishermen, who are primarily Roman Catholic Christians, adds complexity, making community outreach and identity a crucial component of the campaign. The stakes are reflected in the NDA’s seat-sharing clause. The BJP, which has restored relations with the All India Anna

Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, is running for 27 seats in Tamil Nadu, including four of the six seats in Kanyakumari, with two going to its ally.AIADMK. Vijayadhara-ni, a former Congress MLA who joined the BJP and is running from Vilavancode, is one of the prominent contenders. In addition to prominent AIADMK politician Thalavai Sundaram, sitting BJP MLA M R Gandhi is running for reelection from Nagercoil.In a district where electoral math is still precarious, PM Modi hopes to energize cadre and increase the BJP’s presence through the roadshow. In the 2021 Assembly elections, the Congress won three seats, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam won one, and the BJP and AIADMK only managed one each. The main conflict here is becoming more and

more triangular, notwithstanding a larger five-cornered struggle throughout Tamil Nadu. A new dimension has been introduced by actor-turned-politician Vijay and his party, Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam. Vijay’s popularity among Christian voters might upend established voting trends, especially among fishermen and the powerful Fernando community.Voters who identify as Muslim and Christian have historically supported the DMK-led coalition. However, there is a fierce competition for that base of support this election, and all of the main players are adjusting their outreach tactics. The well-being of fishermen has become a major campaign issue. All parties have pledged bigger fuel subsidies and more allowances during fishing prohibition periods. Going one step further, Vijay’s TVK has promised specific housing projects for fishing communities.

Edappadi K Palaniswami, the leader of the AIADMK, was also present at PM Modi’s roadshow. Following a series of electoral failures, Palaniswami views this election as a critical test. Nainar Nagen-dran, the president of the BJP’s Tamil Nadu unit and a candidate from Sattur, joined the campaign as well. Kanyakumari is become one of Tamil Nadu’s most carefully watched election arenas, where every vote could change the outcome due to shifting alliances, new competitors, and a struggle for crucial community votes.

Josh Hazlewood’s short ball causes Rishabh Pant to retire

New Delhi: Along with their slow start, Rishabh Pant’s injury scare made the Lucknow Super Giants’ innings against Royal Challengers Bengaluru even more concerning. The captain of the LSG left the field after being hit on the left elbow by a sharp Josh Hazlewood delivery at Chinnaswamy Stadium.Josh Hazlewood, who was back in the RCB XI, hurried Pant with a hard-length ball that was slanted in at pace during the fifth over of the game. The ball thudded into Pant’s left arm around the elbow and then dropped near the stumps because he was late on the draw and crammed for space. What at first appeared to be a painful blow soon became a real worry. Pant was seen straining to move his left hand easily, play was stopped, and the LSG physio hurried out. He decided he couldn’t continue right away after a quick evaluation and spray therapy, and he left with the physiotherapist. That was a frightening sight for LSG. Since Rishabh Pant is still the club’s captain, wicketkeeper, and one



of its best game-winning players, any injury has an impact on the squad in a number of ways. Leadership on the field and balance behind the stumps are just as important as batting strength in the middle order.

For a wicketkeeper-batter, an elbow blow can be especially problematic because it affects grip, bat swing, collect-

ing, and throwing motion simultaneously. This did not seem to be a typical sting, even if cricket players are hit frequently enough for spectators to not overreact to every body blow.

Pant was obviously uncomfortable, required quick medical attention, and—most importantly—decided to leave after taking some time to evaluate the agony. Usually, that sequence indicates more than a transient shock. Swelling, limited movement, or a nerve-jarring impact that momentarily weakens the hand and forearm are the immediate concerns in these situations. Any elbow problem is noteworthy due of the context surrounding Pant. He has demonstrated incredible resilience in the face of injury setbacks throughout his career and has battled through discomfort in the past.

His decision to quit the field is significant because of this. Unless the discomfort is interfering with their ability to operate, players with Pant’s temperament typically stay still.

After not playing against LSG, Virat Kohli is scheduled to make his Impact Player debut

New Delhi: Before a ball was thrown in the IPL 2026 encounter against the Lucknow Super Giants, Royal Challengers Bengaluru’s team sheet addressed the most important pre-match query. The fact that Virat Kohli was included among the Impact Sub alternatives rather than in the starting lineup suggested fitness management rather than complete unavailability right away. Since RCB’s last game against the Mumbai Indians, the circumstances surrounding that choice have been developing. Despite batting in that game and scoring a half-century, Kohli was sidelined during Mumbai’s chase due to an ankle injury. That particular fact made RCB’s decision to select LSG seem far less shocking. If there was a safer option to keep him in the game, the team obviously did not want to risk him for 20 overs in the field. The Impact Player rule becomes crucial to the plot at that point. Bengaluru will effectively benefit from Kohli’s presence at the crease without subjecting him to the physical demands of fielding if he is kept out of the starting lineup and only comes in when RCB bat. To put it another way, Kohli is not being benched, rested entirely, or ruled out in this situation. It is a clear tactical sign that RCB wants to retain one of their key hitters available for the crucial portion of the game while also protecting his ankle. The decision also makes sense in light of RCB’s season as a whole.Particularly at the Chinnaswamy, where starts at the top may influence the entire innings, Kohli continues to be essential to their batting order.

Even if players like Phil Salt, Rajat Patidar, Jitesh Sharma, and Tim David have contributed to RCB, Kohli’s importance is seen in his ability to control the innings and provide steadiness against both pace and spin. However, an ankle ache may be more problematic on the field than at bat. Different risks are associated with quick rotations, boundary patrol, abrupt stops, and the continuous burden of movement over an entire inning. Therefore, RCB’s choice seems to be a sensible middle ground.Because of this, this is one of the more intriguing applications of the Impact Sub rule this season. RCB appears to be employing it as a fitness-management tool rather than just as a tactical batting-bowling switch. The team sheet makes it quite evident that Virat Kohli will play a part, but Bengaluru wants that involvement to start with the bat rather than the field. It is a wise yet cautious approach for RCB.

Strict Action for Violations, No Compromise on Workers’ Rights: Adityanath Yogi

New Delhi, Apr 16: Yogi Adityanath, the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, declared on Wednesday that worker rights, dignity, and social security would not be compromised and threatened to take severe legal action against any infractions. According to an official statement released here, the chief minister instructed officials to guarantee that every worker obtains respectable working conditions, timely payment of full wages, and all statutory benefits while presiding over a video conference evaluation of the state’s industrial situation. Adityanath took the workers’ commotion in Gautam Buddh Nagar seriously and gave the authorities strict instructions to find and punish non-workers who were causing disturbances or upsetting “industrial harmony.” Additionally, he ordered the exposure of these individuals and, if required, the display of their photos in public areas.The chief minister emphasized a “zero tolerance” approach against companies or individuals who engage in misinformation campaigns, disseminate rumors, or incite workers. He mandated ongoing social media platform monitoring and prompt legal action against anyone discovered disseminating propaganda or incorrect information. The chief minister’s comments coincide with Monday’s massive labor protests in Noida.Numerous vehicles, including police SUVs, were set on fire, public property was vandalized, and stone-throwing incidents were recorded

from the district’s factory hubs.In response to the controversy, Adityanath ordered a thorough investigation into all of these organizations throughout the state, with oversight from the Labour Department and the Infrastructure and Industrial Development Commissioner. According to him, the inquiry should confirm the precise number of employees, funds received from businesses, wages paid to employees, and adherence to regulations pertaining to insurance, ESI, and other benefits.The chief minister gave the order for all government and private industrial organizations to set up efficient grievance redressal cells in order to guarantee the prompt and transparent handling of employee grievances. Additionally, he advocated for better workplace amenities, such as high-quality mess facilities. Adityanath instructed industry development authorities to create plans for dormitories and affordable housing for workers, emphasizing the importance of social responsibilities over mere revenue generation. He highlighted the need for banks to provide insurance coverage for workers, especially regarding accidents or deaths linked to direct bank wage transfers. Education, healthcare, and medical insurance for workers’ children were marked as priorities, and authorities were directed to engage in continuous dialogue with entrepreneurs while ensuring discussions include only legitimate workers.

President Murmu Urges Technology to Close the Healthcare Gap Between Urban and Rural Areas

New Delhi, Apr 16: President Droupadi Murmu stated on Wednesday that the healthcare industry is undergoing rapid change in the current era and emphasized the need to use technological advancements to close the access gap between rural and urban areas so that everyone may receive high-quality care. Speaking at the AIIMS Nagpur convocation event, the President stated that technology like artificial intelligence, digital health services, and cutting-edge research are driving previously unheard-of worldwide advancements in medicine. She emphasized how important it is to adjust to these changes. According to her, becoming a doctor is more than just a job; it’s a way to help people. She noted that a doctor gives people hope in addition to treating illness. “Doctors’ compassionate advice gives patients and their families strength.” Doctors frequently deal with difficult situations, yet they still need to be sensitive to patients and their families. Medical personnel should always be treated with respect by patients and their families. This is crucial to

preserving the relationship of trust between a patient and a physician,” she stated.The President emphasized that both individual well-being and the advancement of the country depend on individuals’ health. She cited a number of initiatives implemented by the Indian government in the last ten years to improve healthcare service. ”In addition to improving access to better medical care, the opening of new AIIMS across the nation has increased chances for medical education. I’m pleased to see that AIIMS Nagpur has become a premier hub for medical education, research, and top-notch healthcare services in just a few years after its founding,” she remarked. ”People respect them and place their trust in them,” she continued, highlighting the responsibility that physicians bear. They entrust doctors with the duty of protecting their own and their loved ones’ health and lives. Therefore, doctors have a moral and societal duty to put their patients’ needs first. They can further improve both their own and the medical profession’s reputations



by diligently carrying out this duty.” She also urged medical professionals to continue their commitment to continual learning, citing curiosity as the cornerstone of advancement. She claimed that the search for novel medical science solutions will advance their careers and increase their capacity to assist.

She urged the young medical graduates to uphold the greatest ethical standards while putting a strong emphasis on innovation, research, and ongoing education. President Murmu emphasized that compassion, integrity, and a patient-centric approach can-

not be replaced by technological advancements. According to the President, medical professionals have the honor of serving humanity, and they must fulfill this duty with compassion and care. They should be proud of this position and respect its principles, she remarked.She expressed faith in the graduating students, saying they will both improve the health of their fellow residents and prosper in their own lives. The President went on to say that these initiatives would assist the nation in achieving its objective of a Viksit Bharat by the century of independence.

The captain is expected to return for this match after SRH received a significant “Pat Cummins” fitness boost



New Delhi: The upcoming Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 has given Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) a significant boost as Pat Cummins, their designated captain, passed the fitness test and is anticipated to join the team in a few days. Cummins hasn’t made an appearance yet despite arriving in

India before to the season. Following SRH’s exciting victory over Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) on April 2, the 32-year-old took a flight back to Australia for a back scan. The scans done in Sydney have shown that the injury has healed, allowing him to resume competitive cricket. Cummins is now aiming for a return on April 25, when SRH will play Rajasthan Royals (RR) in Jaipur. The Australian all-rounder announced on social media that he will return to India right away to re-join the team.Since the Ashes series at home against England, the Australian pacer has not participated in a single game. Additionally, he was not present at the just finished ICC T20 World Cup 2026, where Australia was eliminated

from the group stage for the first time. Ishan Kishan is leading the team in Cummins’ absence. In the current season, the squad has won two of every five games under his leadership. With a net run rate of 0.576, they are presently ranked fourth in the points standings.With the help of debutants Praful Hinge and Sakib Hussain, who each took four wickets, SRH defeated the top-ranked Rajasthan Royals (RR) on Monday. RR was bowled out for just 159 runs in 19 overs while chasing a massive target of 217 runs, losing the match by 57 runs. The Chennai Super Kings (CSK), five-time champions, will take on the 2016 champs on Saturday at Rajiv Gandhi Stadium in Hyderabad.

Videos of Arvind Kejriwal’s court appearances are ordered to be removed by the Delhi High Court



New Delhi, Apr 16: Even though a complaint has sought action against party leaders who shared the clips, the Delhi High Court administration has asked the city police to take action to remove unapproved recordings of court proceedings pertaining to AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal’s plea in the liquor policy matter from social media.Videos of Kejriwal speaking before Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma in the excise policy issue have been ordered to be removed by the Delhi Police by the High Court.It is completely forbidden to record court proceedings without permission, according to a senior High Court official who confirmed the ruling. It is prohibited to record or distribute such videos in accordance with the Delhi High Court’s regulations regarding virtual hearings. The source stated that people

who recorded and shared the videos on social media sites are being prosecuted, pointing out that similar actions have been done in comparable situations in the past.In the meantime, the Registrar General of the High Court received a complaint alleging that the proceedings from the hearing on April 13, 2026, were unlawfully recorded and circulated.The complaint states that Kejriwal personally appeared and defended an application to have Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma recused from topics pertaining to the excise policy case.It further claims that a number of audio and video recordings of the proceedings were made and extensively disseminated on social media by a variety of people, including political figures. According to the complainant, the dissemination of such content was done on purpose with the intention of damaging the judiciary’s reputation and influencing public opinion. Additionally, it highlights instances in which videos were shared with comments that might have misrepresented the events.

The Delhi High Court Rules for Video Conferencing, 2021 and the Electronic Evidence and Video Conferencing Rules, 2025, which forbid unapproved recording or publication of court proceedings, are cited in the suit.It also alludes to a comparable case in June 2024, when the High Court mandated that these recordings be deleted. The complaint has called on authorities to carry out a thorough investigation and prosecute individuals responsible, claiming that such actions are against the law and could erode public trust in the legal system.

Pak-Occupied Kashmir Is Included in the Center’s New Delimitation Bill

New Delhi, Apr 16: The Delimitation Bill 2026, which outlines a legislative framework for conducting constituency delimitation in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in the event that the territory is returned to Indian authority, is scheduled to be introduced by the Center in Parliament this week.

The action is being presented as a confirmation of India’s long-standing constitutional claim over the region.When circumstances change, the proposed law gives the Election Commission of India the authority to serve as the Delimitation Commission for regions that are now occupied by Pakistan. There have never been elections for the 24 seats in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly that are currently set aside for these regions. It is anticipated that the Bill would be discussed during Parliament’s extended three-day budget session. According to government insiders, the ruling alliance is certain that it would pass with just a simple majority. However, a special majority will be required for two related laws: the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill 2026 and the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill 2026.Maharaja Hari Singh’s 1947 Instrument of Accession, which included the whole princely state of Jammu and Kashmir in India, is the foundation of India’s claim to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Numerous legal and political actions, like as a unanimous parliamentary vote in 1994 urging Pakistan to leave the occupied territories, have reinforced this stance. India has continued to institutionally represent this assertion even in the absence of administrative control. Despite several delimitation attempts, the 24 Assembly seats set aside for Pakistan-occupied Kashmir have not changed. Although the total number of seats in Jammu and Kashmir has changed throughout time, elections cannot be held in the area, hence these seats remain unfilled.

RCB Teammate Credits Rasikh Salam's Heroic LSG Performance To His Domestic Experience



Bengaluru: Rasikh Salam's match-winning spell against Lucknow Super Giants earned praise from Jitesh Sharma, who dismissed talk of it being a sudden rise, insisting the pacer always had the skillset. The Royal Challengers Bengaluru wicketkeeper-batter credited experience and the right guidance for helping Rasikh unlock his potential during their IPL 2026 clash. "He already had these skills that you're seeing now, but what he has learned recently is how to use them," Jitesh said at the post-match press conference. "When you get a good Mentor, a good coach, And a

Good environment, you begin to understand how to use the weapons you have. When to use them, where to use them, and whether they are even required," he added. After that, you keep sharpening those weapons. When he played with me for Baroda, he worked a lot on his yorkers and slower ones. At that level, errors happen, but if you practice so much that it becomes muscle memory, then in matches things start coming naturally," Jitesh said. Rasikh's spell stood out for both control and timing. He removed Aiden Markram early, before striking again

To dismiss Ayush Badoni and Mukul Choudhary just as LSG looked to rebuild. He returned to clean up Avesh Khan, finishing with four wickets for just 24 runs in his four overs. At the other end, Bhuvneshwar's three wickets and Hazlewood's control ensured there was no respite for the LSG batting unit, while Krunal Pandya chipped in with two wickets. RCB's bowling unit delivered a clinical performance to restrict LSG to 146 at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, with Rasikh leading the charge alongside Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Josh Hazlewood.

CPL 2026 Will Begin On August 7 With Arnos Vale In St Vincent Debuting As A New Venue

New Delhi: The Caribbean Premier League (CPL) will begin its 2026 season on August 7, with Arnos Vale in St Vincent and the Grenadines set to host matches for the first time in the tournament's history. The league confirmed that this year's edition will be played across eight nations, equalling its widest geographical spread. According to ESPNcricinfo, the matches will take place in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago. CPL chief executive Pete Russell described the inclusion of Arnos Vale as a significant step. According to a press release, he called it "A fantastic venue with a proud cricket history" and expressed confidence that local fans would bring strong energy and atmosphere to the games. Arnos Vale has previously hosted 36 men's international matches and was also one of the venues during the 2024 ICC Men's



T20 World Cup, where conditions notably favoured spin bowling. The 2026 season will run until September 20 and will feature a new franchise, the Jamaica Kingsmen, taking the total number of teams to seven. Their inclusion marks a structural expansion of the competition as it continues to grow in stature. Three matches

have been confirmed at Arnos Vale early in the tournament. The opening game on August 7 will see Jamaica Kingsmen take on Antigua and Barbuda Falcons. On August 8, St Kitts and Nevis Patriots will face Trinbago Knight Riders, followed by Antigua and Barbuda Falcons against St Lucia Kings on August 9. While

the complete schedule is yet to be released, the playoffs, including the eliminator, two qualifiers, and the final, will be staged at Kensington Oval in Barbados from September 16 to 20. The CPL will overlap with England's Hundred tournament, which could impact the availability of players such as Nicholas Pooran and Sherfane Ruth-

erford for the latter stages of the competition, who will be representing MI London. Lamine Yamal opened the scoring inside four minutes after finding space in the box, continuing his rapid rise on the European stage. The goal also saw him become the youngest player to reach 11 goals in the competition, moving past Kylian.

Mumbai Indians Sign Punjab's Krish Bhagat To Replace Injured Atharva Ankolekar In IPL

MI Sign Punjab's Krish Bhagat To Replace Ankolekar

New Delhi: Mumbai Indians have brought in Krish Bhagat as a replacement for the injured Atharva Ankolekar, a move that comes at a crucial time as they look to revive their IPL 2026 campaign. Bhagat, a 21-year-old all-rounder from Punjab, joins the squad at his base price of Rs 30 lakh. A right-arm medium pacer who can contribute with the bat in the lower order, he has featured in seven first-class matches and nine List A games. He also has a half-century in List A cricket, highlighting his ability to chip in with the bat. The youngster is no stranger to the Mumbai setup. He has been part of the franchise's trials over the past two years and represented the Reliance Team in the DY Patil T20 Cup earlier this year. Bhagat also worked closely with the squad as a support bowler during the pre-season, which should help him slot into the side with relative ease. Ankolekar's absence leaves



a gap in Mumbai's balance. The left-arm spinning all-rounder, who was part of India's U19 World Cup squad in 2020, had built a reputation as a reliable utility option. He also played a key role in India's ACC U19 Asia Cup triumph in 2019, earning Player of the Match honours in the final against Bangladesh. Mumbai's decision to bring in Bhagat comes amid a challenging phase in their campaign. Despite starting the season

with a win for the first time in 13 years, they have since slipped into a slump with three consecutive defeats. Execution, rather than personnel, has been a recurring concern. Their struggles in the powerplay have been particularly glaring. In four matches, Mumbai have managed just three wickets in the first six overs, including a rain-affected game against Rajasthan Royals. While Jasprit Bumrah has been econom-

ical, he is yet to pick up a wicket this season. The likes of Trent Boult and Hardik Pandya have also struggled to make early inroads. The batting unit has not fared much better. A lack of intent in the powerplay has left the middle order, including Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma, with too much to do. While Suryakumar has managed a half-century, Tilak's returns have been modest. They now face a tough test against a confident Punjab

Kings side led by Shreyas Iyer. Punjab have been among the standout teams this season, recently posting a blistering 93 without loss in the powerplay against Sunrisers Hyderabad. Openers Prabhsimran Singh and Priyansh Arya have been in fine form, while the addition of Cooper Connolly has strengthened their batting. With momentum against them, Mumbai will hope Bhagat's arrival injects fresh energy into a side searching for answers. Krish Bhagat's base price for the IPL 2026 season is Rs 30 lakh. The 21-year-old all-rounder from Punjab was signed by the Mumbai Indians as a replacement for the injured Atharva Ankolekar. Krish Bhagat is a right-arm medium pacer and lower-order batter who previously worked with the squad as a support bowler during the pre-season. The decision to bring in the youngster comes as Mumbai Indians attempt to recover from a difficult start to their campaign.

Infantino Confirms Iran Will Participate In 2026 World Cup Despite Ongoing War



Zurich: FIFA President Gianni Infantino has firmly backed Iran's participation in the upcoming FIFA World Cup 2026, stating the team will feature in the tournament despite ongoing geopolitical tensions and security concerns. Speaking at CNBC's Invest in America Forum on Wednesday, Infantino dismissed doubts surrounding Iran's involvement following the recent conflict involving the United States and Israel. "The Iranian team is coming for sure, yes," Infantino said, as quoted by CBS News. "We hope that by then, of course, the situation will be a peaceful situation.

As I said, that Would definitely help. But Iran has to come. Of course, they represent their people. They have qualified. The players want to play." Infantino, who recently met the Iranian squad in Antalya, Turkey, underlined both their quality and desire to compete on the global stage. "I went to see them. They are actually quite a good team as well," he said. "And they really want to play and they should play. Sports should be outside of politics now. The United States will co-host the 2026 FIFA World Cup alongside Canada and Mexico. The tournament will feature 104 matches, beginning at Mex-

ico City Stadium on June 11 and culminating at New Jersey Stadium with the final on 19 July. Iran's qualification for the tournament gave the nation a place in Group G. Iran is scheduled to play its fixtures in Los Angeles and Seattle. They will face Belgium, New Zealand, and Egypt. However, due to regional conflict, their participation has cast uncertainty on US soil. The uncertainty over Iran's participation had intensified after remarks from US President Donald Trump. While initially indicating that Iran would be welcome, Trump later raised concerns over the team's safety.

Frustrated Real Madrid Slam Referee Over Soft Camavinga Red Card In Bayern Defeat

New Delhi: Real Madrid's Champions League campaign ended in frustration as they were knocked out by Bayern Munich, with players and staff slamming the referee over Eduardo Camavinga's late red card. The controversial decision proved decisive in a 6-4 aggregate defeat, leaving Madrid fuming at what they believed was a turning point in an otherwise finely balanced contest. The match had been evenly poised before the incident. However, Camavinga's second yellow card late in the game shifted momentum, allowing Bayern to capitalise and score twice to seal progression. At the final whistle at the Allianz Arena, Real Madrid players rushed towards the referee, surrounding him in protest as frustration spilt over. Captain Dani Carvajal was seen confronting referee Slavko Vincic right after the decision, visibly furious with



The call. "It's your fault. It's your fault!" Carvajal was heard shouting at the official. Jude Bellingham also did not hide his frustration when he spoke after the match, questioning the logic behind the booking. "It's a joke. It is impossible for it to be yellow. Two fouls and two yellows," Bellingham said. Antonio Rudiger briefly addressed the incident while passing through the mixed zone, echoing the general sentiment within the squad over the decision. Meanwhile, Arda Guler took matters further. The youngster

confronted the referee After the final whistle and was shown a red card himself near the tunnel, adding to Madrid's frustrations and resulting in a suspension for the start of next season. Real Madrid made a dream start, capitalising on an early mistake from Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, with Guler slotting home inside the opening minute. Bayern responded quickly, but Madrid continued to find a way through, with Guler scoring again and Kylian Mbappe ensuring they went into the break ahead in a chaotic first

half. The game turned late when Camavinga was sent off, shifting the balance decisively. Bayern made full use of the advantage, with Diaz scoring via a deflection before Olise added the finishing touch. Madrid's challenge faded from there, with frustration boiling over at full-time. Camavinga's dismissal came under unusual circumstances. The midfielder had already been booked earlier in the game when he was shown a second yellow card after holding onto the ball for a few seconds following a challenge on Harry Kane. While the initial challenge itself was not deemed serious, the referee penalised him for delaying the restart, a decision that Madrid players felt was harsh given the context of the match. The call ultimately proved costly, as Madrid were forced to play the closing minutes with ten men.

R Vaishali Steps Out Of Brother's Shadow To Become A World Championship Challenger



New Delhi: It is never easy to share a roof with a sibling who is as talented as you, if not more so. Most of us have felt that quiet pang of comparison: the teacher asking why you aren't quite like your brother, or parents, in an unguarded moment, holding up a sibling's achievement as the standard. In classrooms, at home, in sporting circles, there is always that lingering suggestion: what if the other one had done it better? 24-year-old Grand Master Vaishali has lived with that suggestion for most of her life. Despite being one of India's finest chess minds, she was often introduced to the uninitiated simply

as Rameshbabu Pragganandhaa's sister. But on a decisive Wednesday in Cyprus, the shadow finally retreated. By winning the Women's Candidates 2026, Vaishali became only the second Indian woman after Koneru Humpy in 2011 to qualify for the World Championship match. Later this year, she will face China's Ju Wenjun for the ultimate title. Vaishali entered the tournament as a dark horse, the lowest-rated player in the eight-woman field. What followed was a display of nerve as much as skill. In a gruelling 14-round double round-robin, she found another gear late, recovering from

a loss in the 12th round and beating Kateryna Lagno with white in the final round to win the tournament by half a point. It was a victory that showed her toughest race was never just across the board, but against a narrative that had followed her for years. The comparison was always inevitable. Her younger brother, GM Pragganandhaa, became a household name when he became the world's youngest International Master. He then became the second-youngest Grandmaster in history in 2018 at just 12. Vaishali reached that same milestone five years later. Even within Indian women's chess, timelines were unforgiving. Koneru Humpy had become a Woman Grandmaster at 15 in 2002. By comparison, Vaishali's WGM title in 2023, at 21, felt, unfairly, late. While the spotlight burned brightly on Pragg, Vaishali worked in the softer glow of the background. Yet, it was actually Vaishali who moved the first pawn in the family.

Her mother, Nagalakshmi, once famously recalled that she enrolled Vaishali in chess classes simply to wear her off television cartoons. A two-year-old Pragg would sit nearby, often pushing the pieces off the board while his sister practiced. Soon, the toddler was no longer disrupting the game.