

In Brief

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Meghalaya Showcases Major Tourism Investments

Shillong: Meghalaya has highlighted significant investments in tourism infrastructure and expanded support for industry stakeholders as part of its efforts to attract more domestic and international visitors. The state Tourism Department, in collaboration with the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), recently hosted an interactive session in Shillong during a three-day familiarisation tour for leading tour operators from across the country. Addressing the gathering, Tourism Minister Timothy D. Shira said the government is making substantial investments in key tourism circuits.

Alleged Lynching Attempt in Patharkandi Triggers Outrage

Patharkandi: Public outrage is mounting over an alleged mob assault in Assam's Patharkandi area, where two teenage boys were reportedly brutally attacked while attempting to recover their family's missing cattle from a neighboring village. According to local sources, the incident took place on June 1 when members of a family from Mambari village traced their missing cattle to Nalugaon village and went there to bring them back.

Pointed gourd seized in Shillong for artificial colouring

Shillong: Food safety officials in Meghalaya have seized a consignment of 'patol' (pointed gourd) in Shillong on Friday after preliminary tests indicated the possible presence of artificial colouring agents during a random inspection in a local market, an officer said. Deputy Commissioner of Food Safety, D B S Mukhim, said samples have been collected and sent for laboratory analysis. Random tests were conducted after a whistleblower in Assam highlighted the contamination of pointed gourds using artificial colours earlier this week. The inspection was carried out as part of routine surveillance by food safety officials to check the quality and safety of vegetables and other food products being sold in markets.

Woman Stabbed 17 Times to Death

Guwahati: In a gruesome murder that has shocked Dimoria on the outskirts of Guwahati, a young woman was allegedly stabbed 17 times by her lover, who was arrested by Khetri Police within 12 hours of the crime. According to police, the body of the woman was found in a field at Oujari village in Dimoria on the evening of June 4 after the village headman informed authorities. The victim could not be identified initially, but her family later arrived and confirmed her identity.

Amit Shah lays foundation stone for Taj Pushpabanta Palace Hotel in Agartala

Agartala, Jun 06: Union Home Minister Amit Shah laid the foundation stone for the Taj Pushpabanta Palace Hotel in Agartala, a project expected to boost Tripura's tourism sector and strengthen hospitality infrastructure in the state. The foundation-laying ceremony was held at the Kunjan area within the historic Pushpabanta Palace premises, formerly known as the Governor House complex. The event was attended by Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha, cabinet ministers, Members of Parliament, MLAs, senior government officials and representatives from the hospitality industry. During the programme, Shah participated in traditional rituals associated with the foundation-laying ceremony and unveiled a commemorative plaque marking the beginning of the project. A documentary highlighting the proposed hotel, its design and planned facilities was also screened before the gathering. The luxury hotel is being developed as a major hospitality destination in the state and will feature 101 accommodation units. According to project details shared at the event, the property will include 89 standard rooms, six executive rooms, five executive suites and a



presidential villa. The hotel complex will also have a banquet block, a ball-

room, conference and meeting facilities, restaurants and a swimming pool.

Officials said the project is expected to enhance Tripura's tourism ecosys-

tem by attracting domestic and international visitors while creating new opportunities for the hospitality and service sectors. The hotel is also expected to improve the state's capacity to host major conferences, business events and tourism-related activities. The Pushpabanta Palace, one of Agartala's prominent heritage landmarks, is expected to gain renewed prominence through the development of the luxury hotel, which seeks to combine modern hospitality facilities with the site's historical significance. At the ceremony, Chief Minister Manik Saha presented Amit Shah with a replica of the revered Tripura Sundari Temple as a token of respect. Senior representatives of [Indian Hotels Company Limited](https://www.ihcltata.com/?utm_source=chatgpt.com), including CEO Puneet Chhatwal, were also present at the event. The project is being viewed as a significant addition to Tripura's tourism infrastructure and is expected to contribute to the state's efforts to position itself as an emerging destination for leisure, heritage and business tourism in Northeast India.

Amit Shah inspects the BSF's Lankamura Border Outpost in Tripura

Agartala, Jun 06: Union Home Minister Amit Shah inspected the BSF's Lankamura Border Outpost (BOP) in Tripura on Friday and boosted the morale of the troops by interacting with the border sentinels.

On this occasion, Tripura Chief Minister Dr. Manik Saha, Union Home Secretary, Director of the Intelligence Bureau, Secretary (Border Management), and Director General of the Border Security Force, along with several other dignitaries, were present.

IShah said the e-inauguration of personnel accommodation at the 37th Battalion of the Border Security Force (BSF) and the e-foundation laying of the Quarter Guard complex at the 97th Battalion of BSF were carried out. He said that the Modi Government has undertaken several initiatives to improve facilities for the personnel guarding the nation's borders. Care has been taken not only of the health of the personnel but also of housing for their families. He said that the mere mention of the BSF evokes a sense of respect among the people of the country, signifying that the nation sees and acknowledges the hardships you face, and recognizes your penance, sacrifice, and dedication.

The Union Home Minister said that the BSF is responsible for securing the borders. He noted that these vast borders present different kinds of challenges at different locations. He said that the Modi Government has decided to develop "smart borders" wherever the Border Security Force (BSF) and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) are deployed. Under a quadrilateral security strategy, the aim is to make borders impregnable by integrating local

administration, technology, and the dedication of security personnel. Shah said that the concept of smart borders is in its final stage and a pilot project will be launched soon. He added that the pilot will be implemented at seven or eight locations across different borders of the country simultaneously. Any initial challenges encountered during the pilot will be addressed, after which the initiative will be scaled up to cover the entire border network. The Home Minister further stated that District Magistrates, Superintendents of Police, village patwaris, and sarpanches will also play an important role in this framework. He emphasized that until local administration in border areas is integrated into this concept, borders cannot be made truly impregnable. He said that imagining border security in isolation will never be successful. Shah said that the Tripura Frontier is very important for the security of the country's borders. He stated that, for the modernization of border fencing, we have also approved the installation of 119 kilometers of new fencing to replace a portion of the approximately 650 kilometers of fencing that is over 15 years old. He further said that several projects aimed at improving facilities for personnel at border outposts—such as electricity supply, green energy initiatives, and safe drinking water—have not only been initiated but also completed. He mentioned that Tripura is a sensitive state surrounded by borders on three sides. He stated that Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has set a vision of making India a fully developed nation by 2047. He said that to achieve this goal, India must first be made secure.

Meghalaya Showcases Major Tourism Investments, Seeks Stronger Partnership with National Tour Operators

Shillong, Jun 06: Meghalaya has highlighted significant investments in tourism infrastructure and expanded support for industry stakeholders as part of its efforts to attract more domestic and international visitors. The state Tourism Department, in collaboration with the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), recently hosted an interactive session in Shillong during a three-day familiarisation tour for leading tour operators from across the country. Addressing the gathering, Tourism Minister Timothy D. Shira said the government is making substantial investments in key tourism circuits. According to official figures, more than ₹683 crore has been allocated for the Umiam circuit, over ₹673 crore for the Sohra circuit, more than ₹538 crore for the New Shillong circuit, and over ₹244 crore for the Tura circuit. Additional tourism projects are also being implemented across the Garo Hills region. The minister said the government has also extended financial support to tourism stakeholders.

Over the past three financial years, around ₹3.62 crore has been provided to tour operators, including ₹1.42 crore during the previous financial year. Financial assistance ranging from ₹25 lakh to ₹50 lakh has also been extended to support indigenous festivals and preserve Meghalaya's rich cultural heritage. Tourism Commissioner and Secretary Vijay Kumar D. said the state is focusing on increasing the average duration of tourist stays through experiential travel and community-based tourism



initiatives. He noted that Meghalaya is providing a 70 per cent government subsidy for rural homestays and is working to expand hospitality infrastructure, with several luxury hotels currently under development. The state aims to have ten five-star hotels within the next five years. The familiarisation tour covered several popular destinations, including Shillong, Sohra, Umiam Lake, Nohkalikai Falls, Arwah Cave, Maw-

phlang Sacred Grove and Laitlum Canyon. Delegates also experienced local cuisine, cultural programmes and community tourism projects. IATO President Ravi Gosain said the association would work closely with the Meghalaya government to promote the state's tourism offerings through its national and international industry network, helping position Meghalaya as a leading tourism destination in the Northeast.

Satgaon Police Officer Given Punitive Transfer After Assault Allegation

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The incident reportedly took place in the Panjabari area on May 29. Following the episode, a case was registered against Rajkhowa at Satgaon Police Station.

After the matter came to light and an investigation was initiated, the police department ordered Rajkhowa's transfer to DCP Central. Further inquiry into the case is underway.

Alleged Lynching Attempt in Patharkandi Triggers Outrage, Two in Custody

Patharkandi, Jun 06: Public outrage is mounting over an alleged mob assault in Assam's Patharkandi area, where two teenage boys were reportedly brutally attacked while attempting to recover their family's missing cattle from a neighboring village.

According to local sources, the incident took place on June 1 when members of a family from Mambari village traced their missing cattle to Nalugaon village and went there to bring them back.

During the process, two teenage members of the family were allegedly detained by a group of villagers and subjected to severe physical assault.

Witnesses and family members allege that the attackers used sharp weapons, including machetes and swords, and also fired multiple rounds from an air gun at the teenagers.

The victims sustained serious injuries and were rushed to Silchar Medical College and Hospital for treatment. Doctors reportedly removed pellets from their bodies, and their condition has been described as serious.

The incident has triggered widespread condemnation, with many questioning the growing tendency of mob justice. Critics argue that even if there had been suspicions of theft, the accused should have been handed over to law enforcement authorities rather than being subjected to violence.

Adding to the controversy, videos allegedly showing the assault were reportedly uploaded to Facebook by some of those involved. The videos quickly circulated on social media, bringing the incident to public attention and sparking widespread anger and demands for justice.

The delay in arrests also became a major point of criticism. Although the incident occurred on June 1, police action reportedly intensified only after public protests gained momentum.

Authorities have since arrested two accused persons and produced them before a court. However, questions continue to be raised over the limited number of arrests despite allegations that a large crowd participated in the attack.

Condemning the incident, Sonai MLA Aminul Haque Laskar stated that the manner in which the victims were beaten has no place in a civilized society.

A large protest meeting was organized in response to the incident, with participants demanding a fair and impartial investigation and strict action against all those responsible.

Algapur-Katlicherra MLA Zubair Anam also expressed concern over the pace of the investigation, noting that despite allegations of the involvement of many individuals, only two arrests have been made so far. He called on authorities to identify and prosecute every person involved in the assault.

The incident has once again reignited concerns over mob violence and the dangers of taking the law into one's own hands.

Civil society groups and local residents have demanded that investigators use available video evidence and social media footage to identify all those responsible and ensure that justice is served.

ANSU launches admission helpdesk for Garo Hills students seeking NEHU admission

Agency: The A•chik NEHU Students' Union (ANSU) has launched a dedicated Admission Helpdesk to assist students from Garo Hills applying for admission to North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU) for the 2026-27 academic session. The initiative has been introduced to support students, especially those from remote and rural areas, who often face difficulties in accessing information about university admissions and completing online application procedures.

According to ANSU, the helpdesk will serve as a support platform for prospective students by providing guidance on various aspects of the admission process. These include eligibility requirements, admission procedures, reservation policies, document verification and submission, as well as hostel-related information. Union representatives said many students from rural parts of Garo Hills face challenges due to limited



access to information, internet connectivity issues and a lack of awareness about admission guidelines.

The helpdesk has therefore been established to ensure that deserving students are not deprived of higher education opportunities because of technical difficulties or insufficient information. With

the admission process for the new academic session currently underway, ANSU expressed confidence that the initiative would help increase student participation from different parts of Garo Hills and encourage more young people to pursue higher education at NEHU.

The union stated that it remains committed to supporting students

and ensuring that the admission process is accessible, transparent and easier to navigate for applicants from the region. NEHU, one of the premier central universities in the Northeast, attracts students from across Meghalaya and neighbouring states every year. ANSU believes that timely assistance and proper guidance can help students make informed decisions regarding their academic future and successfully complete the admission process.

Students seeking admission-related support may contact the ANSU Admission Helpdesk through the mobile numbers 9863729710 and 6009235349. Assistance is also available through email at achiknehusstudentunion@gmail.com.

The union has urged students and parents to make use of the helpdesk facility and seek guidance whenever required during the ongoing admission season.

Two militant cadres arrested, tobacco transporter held in separate Manipur operations

Imphal, June 06: Security forces and Manipur Police have arrested two alleged members of banned militant organisations and apprehended a man accused of transporting tobacco products in separate operations conducted across different districts of the state, officials said.

The operations were carried out in Kakching, Imphal West and Thoubal districts as part of ongoing efforts by security agencies to curb unlawful activities and maintain law and order in the region. According to officials, an active member of the banned People's Liberation Army (PLA) was arrested by security forces on June 5 from Kakching district.

The individual was identified as Huidrom Boyboy Singh (28), a resident of Wabagai Thingel Leikai under Hiyanglam Police Station. Security officials alleged that Singh was involved in activities linked to the outfit, including arms smuggling and



the display of the organisation's banners, flags and symbols in various locations. Several incriminating items were recovered from his possession during the operation.

Authorities have not disclosed the details of the seized materials, and further investigation is underway. In a separate operation conducted on the same day, security personnel apprehended another alleged militant cadre belonging to the banned Kangleipak Communist Party (MFL).

The arrested individual was identified as Thangjam

Diya Singh, also known as Manimatum, aged 26, from Lamsang Makha Leikai under Imphal Police Station in Imphal West district. Officials said incriminating items were also recovered from him at the time of arrest. Security agencies are examining the seized materials and investigating his alleged links and activities within the organisation. Meanwhile, Manipur Police arrested Md.

Azmal Khan (26), a resident of Lilong Uku in Thoubal district, on June 4 in connection with the transportation of tobacco products. Police said he was intercepted on the Pallel-Chandel road near Pioneer School under Pallel Police Station in Kakching district. During the operation, officers seized a Super Carry vehicle that was allegedly being used to transport the tobacco products. Authorities are investigating the source and intended destination of the consignment.

Rajiv Singh takes charge as Cabinet Secretariat security secretary after Manipur tenure

Imphal, June 06: Senior IPS officer Rajiv Singh has assumed charge as Secretary (Security) in the Cabinet Secretariat, marking the end of his nearly three-year tenure in Manipur, a period that coincided with one of the state's most challenging phases marked by prolonged ethnic violence and social unrest. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet had approved the appointment of the 1993-batch Indian Police Service officer of the Tripura cadre to the sensitive post last month.

The position heads the security wing of the Cabinet Secretariat and exercises administrative control over the Special Protection Group (SPG), the elite force responsible for the close security of the Prime Minister and eligible members of the Prime

Minister's family residing at the official residence. Singh formally took over the assignment on June 5, succeeding Parag Jain, chief of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), who had been holding additional charge of the post since November 2025.

His transfer to the Centre comes after leading the Manipur Police during a prolonged crisis triggered by ethnic clashes between the Meitei and Kuki communities that erupted on May 3, 2023. The violence left more than 260 people dead and displaced thousands across the state, creating one of the most serious law-and-order challenges in Manipur's recent history. Rajiv Singh was sent to Manipur on June 1, 2023, at a time when the state's 45,000-member police force was facing severe internal strain. The force



had become deeply divided along ethnic lines, with many personnel relocating to areas dominated by their respective communities.

Reports indicated that nearly 1,200 police personnel were absent from duty during the peak of the unrest. During his tenure, Singh introduced several measures aimed at restoring the functioning of the

police force. More than 1,150 absent personnel were traced and permitted to resume duties from locations where they felt safe. In a significant step towards maintaining recruitment and operational continuity, he organised a virtual passing-out parade for 304 newly recruited constables from both Meitei and Kuki communities, allowing them

to take their oath remotely before being deployed in their respective areas. Under his leadership, the Manipur Police intensified efforts to recover looted weapons from armouries, strengthened security at vulnerable locations, dismantled militant bunkers in sensitive areas and provided security cover to farmers working in conflict-prone foothill regions. Despite operating in an extremely polarised environment, Singh earned appreciation from leaders and representatives across different communities.

Former Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh acknowledged his contribution in a message on X, stating that he "sincerely appreciated his dedicated service and significant contributions towards maintaining law and order and strengthening peace and

stability in the state." Deputy Chief Minister Nemcha Kipgen also praised Singh's "fair, impartial, and unbiased approach," saying that despite the difficult circumstances, he remained transparent and balanced in carrying out his responsibilities.

A senior Meitei community leader similarly acknowledged Singh's accessibility during the crisis and noted that although differences of opinion existed, "your sincerity in striving to do what was best for the state was always evident."

With his appointment to the Cabinet Secretariat, Singh now moves to one of the country's most important security assignments, bringing with him extensive experience gained from managing a complex and sensitive security situation in Manipur.

Smuggling of Burmese areca nuts into India

Aizawl, June 06: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday carried out massive search operations across nine spots in the border town of Champhai along the Mizoram-Myanmar frontier in its ongoing investigation into the case of large-scale smuggling of illegal Burmese dry areca nuts into India.

The search operation is continued from early morning in close coordination with the Mizoram Police.

Officials said this major crackdown "targets a highly organised cross-border network heavily involved in the large-scale smuggling of illegal Burmese supari (dry Areca nuts) into India."

"The ongoing raids focus primarily on the residences and business premises

of prominent local facilitators of the smuggling network," the officials, privy to the operation. ED investigation reveals "these individuals illegally brought in Myanmar-origin consignments via the Tiu River, stored them in local godowns, and used fraudulent e-way bills and forged documents to pass them off as legitimate local purchases."

"This illicit pipeline facilitated the generation and systematic layering of hundreds of crores of rupees," the officials said.

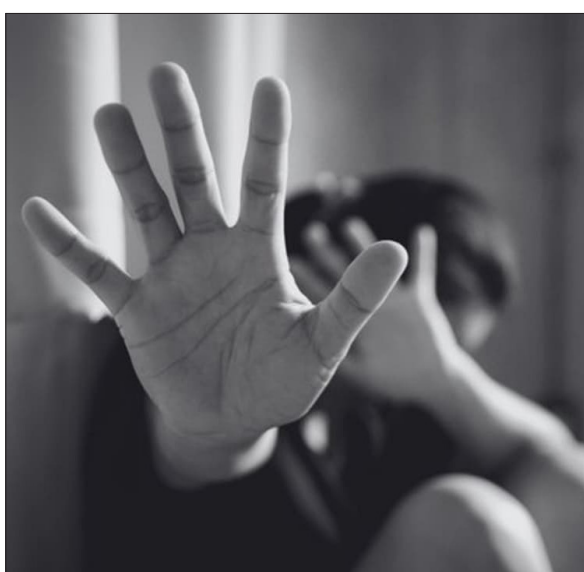
Furthermore, they said, the accused actively exploited their local tribal status to act as "front claimants" before Customs authorities, using unrelated historic import documents to secure the release of seized contraband.

DENSU seeks time-bound probe into alleged sexual abuse of minor in Dimapur

Kohima, June 06: The Dimapur Eastern Nagaland Students' Union (DENSU) has submitted a memorandum to the Director General of Police (DGP), Nagaland, demanding a fair, impartial and time-bound investigation into the alleged sexual abuse of a minor girl in Dimapur's Lengrijan area. In the memorandum, signed by DENSU president and general secretary, the union expressed deep concern over the case, stating that the incident has generated widespread anxiety among students, parents and the general public. The organisation stressed that every child victim deserves justice, protection, dignity and an opportunity to be heard without fear, pressure or intimidation.

The union said a transparent and professional investigation is necessary to maintain public confidence in the justice system and ensure that all aspects of the case are thoroughly examined. Among its key demands, DENSU called for a detailed investigation into the source, ownership, possession and legality of a firearm reportedly linked to the case. The union urged authorities to take appropriate legal action against anyone found responsible for any violations related to the weapon.

The memorandum also sought a comprehensive examination of all individuals who may have direct or indirect knowledge of the incident. This



includes persons alleged to have made statements or engaged in actions that may have affected the dignity, reputation or interests of the minor victim. DENSU further demanded that investigators examine whether any person aided, facilitated, concealed or attempted to suppress the alleged offence or interfere with the subsequent investigation.

The union said those found involved should face legal action in accordance with the law. The students' body also urged the police to ensure that all accused persons connected with the case are brought under the scope of the investigation, including any individuals who may still be absconding or have not yet been apprehended. Expressing concern over the possibility of interference in the investigation, DENSU requested that the prosecu-

tion strongly oppose any bail application that could influence witnesses, affect evidence or prejudice the course of justice, particularly given the seriousness of allegations involving a minor child. One of the major demands placed before the police chief was the constitution of a Special Investigation

Team (SIT) to conduct an independent, transparent and comprehensive investigation into the case. The union also sought supervision of the probe by an officer not below the rank of Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG), with overall monitoring by DGP Rupin Sharma. The memorandum additionally called for adequate protection and support for the victim and her family.

DENSU urged authorities to ensure protection from threats, coercion, harassment, intimidation or any

form of undue influence during the course of the investigation and legal proceedings.

The union emphasised the need to strictly protect the identity of the minor victim in accordance with the provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, and other applicable laws. It also appealed for firm action against any attempt to obstruct, influence or derail the investigation. The organisation urged authorities to complete the investigation on a priority basis so that justice is delivered without unnecessary delay. In its memorandum, DENSU stated that crimes against children affect the very foundation of society and warned that any negligence, delay or compromise in such cases could weaken public trust in the justice delivery system.

The union said it believes the Nagaland Police will take all necessary measures to establish the truth and ensure justice without fear, favour or prejudice. It also expressed confidence that the authorities would act decisively to safeguard the rights, welfare and dignity of the minor victim while upholding the rule of law. The memorandum comes amid growing public attention on the case, with several civil society organisations, student bodies and community groups calling for a transparent investigation and strict legal action against those found guilty.

Bandh affects normal life across Itanagar Capital Region despite government assurance

Itanagar, June 06: Normal life was disrupted across the Itanagar Capital Region (ICR) on Friday as a 24-hour bandh called by the Arunachal Pradesh Indigenous Youth Organisation (APIYO) affected business activities, educational institutions and public movement, even as the state government maintained that the key issues raised by the organisation had already been resolved. The shutdown, which began at 5 am on Friday, is scheduled to continue until 5 am on Saturday.

The bandh was called by APIYO over concerns related to alleged unauthorised mosques and illegal immigration in the state. The impact of the shutdown was visible across the capital region, with most shops, markets and educational institutions remaining closed throughout the day. Roads in several areas wore a deserted look, with only a limited number of government and police vehicles seen moving on the streets. Police officials said the bandh remained largely peaceful, although a few incidents of tyre burning by supporters of the shutdown were reported from some locations. Security personnel were deployed in different parts of the capital region to maintain law and order and prevent any untoward incidents. The district administration had earlier declared the bandh illegal.

Meanwhile, the state government reiterated that action had already been taken on the main issue highlighted by the organisation. Addressing a press conference, Education Minister Dorjee Sona said the administration had already closed all 15 mosques identified as operating without the required approvals in the Itanagar Capital Region. "The issue that led to the bandh call has been resolved. Since all the identified mosques have been closed, there is no reason for the agitation to continue," Sona said. According to the minister, official veri-



fication conducted by the authorities found that several of the structures were functioning without mandatory approvals such as registration certificates, building permissions, development clearances and other statutory requirements.

He stated that 12 such structures had already been sealed or closed by the district administration, while the remaining three, which were located on private land, were shut down on Wednesday. Sona further said that the government remains committed to ensuring that all institutions function within the framework of the law while maintaining peace, public order and communal harmony in the state. The bandh also took place amid apparent confusion within APIYO af-

ter conflicting statements emerged from members of the organisation on Thursday.

While one group of leaders announced during a press conference that the proposed shutdown had been withdrawn, another faction later stated through social media posts that the bandh would continue as originally scheduled. Despite the government's position that the primary demand had been addressed, the shutdown went ahead, leading to disruptions in daily life across the capital region. Authorities continued to monitor the situation closely throughout the day while appealing to the public to maintain peace and cooperate with law enforcement agencies. The bandh is expected to conclude at 5 am on June 6.

Nongkseh crowned Meghalaya State League champions after comeback win over Langsning

Shillong, Jun 06: Nongkseh SSCC capped a remarkable debut campaign in the Meghalaya State League (MSL) by defeating Langsning FC 2-1 in the final at a packed SSA Stadium on June 5.

Trailing at half-time after an own goal by Bannynkhrwnam Nongkhlaw in first-half stoppage time, Nongkseh produced a strong second-half fight-back to secure the title in front of a sold-out crowd.

Captain Hardy Cliff Nongbri restored parity in the 61st minute after connecting with a delivery from Sheen Sohktung. Substitute Shano Tariatang then completed

the turnaround seven minutes later, finishing off a counterattack set up by Kitboklang Pale. The victory earned Nongkseh the MSL trophy and a cash prize of Rs 8 lakh, while runners-up Langsning received Rs 5 lakh, the highest prize money awarded in the competition's history. Langsning pushed for an equaliser in the closing stages but were unable to breach Nongkseh's defence as the newly crowned champions held firm until the final whistle.

The fifth edition of the MSL featured its largest-ever scale, with 33 teams competing across eight venues and 139



matches. Organised by the Meghalaya Football Association with support from the Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs, the tournament also met the

All India Football Federation's competition requirements, paving the way for the champions' participation in I-League 3. The final drew an overwhelming

response from supporters, with tickets selling out hours before kick-off, highlighting growing interest in domestic football across the state.

LGBI Airport Pays Tribute to Lokapriya Gopinath Bardoloi on His Birth Anniversary

Guwahati, Jun 06: Lokapriya Gopinath Bardoloi International Airport (LGBI Airport) today observed the birth anniversary of Lokapriya Gopinath Bardoloi, the first Chief Minister of Assam and a visionary leader whose contributions continue to inspire generations.

The programme commenced with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp and offering of floral tributes before the statue of Lokapriya Gopinath Bardoloi by Chief Airport Officer Mukesh Nankani, along with officials of



tributed saplings to passengers to mark the occasion and celebrate the legacy of the Bharat Ratna awardee. The annual observance reflects LGBI Airport's commitment to honouring the life and contributions of the leader after whom

the airport is named. The airport's new integrated terminal, inspired by the culture, craftsmanship and natural beauty of Assam, serves as a modern gateway to Northeast India. With its blend of regional identity, digital innovation and pas-

senger-centric facilities, the terminal reflects the aspirations of a progressive Assam while preserving its rich heritage. Through such initiatives, the airport continues to celebrate and preserve the legacy of Lokapriya Gopinath Bardoloi.

Pointed gourd seized in Shillong for artificial colouring

Shillong, Jun 06: Food safety officials in Meghalaya have seized a consignment of 'patol' (pointed gourd) in Shillong on Friday after preliminary tests indicated the possible presence of artificial colouring agents during a random inspection in a local market, an officer said.

Deputy Commissioner of Food Safety, D B S Mukhim, said samples have been collected and sent for laboratory analysis. Random tests were conducted after a whistleblower in Assam highlighted the contamination of pointed gourds using artificial colours earlier this week. The inspection was carried out as part of routine surveillance by food safety officials to check the quality and safety of vegetables and other food products being sold in markets.

James Sangma resigns from Meghalaya Industrial Development Corporation



Shillong, Jun 06: Following his nomination as MDA candidate for upcoming Rajya Sabha election, NPP national vice-president and former Dadenggre MLA James K Sangma has resigned as Chairman of Meghalaya Industrial Development Corporation Limited (MIDC).

The ruling Meghalaya Democratic Alliance (MDA) – II on Thursday announced Sangma as the consensus candidate of the coalition for the state's lone Rajya Sabha seat, election to which will be held on June 18.

Announcing the decision on social media Friday, Sangma said he tendered his resignation Thursday, calling the role "an honour of the highest order."

He conveyed "deepest gratitude" to Chief

Minister Conrad K. Sangma for "the confidence and trust reposed in me," noting that the CM's guidance was "a steady source of inspiration" during his tenure.

Sangma also thanked MIDC's Board of Directors, officers, and staff, describing his time with them as "one of the most enriching experiences of my professional life."

Underscoring MIDC's mandate to accelerate industrial development, support MSMEs, and channel institutional finance in Meghalaya, Sangma said he carried the responsibility "with great pride." "I leave the institution with full faith in its people and its purpose," he wrote, adding, "I remain deeply committed to the progress and prosperity of our State, in whatever capacity I am called to serve."

Woman Stabbed 17 Times to Death; Lover Arrested in Dimoria

Guwahati, Jun 06 (HS): In a gruesome murder that has shocked Dimoria on the outskirts of Guwahati, a young woman was allegedly stabbed 17 times by her lover, who was arrested by Khetri Police within 12 hours of the crime. According to police, the body of the woman was found in a field at Oujari village in Dimoria on the evening of June 4 after the village headman informed authorities. The victim could not be identified initially, but her family later arrived and confirmed her identity. Police investigations revealed that the accused, identified as Bipul Mallik, a resident of Dimoria, allegedly attacked the woman repeatedly with a dagger before fleeing the scene. Following his arrest from Guwahati, Mallik reportedly confessed to the crime during interrogation. Officials said the accused had earlier served a jail term in a POCSO case and was released from prison in February this year. Preliminary findings suggest that he had called the woman to Dimoria before allegedly carrying out the fatal attack.

Complaint Filed in Goalpara School Beef Consumption Allegation; Police Launch Inquiry

Goalpara, Jun 06: A complaint has been lodged at Krishnai Police Station in Assam's Goalpara district following allegations that a group of students consumed beef inside a classroom and allegedly attempted to pressure two Hindu students to eat it at a higher secondary school. According to the complaint, the incident reportedly took place at Habraghat Higher Secondary School in Krishnai. The complainants alleged that five students brought beef to the school and consumed it inside a classroom during school hours. The complaint further stated that the students allegedly tried to compel two Hindu classmates to consume the meat. When the two students refused, they were reportedly subjected to mental pressure and intimidation. According to family members, the matter came to light after the students informed their parents about the alleged incident upon returning home from school. The parents subsequently approached Krishnai Police Station and filed a formal complaint, seeking legal action and a thorough investigation. The allegations have sparked concern among local residents, with many demanding that authorities conduct an impartial inquiry into the matter and ascertain the facts.

Meghalaya High Court Clears Woman to Contest West Garo Hills VEC Election

Shillong, Jun 06: The Meghalaya High Court has set aside an order that barred a woman from contesting the upcoming Village Employment Council (VEC) election in West Garo Hills, allowing her to participate in the poll. A division bench comprising Chief Justice Revati Mohite Dere and Justice W. Diengdoh passed the order while hearing an appeal filed by Ambiya Begum. Begum had challenged an earlier decision of a single judge who dismissed her petition against her disqualification from the election. During the hearing, the Meghalaya government informed the court that the Block Development Officer and Programme Officer of the MGNREGS Selsela Community and Rural Development Block had

issued a letter on June 5 stating that the office had "no objection" to Begum contesting the VEC election. Taking the letter into consideration, the court observed that the earlier order issued on May 25, 2026, debaring and disqualifying Begum from contesting the forthcoming Sobribari Village Employment Council election could no longer be sustained. The division bench subsequently quashed and set aside the disqualification order, effectively removing all restrictions on her candidature. The court further noted that in view of the latest development and the government's no-objection communication, there was nothing left for further consideration in the appeal. The matter was accordingly disposed of.

State Forms 4 Panels for ILP Reforms and Indigenous Protection

Itanagar, Jun 06: Chief Minister Pema Khandu announced the formation of four high-powered committees to address issues related to infiltration, strengthen the Inner Line Permit (ILP) system, re-verify Arunachal Pradesh Scheduled Tribe (APST) certificates, and safeguard the rights of indigenous communities in the state. The committees have been constituted in line with resolutions adopted during consultative meetings held on May 27 and May 29 under the Chief Minister's chairmanship. The meetings focused on indigenous tribal rights, APST matters, the ILP framework, and other related concerns. According to Khan-

du, the panels include representatives from the Arunachal Indigenous Tribes Forum (AITF), the All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU), the Arunachal ST Bachao Andolan Committee, legal experts, scholars, and government officials to ensure a broad-based and participatory approach. To address concerns over infiltration and illegal immigration, the government has formed a committee headed by Environment and Forests Minister Wangki Lowang. The panel will assess the extent of infiltration and immigration in the state and recommend measures for stronger border control, biometric and digi-

tal verification systems, and action against forged identity documents and undocumented settlement networks. It will also suggest legal and administrative measures to curb illegal immigration and strengthen existing safeguards. A second committee, led by Agriculture and Horticulture Minister Gabriel D. Wangsu, has been tasked with strengthening the Inner Line Permit regime. The panel will review the current ILP issuance, monitoring and verification system, examine the 2026 ILP guidelines, and recommend reforms, including technology-driven monitoring mechanisms and improved verification processes for tourists,

visitors, and workers. The government has also constituted a committee headed by Education Minister Pasang Dorjee Sona to review the issuance and verification of APST certificates. The panel will recommend a robust verification mechanism, propose amendments to existing guidelines, and suggest advanced security features, biometric verification systems, village-level scrutiny, and district-level verification procedures. It will also recommend action against forged certificates and fraudulent tribal claims. Another committee, chaired by Law Minister Kento Jini, will examine issues related to non-APST lineage

claims and the protection of indigenous rights. The panel will identify loopholes that allow misuse of tribal rights and recommend safeguards concerning tribal identity, inheritance, land protection, lineage verification, and reservation benefits. It will also propose measures to prevent fraudulent claims and recommend legal action against those who illegally acquire tribal rights. All four committees have been empowered to seek reports and data from government departments and district administrations. They are required to submit their recommendations to the government within six months of their first meetings.

Meghalaya issues notification on display of name boards on government vehicles

Shillong, Jun 06: Meghalaya has notified a fresh set of regulations governing the display of name boards on government vehicles, laying down who can use official designation plates and the manner in which they must be displayed. The Transport Department issued the "Display of Name Boards on Motor Vehicles Regulations, 2026", which came into effect from the date of publication in the official gazette. The notification states that no vehicle, except those specifically listed under the regulations, may display boards carrying the name of the government, a government department or the designation of a dignitary or official without prior approval from the Transport Department. The rules permit designated name boards for constitution-



al authorities, elected representatives, senior government officials and members of the judiciary. These include the Governor, Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, Cabinet Ministers, Speaker and Deputy Speaker, Members of Parliament, MLAs, Chief Executive Members of Autonomous District Councils, the Chief Secretary, Director General of Police, Deputy Commissioners, Superintendents of Police and several

other categories of officials. Under the regulations, official boards must generally be displayed at both the front and rear of the vehicle, alongside the registration mark. Most boards are required to measure 50 cm by 15 cm, with specified colour schemes depending on the office held. The notification also makes it mandatory for the boards to be removed or suitably covered when the concerned dignitary or officer is not travelling in the vehicle.

Almost 90% work on border fencing with Bangladesh completed in Meghalaya

Shillong, Jun 06: In a region where border fencing projects routinely get stuck over terrain, legal challenges, land ownership and diplomatic complexities, Meghalaya has achieved remarkable success on the border it shares with Bangladesh.

The state shares a 443-km international border with its eastern neighbour. These stretches pass through East Khasi Hills, West Khasi Hills, South West Khasi Hills, East Jaintia Hills, West Jaintia Hills, South Garo Hills and South West Garo Hills. Nearly 400 km of this border has already been fenced, leaving just 40-45 km pending. That means Meghalaya is now without touching distance of completing one of the Northeast's most significant border infrastructure projects. Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma recently underscored the scale of the achievement, stating that nearly 400 km of fencing has already been completed and that only about 40-45 km remains. Significantly, he noted that the unfinished portion is no longer being held up by construction challenges. According to the Chief



Minister, most of the delay is linked to local issues and objections in the remaining stretches. In comparison to other border-fencing projects across India, Meghalaya's initiative is nearly 90 per cent complete. Considering that the Bangladesh border is India's longest international boundary, spanning

4,096 km, Meghalaya's position stands out. West Bengal accounts for 2,217 km of the border, Tripura 856 km, Meghalaya 443 km, Mizoram 318 km and Assam 262 km. While every state faces its own set of challenges, Meghalaya is among the very few that can now see the finish line.

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The Growing Neglect of Public Parks

Public parks are among the few spaces where people of all ages can relax, exercise, and connect with nature free of cost. Yet many parks suffer from poor maintenance, inadequate facilities, and gradual encroachment. As cities become denser, the value of open green spaces increases. Parks improve air quality, encourage physical activity,

and provide much-needed respite from urban stress. Despite these benefits, green spaces often receive less attention than commercial and infrastructure projects. Urban development should not come at the expense of public recreation. Preserving and improving parks is an investment in both public health and quality of life.

Northeast government based on space

21st-century governance is data-intelligent governance that uses space technology to allow the government to monitor environmental, geographic, or infrastructure developments that are outside the scope of ground-based data systems in real time. The Northeastern states are able to use space technology, satellite communication application services, and geospatial technology to accelerate growth in agriculture, health, education, weather services, disaster management, and other areas of development thanks in large part to the North-Eastern Space Applications Center (NESAC). Union Minister Jyotiraditya M. Scindia indicated a significant shift in NESAC’s role to expedite progress and better protect the region from disaster risks and climate change by outlining five major plans to make NESAC a key player in enhancing regional development, preparing for disasters, promoting climate-smart governance, encouraging scientific innovation, and using data for policymaking. At the 13th NESAC meeting in Shillong, the DoNER minister listed five initiatives: making comprehensive maps of village resources; monitoring wetlands, forests, rivers, and landscapes on a regular basis; assisting Northeastern geospatial and space-technology startups; creating a digital platform called NER-Shield to aid in disaster resilience; and establishing a framework for tracking the region’s natural wealth and resources. Ending development inequities is hampered by ac-

cessibility in the region’s isolated and poorly linked villages. A comprehensive map of a village’s land, infrastructure, natural resources, and human footprints can be produced with the aid of high-resolution satellite imagery. The state government, the federal government, and local self-governments, such as panchayats or village councils under autonomous councils, can set development goals and priorities with scientific accuracy and create plans and programs thanks to these comprehensive maps. These maps can identify which villages lack a primary healthcare facility, where new roads and bridges are required to enhance connectivity and transportation, where roads or embankments need to be repaired, identify encroachment of a forest or wetland, monitor seasonal variations in water bodies, identify cleared forest patches, demonstrate how afforestation or deforestation has resulted in an increase or decrease in forest cover, etc. For local governments to create precise and fact-based village development plans, such micro-level and real-time data are essential. Real-time data collection from field-based physical surveys is challenging due to their time-consuming nature. Because judgments are frequently based on out-of-date assumptions about the present situation and rely on the most recent data—which is often outdated—instead of updated information, this circumstance leads to gaps in the planning process.

Building a disaster-resilient Northeast requires monitoring the disaster risk for real-time intervention before they become a disaster, since climate change and extreme weather events increase the region’s vulnerability to disasters. For the Brahmaputra basin, the NESAC has already created a flood early warning system. By effectively using this system to issue timely alerts, the vulnerable communities’ flood resilience can be greatly increased, and the basin states’ capacity to anticipate floods and take timely mitigation measures can be strengthened. Therefore, the Vision NESAC roadmap review was a crucial exercise to realign its goals in order to strengthen state capacities to confront the issue of growing climate threats and guarantee sustainable development. According to the roadmap, the region will gradually change through space-enabled innovation and governance, moving from smart analytics to a smart region and finally an autonomous ecosystem. A practical step toward integrating space technology with the region’s resilience needs is the Union minister’s proposal for hyper-local, multilingual last-mile alert systems integrated with telecom networks and his suggestion to increase geospatial risk-monitoring tools for landslides and other natural hazards to strengthen disaster resilience. The fact that NESAC, ISRO, DoNER, and the Northeastern States made a firm commitment at the conclusion of the NESAC meeting to leverage

space technology and innovation to enhance inclusive, sustainable, and future-ready development in the region is reassuring. Raising awareness of NESAC’s operations can boost community trust in space-based governance and motivate locals and the government to plan local development, report disaster risks, and support disaster management using geospatial tools like the Global Positioning System, Geographic Information System, and remote sensing. The manpower required to bolster space-based governance will be developed thanks to the DoNER Ministry’s assistance to the Northeastern states in improving geospatial education. By enhancing basic and advanced courses on geospatial tools and their uses, higher education institutions around the area can prepare more professionals and researchers to incorporate these techniques into regular state government. There is an urgent need for a concentrated move to space technology, geospatial intelligence-based planning, and active public participation in such smart governance and catastrophe management. For NESAC to fulfill its intended revolutionary function, strong financial support from the federal and state governments as well as administrative and logistical collaboration are essential. Strong policy advocacy is required to fulfill the objective for space-based governance and extensive departmental integration.

China’s Second Great Wall and the Line of Amity

A structural paradigm shift is taking place in China’s strategic stance along its 3,488-kilometer Line of Actual Control (LAC) with India. The People’s Republic of China (PRC) is methodically weaponizing its legal, infrastructural, and tactical systems in order to permanently freeze the geopolitical status quo on its terms, moving away from conventional, fluid territorial disputes. The implementation of its Land Border Laws and tactical maneuvers to secure absolute asymmetric vantage spots throughout the Himalayas form the core of this plan. India must move away from reactive, resource-intensive militarization in order to counter this dynamic. New Delhi can go to a highly advanced, economical defense architecture by realizing that China wants containment through fortification rather than multi-axis expansion. The “Line of Amity” architecture, which was first conceived by Jaideep Saikia, provides India with a sophisticated mechanism to stabilize its northern border, maximize defense spending, and reallocate essential funds to human infrastructure. China’s territorial and legislative actions do not suggest a traditional expansionist attempt to conquer India’s heartland. Rather, the PRC’s main goal is to construct a “Second Great Wall of China”—an impregnable tactical barrier.

From a geopolitical standpoint, Beijing’s construction of a technology and physical frontier barrier is more about carrying out a unilateral territorial crystallization strategy than it is about traditional defense. By building this infrastructure, the PRC hopes to turn geopolitical disagreements into an irrevocable fait accompli by imposing a permanent, non-negotiable freeze on the border only on its own terms. A defensive perimeter functions mechanically on a binary mandate of mutual containment: the rigorous spatial confinement of the architect state is its implicit structural consequence, while its stated tactical function is to prevent external revisionist penetration. To put it another way, a wall has two functions: it repels intruders and, by default, encloses the area it protects. The PRC effectively defines its own sovereign ceiling by technologically and physically tying its outermost defensive envelope to a defined geographic coordinate. As a result, this containment matrix has two functions: it both operationally and legally confines China to its own perimeter, signifying a move away from outward geographical flexibility and toward a total stabilization of its existing sphere of influence. China’s land border legislation, which the PRC



had implemented on January 1, 2022, were discussed by the author. On June 13, 2022, he participated in a “China Seminar” at the 27 Mountain Division in Kalimpong. Among those in the division’s famous Bewoor Hall were Lt Gen R.P. Kalita, the then-GOC-in-C of Eastern Army Command; Prof. Srikanth Kondapalli; Amb. Gautam Bambawale, the former Indian Ambassador to China; Lt Gen Arun K. Sahni, the former GOC-in-C of South Western Command; and Vice Admiral Anil K. Chawla, the former FOC-in-C of Southern Naval Command. “Beijing’s Land Border Laws’ codification signifies a purposeful transition from political ambiguity to strict legal sovereignty. The law essentially transforms civilian settlements (Xiaokang villages) into key elements of military defense by specifically requiring the state to strengthen borders and enhance frontier public services. It provides legal protection for constructing infrastructure on contested ground, establishing it as official territory prior to diplomatic negotiations. The tactic depends on maintaining commanding high-ground positions along the whole boundary. The precise design is revealed by recent historical flashpoints from the Eastern Sector, which the author has been studying for more than 25 years: The Yangtse Incident (Kameng Sector); In order to control local lines

of communication, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) concentrated on gaining a strong ridge position overlooking the Tawang plains rather than attempting deep territorial penetration. The Jampheri Ridge Proximity (Doklam): In order to give the PLA a clear view of India’s precarious Siliguri Corridor, China moved closer to the Jampheri Ridge. This action aims to maintain an ongoing, asymmetric danger from high elevations to India’s link to its northeastern states. China hopes to create a long-lasting defensive barrier with these measures. Beijing would be able to project power throughout the Indo-Pacific while India will be permanently at a tactical disadvantage thanks to this infrastructure. India cannot match China’s soldier-for-soldier or concrete-for-concrete defense of this reinforced barrier. China currently spends about US \$277 billion on defense, a 3.2-to-1 headline ratio more than India, which spends about US \$86 billion. Strategic fatigue will result from trying to replicate China’s high-altitude infrastructure footprint. India needs to reevaluate its perspective on the border in order to end this cycle. A “Line of Amity” is a notion that offers the necessary structure. Breaking the Baggage of Past Nomenclature: Conflicting cartographic claims and historical tension are associated with traditional terminologies like the McMahon Line and the

Line of Actual Control (LAC). Instead of framing the boundary as an adversarial line of conflict, a “Line of Amity” re-frames it as a negotiated zone of mutual stability. De-escalation via Buffer Zones: In order to establish stable and non-threatening deployment patterns, the plan recommends that both parties retreat from their present locations. A cooperative security architecture substitutes technology-driven, stand-off surveillance for forward-deployed friction points. This guarantees India’s territorial integrity while honoring China’s emphasis on defense through fortification. New Delhi needs to establish a high-level “Boundary Commission” right away in order to carry out this objective. In order to audit Jaideep Saikia’s proposal, this council should include military strategists, cartographers, diplomats, and subject matter specialists. In order to provide Beijing with a stable border while maintaining India’s strategic core, the panel would construct a methodical framework for a negotiated settlement. The cost of keeping tens of thousands of soldiers in a forward-deployed, high-altitude posture is enormous. Changing to a stand-off, optimized defense posture along the “Line of Amity” has enormous financial benefits. According to military analysts, it costs up to Rs 12,000 to Rs 15,000 per soldier per day to maintain a single division (roughly 17,000

to 20,000 troops) in extremely high-altitude regions like Eastern Ladakh or Arunachal Pradesh because of specialized winter clothing, sophisticated rations, aviation fuel, and ongoing logistics support. In addition to severe non-financial costs like high soldier morbidity and strategic immobilization in fixed, defensive positions, forward alpine deployment involves enormous financial costs due to the high resource consumption needed for winter-proofing bases, helicopter supply sorties, and extreme-weather gear. On the other hand, its main advantage is an instantaneous physical deterrent against territorial invasions. By substituting a one-time capital investment in automated sensor grids, satellite surveillance, and armed drone fleets for high-maintenance human garrisons, technology-driven border control lowers long-term operating costs. Increased situational awareness and quick response flexibility are the main advantages of this tech-centric approach, albeit this isn’t true for all industries along the India-China border. In the end, a hybrid strategy provides the best balance by using technology to reduce the financial and human costs associated with advance deployment while maintaining sufficient physical force to protect the terrain. India should reallocate substantial annual spending from operational maintenance to essential

public sectors by retreating from these front friction sites to optimized bases: Infrastructure Improvements: Thousands of primary healthcare facilities could be established throughout rural India with the help of reallocated money. Equipment and Personnel: Modern medical equipment and medical professional training for underprivileged communities might be completely funded with the money saved. Digital Integration: Up-to-date digital learning resources and dependable internet infrastructure might be made available to millions of rural students. School Upgrades: To support India’s expanding workforce, funds could be used to build specialized vocational training facilities and fix deteriorating elementary school infrastructure. India can use a complex combination of asymmetric economic and geopolitical pressure to persuade China to agree to mutual buffer zones along the “Line of Amity”. India may remind Beijing that a hostile border jeopardizes its crucial trade surpluses by directly linking China’s access to its vast consumer market, vital mineral supply chains, and high-tech investment prospects to verifiable border de-escalation. Geopolitically, India may act as a strong counterweight by utilizing its rising maritime presence at choke spots in the Indian Ocean, like the Malacca Strait, and its strategic align-

ment within the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad). India reframes mutual buffer zones not as a concession but as a crucial geopolitical off-ramp for China to protect its larger global and maritime ambitions by showing Beijing that an unresolved, unstable land border will force New Delhi to fully integrate into Western security architectures and increase naval pressure on China’s energy lifelines. A key structural shift from the underlying 2005 Political Parameters and Guiding Principles Agreement is shown by the shift toward a piecemeal, “early harvest” strategy. Originally, any boundary solution had to be a single, comprehensive package deal that covered all sectors—western, middle, and eastern—in a single, final agreement, according to Article III of the 2005 Agreement. In order to overcome decades of diplomatic lethargy, New Delhi has successfully compromised on this “all-or-nothing” approach by switching to a gradual model. Negotiators are deliberately repackaging the 2005 agreement instead of throwing it out completely. The 2005 agreement’s provision regarding maintaining a “political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship” has been used by both parties as a legal justification for this methodical approach. In less unstable areas, this practical adjustment enables India to achieve quick sovereign finality while conditionally postponing the more complicated and heavily militarized Ladakh fronts. The new Expert Group’s primary responsibility under the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination is to serve as the primary team responsible for implementing the detailed strategy for resolving border disputes. The group’s specific mandate, which was established to convert high-level political mandates into technical realities, comprises: Exploring advancements in boundary delimitation, the group focuses on identifying low-conflict sectors like the Kameng Sector to establish definitive borders. This includes mapping overlaps in boundary understandings, drafting legally binding agreements, and isolating militarized zones for diplomatic progress. Data provided will aid high-level discussions between special representatives, especially leading up to the Tianjin summit, where a shift in strategy was acknowledged. India’s focus must shift towards achieving incremental stability with China, leveraging current geopolitical challenges to solidify long-term border resolutions. This approach could enhance Modi’s legacy as a statesman who effectively navigates India’s security landscape.

Malabar Group showcases CSR impact through Hunger Free World's rehabilitation initiatives



Mumbai: Reinforcing the growing role of corporate social responsibility in addressing social challenges, Malabar Group has released a new impact report highlighting how its Hunger Free World initiative is transforming lives through sustained community outreach and rehabilitation support. Released on World Hunger Day, the report, “Impact Stories: How a Daily Meal Opens the Door to a Transformed Life”, documents the impact of the Street Meal Distribution Programme, implemented by Thanal. While the initiative was launched to provide nutritious meals to people facing hunger, it has evolved into a comprehensive support mechanism connecting vulnerable individuals with healthcare, shelter, rehabilitation and family reunification services. Operating across 20 states in India and nine countries, including six GCC nations, the United States, the United Kingdom and Zambia, Hunger Free World currently reaches around 1.43 lakh beneficiaries through its Street Meal Distribution Programme and Micro Learning Centres.

The report highlights several rehabilitation success stories, including support for an elderly man in Nagercoil who was moved to a care home, dignity restoration and rehabilitation assistance for a bedridden man in Kumbakonam, shelter support for a distressed woman in Chennai, a family reunification effort between Udupi and Chennai, and medical intervention for a physically challenged senior citizen in Tiruchirappalli.

“A meal may appear simple, but when it is delivered consistently and with human attention, it becomes much more than food,” said M. P. Ahammad, Chairman of Malabar Group. He said trust built through regular outreach often becomes the foundation for healthcare access, emotional support and dignity restoration.

The initiative forms part of Malabar Group’s broader CSR commitment, under which the company allocates five per cent of its net trading profit towards social responsibility programmes focused on hunger eradication, education, healthcare, housing, women empowerment and environmental sustainability. The report underscores how strategic CSR investments can deliver long-term, measurable impact for vulnerable communities.

Oil India finds natural gas in another Andaman well: What it could mean for India

Mumbai: Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Friday announced the finding of natural gas in the Andaman Sea, a development that could strengthen India’s efforts to increase domestic energy production and reduce dependence on imported fuel. The discovery was made at the Sri Vijayapuram-3 exploratory well drilled by Oil India Ltd around 15 kilometres off the east coast of the Andaman Islands. According to the minister, the well was drilled in waters about 355 metres deep, and initial testing confirmed the presence of natural gas. In a post on X, Puri described the find as a major step forward for India’s offshore exploration programme. “Very happy to report the presence of natural gas in Sri Vijayapuram-3, an exploratory well drilled by Oil India Ltd,” Puri said.

He added that testing at a depth of more than 1,900 metres in the Eocene formation established the presence of natural gas through continuous flaring. Importance of the discovery “This presence of natural gas will help us in taking forward our exploration ambitions in coordination with global deepwater exploration experts like Petrobras, TotalEnergies, BP, Shell and Exxon-Mobil and will be a significant milestone in our journey through Amrit Kaal,” Puri said. The back-to-back gas discoveries are being viewed as an important development for India’s offshore exploration efforts, particularly in the relatively underexplored Andaman Basin. Industry observers believe the findings could encourage further exploration and appraisal work aimed at assessing the region’s hydrocarbon potential. According to Oil India, the latest discovery provides further evidence of a working petroleum system in the basin and could indicate the presence of additional hydrocarbon accumulations, reported PTI. Following the earlier Sri Vijayapuram-2 discovery, the company launched an extensive appraisal programme. The effort includes reprocessing existing seismic data and acquiring nearly 600 square kilometres of additional 3D seismic data, reported PTI. Oil India said data processing and interpretation are underway and will help determine future appraisal drilling plans. With two gas discoveries from three



exploratory wells, the Andaman offshore region is increasingly being seen as one of India’s most promising areas for future oil and gas exploration. The latest finding marks the second hydrocarbon find from three exploratory wells drilled by Oil India in the Andaman Basin during its current exploration campaign. Puri said hydrocarbon presence has now been confirmed in two of the three wells drilled so far in the basin. The result strengthens hopes that the Andaman region may hold significant oil and gas resources. The discovery follows the earlier Sri Vijayapuram-2 find announced in 2025. Tests at that well confirmed natural gas with around 87% meth-

ane content. Will Venezuelan crude imports rise further? PM Modi-Rodriguez meeting drops strong hints For India, the discovery is important because the country imports a large share of its oil and gas needs. New domestic discoveries can help improve energy security and support long-term economic growth. What may happen next Oil India will now conduct detailed studies to better understand the newly discovered gas. The company is collecting gas samples to determine its composition and calorific value. It will also carry out isotope studies to understand how the gas was formed. That earlier success encouraged further exploration in the region. Industry

experts believe the Andaman Basin shares geological characteristics with hydrocarbon-rich areas stretching from Myanmar to Indonesia. The latest discovery adds to evidence that the basin contains an active petroleum system capable of holding commercial energy reserves. The government plans to intensify exploration efforts in the Andaman region. Several additional exploratory wells were scheduled by the end of 2025 as authorities seek to identify more oil and gas reserves. Under the mission, India plans to drill a large number of deepwater and ultra-deepwater exploration wells across offshore basins to unlock the country’s hydrocarbon potential.

BDL shares: Target price trimmed, but brokerage maintains ‘Accumulate’ call on FY27 optimism

Mumbai: Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL) saw a negative surprise on all fronts as the execution delay related to surface-to-air missile (SAM) projects dragged sales and subsequently margin, Elara Capital stated. “We believe the delay was on account of post-testing observations, which are now being incorporated, resulting in delay in deliveries; however, it is likely these issues are transient, with full recovery expected in FY27,” the domestic brokerage added. Although BDL missed sales CAGR target of 30 per cent for FY26, it has a closing orderbook of ~Rs 26,000 crore, to be executed in the next 3-4 years and robust order visibility; we expect sales growth to improve hereafter,” it also said. Elara reduced its target price, while maintaining the ‘Accumulate’ rating.

“We lower our TP to Rs 1,315 (from Rs 1,580) on 38x March FY28E P/E, due to muted performance in FY26 on sales and



margin fronts. However, we retain Accumulate as issues are set to subside by FY27, and BDL has a robust order pipeline in the near term along with unexplored export oppor-

tunities,” it stated. “We expect BDL to be a key beneficiary of a robust order pipeline, which includes quick reaction surface-to-air missile (QRSAM) worth Rs 10,000-

12,000 crore, Astra missile order, MRSAM for the Navy, exports order for Akash, and small-ticket orders for Nag, Helina, and Dhruvastra missiles,” Elara noted. “The company has developed an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)-launched precision guided missile (ULPGM), which is likely to garner robust demand, due to its unique nature of launching missiles through a drone which returns. BDL is collaborating with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) to develop new products to help propel revenue growth,” it further stated.

Separately, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd (MOFSL) and Nuvama Institutional Equities have downgraded the stock to ‘Neutral’ and ‘Reduce’, respectively.

Meanwhile, BDL shares were last seen trading 1.38 per cent higher at Rs 1,222.90 in Wednesday’s trade.

From 135 ships a day to 11: Hormuz

Mumbai: Traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has collapsed by more than 90% from pre-war levels, with over 800 vessels stranded in the Middle East Gulf, raising concerns that disruptions to a route carrying nearly 20% of global oil supply could continue well into late 2026, according to a white paper by S&P Global Commodity Insights. Before the outbreak of the US-Israel conflict with Iran on February 28, more than 100 vessels carrying around 20 million barrels of crude oil and refined products transited the Strait every day, equivalent to nearly one-fifth of global oil supply. The waterway also handled around 30% of global LPG trade, 20% of LNG, 16% of alumina and 14% of global fertiliser shipments, highlighting its central role in global commodity flows. However, S&P Global’s latest assessment shows the Strait remains far from normal despite discussions around re-opening. “Markets differentiate between a technical re-opening of Hormuz and a commercial re-opening, which is based on restored confidence of cleared mines, eased insurance and safe passage. With more than 800 vessels still stranded in the Middle East Gulf, our Commodities at Sea clearance modelling suggests the world’s most watched energy artery is poised to keep pulsing below normal for months — into late 2026,” said Rahul Kapoor, Head of Shipping & Metals at S&P Global Commodity Insights.

Stocks are falling Nifty IT index plunges over 1,600 points; TCS, LTM slide 8%

Mumbai: After leading the market rebound for three straight sessions, technology stocks found themselves at the centre of a sharp sell-off on Wednesday. The reversal was swift and widespread, dragging the Nifty IT index down more than 1,600 points, or over 5%, in intraday trade. Weakness in global technology stocks also weighed on investor sentiment. According to Kunal Bajaj, Research Analyst at Choice Institutional Equities, “The sharp correction in the Nifty IT index after a three-day rally appears to be largely driven by global risk-off sentiment following weakness in US technology stocks overnight, particularly amid renewed concerns around elevated AI-linked valuations and profit booking in large-cap tech names.” Indian IT companies derive a significant portion of their revenue from overseas markets, particularly the United States. As a result, any weakness in global technology stocks often spills over into domestic IT counters. 3 ‘Buy’ recommendations by Jefferies, with up to 23% upside potential. “The stronger guidance from global software vendors reinforced confidence that enterprise technology spending remains resilient, which investors interpreted as an early indicator of a recovery in discretionary IT spending. However, after the sharp rally, valuations had turned relatively stretched in the near term, making the sector vulnerable to global profit booking,” said Bajaj.

At this hour, the Nifty IT index was

trading below the 29,500 mark, making it one of the worst-performing sectoral indices of the day. Let’s take a look at the key reasons why tech stocks are falling. Rally loses steam as investors book profits The kerigger behind today’s decline appears to be profit booking after a strong three-day run in technology shares. Artificial intelligence continues to dominate discussions around the future of the technology sector. However, analysts believe the financial benefits from AI adoption may take longer to materialise than many investors initially expected. Agrawal also highlighted that Indian IT firms are actively adapting to the changing environment. “Domestic IT companies are taking proactive steps to expand their total addressable market by partnering with global AI leaders and offering bundled AI-enabled solutions to their clients,” added Agrawal. However, he cautioned that the earnings impact may not be visible immediately. “I believe the benefits of these initiatives are more likely to be reflected in companies’ profit and loss statements beginning FY28 rather than FY27, which is still a few quarters away,” added Agarwal.

What investors need watch ahead While analysts acknowledge the near-term challenges, they also believe AI could eventually create new growth opportunities for the industry. Kunal Bajaj of Choice Institutional Equities said, “At a broader level, the market narrative around AI is gradually shift-

ing from disruption risk to long-term opportunity for Indian IT services.” He added that enterprises are increasingly viewing AI as a technology enabler that could expand spending on cloud, data, software engineering and digital transformation initiatives. IT stocks had seen a notable recovery in recent sessions after undergoing a prolonged correction earlier this year. Improved sentiment, attractive valuations and short covering helped the sector bounce back. TCS emerged as the biggest loser among large-cap IT names, falling around 8%. LTM was not far behind with a decline of about 7%. Persistent Systems, Coforge and Tech Mahindra dropped nearly 5% each, while Infosys and HCL Technologies slipped roughly 4%. While valuations have corrected significantly from their peaks, analysts believe the fundamental challenges facing the sector remain largely unchanged. Sunny Agrawal, Head of Fundamental Research at SBI Securities, said, “Fundamentally, nothing has changed when it comes to IT stocks. We all know that the entire IT sector has been facing pressure related to AI adoption and its deflationary impact on traditional IT services growth.” According to him, most Tier-1 IT companies continue to guide for low single-digit growth in FY27, while many mid-sized firms are expecting only modest double-digit expansion. This has kept investors cautious despite recent buying interest.

Down 50% this Tata Group stock before first bonus issue

Mumbai: Multibagger stocks to buy: Shares of Trent Ltd shall trade ex-date for bonus issue on Thursday, June 04, 2026. The Tata Group company has announced to issue bonus shares for eligible investors along with its quarterly earnings for the March 2026 quarter, marking its first ever bonus issue. Wednesday, June 03 marks the last day to buy shares of Trent before the stock trade ex-bonus on Thursday, June 04, 2026. From Wednesday, the stock will be available only ex-bonus, nearly two-third price of the today’s close. The stock was trading nearly Rs 4,250-4,300 levels on Wednesday and only existing investors will get the bonus shares of the company.

Trent reported a 32.57 per cent yearly jump in the net profit at Rs 413.10 crore with a 19.23 per cent YoY rise in the revenue at Rs 5,027.99 crore for the quarter ended on March 31, 2026. Its Ebitda came in at Rs 653 crore, up 44 per cent YoY with company adding 23 Westside and 109 Zudio stores. Trent also announced a final dividend of Rs 6 per share for the reported quarter. It also announced a final dividend of Rs 5 per shares in June 2025, a dividend of Rs 3.2 in May 24 and a dividend of Rs 2.2 in May 2024. Tata Group firm has been announcing dividend of shareholders on consistent basis.

However, one should not think that shares of Trent Ltd are down 33 per cent from its 52-week high at Rs 6,259, hit on June 30, 2025, while the stock has gained nearly 31 per cent from its 52-week low at Rs 3,276.10 hit on March 30, 2026. The stock is down nearly 50 per cent from its all-time high at Rs 8,235 hit in October 2024. Despite this fall, the stock is up 400 per cent in last five years. “COCO-focused expansion in tier -II/III markets provide revenue visibility as revenue profile of newer stores matures. We expect margin to remain resilient despite soft LFL for value fashion. Monitor Rs 2,500 crore fund raise. Our revenue and EBITDA estimates are largely unchanged, and we introduce FY29E estimates,” said Elara Capital with an ‘accumulate’ rating with a target price Rs 4,800. Trent delivered strong performance driven by



store expansion across new geographies, an enhanced customer proposition through emerging categories and a robust omnichannel strategy. Management remains optimistic about recovery in sentiment as geopolitical uncertainties settle, and is continuing to focus on building a differentiated portfolio addressing evolving aspirations, said Geojit Investments.

Strategic investments in store upgrades, supply chain automation, digital initiatives and new brand incubation support long-term positioning. With stable pricing, quality own brands, improving revenue density in newer markets and sustained capital efficiency, the company is well-positioned for continued growth,” it said with a ‘buy’ rating and a target price of Rs 4,712. ICICI Direct Research broadly maintained its revenue and ebitda estimates for FY27E and FY28E. “However, our PAT estimates stands reduced for FY27E and FY28E due to higher depreciation cost considering accelerated store expansion ahead,” it said with a ‘buy’ rating and a target price of Rs 5,075.

‘Family values’ African charter condemned rights groups as regressive and dangerous

Africa: An African treaty that rejects longstanding international human rights obligations moved a step closer to becoming policy this week as governments across the continent met in Ghana.

The draft African charter on family, sovereignty and values, seen by the Guardian, asserts that African values and culture are under attack from “foreign ideologies” and urges states to withdraw from any agreements that do not align with the principles of the charter, including the 2003 Maputo protocol, which promotes gender equality and protects the reproductive and health rights of women and girls.

The charter is the first attempt to impose a conti-

nent-wide legal framework rooted in a moralistic rather than rights-based viewpoint. It claims that sexual and reproductive health and rights are an existential threat to the African family, and falsely states that policies based on these rights promote abortion on demand. The draft treaty also rejects comprehensive sex education (CSE), which it claims sexualises children; asserts that gender is either male or female; and declares that parental rights override a child’s rights, including on decisions about sexuality and discipline. African legal experts, reproductive rights groups and LGBTQ+ advocates have condemned the charter as regressive and dangerous.

Gilbert Mitullah, a Kenyan lawyer and board member at the Queer African Network,

said: “It is a licence to oppose, regress on or refuse to implement existing commitments on sexual and reproductive health, and on LGBTQ rights, and to dismantle the Maputo protocol from within. That is its operational function, even before any signature is placed on it.” The charter was drawn up by a core group of African lawmakers, led by Ugandan government ministers, at the annual inter-parliamentary conference on family values and sovereignty, a controversial meeting that has become known for shaping anti-homosexuality legislation. The objective of the 2026 conference, which was held in Ghana for the first time this week and attended by representatives from 20 countries, was to advance the charter by garnering enough support to take it to the African Union general assembly next February, when it would be put to a vote. Critics say the charter’s definition of family based strictly on heterosexual marriage ignores the huge diversity of families across the continent’s 54 countries. In an extensive analysis of the draft, the Initiative for Strategic Litigation in Africa (ISLA), a pan-African feminist initiative, argues that prioritising the family over the individual “risks legitimising the subordination of women, children and adolescents to collective family interests and insulating private family relations from state accountability, especially in situations involving violence, coercion, or discrimination.”

Lakshita Kanhiya, a legal officer at ISLA, said: “Women will no longer be safe; children will not be safe.” Mitullah said: “‘Family values’ rhetoric does two things at once. It legitimises expanded state intrusion into private life, and it provides a vocabulary that wins votes without delivering material change.”

The ISLA report also criticises the way legitimate concerns around sovereignty and colonialism are distorted. The terminology running through the charter exposes

the strong influence of conservative Christian organisations from the US and Europe that oppose abortion and LGBTQ+ rights. Progressive policies are dismissed as neocolonialism or cultural imperialism. Famia Nkansa, communications lead at Purposeful, a Sierra Leone-based organisation focused on girls’ activism, said: “Anti-rights activity on the continent is simply an extension and expansion of the same colonial playbook: Africa serving as a battleground on which the west wages its ideological and economic wars.” According to the US-based international reproductive rights organisation Ipas, the annual conferences have been supported by Family Watch International, an Arizona-based Christian lobbying organisation that opposes abortion and runs an anti-CSE campaign. Sharon Slater, FWI’s co-founder, has repeatedly claimed that the UN and western donor nations are imposing a “radical sexual rights agenda”. Mitullah said: “The charter is not a continental instrument that happens to share vocabulary with western anti-rights groups. It is a transplant.

He added that the Geneva Consensus Declaration, an anti-abortion manifesto crafted by the former Trump adviser Valerie Huber, was cited in the text, describing the document as a “collaborative product of a transnational network, with African signatories used to give it the appearance of Indigenous provenance”. In a statement, FWI said it was not participating in or a sponsor of the conference in Ghana. “The draft charter is Africa-inspired, African-initiated, and African-directed and controlled,” it said, but added: “That being said, FWI strongly supports the draft charter’s restrictions on the dissemination of harmful CSE programmes in Africa, given their propensity to sexualise children. We also strongly support the provisions encouraging governments to use a family lens when developing and implementing laws, policies and programmes.”

Arrests of critics in Ghana provokes alarm over free speech under Mahama

West Africa: Ghana has recorded 14 arrests linked to false news and offensive speech in less than 16 months, nearly double the number documented during the previous administration’s entire eight-year tenure, according to the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA). The rise has triggered a sharp debate in one of West Africa’s most stable democracies over whether authorities are simply enforcing long-standing laws in a new digital environment, or edging into a more restrictive approach to public speech. A senior ruling party official dismissed allegations that the arrests amount to a crackdown.

“The opposition intentionally sponsors people to insult the President,” he told Al Jazeera. “When the law catches up with them, they cry persecution to score cheap political points.

He pointed to the case of TikTok Prince Ofori, known as “Fante Comedy”, who was arrested last August over alleged threats to President Mahama. Days after his arrest, Ofori appeared at a political rally alongside opposition figures, a development the official said showed how quickly such cases become politicised.

“They paraded him at an opposition rally,” he said. At the centre of the debate are long-standing provisions in Ghana’s Criminal Code and Electronic Communications Act, which authorities say are now being applied to a fast-moving digital landscape.

Government supporters argue the increase in arrests reflects the explosion of anonymous and unregulated online content

Critics say the problem is not the laws themselves, but how they are being used.

A legal consultant who reviewed recent cases said he counted at least 16 alleged misapplications of Section 208 in the past 18 months, compared with roughly a dozen in the previous eight years. “The law has been abused beyond repair,” he said. “Repeal is the only remedy.” Veteran journalist Ben Ephson said Ghana needs clearer guidance on where free expression ends and harm begins.

“The government must properly explain the arrests so people can draw the line between press freedom and responsible journalism,” he said.

He added that both journalists and state institutions risk overstepping if the rules remain unclear. Ghana remains one of West Africa’s more open democracies, with a competitive political system and active media landscape. But the rise in speech-related arrests has sharpened scrutiny of how far the state can go in policing online expression without undermining the democratic culture that helped define its reputation.

The debate is also politically charged because of Mahama’s own past warnings. As opposition leader, he described the use of state power against dissent as a “dangerous blueprint.” Today, critics say his government faces accusations it once condemned.

For Alexander Afenyo-Markin, the moment calls for restraint — and reflection

“We should not continue to say that because it happened yesterday, it should happen today and tomorrow. That cycle must end,” he said. “President Mahama has an opportunity to leave a legacy of tolerance and free speech. I hope he takes it.” “When you compare the freedom of the media



and the rights of the individual, we need to be careful that the media, in trying to do their work, don’t trample on people’s rights,” he said

A wider global debate

Others say Ghana’s debate mirrors tensions playing out in other democracies.

Tegha King of the Universal Peace Federation Ghana said concerns about shrinking civic space are not unique to Ghana. “The global civic space must cultivate more free speech, not less,” he told Al Jazeera. He said stronger institutions, not more arrests, are needed to manage the pressures of the digital age

“There must be independent courts, transparent enforcement, media self-regulation and digital literacy,” he said.

Civic awareness and external concern Some analysts point to gaps in public understanding of constitutional rights. “There is a lack of constitutional education among many Ghanaians,” said David Adofo of the African Chamber of Content Producers. “People must know the consequences of their actions before they act, not after.” Concerns are also being voiced outside the country. “We have had many concerns from diasporans about perceived erosion of press and political freedoms, especially news of blogger arrests,” said Nana Kofi Opoku-Agyemang of the NuGhana Expat Center. “Negative news sells fast. The government must be cautious so it does not project a negative image of Ghana in the diasporan community.” An NDC communicator said the legal framework in question predates the current administration and defended the approach

“Ghana’s laws, Section 208 of the Criminal Code and Section 76 of the Electronic Communications Act, have been on the books for decades,” he said. “What has changed is the sheer volume of reckless, anonymous and sometimes dangerous content on social media. There is no systematic crackdown. There is simply enforcement of existing law.”

Adam Hamawy, NJ House Primary Calling for End

West Africa: We speak with Dr. Adam Hamawy, the former U.S. Army combat surgeon who just won the Democratic nomination in New Jersey’s 12th Congressional District. He is now the heavy favorite to win the Democratic-leaning district in November and, if elected, would become New Jersey’s first Muslim member of Congress. Hamawy is an outspoken advocate for Palestinian rights and volunteered in Gaza during Israel’s genocidal assault on the territory. He has been endorsed by prominent progressives like Senator Bernie Sanders and Congressmember Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, as well as Illinois Senator Tammy Duckworth, who credits Hamawy with saving her life after her helicopter was shot down in Iraq in 2004.

“I was running on something very simple: that we should be spending on healthcare, not bombs,” Hamawy tells Democracy Now!, criticizing the \$1 trillion Pentagon budget. “We need to be spending some of that right here at home to restore our nation, to fund universal healthcare like Medicare for All, to fund tuition-free public college, to rebuild our roads and bridges, to address the housing crisis.”

AMY GOODMAN: We begin today’s show in New Jersey, where Dr. Adam Hamawy beat a crowded field Tuesday to win the Democratic Party’s nomination in the race to succeed retiring Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman. Dr. Hamawy had the endorsement of progressives including Senator Bernie Sanders and Congressmember Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. Hamawy is a former U.S. Army surgeon. Democratic Senator Tammy Duckworth, who also endorsed Dr. Hamawy, said he helped save her life after her helicopter was shot down in Iraq, her legs blown off. In 2024 and 2025, Dr. Adam Hamawy volunteered in Gaza, where he treated Palestinians injured there. In 2024, Hamawy spoke to Democracy Now! from Gaza.

DR. ADAM HAMAWY: Most of my patients are children. My average patient is about 12 or 13 years old. They range from — the youngest one I’ve taken care of is about 4. And the age goes up to like mid-sixties

or seventies. The people — since the invasion of Rafah, we’ve had a lot of the hospital personnel leave, because they are trying to get their families out of Rafah. Many of them have either moved there from other parts of Gaza, or they have, you know, lived there and are trying to flee. Yes, I am — you know, I’m very happy about Tuesday. And I was running on something very simple, is that we should be spending on healthcare, not bombs. We should be spending on our communities here, you know, in New Jersey, in America, and not funding bombs overseas for, you know, atrocities and genocide. We should not be funding the endless wars that we’re seeing. We shouldn’t be funding ICE. DR. ADAM HAMAWY: So, I’ve been working in war and disaster zones for the last 30 years. I volunteered, you know, two weeks a year, or sometimes longer, and then I’d come back feeling that I have given back. And I couldn’t do that after coming back from Gaza.

I just couldn’t go back to life as usual, because what I witnessed there wasn’t a war. I witnessed a level of destruction I had never experienced before. What I witnessed was really a genocide. I was taking care of the victims of it, and I couldn’t stay silent. And with the restriction on foreign journalists from entering, I had a front-seat view, and I felt that I had to go to my lawmakers and say, “We are allowing, we are enabling this to happen as a country. We are using American tax dollars for this to happen.” And I started advocating and going to D.C., and I found that many doors were closed. People didn’t even want to hear what was happening. They wouldn’t even listen, whether they agreed or not. And this was a message that people wanted to hear, that people were waiting to hear, because we see the problems that we have at home that we are ignoring. You just went through your War and Peace Report, and we see that, you know, we need the billions of dollars that are being spent on these endless wars to fix our communities and to restore the democracy that seems to be being dismantled right in front of us.

Are the US and Iran closer to war

Iran: While the United States and Iran have continued to exchange a series of proposals and counter-proposals for peace since a temporary ceasefire was announced in April, leaders on both sides have repeatedly signalled that they are also prepared to use force against the other if the need should arise. And, despite that Pakistan-mediated ceasefire announced on April 8, flare-ups since then have prompted fears that renewed war — rather than peace — could be next. On Friday, Iran’s Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi warned that US bases in the region that are used to launch any aggression against Those strikes followed US strikes on Iranian radar and drone sites in Goruk and on Qeshm Island, as well as a US attack on a tele-

communications tower on Qeshm and the downing of Iranian drones targeting civilian ships. Iran are considered legitimate targets. This warning came after attacks over the past few weeks on both Iran and US assets and infrastructure in Gulf countries. On Friday, Iran’s navy also said that it had fired warning missiles and drones at US warships in the Gulf of Oman, and accused the US Navy of harassing maritime traffic and seizing commercial vessels and oil tankers amid the ongoing US naval blockade of Iranian ports, Iranian state media reported. So, which is more likely — peace or renewed warfare? Here is what each side has said so far. Where have attacks occurred most recently? Tasnim also reported that the IRGC fired missiles and

drones at an airbase and the headquarters of the US Fifth Fleet in Bahrain. CENTCOM said projectiles aimed at Bahrain were intercepted, however, and that no US personnel or assets were harmed in either Kuwait or Bahrain. Iranian missiles and drones struck Kuwait’s international airport on Wednesday morning, according to state news agency KUNA, which reported injuries, damage to facilities, and flight suspensions and diversions. India’s foreign ministry said one Indian national was killed and several others were injured in the attack. US Central Command (CENTCOM) said two Iranian missiles aimed at Kuwait had fallen short or broken apart, however, and insisted that several ballistic missiles did not reach their targets.

Iran’s Tasnim news agency said Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) had targeted US helicopters in a “regional country”, apparently referring to Kuwait, but it was unclear if the helicopters were at the airport or whether debris and intercepted projectiles had caused the airport damage. Tehran said US forces damaged an Iranian oil tanker near the Strait of Hormuz, and Iranian media reported that the IRGC navy hit a vessel it called “Panaya” with missiles in response. On May 17, for example, Abu Dhabi authorities said a drone strike caused a fire at an electrical generator outside the Barakah nuclear plant’s inner perimeter, though no injuries were reported and radiation levels remained normal.



5 fashionable work flats that will keep your feet comfortable



Individuals who commute, traverse between meetings, or endure extended periods outdoors are well aware of the challenge in locating workwear flats that not only appear fashionable but also do not cause discomfort to

the feet by midday. A lot of formal flats look polished for exactly 20 minutes before the back straps start digging in, the soles feel paper-thin, or the material starts rubbing painfully near the toes. And nobody wants to

carry emergency band-aids in their handbag every day. Thankfully, comfortable footwear has become much more fashionable recently. Soft cushioning, anti-skid soles, padded straps, breathable fabrics, and ergo-

nomie fits are becoming part of everyday footwear design instead of just orthopedic-looking shoes. At the same time, workwear itself has become more relaxed. Fashion right now leans toward effortless dressing; easy

kurtas, wide-leg trousers, linen sets, oversized shirts, and comfortable footwear that still looks polished enough for office settings.

Comfy and stylish footwear for work

1. Metro Women’s Flat Floral Embellished Fashion Kolhapuri Sandals: Kolhapuri-inspired flats are having a major comeback because they work beautifully with both Indianwear and modern workwear. This embellished pair from Metro balances traditional styling with enough comfort for daily wear. The flatter sole and open silhouette help reduce that suffocating feeling closed footwear can create during hot summer commutes, especially in Indian weather. The embellishment also makes them feel polished enough for office outfits without looking overly festive. These are ideal if your work wardrobe includes kurtas, cotton co-ords, straight pants, or relaxed ethnicwear. Style tip: Pair with white kurta sets, cigarette pants, linen co-ords, or straight-fit trousers for an elegant everyday office look.

2. Mochi Women Flat Fashion Slip-On: Mochi flats are popular for a reason: they usually balance comfort and clean styling really well. This slip-on pair especially works if you prefer minimal footwear that

can go with almost everything in your wardrobe.

The easy slip-on structure makes them practical for daily wear, while the softer fit helps avoid excessive rubbing around the heel area, which is honestly where most work flats fail.

They also have that polished-neutral aesthetic that fits perfectly into the whole “quiet luxury officewear” trend dominating fashion right now. Style tip: Style with tailored trousers, oversized shirts, monochrome kurtas, or ankle-length denims for a clean, polished vibe.

3. Bata Women’s Slip-On Sandal: If comfort is your top priority, this pair from Frido is probably the most functional option on this list. The cushioned sole, padded knit upper, and anti-skid design are specifically made for prolonged wear, which makes a huge difference during long office days. The zero-drop sole structure also supports more natural movement compared to overly stiff flats. And importantly, they still manage to look stylish enough for casual officewear instead of resembling purely orthopedic footwear.

This is especially useful if you walk a lot, use public transport, or spend hours standing throughout the day.

Style tip: Pair with relaxed

Indian wear, cotton palazzos, oversized shirts, or airport-style athleisure looks.

5. XE Looks Stylish Beaded Flat Slippers for Women: Beaded flats are ideal if you want comfortable footwear that still feels slightly dressy and feminine. This pair works especially well for offices where slightly elevated casual dressing is common.

The open slipper structure reduces friction points that often cause blisters around the ankle or heel, while the embellishment helps the flats look intentional and polished instead of overly basic. These are especially nice for summer because open footwear naturally feels lighter and more breathable throughout the day. Style tip: Pair with printed kurtas, flowy dresses, linen pants, or monochrome outfits to let the footwear stand out subtly.

What makes work flats actually comfortable?

After years of painful office footwear trends, people are finally prioritising:

The best work flats today aren’t just about looking formal anymore. They’re about surviving real life: commutes, stairs, long meetings, café stops, shopping detours, and entire days spent moving around comfortably.

Rakul Preet Singh reflects on a painful injury sustained after performing an 80 kg deadlift

Rakul Preet Singh shared insights regarding one of the most difficult periods in her life during her appearance alongside her husband Jacky Bhagnani on Neha Dhupia and Angad Bedi’s talk show, Double Date. She recounted how a choice related to her workout resulted in a significant injury.

Workout mistake that left Rakul Preet Singh injured

The actor shared that she suffered a severe lower back injury after attempting an 80 kg deadlift without wearing a safety belt, something she normally never skips. Reflecting on the incident, Rakul said, “No matter what your trainer tells you, deadlift

is the worst exercise to do. It’s an ego lift.”

She explained that while she usually trained with proper support, that day she chose to go without a belt. “That one mistake caused me a slip disc and 40 days of bed rest,” she said. Beyond the physical pain, Rakul admitted the emotional toll was just as difficult. Used to an active and independent lifestyle, she struggled with suddenly relying on others for even basic tasks. “It was not only a physical injury, it was affecting me mentally too. It was a mental mess up because I was going through a physical turmoil,” she shared. She added, “Suddenly, I was not able to do



anything, and that really triggers you.” How Jack-

ky Bhagnani supported her through recovery

During this period, she credited Jacky for being her constant support system. “It’s very important that your partner supports you at that point, and that was Jacky’s biggest contribution when I was injured. He was there for me,” she said. Her injury led to intense pain, restricted movement and nerve-related complications, forcing her to eventually take complete rest before gradually resuming work.

Looking back, Rakul’s experience stands as a reminder of the importance of listening to one’s body and never compromising on safety during workouts, no matter how experienced one is.

The Wedding Celebrations of Dua Lipa and Callum Turner Commence



Dua Lipa may have officially married her husband, actor Callum Turner, in London; however, this does not imply that the festivities must come to an end. The couple is presently in Palermo, Sicily, to commemorate their love and wedding with an extravagant celebration. They commenced the first day of this event with welcome drinks for their friends at the Palazzo Valguarnera Gangi. The party is expected to be star-studded, with celebrities like Charli XCX and her husband George Daniel, Mark Ronson, Grace Gummer, Troye Sivan, and Joe Alwyn, to name a few, to be in attendance.

A Page Six source has revealed some information about the upcoming wedding party: “The actual wedding weekend is June 5-7 at Villa Valguarnera in Bagheria, Sicily, near Palermo, Italy. It’s going to be a huge, ultra-luxurious affair.” The couple selected Palermo, Sicily, as their wedding location after taking a vacation there last summer. They have booked out the Villa Igica as the guest headquarters so that

“all their guests can stay together, celebrate privately and just enjoy the weekend.”

After seeing the images from her intimate court wedding celebrations, where the singer wore a custom Schiaparelli skirt suit, it is a given that her wedding outfits are also going to go hard. For the first day of the party, Dua Lipa stunned in a sexy ensemble that was made up of leather and feathers. The queen of living her best life and making no apologies for it, Dua Lipa wore a Bottega Veneta white gown with a dangerously low back that had her new husband, Callum Turner, obsessed with her backside, and there are photos to prove it.

The top half of the halter-neck gown was made up of textured white leather, which is the signature intrecciato weave of the brand. The figure-hugging bottom flowed into a mermaid-style skirt, which was made of white ostrich feathers. She accessorised with a matching feathery clutch and more gold Bulgari jewellery. It was a no-brainer that Dua Lipa

would sport Bulgari on her big days, as she has been associated with the brand and is an ambassador for the jewellery line for a while. She wore a Serpenti bracelet on the first day of her Sicilian celebrations and also chose a Serpenti necklace with her wedding suit. A peek at the photos of the wedding party and one would see the interesting decor. The party has quite a few bookshelves, filled with books placed across the yard. Dua Lipa is a well-known lover of books. She even has her own digital book club where she recommends several literary works.

And this decor also hints to the way she met her current husband. Dua Lipa and Callum Turner met at a dinner event in Los Angeles before a mutual friend’s birthday party. They sat next to each other and struck up a conversation, realising they were both reading the exact same book, Trust by Hernán Díaz. Both of them had just finished the first chapter, leading Turner to jokingly say, “So we’re on the same page”.

These timepieces are priced below ₹3,000, yet you will wear them for many years



Many trends are short-lived. Watches, however, are not. As fashion cycles accelerate, a quality watch continues to be one of the rare accessories that can maintain its relevance in your collection for years, and occasionally even for decades. The key lies in selecting timeless designs that will not appear outdated after a single season. Attributes such as a simple dial, a flexible strap, dependable movement, and a design suitable for various occasions often hold greater significance than an ostentatious logo or details driven by current trends. If you’re shopping on a budget, these watches under ₹3,000

prove that great style doesn’t have to come with a luxury price tag.

Watches under ₹3,000

1. Sonata Poze 8 Quartz Analog Northern Lights Inspired Watch: Inspired by the colours of the Northern Lights, the luminous blue dial brings personality to an otherwise classic silhouette. The blue leather strap complements the face beautifully, creating a design that feels contemporary without being overly trendy. Unlike novelty watches that quickly lose their appeal, this one balances visual interest with wearability. Why it’ll age well: The classic round case keeps the design timeless while the

unique dial adds character.

Best for: casual wear, college, travel, everyday styling.

2. TIMEX Classics Analog Watch for Men: Timex has built its reputation on creating watches that simply don’t go out of style. This classic analog model embraces everything that makes traditional watchmaking appealing: a clean dial, straightforward design, and versatility that works with almost any outfit. It’s the kind of watch you can wear to work today and still happily wear five years from now. Why it’ll age well: Minimalist styling rarely feels outdated.

Best for: office wear, formal occasions, everyday use.

3. TEAL by Chumbak Jungle Flowers Analog Watch: This floral-inspired design from Chumbak offers something a little more playful while remaining surprisingly versatile. The printed vegan leather strap adds personality, while the round dial keeps the overall design balanced. For women who prefer accessories that reflect their personal style, this watch feels fresh without being fleeting. Why it’ll age well: Artistic prints come and go, but floral motifs have remained popular for generations. Best for: casual dressing, creative workplaces, weekend outfits.

4. Titan Minimalist Timeless Style Quartz Analog Watch: If there were an award for “most likely to still look good in 20 years,” this Titan would be a strong contender. The champagne dial paired with a dark brown leather strap creates a sophisticated combina-

tion that feels both classic and contemporary. The subtle date function adds practicality without cluttering the design. This is exactly the kind of watch many men buy once and continue wearing for years. Why it’ll age well: Neutral colours, clean design, and timeless proportions.

Best for: office wear, formal events, everyday sophistication.

5. Casio Enticer Ladies Analog Watch: Few brands understand timeless value quite like Casio. The Enticer collection focuses on elegant simplicity, and this cream-dial model perfectly captures that philosophy. The understated colour palette makes it easy to pair with ethnicwear, western outfits, workwear, and occasion wear alike. It’s proof that simplicity is often the smartest long-term investment. Why it’ll age well: Classic cream dials and understated designs rarely go out of fashion. Best for: office wear, daily use, versatile styling.

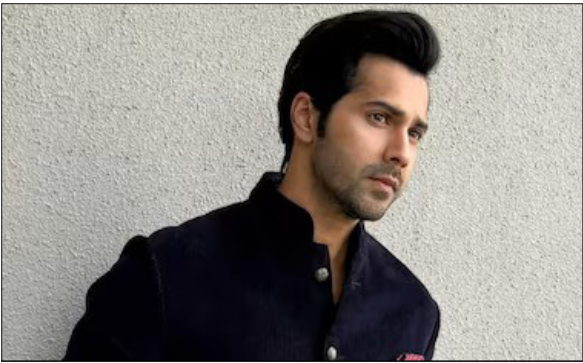
What makes a watch timeless?

The watches that survive changing trends usually share a few common traits:

- Clean, uncluttered dials
- Neutral colour palettes
- Classic round cases
- Reliable movements
- Versatile straps
- Minimal trend-driven details

These design choices allow a watch to remain wearable year after year, regardless of what’s happening in fashion. That’s why some affordable watches end up lasting far longer in wardrobes than much more expensive trend pieces.

Farah, Varun mock Vashu Bhagnani’s late arrival on show



Mumbai: Choreographer-director Farah Khan recently invited Bollywood actor Varun Dhawan and his father David Dhawan to her house, and took a subtle dig at producer Vashu Bhagnani. The timing of the jokes makes it interesting as Vashu Bhagnani and Varun’s father are engaged in a legal stand-off over the issue of music royalty. As Varun arrived a little later than his father at Farah’s house, he decided to make up for it by bringing gifts not for Farah but her house help and YouTube star Dilip. As the actor entered Farah’s house, he said, “This is better than Trump’s house. I got something for Dilip”. Farah asked,

conference, and also made a targeted comment on David Dhawan’s son, Varun as he said that the actor never checked on him after their 2020 collaboration ‘Coolie No. 1’ sank without a trace. Talking about the same, he earlier told the media, “Very honestly, after this case, there is some bitterness in all relationships. But Varun hasn’t called me in 2 years anyway. We made ‘Coolie No. 1’ in 2020, suffered a loss of INR 27 crore, he never even bothered to ask how I was doing. If he maintains the relationship, fine. If not, that’s fine too. I lost a lot of money being with him. He is like my child, children make mistakes. Father and son, so be it”. The immediate trigger behind the lawsuit was the recreated use of the iconic song ‘Chunari Chunari’ from ‘Biwi No.1’. Vashu Bhagnani claimed that although Tips owned audio rights, the underlying film-linked intellectual property and recreation permissions still required consent or involvement from his side.

Dhurandhar 2: raw & undekha debuts on OTT, fans excited



Mumbai: The Dhurandhar franchise continues to draw attention as a special digital version, titled Dhurandhar 2: The Revenge (Raw & Undekha), released on JioHotstar yesterday at 7 PM. While audiences had been anticipating the OTT release, the streaming platform has added nearly 30 minutes of exclusive bonus footage. This additional content includes behind-the-scenes moments, cast interactions, candid conversations, and insights into the filmmaking process. The release has generated buzz online, with fans sharing their excitement across social media platforms. One viewer shared, “Raw version ka naam sunke hi curiosity level high ho gaya. Agar Uzair waala scene already intense tha toh ab aur kya dikhane waale hain.” Others highlighted the appeal of the behind-the-scenes additions. A user commented, “The film was

Anthony Head dies at 72

Agency: A wave of quiet grief has settled across the entertainment world as tributes continue to pour in for veteran British actor Anthony Head, whose passing at the age of 72 has left colleagues, fans and co-stars reflecting on a career that spanned decades and generations. While the news has deeply saddened those who worked with him, the details shared by his family paint a gentle and peaceful final moment for the actor, best known for his work across television, film and stage. His daughters, Emily and Daisy, confirmed the news in a statement, saying he “passed away peacefully of complications due to pneumonia, surrounded by his family.” They added, “it is with heavy hearts that we announce the death of our extraordinary father”. In their emotional note, they also reflected on his life beyond the screen, saying, “It has been, and forever will be, an honour and a privilege to be his daughters, and to have witnessed firsthand the impact both he and his work have had on so many.” They further added that they knew “how dearly he will be missed by friends, colleagues and fans of the show he was in”, noting that he “loved his job very much” and “always considered himself incredibly lucky”. The family also said that “his legacy will live on”, expressing gratitude for having witnessed his lifelong dedication to acting. Head became a familiar face to global audiences after gaining international recognition as Rupert Giles in the hit supernatural series Buffy the Vampire Slayer during the late 1990s. His portrayal of the calm, intellectual mentor figure became one of the defining performances of the show’s success. Over the years, he built a diverse body of work across television.

Mahieka, Avanti & Kirandeep shine in blenders pride campaign



Mumbai: Blenders Pride Packaged Drinking Water has launched its latest campaign, The One And Only, offering a fresh narrative on what it truly means to be successful in today’s world. In an era where markers of success are becoming increasingly visible and crowded, the brand is reasserting a timeless truth: true success lies in distinction. The campaign features three remarkable young achievers — Avanti Nagrath, Kirandeep Chahal, and Mahieka Sharma, each embodying unique facets that set them apart. Avanti’s fearless, one-of-a-kind confidence exudes pure charisma, while Kirandeep’s magnetic, bold energy commands desire. Rounding out the trio, Mahieka inspires awe through her graceful, understated elegance. Set in an aspirational world of high-achieving peers, these three protagonists—and by extension, the brand itself—distinctly set themselves apart, naturally drawing the spotlight wherever they go. A fashion model and lifestyle creator with a background in economics and finance, Mahieka is known for her calm confidence. Having walked for celebrated designers including Anita Dongre and Amit Aggarwal, she was also recognized as “Model of the Year” at the Indian Fashion Awards. Her minimal, wellness-driven aesthetic inspires poise and quiet admiration. Avanti Nagrath is one of India’s most promising international fashion models, known for making a strong mark on global runways at a young age. Born and raised in Delhi, she began modelling as a teenager while balancing school and competitive basketball, eventually turning her passion into a full-time career. Her breakthrough came in 2022 when she opened the Versace Fall/Winter show at Milan Fashion Week, becoming one of the few Indian models to achieve such a milestone. Since then, Avanti has walked for some of the world’s most prestigious luxury houses, including Versace, Dior, Burberry, Hermès, Bottega Veneta, Coperni, Jacquemus, Givenchy and Chanel. She has

also been a regular presence at major Indian fashion weeks, collaborating with celebrated designers such as Tarun Tahiliani, Manish Malhotra and Rahul Mishra. Recognised for her striking runway presence and effortless versatility, Avanti represents a new generation of Indian talent redefining global fashion. Despite her rapid rise, she is known for her grounded personality, love for sports, and commitment to continuous learning and creative exploration. An Indian fashion model with a strong global footprint, Kirandeep’s journey from journalism to international runways is marked by persistence and individuality. She has walked for top designers like Manish Malhotra and Tarun Tahiliani and achieved a major milestone by walking for Dior at Paris Fashion Week. Her magnetic and unapologetic presence is a cornerstone of her success. The campaign positions these three protagonists as individuals who command admiration and influence in an aspirational world. As the campaign states, while the world is filled with many equals, these protagonists stand a cut above the rest. The campaign was a 360-degree integrated effort, appearing across digital platforms, including the ICC T20 World Cup, as well as front-page newspaper ads and outdoor sites in major cities.

Peddi OTT release: Ram Charan film streaming details



Chennai: Ram Charan’s recent outing, Peddi, has been trending across all social media platforms. Film buffs are actively searching for its digital release. The digital rights for the sports-based action drama have been acquired by Netflix, and it is expected to premiere on the platform by mid-July. That said, the makers have not yet revealed an official release date for the OTT premiere, as Peddi will make its debut on streaming only after completing a full theatrical run. This project marks a new collaboration for Ram Charan and director Buchi Babu Sana. The film collected Rs 138 crore on its opening day, as per a statement by Vriddhi Cinema. On its second day, it held its ground and attracted huge crowds in some markets, presenter Y Ravi Shankar said. Peddi features a star-studded cast including Janhvi Kapoor, Shiva Rajkumar, Jagapathi Babu, Ravi Krishan, and Boman Irani, among others. Shruti Haasan makes a special appearance in a song alongside Charan, while AR Rahman composed the music for the movie.

Actor Salim Kumar hospitalised, on ventilator



Kochi: National Award-winning actor Salim Kumar was admitted to a private hospital here on Saturday and is currently on ventilator support, hospital authorities said. The actor experienced health issues and was rushed to the hospital in the morning, officials said. Hospital authorities said further details regarding Kumar’s health condition would be disclosed later. Kumar, who won the National Film Award for Best Actor in 2010, had undergone a liver transplant a few years ago. Associated with drama and mimicry before entering films, Kumar began his film career in 1997 and is known for portraying a wide range of comedy and character roles in Malayalam cinema. He has won the Kerala State Film

Award on four occasions. During the recent Kerala Assembly election, Kumar openly supported the Congress-led UDF, appearing alongside its leaders on several occasions and criticising the LDF leadership.

Rubina Dilaik first exposes Orry, then apologises with cakes for isolating him

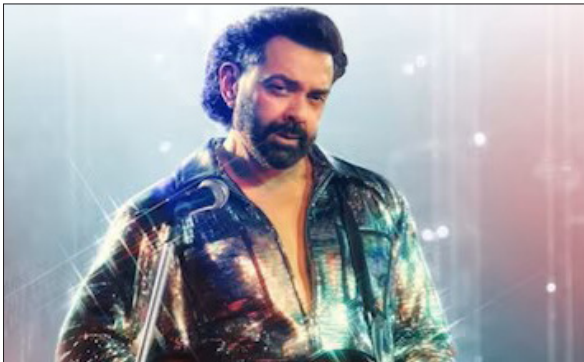
Mumbai: Popular television actress Rubina Dilaik hilariously “exposed” Orry Awatramani’s claims of being ‘ignored’ by showing that he’s always on his phone. However, in a funny twist of tales she later apologises to him as he convinces her for funnily ‘isolating’ him. Rubina shared a string of videos from a restaurant she visited with Orry and Ruhaniika Dhawan on her stories section. The first video which had the caption “expose”, Rubina was heard saying: “There’s a lot of news around...” To which, Ruhaniika chimes in: “They we are leaving Orry out but he’s actually on his phone.” Orry tried to give an explanation as he said: “I was reading some work stuff.” Rubina didn’t believe and said he was “lying”. “You ignore us. On the table,” she added. Orry then hilariously said: “Who’s sitting on my left or my right. They are sitting on one side and making me carry their bags to come here in advance and take the order.”



He even made the waiter his alibi, who said that Rubina when she entered had said that she is hungry and angry. Orry added: “And you said did you place my order.” In the next video, Rubina and Ruhaniika got four cakes for Orry, the “Bigg Boss 14” winner was heard saying: “Orry that’s for you. Sorry we isolated you. Sorry we made you feel you are all alone so we have got you cakes please accept our apologies.” She in the next

video was heard saying: “Along with these cakes I ate away my lipstick and again this guy is on his phone.” To which pat came the reply from Orry: “You told me not to talk to you.” Orry, Rubina and Ruhaniika will be seen in the news season of the stunt-based reality show “Khatron Ke Khiladi”. It also stars Harsh Gajjar, Farrhana Bhatt, Rithvik Dhanjani, Karan Wahi, Avika Gor, Gaurav Khanna, Jasmin Bhasin, Shagun Sharma and others.

Bandar day 1: Bobby Deol film opens at ₹50 lakh



Mumbai: After a quiet build-up and strong curiosity around its release, Anurag Kashyap’s latest crime drama Bandar has finally arrived in cinemas, entering a competitive box office landscape and immediately finding itself up against bigger commercial releases. The Bobby Deol-led film, however, has opened to a modest start in its first 24 hours. According to box office tracking platform Sacnilk, Bandar earned an estimated ₹50 lakh net in India on its opening day. The film released on June 4 across just over 300 screens nationwide, giving it a limited rollout compared to mainstream Bollywood releases. Despite the controlled release strategy, occupancy remained low at a little over 13% on day one. The film’s performance comes at a time when it is sharing screens with Varun Dhawan, Mrunal Thakur and

Pooja Hegde’s commercial entertainer Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai, which reportedly had a significantly wider release of around 2500 screens and opened with ₹7.50 crore on its first day. While the numbers may appear underwhelming at the box office, Bandar has found relatively stronger traction in terms of critical and audience response. Early reactions have been largely positive, with Bobby Deol’s performance drawing particular attention. Several viewers and critics have pointed to it as one of his most impactful roles in recent years, while also describing the film as one of Anurag Kashyap’s stronger directorial outings in recent times. The encouraging word of mouth has raised interest in whether the film will see growth over the weekend, especially given Bobby Deol’s renewed popularity in recent projects. At a special screening of the film, his half-sister Esha Deol showed her support and also shared a heartfelt note praising his performance. She wrote, “You are in the best form ever! Undoubtedly the finest actor today. Enduring and vulnerable! Way to go, bhaiya.” On the creative side, Bandar is written by Sudip Sharma and Abhishek Banerjee and directed by Anurag Kashyap. The film is reportedly inspired by real-life events and follows the story of Samar, played by Bobby Deol, a once-popular singer-actor whose career is in decline. His life takes a dramatic turn when he is arrested following a rape complaint filed by a woman named Gayatri, played by Sapna Pabbi. The narrative unfolds around the legal and social chaos that follows, as Samar becomes entangled in a relentless cycle of accusations and public scrutiny. The ensemble cast includes Sanya Malhotra, Sapna Pabbi, Saba Azad, Indrajith Sukumaran, Raj B. Shetty and Jitendra Joshi in key roles.

World No. 1 Minakshi and Deepak to lead India’s charge at World Boxing Cup

New Delhi: World No. 1 Minakshi and seasoned campaigner Deepak will spearhead India’s challenge at the World Boxing Cup 2026 , scheduled to take place in Guiyang, China, from June 15 to 21. This is a second-string Indian team comprising boxers who finished as runners-up in the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games trials.India enters the tournament on the back of an impressive run in the previous World Cup cycle, where the team consistently secured multiple medals across stages and delivered a strong overall tally in the finals, underlining its growing stature on the global stage.

The Boxing Federation of India has named a well-rounded squad featuring a blend of established performers and emerging talent across both men’s and women’s categories.

India currently stands third globally in terms of overall top 10 ranked athletes, including a second-place position in the women’s category and fourth in the men’s.

Notably, India lead the



world in the women’s division when it comes to top 3 ranked athletes, highlighting its dominance at the elite level.The tournament presents an opportunity for Indian boxers to gain valuable ranking points and continue building momentum in a crucial competi-

tive season. Speaking on the squad, BFI President Ajay Singh said, “The World Boxing Cup is an important platform for our athletes to test themselves against top international competition. The systems and structures we have put in place are



now consistently translating into results, with strong performances across weight categories.“We are seeing depth like never before, and this consistency is helping India establish itself as one of the leading boxing nations in the world.”In the women’s

division, Minakshi leads a formidable lineup alongside Poonam , Prachi , and Mahi Lama .The squad is further strengthened by Saneh , Gitimoni G , Sanamacha C , Naina , and Alfiya Tarannum Akram Khan Pathan , ensuring strong representation across

weight categories.

On the men’s side, Deepak brings experience and leadership, supported by Rishi S , Nikhil , and Anmol . Abhinash Jamwal , Malsawmtluanga , Jugnoo , and Harsh Choudhary add depth, while Sawan G rounds off the squad in the super heavyweight division.

The team has been training at the national camp, with preparations focused on technical sharpness, fitness, and tactical execution ahead of the tournament.

India heads into the competition with sustained success at recent international events, including strong performances at the World Boxing Cup stages and the World Championships, reflecting the steady rise of Indian boxing on the global stage.Indian Squad for World Boxing Cup 2026 :Women: Minakshi , Poonam , Prachi , Mahi Lama , Saneh , Gitimoni G , Sanamacha C , Naina , Alfiya Tarannum Akram Khan Pathan . Men: Rishi S , Nikhil , Anmol , Abhinash Jamwal , Deepak , Malsawmtluanga , Jugnoo , Harsh Choudhary , Sawan G .

Reddy’s exit puts spotlight on Bengaluru development portfolio



Bengaluru: R Ramalinga Reddy ’s resignation from the state’s newly formed cabinet after being denied the Bengaluru Development portfolio has reaffirmed the importance of a portfolio seen as one of the most influential centres of power in the state government, party leaders said on Friday.

Reddy’s resignation came at a juncture where-in Bengaluru prepares for long-delayed civic elections and a new phase of urban governance.

“This is no longer a conventional urban development portfolio,” a senior Congress leader involved in discussions surrounding cabinet formation said. “The minister is effectively dealing with the future Congress government.”

Krishna Byre Gowda took charge of the department on June 3.Under the current structural allocation, the Bengaluru development minister directly oversees the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), and the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL).

This concentration of local administration distinguishes it from the broader urban development portfolio.

As the state’s economic engine and largest urban centre, Bengaluru commands disproportionate political attention. “In Bengaluru, development decisions are political decisions,” a party leader familiar with the matter said. “Roads, planning, infrastructure, mobility, civic administration, housing—everything eventually comes back to this department.”

“There is a reason chief ministers have historically kept this portfolio with themselves,” another Con-

gress leader said. “The department touches every major issue in the city and gives the government a direct role in shaping Bengaluru’s future.”

During Bengaluru’s emergence as a global technology hub, the city became closely associated with the administration of former chief minister SM Krishna, who held the post between 1999 and 2004, and is seen as having actively helmed its urban transformation.

While former chief ministers including Siddaramaiah, BS Yediyurappa, and Basavaraj Bommai historically retained the portfolio to exercise direct control, it was occasionally partitioned as an exclusive cabinet assignment to senior heavyweights.

This includes KJ George during the mid-2010s and, most recently, DK Shivakumar, who helmed the department alongside his role as deputy CM under the previous Siddaramaiah-led administration.

The transition has added an edge to the current friction. Party insiders noted that Ramalinga Reddy had anticipated stepping into the vacancy created by Shivakumar’s elevation, pointing to an understanding that the city’s oversight would return to a veteran urban hand once the leadership shifted.

“The coming civic elections have changed the political calculations,” a senior party leader said. “Whoever oversees Bengaluru Development will have a significant role in how the government presents its work in the city.”

“Ramalinga Reddy has decades of political investment in Bengaluru, while Krishna Byre Gowda has emerged young Turk in the government’s plans for the city’s future,” another Congress leader familiar with the cabinet discussions said. “From the party’s perspective, both had a case.”

Ramalinga resigns as K’taka minister citing ‘humiliation’

Bengaluru: The two-day-old DK Shivakumar government in Karnataka received its first jolt on Friday after senior Congress leader R Ramalinga Reddy resigned from the cabinet on live television over portfolio allocation, alleging that he was promised a particular department but was later denied the ministry. The announcement by the eight-time lawmaker from Bengaluru and eight-time minister came less than 24 hours after portfolios were announced and two days after Reddy took oath along with 13 others in the new government after the resignation of former chief minister Siddaramaiah.

Reddy – currently the minister of major and medium irrigation department – alleged that he was promised the Bengaluru development department, which was allotted to another senior Congress leader, Krishna Byre Gowda.

In a press conference, Reddy said he had not resigned from the Congress, adding that he will continue to remain a party member and legislator.“I have been humiliated time and again, cannot take it anymore,” Reddy said. The 72-year-old also referred to his long association with the party, saying he had spent 53 years in the Congress and intended to continue in its ranks. “I am not angry, only disappointed,” he said. “Twice they called me and promised to give me that (Bengaluru Development) portfolio, but in the end it went to someone else. That is why I feel

hurt. Therefore, today I am resigning,” Reddy told reporters.

Reddy said he had never lobbied for ministerial office or sought any specific department from the party leadership. “I never asked Siddaramaiah for the Bengaluru Development portfolio. He voluntarily offered it,” Reddy said, recounting events after the formation of the previous Congress government between 2013 and 2018. He also served as transport minister under Siddaramaiah from May 2023 to May 2026.

Reddy said he met Shivakumar before the latter took oath as CM but did not raise any demand for ministership or a portfolio. “I never asked him to make me a minister. I never asked Siddaramaiah to include me in the cabinet. I never approached the high command,” he said.

Asked whether he would reconsider his decision if persuaded by the party leadership or offered the portfolio he wanted, Reddy replied with a firm “no”.

Shivakumar sought to play down concerns and indicated that the issue will be resolved.“Nothing to worry about. He is a great friend. We are the closest friends among the Cabinet. We will sort out the problem,” Shivakumar said. “Ramalinga Reddy is my colleague and our senior leader. He said that he cannot go to the village and work. He said that I should give him some other ministerial post. I will talk to Ramalinga Reddy and make everything right,” the CM added.Reddy said he will



not personally hand over his resignation to the chief minister but send it through his personal secretary to the chief minister’s office (CMO).“My thanks to you and the Congress party for giving me a ministerial position in your cabinet.

Since it is not possible for me to function against my conscience, I am submitting my resignation from the ministerial post. I request that my resignation be accepted. I will continue as an MLA and as a worker of the Congress party,” read the resignation letter. State home minister Priyank Kharge underlined Reddy’s importance to both the party and the

state. “He is very important for the party. He is very important for the state. He has won elections eight times. We need his experience,” he said.

Congress state president B K Hariprasad said he will speak to him and resolve the issue. “Such things keep happening in politics. There is no problem. But he will talk to us; he is not going to do anything against the Congress party,” he said.Byre Gowda didn’t respond to the calls for a comment.The development comes just months ahead of scheduled elections for the Greater Bengaluru Authority, the responsibility of coor-

minating the local election rests with the city in-charge minister. Reddy’s claim to city governance traces back to 2002–2004 under S.M. Krishna, when he held the Bangalore City Development charge alongside Food & Civil Supplies. However, the portfolio lacked today’s centralized power. Krishna personally steered the urban blueprint via the Bangalore Agenda Task Force, leaving Reddy with localized administration rather than master planning.

Reddy remains one of the Congress party’s most influential leaders in Bengaluru and has long been a prominent figure in the city’s political and organisational affairs.Reacting to the escalating friction within the ruling dispensation, Leader of the Opposition R. Ashoka took a sharp dig at the Congress party’s stability, pointing to the open rebellion and subsequent ministerial resignations over portfolio allocation.“Kannadigas may one day wake up to a morning without the sun, but not a day without Congress infighting in Karnataka,” Ashoka said, mocking the persistent internal conflicts.

Highlighting the repeated intervention of the Congress high command to douse local fires, the BJP leader added that with two years still remaining in the government led by Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, senior central leaders including Rahul Gandhi, K.C. Venugopal, and Randeep Singh Surjewala “might as well rent a permanent office, or better still, buy a house in Bengaluru.”

Brazil’s chase for sixth star begins with Vinicius in charge and Neymar fighting time before World Cup 2026

Mumbai: Carlo Ancelotti’s Brazil do not look like the traditional Brazilian dream. There is no romantic flooding of the pitch with attackers, no naive trust that individual genius will solve every problem. What Ancelotti has built instead is a tournament machine - disciplined enough to survive adversity, quick enough to punish it, and structured around the one player who can decide the match in a single run. That player is Vinicius Jr. Everything else is architecture built around that fact.

Brazil are in Group C alongside Morocco, Haiti, and Scotland. Neymar’s fitness continues to cast a shadow over the opening fixtures after a calf problem ruled him out of warm-up matches, though Ancelotti has expressed confidence he will be available by the first or second group game. The squad beyond him, however, is deep enough not to require him. Goalkeepers:

Alisson, Ederson, Weverton
Defenders: Alex Sandro, Bremer, Danilo, Douglas Santos, Gabriel Magalhães, Ibanez, Leo Pereira, Marquinhos, WesleyMidfielders: Bruno Guimaraes, Casemiro, Danilo Santos, Fabinho, Lucas PaquetForwards: Endrick, Gabriel Martinelli, Igor Thiago, Luzi Henrique, Matheus Cunha, Neymar, Raphinha, Rayan, Vinicius Jr Brazil’s goalkeeping situation is one of their most underrated advantages.

Alisson is the first choice, and the argument does not require much elaboration. He offers shot-stopping quality at the very highest level, commanding presence in his box, and the composure to keep Brazil alive during the spells - inevitable in any deep tournament run - when the structure temporarily breaks down. World Cup knockout football tends to be chaotic, physical and unpredictable. Alisson thrives precisely in that envi-

ronment. Ederson represents a different profile. He is the cleaner passer and would be the better option if Brazil face a high-pressing side that demands ball-playing from deep. But in a tournament that will likely be decided in tight, nervous knockout matches, Alisson’s shot-stopping ceiling gives Brazil a more reliable safety net.Weverton rounds out the group as squad cover.

This department is not where Brazil’s vulnerabilities lie. Brazil’s central defensive options are strong enough to win a tournament.Marquinhos brings leadership, reading of danger and the institutional knowledge for a player who has navigated high-pressure international football for years. Gabriel Magalhaes brings physical aggression, aerial dominance and set-piece threat from the left side. Together they form a pairing that is difficult to bully

and difficult to beat in the air, which matters enormously as knockout rounds progress.

Bremer offers something different: a more duel-oriented, combative presence that Ancelotti could deploy against physically imposing strikers or sides that threaten aerially. Ibanez and Leo Pereira add depth. But barring injury, Marquinhos and Gabriel are the centre-back foundation.The full back question is where the real tactical story lives.On the right, the choice between Danilo and Wesley is not simply a personnel decision - it shapes Brazil’s entire defensive shape. Danilo offers control. He can tuck into a back three during the build-up phase, freeing Raphinha and the midfield to push higher without leaving happening space on Brazil’s right flank. Wesley is the more exclusive option, capable of generating width and contribution to attacks, but his use comes at a cost: Casemiro and Bruno



Guimaraes must convert more open ground when possession is lost.On the left, Alex Sandro is likely to be preferred over Douglas Santos. His experience in knockout football edges the decision for Ancelotti. Brazil’s best defensive version is not spectacular, and that is exactly the point. It is controlled, compact and

deliberately conservative in the positions it takes behind the ball. Against the very best transition teams in this tournament, that discipline may prove more valuable than an extra attacker. If Brazil’s defence is their structural backbone, the midfield is the pivot around which everything else either functions or fractures.

Casemiro and Bruno Guimaraes are expected to form the double pivot, and the logic is sound on paper. Casemiro sits in front of the centre-backs, reads lines early and provides the destroyer presence Brazil need in the centre. Bruno carries the ball, breaks defensive blocks and links the attack to the defence with the kind of

forward-passing intelligence that gives Brazil’s transitions their bite. The problem is workload.

If Brazil play with four advanced players ahead of the midfield, which their best attacking personnel essentially demands, those two midfielders must cover enormous amounts of space.

They have to protect the full-backs, defend counters before they develop, win second balls and feed Vinicius early enough to give him momentum. That is manageable when Brazil are dominating. When opponents press high, disrupt the build-up and force Brazil backwards, a two-man pivot can begin to look stretched and slow.Fabinho is Ancelotti’s insurance policy for closing games out. If Brazil hold a lead deep into a knockout match, Fabinho coming off the bench to turn the midfield into a wall of bodies is a clean, intelligent tactical option.

Denied Virat Kohli's Autograph, A Young Fan Receives Unique Gift From Lalit Modi

Chandigarh: Remember the young Virat Kohli fan who was left heartbroken after failing to get his idol's autograph? Turns out, he has finally received an unexpected good news. Months after the video of the kid breaking down in tears went viral, former IPL chairman Lalit Modi personally reached out and promised him a special gift. Yugveer Budhiraja had become the focus of attention after a clip showed him repeatedly trying to approach Kohli for an autograph. However, each time he tried, security personnel stopped him, and eventually he walked away upset. He was also seen throwing his bat in frustration. During an interview with Humans of Bombay founder Karishma Mehta, Modi said the video had deeply affected him. "I will send him a Season 1 bat. The bat is signed by every player, which has Virat Kohli's signature as well," Lalit Modi said. He added, "Unfortunately I don't have a single bat of Virat Kohli myself." On June 3, Yugveer shared an Instagram video revealing that he had received a video call from Lalit Modi himself. Wow! This is just soooo heartwarming, amazing work," a user wrote. Another commented, "what a thoughtful and loving gesture. Stay blessed always." A third said, "Man of his word. Legend." Another wrote, "You are the best sir." "Awww ... such heartwarming moment," another commented.

A user summed up the situation by writing, "At least someone could reciprocate with the kid's feelings..he will feel really good ..from disappointment to excitement..that's Life ..he learnt it too soon... Great stuff." In run-chases, Virat has made 4,285 runs in 138 matches and 131 innings at an av-



erage of 42.42 and a strike rate of 136.42, with three centuries and 29 fifties, with a best score of 108*. During successful chases, he has made 2784 runs in 76 matches and 70 innings at an average of 63.27 and a strike rate of 142.69, including three centuries and 20 fifties, with a best score of 108*. Virat has been the driving force for RCB in massive run-chases and knows how exactly to play in big chases, with crucial runs in his team's six highest successful chases in IPL history: This all makes up a total of 395 runs in six innings at an average of 197.50 and a strike rate of over 173, including a century and four fifties. He has also levelled with Rohit Sharma for the most 'Player of the Match' honours in IPL among Indian players, with 21 each.

Virat has made a huge leap in IPL 2026 run-charts, jumping to third

spot in the Orange Cap race with 484 runs in 12 matches and innings at an average of 53.77 and a strike rate of 165.75, including a century and three fifties. Coming to the match, RCB won the toss and opted to bowl first, reducing KKR to 48/2. It was knocks from Angkrish Raghuvanshi (71* in 46 balls, with seven fours and three sixes) and Rinku Singh (49* in 32 balls, with three fours and two sixes) which took KKR to 192/4 in 20 overs. Josh Hazlewood, Rasikh Salam Dar and Bhuvneshwar Kumar took a wicket each. During the chase, Virat lost his opening partner, Jacob Bethell (15), early once again, but a 92-run stand with Devdutt Padikkal (39 in 27 balls, with seven fours) kept RCB above the required run-rate. Towards the end, it was Virat all over KKR as RCB chased down the total in 19.1 overs with six wickets

in hand. RCB is back to the top of the table, with eight wins and four losses, giving them 16 points. On the other hand, KKR, which was on a four-match unbeaten streak after six winless matches (spanning five losses and a no result), faces a massive dent to their playoff chances, making their final three matches a must-win affair. The raw emotion of cricket fandom was captured in a viral video that touched millions across India. The clip featured a young, passionate fan, later identified as Yugveer Budhiraja, waiting outside a hotel lobby with a cricket bat cradled in his arms.

His sole mission was to secure an autograph from his idol, Indian batting maestro Virat Kohli. As Kohli emerged surrounded by a heavy security detail, Yugveer eagerly attempted to approach the superstar. However, the strict security

cordon immediately intercepted the youngster, pushing him aside to clear a path for the cricketer. Despite multiple attempts to get close enough to catch Kohli's attention, the security team repeatedly turned the young boy away. Realizing his dream had slipped through his fingers, the overwhelming disappointment proved too much to bear. In a raw, visceral moment of heartbreak, the young fan broke down in tears, walked away, and threw his cricket bat to the ground in utter frustration. The video quickly spread across social media platforms like X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram, drawing immense sympathy from cricket enthusiasts nationwide. While many netizens understood the necessity of high-level security for a global sports icon like Kohli, they could not help but feel a profound sense of empathy for the weeping child. The video sparked a massive wave of online reactions, with thousands of users sharing the clip in hopes that it might somehow catch the attention of Virat Kohli or the management team at Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB). Instead, it caught the attention of the man who laid the very foundation of modern cricket entertainment. Among the millions who viewed the heartbreaking footage was Lalit Modi, the founder and former chairman of the Indian Premier League (IPL). For Modi, the image of a young fan crying over a missed autograph struck a deep personal chord. During the podcast, Lalit Modi made a public vow to find the young fan and gift him a prized piece of cricket history from his own private collection. He tasked his media team with tracking down the boy's identity and contact information.

Shreyas Captains India; Sooryavanshi Called Up



Chennai: Expectedly, Shreyas Iyer was announced the new T20I captain of India by the Indian cricket board on Saturday afternoon. BCCI secretary Devjit Saikia and chairman of senior men's selection committee Ajit Agarkar announced the T20I squads for the 2026 Asian Games, India tours of England and Ireland. Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, the 15-year-old batting sensation from Bihar, also found a place in all three squads. Iyer replaced his Mumbai teammate Suryakumar Yadav, who was struggling with bat despite leading the team to its second T20 World Cup crown earlier this year.

Given his below-par returns with the bat for India and his IPL franchise Mumbai Indians, Yadav was dropped from the squad. Another Mumbai Indians batter Tilak Varma was named the new vice-captain in the shortest format. Interestingly, ace pacer Jasprit Bumrah was rested from the T20I series against England and Ireland but was named in the squad for the Asian Games. Besides, Delhi's right-arm pacer Prince

Yadav was awarded for his good show in the 2026 IPL where he claimed 16 wickets for Lucknow Super Giants in 14 matches. He will be the part of the 16-member team touring England and Ireland for T20Is. Another Delhi pacer, Harshit Rana, who got injured during a warm-up match before the start of the T20 World Cup has also made his comeback and found a place in all the three squads.

Three months after leading India to a successful defense of the T20 World Cup title, Suryakumar Yadav has lost both the captaincy and his place in the T20I squad. His IPL 2026 campaign also failed to produce the numbers expected of one of the format's premier batters. Playing for Mumbai Indians, Suryakumar managed 270 runs in 13 innings at an average of 20.76 and a strike rate of 147.54. This decision by the selectors was based on a combination of Suryakumar's recent form and the need to build a team for the future. In his place, Shreyas Iyer will lead the new-look Indian side for the UK tour and the Asian Games.

Sunil Gavaskar Pauses His Speech To Answer Wife's Call, Delighting Mumbai Audience

Mumbai: Cricketing legend Sunil Gavaskar has captured the internet's affection after a video of his spontaneous "wife-paaglu" moment went viral across social media platforms. The former Indian captain paused his keynote address mid-event to answer a phone call from his spouse, Marshneil, sparking widespread amusement online. The relatable incident happened in Mumbai during a special gathering hosted by the Rotary Club of Bombay Airport. Gavaskar was attending as the Chief Guest to celebrate a major milestone for the 'Gift of Life' initiative, which has provided free, life-saving cardiac surgeries to roughly 850 underprivileged children. While speaking to



the attendees at the Rotary Service Centre on Juhu Tara Road, the batting icon's phone began ringing at the podium. Recognizing the caller immediately, he stopped his speech, politely excused himself to the crowd, and took the call right on stage before offering a witty explanation. This must be my wife.

Let me just take it. Just to remind me that I shouldn't speak too much."— Sunil Gavaskar, Beyond the viral comedy, the event itself was deeply emotional. The charity project has been doing incredible work, helping hundreds of families deal with complex congenital heart defects. Gavaskar spent plenty of

time hanging out with the young survivors and their parents, calling the brave little kids the "real heroes" of the day. Cricket legend Sunil Gavaskar momentarily paused his keynote speech at a Rotary Club event in Mumbai to answer a phone call from his wife, creating a humorous viral moment online.

The event celebrated the Gift of Life initiative, which has provided free cardiac surgeries to around 850 underprivileged children. Gavaskar, the chief guest, praised the young survivors as true heroes while highlighting the charity's impactful work supporting families. His light-hearted interruption added warmth to an emotionally significant gathering.

Virus Forces Arnaldi Out; Zverev To Face Cobolli In French Open Final

Mumbai: Matteo Arnaldi's dream run at the French Open came to an abrupt end on Friday after the Italian was forced to withdraw from his semifinal against compatriot Flavio Cobolli due to illness, handing the 10th seed a place in Sunday's title clash against Alexander Zverev. Arnaldi pulled out roughly 20 minutes before the scheduled start of the match on Court Philippe-Chatrier. Tournament organisers said the 25-year-old, ranked No. 104 in the world, had come down with a virus and was unable to take the court. "It's not what I wanted to do. Last night I started to feel unwell and then at dinner I started to feel so, so in my stomach and then I woke up at 1am and started vomit-



ing," Arnaldi told reporters. "I could not sleep at all. At 6-7 I vomited again and we called the doctor to the room and he gave me some stuff. But then throughout today I could not eat - every time I would eat or drink I would go back to the bathroom." The withdrawal denied fans a first-ever all-Italian men's Grand Slam semifinal and

brought the curtain down on one of the stories of the tournament. Arnaldi had arrived in Paris with little expectation but pieced together a remarkable run to reach the last four, becoming one of the surprise packages of the fortnight. Under Grand Slam rules, a player who has already been eliminated from the main draw cannot

replace a withdrawn semifinalist. As a result, Cobolli advanced directly to the final without striking a ball. The walkover marked the first time a men's Grand Slam semifinal has been decided in such circumstances since Wimbledon 2022, when Rafael Nadal withdrew before his semifinal against Nick Kyrgios because of an abdominal injury. Kyrgios subsequently reached the only Grand Slam final of his career, losing to Novak Djokovic in four sets.

For Cobolli, the development capped a breakthrough tournament. The Italian has enjoyed the best Grand Slam run of his career in Paris and now finds himself one win away from a maiden major title.

Tumour Survivor Opinder Sekhon Wins Four Medals At Malaysian Masters Athletics



Mumbai: She survived a potato-sized brain tumour and a near-fatal bout of meningitis. Now Opinder Kaur Sekhon, 65, is winning gold medals in Malaysia. The Chandigarh-based Masters athlete and mother-in-law of Himachal Pradesh PWD Minister Vikramaditya

Singh won four medals at the 38th Malaysian International Masters Athletics Championship held in Kuala Lumpur from June 5 to 7. Competing in four events in her first international meet, she finished on the podium in all of them. Sekhon clinched gold in the discus throw with a

throw of 14.75 metres and gold in the 400 metres in 1:42.35. She took silver in the 200 metres, clocking 42.59 seconds, and silver in the 100 metres in 20.37 seconds. Sekhon told The Tribune she had come back from death twice and then turned to fitness. "I underwent a seven-hour surgery

in the US to remove a potato-sized brain tumour. In 2013, I was struck by brain meningitis — a condition my doctor later told me was more dangerous than the tumour itself," she said. For twelve years, she did not know how close she had come to dying. "My doctor told me only recently, after twelve years, that he was not sure I would survive," she told The Tribune from Kuala Lumpur. "Knowing my real condition has only made me work harder." "I had one thing in my heart — I would not be a burden on my family. That is why I fought with my body and pushed it to its limits. When I was struggling, I drew inspiration from the late Baba Fauja Singh. I never thought I would one day become a motivation for others myself.

IGPL Bharath Classic: Kochhar Finishes One Shot Behind First-Day Leader

Mumbai: Chandigarh's Karandeep Kochhar pocketed a fine round of 6-under 66 and positioned himself in the tied second place at the end of the first day of the USD 500,000 AM Green Indian Golf Premier League (IGPL) Bharath Classic at the Mazagan Beach & Golf Resort on Friday. The 26-year-old stands one shot behind the leader, Thailand's Runchanapong Youprayong, who carded 7-under 65, including eighth birdies against one bogey. Kochhar, a four-time winner in India, added a breakthrough win on the AM Green IGPL Tour late last year with a victory in IGPL Dubai hosted by Shiv Kapur. Kochhar had a four-birdie streak early in the round from the second hole and turned in 5-under 31, before picking two more birdies against one bogey in his second 9-for a 66. Sharing the second place with Kochhar were Australia's Will Florimo and Austria's Nicklas Regner. Thai star Runchanapong, who came into this week's event with a fine showing last week — having secured third place at AM Green IGPL Morocco Rising Stars. He benefitted from the experience of having



played at the same venue before, and took a one-shot lead in the Bharath Classic edition. The next top-performing Indian on the field was Aryan Roopa Anand. Armed with confidence that leapfrogged since his win at the AM Green IGPL Congo, shot 4-under 68 despite two bogeys. He had six birdies, including three in a row on the front nine of the course from the third to the fifth.

One of IGPL's marquee stars, Kochhar had missed the cut last week but said he

was hoping to make up for it. "I think I played really well overall this time. I drove it well, hit the irons well and putted well. I think last week I struggled with my putting," he said. "I put in a lot of work over the weekend and on the first few days of the week. So, I think all of that work really showed in today's round. The course wasn't playing that easy, especially midway through the round. It was really windy and that whole stretch of 12, 13, 14, 15 is not easy.