

IPR Minister Pijush Hazarika extends National Press Day greetings; state-level event held in Guwahati

Guwahati, Nov 17: Assam Information and Public Relations Minister Pijush Hazarika today conveyed warm greetings to journalists on the occasion of National Press Day praising the media for its steady role in strengthening democracy.

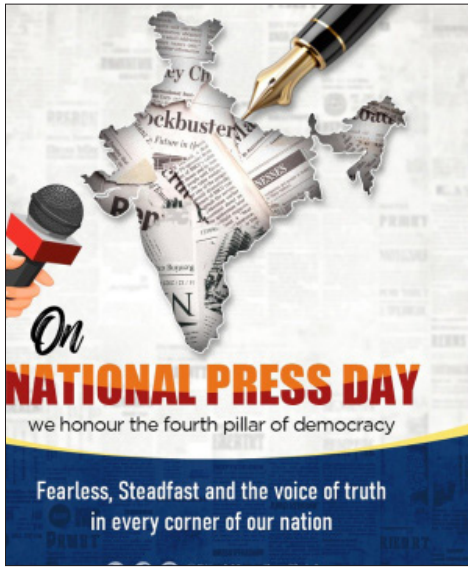
The Minister shared his message through social media and expressed deep respect for the press community. In his message, Hazarika said that National Press Day is an important reminder of the work done by journalists for truth, transparency, and democratic values. He extended his best wishes to all members of the media fraternity and said that the contribution of journalists in building an informed society remains invaluable. The Minister wrote that journalists act as the “mirror of society” by delivering accurate and fact-based news.

He added that fair and people-centric journalism helps

in shaping public opinion and supports the growth of a healthy democracy. Hazarika also expressed hope that journalists will continue to work with sincerity while upholding the dignity and long-standing traditions of the media. He once again wished everyone on National Press Day and thanked them for their service.

While the Minister shared his message online, the official State-level National Press Day 2025 celebration took place in Guwahati at the Conference and Training Centre of the Public Works Department in Dispur. The event was organised by the Directorate of Information and Public Relations, Government of Assam. The theme for this year’s celebration was “Ensuring the Credibility of News Service Amid Misinformation.”

Officials said the theme reflects the challenges faced by the media today, especially



the rapid spread of false information and the importance of maintaining public trust. The programme was attended by senior officials, journalists, and media professionals from across the state. Though Pijush Hazarika was announced as the

Chief Guest as per the official schedule, the event continued in his absence.

Prof. Dr. Dhrubajyoti Borah, Vice Chancellor of Srimanta Sankaradeva University of Health Sciences and former president of Asam Sahitya

Sabha spoke about the importance of responsible journalism and the role of the press in protecting democratic values. Director of Information and Public Relations, Manabendra Dev Roy, IAS, had earlier issued the formal invitation for

■ The program featured speeches from senior officials, including Prof. Dr. Dhrubajyoti Borah, who discussed responsible journalism. ■ The event addressed challenges including the spread of misinformation and the necessity of public trust.

the event, calling upon the media community to participate in the celebration.

He said that National Press Day is an opportunity to recognise the dedication of journalists who work every day to keep the public informed. National Press Day marks the establishment of the Press Council of India, which was set up to preserve the freedom of the press and to maintain high standards in journalism. Every year, the day is observed to remind both the media and the public of the importance of a free and responsible press.

In Brief

Seize heroin and cannabis in Pasighat

Itanagar: In a targeted operation on November 15, under Operation Dawn 2.0, the East Siang Police arrested drug peddler Kadum Yomso from Sibbo village. The Anti-Drug Squad seized approximately 6.17 grams of suspected heroin and 1.97 grams of suspected ganja during the operation, conducted under the NDPS Act, 1985, with independent witnesses present. The accused and the seized materials were transported to Pasighat Police Station, and a case was registered against him. Superintendent of Police Pankaj Lamba commended the team’s efforts and emphasized the need for community vigilance against drug trafficking in East Siang.

Major cache of arms recovered in Manipur

Imphal: On November 16, security forces in Manipur arrested three insurgent operatives and seized a large cache of arms and ammunition. Khuraijam Shyam Singh (37) was detained for extortion and illegal mediation in crimes against women, while Nongmaithem Bidyasagar Singh (24) was arrested for threatening truck drivers along the Jiribam–Imphal route. The most notable arrest was Kojiam Ibochouba (45), a self-styled Major of the RPF/PLA, who was sought for a 2017 ambush. His information led to the recovery of significant weaponry, including an M-16 rifle, various types of ammunition, explosives, and military supplies buried in a farm in Kakching district.

A serious road accident

Guwahati: A serious road accident on the Pabhoi-linked four-lane road in Biswanath resulted in one death and one critical injury last night. A scooter collided with a Punjab-body truck at Charisharaniya, an area known for heavy traffic. The impact was severe, leading to one rider’s death at the scene and the other being rushed to Biswanath Civil Hospital. The truck was traveling from Tezpur to Lakhimpur, while the scooter was headed towards Pabhoi. Local residents responded quickly to assist before emergency services arrived, but one rider did not survive. The identities of the deceased and the injured are still unknown, and both vehicles involved have been seized for investigation.

In Doomdoo, MLA Rupesh Gowala initiates significant infrastructure projects

Doomdoo, Nov 17: On Sunday, Assam Cabinet Minister and Doomdoo MLA Rupesh Gowala conducted the bhumi puja for several key infrastructure projects in the Doomdoo assembly constituency, signaling a significant advance in local development. Among these initiatives, the construction of a reinforced cement concrete (RCC) bridge over the Doomdoo river along Old AT Road was launched. This particular project, which falls under the STBR/SOPD-G/Doomdoo-01 scheme, entails an estimated investment of approximately Rs 8 crore, aimed at enhancing connectivity in the region.

In addressing ongoing challenges related to erosion and flood damage affecting various wards in Doomdoo town, Gowala also performed the bhumi puja for a comprehensive flood and erosion protection project. This initiative, termed ‘Flood and erosion protection measures to protect Doomdoo town and its adjoining areas,’ is set for execution under the SOPD-G fund for the fiscal year 2024–25, with a projected budget of Rs 2,459 lakh, focusing on safeguarding vulnerable regions along the river.

Additionally, another critical erosion-control project was initiated to shield the Dighaltarrang tea estate area from the encroaching Dibru river. The foundation stones of these significant projects were previously laid by Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma during his latest visit to the area.

Gowala also commemorated a personally meaningful milestone by inaugurating the newly-constructed RCC building of Maniram Dewan Primary School in No. 8, Sookreting, a school with personal history as he studied there in his youth. During the inauguration ceremony, Gowala expressed that the realization of these projects represents . The event saw the attendance of Doomdoo Municipal Board Chairperson Kanta Bhattacharjee, ward commissioners, officials from the Public Works and Water Resources Departments, and a large assembly of residents from the area.

Gaurav Gogoi slams Ashok Singhal over ‘cauliflower’ post, calls it a new low in Assam’s political debate

Guwahati, Nov 17: Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi today criticised Assam Cabinet minister Ashok Singhal after the minister shared an image of cauliflower fields on social media following the Bihar election results. The post, which carried the caption “Bihar approves gobi farming”, has triggered sharp reactions online and in political circles. Gogoi said the remark was not just a casual comment but something that touched a painful chapter in India’s history. He pointed out that the phrase has long been linked to the 1989 Logain massacre in Bhagalpur, where more than a hundred Muslims were



killed and their bodies reportedly hidden under cau-

liflower plantations. Gogoi said using such an image for

political messaging was “a shocking new low in politi-

cal discourse”. According to him, the post was “vulgar and shameful”, especially because it made light of an incident that caused deep suffering to many families. He added that bringing up such a tragedy for mockery or political point-scoring shows “how far some are willing to descend in public life”. Gogoi also targeted Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, alleging that this kind of mindset gets encouragement from the top leadership in Assam. He accused the Chief Minister of promoting a culture of hostility towards minorities and said this was dangerous for the state’s social fabric.

COCOMI sends the PM a memo

Disputes the claims made by Kuki groups to the hill regions of Manipur

Imphal, Nov 17: The Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI) has presented a memorandum to the Prime Minister, disputing claims by the United People’s Front (UPF) and the Kuki National Organisation (KNO) about historical jurisdiction and ancestral land rights in Manipur’s hills. Following UPF-KNO discussions with Home Ministry officials on November 6-7, COCOMI labeled their statements as misleading. It referenced historical documentation, including colonial records and judicial rulings, asserting that both valley and hill areas fell under the Manipur State’s admin-



istration, validated by court judgments from 1963 and 1979 regarding state authority over forest lands.

COCOMI contested Kuki groups’ assertions of ancestral land, describing their presence as a ‘colonial-era settlement’ initiated by British administration in the 19th and early 20th centuries. It

cited British Political Agent William McCulloch’s documentation of Kuki settlements as aligned with the colonial frontier strategy. Moreover, COCOMI described the term “Kuki” as an administrative label from the colonial era, undermining claims of indigeneity. The organization argued that tribal communities’

land rights were usufructuary, intended for use rather than legal ownership. COCOMI concluded by urging the Government of India to reject these “ahistorical claims” as their acceptance could threaten Manipur’s territorial integrity. The memorandum is signed by COCOMI convenor Khuraijam Athouba.

The Nampi Conclave Declaration is adopted by Kuki-Zo groups

Outline a cohesive political strategy



Imphal, Nov 17: The Kuki-Zo leadership adopted the Nampi Conclave Declaration aimed at detailing the community’s political aspirations and enhancing coordination among institutions.

The event, themed “Unity in Action: Securing Land, Legislature, and Future for the Kuki-Zo People,” included representatives from various organizations and political bodies. The declaration calls for a Union Territory with a Legislature as a core objective and proposes the formation of a central Working

Group to improve political coordination.

It also establishes a Unified Political Movement Working Committee as the primary negotiating body with the Government of India. The conclave emphasized continued mobilization for Union Territory status and designated May 3 as “Separation Day” annually.

Overall, this effort seeks to unify Kuki-Zo groups and streamline their political processes for future discussions with the Union Government.

A large crowd opposes the proposed logistic park in Dorabeel

Palasbari, Nov 17: Advocate Shantanu BarthaKur addressed a large public meeting in Dorabeel, Kamrup district, emphasizing the importance of protecting nature against developmental projects, particularly in relation to the Assam government’s plan to build a logistic park on 150 bighas of traditional grazing land near the ecologically sensitive Dorabeel wetland. He asserted that local communities have rights to preserve natural resources, highlighting the threat this project poses to the livelihood of thousands who rely on Dorabeel’s grasslands for agriculture, fishing,

and cattle-rearing.

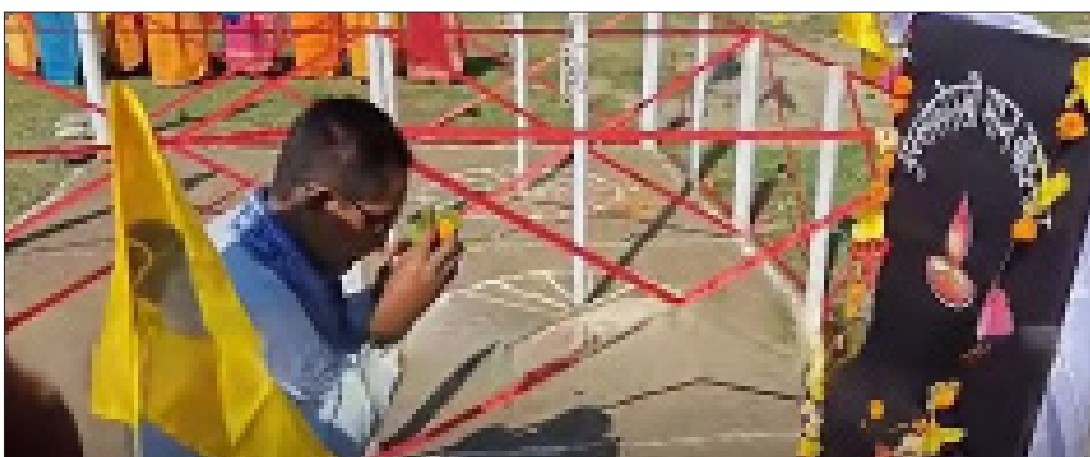
Prominent members of the Dorabeel Grazing Land Protection Committee voiced their concerns, with Prasenjit Kalita stating that the government’s actions endangered the wetland’s biodiversity, while Secretary Md Nizam-uluddin Ahmed condemned the plan as ‘unwarranted encroachment.’ Calls for unity across political lines were made by Kanak Chandra Das against the government’s ‘hasty’ decision. Other speakers noted the area’s ecological significance, including its role as a habitat for migratory birds and its support for traditional pottery.

Assam marks 74th Bodo Literary Day with celebrations across the region

Guwahati, Nov 17: Assam today observed the 74th Bodo Literary Day, known as Boro Tunlai San, with quiet pride and widespread participation across the state and in neighbouring regions. The day, celebrated every year on November 16, marks the foundation of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha (BSS), one of the most important organisations working for the growth of Bodo language and literature. In Kokrajhar, the Kokrajhar Primary Bodo Sahitya Sabha held a ceremonial programme at Khargaon.

The event began with the hoisting of the Sabha flag by president Supen Chandra Brahma. This was followed by a tribute to the martyrs who dedicated their lives to the Bodo language and literature movement. The organisers also conducted a range of literary competitions for students, aiming to encourage young learners to take pride in their language and heritage. Several educational institutions, including Bodoland University, Kokrajhar Government College, and Dr. Sobha Brahma Music and Fine Arts College, marked the day with events on their campuses.

These included discussions, cultural programmes, and small gatherings focused on the importance of preserv-



ing and promoting Bodo identity. The celebration was not limited to Assam. District and unit committees of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha, along with schools and colleges in West Bengal and Meghalaya, also observed the day.

These states have sizeable Bodo-speaking populations who take part in the occasion every year. Bodo Literary

Day remembers the founding of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha on November 16, 1952. Jaybhadra Hagier served as the first President, while Sonaram Thaosan was the founding Secretary. Their efforts and vision laid the foundation for decades of work toward strengthening Bodo language, literature, and cultural traditions.

Uttar Pradesh mine collapse UP mining accident claims two more lives, total reaches three

Lucknow, Nov 17: Nine workers were thought to be buried in the rubble of a stone mine that collapsed at Billi Markundi in Sonbhadra, Uttar Pradesh, a day earlier. Two additional workers were discovered dead on Sunday. On Saturday, one employee’s death was confirmed.

A magistrate’s investigation into the collapse’s cause has been ordered, according to district magistrate Badrinath Singh, who visited the area. Vagish Singh, another district magistrate, will carry out the investigation and submit the findings. According to officials, the investigation’s conclusions will determine the course of action. On Saturday, Uttar Pradesh minister Sanjeev Gond said around 12 people were believed to be working at the mining site. He promised a probe and said action would be taken against those whose laxity led to the incident.

Chhotu Yadav, a worker, said his brothers Santosh Yadav and Indrajit Yadav were trapped. Another worker said that nine compressors were operating at the mine, with at least one person deployed for each. Additional director general of police Piyush Mordia said a rescue operation was underway and efforts were going on to clear the debris and locate the trapped workers. The national and state disaster response teams, and the fire department were involved in the rescue operations even as the exact number of those missing was being ascertained.



16 additional victims’ remains were recovered from the Ahmedabad site of the Air India tragedy

On Monday in Saudi Arabia, a tragic collision between a bus carrying Indian pilgrims and a fuel tanker resulted in the deaths of 42 people, including women and children.

New Delhi, Nov 17: According to those familiar with the situation, a bus and a fuel tanker collided in Saudi Arabia early on Monday, killing forty-two Indian pilgrims, including women and children.

According to those who spoke on condition of anonymity, the pilgrims, who were primarily from the Hyderabad area, were riding the bus from Mecca to Madinah when the tragedy happened at around 1:30 a.m. on Monday. They were in Saudi Arabia for the Umrah pilgrimage, which takes place outside of the Hajj season. The Indian side did not provide an official statement regarding the deaths. 42 deaths were confirmed by the individuals mentioned above. 11 women and 10 children may have been among the victims, according to Gulf News’s sources, while Saudi authorities were still confirming the exact figure. External affairs minister S Jaishankar expressed shock at the incident and said Indian officials in Saudi Arabia were providing support to the affected Indian nationals and their families. “Deeply



shocked at the accident involving Indian nationals in Medinah, Saudi Arabia. Our Embassy in Riyadh and Consulate in Jeddah are giving fullest support to Indian nationals and families affected by this accident,” he said in a social media post. “Sincere condolences to the bereaved families. Pray for the speedy recovery of those injured.” The collision between the bus and the fuel tanker triggered a massive fire, media reports said. There were more than 30 women and children in the bus when the accident occurred at Mufrihat, about 160 km from Madinah, the reports said. The pilgrims were on their way to Madinah after completing rituals in Mecca.

“Rescue teams described the scene as devastating, with the bus completely gutted, making victim identification extremely challenging,” Gulf News reported.

AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi, the MP for Hyderabad, appealed to the government to ensure the speedy repatriation of the bodies and treatment of the injured. Telangana chief minister A Revanth Reddy expressed shock at the incident and directed civilian and police officials to ascertain how many residents of the state were involved in the accident. He also directed them to liaise with the external affairs ministry and the Saudi Arabian embassy in New Delhi.

RSS worker killed in Ferozepur; Oppn criticises Punjab law & order

Ferozepur, Nov 17: Senior police authorities claimed on Sunday that a 32-year-old Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) worker was shot and killed by unidentified gunmen in the city’s major bazar area on Saturday night while he was returning home from his dupatta shop. The police have also detained four persons in relation to the case. Naveen Arora was the victim, according to the police. According to authorities, Naveen’s grandpa, the late Dina Nath, who was also a prominent RSS leader in Ferozepur, was cremated on Sunday. Ferozepur senior superintendent of police (SSP) Bhupinder Singh Sidhu said that nine teams have been formed to trace and arrest the culprits. “Police have combed through CCTV footage and identified the assailants. Nine teams have been formed to nab the accused. No exact motive behind the murder has been ascertained,” the SSP said. Investigators said Naveen lived at Sadhu Chand Chowk and was returning home on his motorcycle from his shop in the main bazar area around 7pm, when two unidentified assailants approached him and opened fire. A bullet struck him in the head, causing him to collapse on the road. His family members rushed him to a hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival, they said. Naveen’s father, Baldev Raj Arora, said Naveen had left the shop minutes earlier. “When we reached the spot, he was lying on the road. We rushed him to the hospital, but

he didn’t survive.” The sensational murder in a busy market has triggered a political row in the state with the Opposition parties slamming the state government over “deteriorating” law and order in the state.

Punjab Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) chief Sunil Jakhar on Sunday alleged that Naveen’s murder has once again exposed the AAP government’s failure to maintain law and order in the state.

In a press statement, Jakhar alleged that gangsters were running a parallel government in the state, while chief minister Bhagwant Mann had failed to fulfil his responsibilities. Union minister of state Ravneet Singh Bittu also condemned the murder and said that the incident had “shaken the entire state”. “The murder is a stark reminder that criminals had become emboldened and the people were increasingly feeling unsafe,” Bittu said. Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) chief Sukhbir Singh Badal termed it ‘jungle raj’. “This is jungle raj in Punjab. Peace and communal harmony are in serious danger. No one’s life or property in Punjab is safe today. Criminals roam free, innocents are gunned down in broad daylight,” Badal said. The ruling AAP called the murder a conspiracy. “The murder of innocent youth is a major conspiracy to disturb law and order in the state. The government is committed to eliminating gangsters from Punjab,” said Ranbir Bhullar, AAP MLA from Ferozepur (Urban).

SC stays Kerala Bishop money-laundering trial

New Delhi, Nov 17: The trial proceedings against Bishop Dharmaraj Rasalam, the former moderator of the Church of South India (CSI), who is accused of money laundering connected to admissions to a medical college in Kerala, were suspended by the Supreme Court on Monday.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) was also notified by a bench of judges Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta to respond to the bishop’s appeal contesting the current prosecution. Senior counsel S Muralidhar, who represented Rasalam, asked the court to halt the trial court’s proceedings, claiming that continuing the case will result in irrevocable prejudice before the bishop’s legal appeal is decided. The bench decided to put the trial on hold for the time being so that the ED could react. Rasalam, who formerly headed the South Kerala Diocese and served as moderator of the CSI, is accused of collecting ₹7.225 crore from parents of prospective students in exchange for promising admission to the Dr



Somervell Memorial CSI Medical College in Karakoram. He is alleged to have directed parents to pay the money through intermediaries within the college administration, a charge he has consistently denied. The Supreme Court’s intervention comes against the backdrop of a detailed order passed by the Kerala High Court in March, where a single-judge bench had refused to quash the ED’s money-laundering probe. Justice VG Varun had dismissed Rasalam’s plea, holding that the material collected by the federal agency warranted further investigation and possible prosecution. According to the ED’s findings

placed before the high court, at least 28 candidates or their parents were allegedly asked to pay large sums in return for admission to medical courses. The agency claimed that the bishop sent the parents to Sri Thankaraj, then comptroller of the college, who in turn directed them to deposit the money with a clerk. Many of these students reportedly never secured admission despite paying hefty sums. The ED further contended that significant portions of the money were used for infrastructure development at the medical college and were also diverted to the South Kerala Diocese. It asserted that Rasalam’s role in the chain of transactions was

“well-established” and that he was liable to be prosecuted under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). Rasalam, however, has maintained that the allegations are fabricated. His counsel earlier argued before the high court that as bishop and de facto chairman of several institutions, he was not involved in the day-to-day administration and merely advised parents who approached him seeking admissions.

They also pointed out that the Kerala Police crime branch had previously investigated the same allegations and found them to be unfounded -- a conclusion the High Court refused to rely on. The case took a dramatic turn in July 2022 when the ED detained Rasalam at Thiruvananthapuram International Airport as he was about to board a flight to the United Kingdom, after which he was prohibited from leaving the country. The federal agency has since maintained that the case reflects a broader pattern of financial impropriety within the diocese.

Three Maoists killed in Chhattisgarh’s Sukma district



Sukma, Nov 17: According to authorities, three Maoists were slain in a gunfight with security personnel on Sunday in a wooded area near Tumalpad in the Sukma district of Chhattisgarh. According to Sukma police superintendent Kiran Chavan, the gunfight started after an operation was started based on information concerning Maoist movement.

The bodies of three Maoists, including two women, were found after the sporadic gunfight. Barrel Grenade Launchers, explosives, various weapons, and a 303 rifle were taken from the scene. The three were identified as Madvi Deva, Podiam Gangi, and Sodhi Gangi, who carried a bounty of ₹5 lakh each on their heads. Police said Deva was a sniper specialist allegedly involved in civilian killings. A search operation was underway in areas adjoining the encounter site.

Inspector general (Bastar range) Sundarraj Pattilingam said the Maoist movement in the region is in its “final stage” and urged Maoists to surrender and join the government’s rehabilitation programme. Police said 262 Maoists have been killed in Chhattisgarh so far this year. Nearly 300 of them surrendered last month in the state. Top Maoist Mallojula Venugopal Rao alias Bhupathi and 60 others laid down arms in Maharashtra’s Gadchiroli district.

The Union government has reiterated its target of eliminating the Maoist insurgency from the country by March 2026.

Rajnath accuses Marxist historians of ignoring Dalit and tribal roles



Lucknow, Nov 17: As he inaugurated the statue of independence warrior Uda Devi Pasi in Lucknow on Sunday, Defense Minister Rajnath Singh accused Marxist historians and the previous administrations of purposefully ignoring the contributions of the Dalit and tribal populations.

He said that just a small number of families’ contributions to the freedom struggle were documented in historical accounts. He claimed that “Dalit, Adivasi [tribal], and Pasi leaders were

neglected.” Singh chastised the previous administrations for failing to acknowledge the role played by Pasi leaders in the fight for independence.

Singh stated, “Yogi Adityanath, the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, has honored and recognized such leaders of the freedom struggle.” He enumerated the Pasi leaders’ contributions to the conflict. Adityanath said Uttar Pradesh was the focal point of the 1857 revolt against the British and that Pasi leaders, including Uda Devi, contributed a lot to it.

Adityanath cited steps his government has taken to inform students about the history and contribution of the Pasi community in the freedom struggle. “A separate book has been introduced in primary schools on the leaders of the Pasi and other communities who were neglected.” Adityanath said three women battalions of the Provincial Armed Constabulary have been named after Pasi leaders, including Uda Devi. He added that a monument of the 12th-century Maharaja Bijli Pasi was also coming up in Lucknow.

Road mishap in J&K’s Budgam leaves 4 dead, several injured

Budgam, Nov 17: In the Budgam area of Central Kashmir, two cars crashed on Saturday night, resulting in at least four fatalities and multiple injuries, according to officials. A car and a dumper truck collided. The Chief Minister has directed district officials to help the impacted families, treat the injured as soon as possible, and carry out a comprehensive inquiry into what caused the disaster. “Chief Minister has expressed shock and grief over the tragic accident in Budgam, where multiple lives are feared lost,” the official account of the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister’s office said on X. “He has directed the administration to provide every possible assistance and ensure urgent medical care for the injured. The cause of the accident shall be thoroughly investigated,” the post read. The Jammu Kashmir National Conference said that Party President Farooq Abdullah and Vice President and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah are deeply shocked and saddened by the tragic Budgam road accident. “Party President Dr Farooq Abdullah and VP & Chief Minister Omar Abdullah have expressed deep shock and grief over the tragic road accident in Budgam, where multiple lives are feared to have been lost,” in a post on X, the official account of the Jammu Kashmir National Conference wrote. “The honourable Chief Minister has directed the district administration to extend every possible assistance to the affected families and ensure urgent medical care for the injured. He also emphasised that the cause of the accident will be thoroughly investigated to ascertain the circumstances leading to the tragedy,” the post read.



Delhi Police dismantle Pardi gang network, make four arrests at railway station

New Delhi, Nov 17: According to an official on Sunday, Delhi Police has detained two suspected members of the infamous Pardi gang, who are wanted in over 60 cases across Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, and Delhi. Madhya Pradesh police declared a reward of ₹10,000 for each of the two accused, Tega Pardi (40) and Arun Pardi (37). According to the official, Tega also allegedly broke free from police custody in 2024. According to the police, a team from the crime branch initiated the operation in response



to a recent surge in nighttime break-ins in Neb Sarai, Hauz Khas, and Malviya Nagar, where the Pardi gang was suspected of being involved. “On November 14, an input was received that the two criminals would arrive

near Shahabad railway station in Dwarka to meet an associate. The team laid a trap and apprehended the duo,” said the police officer. During interrogation, the accused allegedly disclosed that they are part of an organised inter-state gang traditionally involved in house burglaries, robberies and dacoities. The gang moves in groups of families, sets up temporary roadside shelters near railway stations, and conducts reconnaissance while selling small items such as toys and balloons in markets. “At night, they allegedly break

into houses armed with slingshots and stones, often attacking residents on the head if confronted. After committing the offence, they quickly shift to another city to avoid arrest. Both, Arun and Tega have extensive criminal records, including cases of murder, attempt to murder, armed robbery and burglaries registered in multiple districts of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat,” said the officer.

After completion of legal formalities, the two were handed over to Madhya Pradesh Police for further investigation.

UP mine collapse

Sonbhadra, Nov 17: At Billi Markundi in Sonbhadra, Uttar Pradesh, a stone mine collapsed on Saturday, leaving three workers dead. One of the victims was pronounced



dead on the day of the tragedy, but the other two were discovered on Sunday. It is thought that nine more people are stuck in the stone quarry’s rubble. It is impossible to determine the precise number of trapped personnel, though.

Raju Singh (30), a resident of Panari village in the Sonbhadra district, has been identified as one of the deceased. Uttar Pradesh minister Sanjeev Gond, who visited the spot on Saturday, said around 12 people were believed to be working at the mining site.

UK tourists spot endangered Golden Langur during visit to Assam’s Kakoijana Reserve Forest

Guwahati, Nov 17: A group of nine tourists from the United Kingdom visited Kakoijana in Assam’s Bongaigaon district today where they were able to see the endangered Golden Langur in its natural surroundings.

The sighting turned out to be the highlight of their trip, as the primate is rarely seen so closely in the wild. Kakoijana Reserve Forest is known as one of the most important homes of the Golden Langur.

Over the years, the forest has drawn steady international attention because of its rich biodiversity and the conservation efforts taken by local communities and forest authorities. The visiting team spent several hours moving



through the forest trails and recorded their observations through photographs and videos.

Apart from the wildlife experience, the tourists also enjoyed traditional Assamese food prepared by local residents. They later said they were touched by the warm hospitality and were delighted to taste simple local dishes

that reflected the flavours of the region.

The visitors praised Assam’s natural beauty, saying they were impressed by the greenery, the peaceful atmosphere and the rich wildlife that make the area stand out. They described the visit as refreshing and memorable. Forest officials noted that such visits show the growing global

• *Kakoijana Reserve Forest is a significant habitat for the Golden Langur, attracting international attention due to its biodiversity and conservation efforts.*

• *Forest officials noted that such visits indicate growing global interest in Assam’s eco-tourism, emphasizing the role of conservation-based tourism in protecting endangered species and supporting local communities.*

interest in Assam’s eco-tourism potential. They added that conservation-based tourism in places like Kakoijana helps bring attention to endangered species and encourages communities to continue protecting their forests.

In the midst of centennial festivities, RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat travels to Assam for two days

Guwahati, Nov 17: Dr. Mohan Bhagwat, the Sarsanghchalak of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), visited Assam on November 17 for a two-day trip, which is part of the organization’s centenary celebrations.

Upon his arrival at Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport, he headed to Sudarshanalaya in Barbari to engage in a series of discussions with RSS functionaries, underscoring the significance of the occasion as the RSS marks 100 years since its founding. This visit represents Dr. Bhagwat’s second trip to Guwahati within the year. In Feb-



ruary, he spent five days in the city, where he interacted extensively with RSS karyakartas (workers) on various organizational issues and addressed a session of the Rashtra Sevika Samiti at IIT Guwahati. He also participated in a Boudhik (intellectual) session at South Point High School in Saukuchi,

which attracted considerable attendance from RSS volunteers.

During the current visit, Dr. Bhagwat is anticipated to lead strategic meetings and conduct internal reviews as part of the centenary celebrations, further solidifying connections with the organization’s workers in the region.

Meghalaya’s ascent to prominence in music is reinforced by the

Cherry Blossom Festival

Shillong, Nov 17: The Shillong Cherry Blossom Music & Arts Festival 2025 attracted tourists from India and abroad, solidifying Meghalaya’s role in the concert economy. Initiated by Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma, the festival fused global entertainment with local artistry, showcasing performances from stars like Nora Fatehi, Jason Derulo, and Diplo. The event featured cultural activities and honored local musicians, particularly with a tribute to Zubeen Garg. Beyond music, it offered diverse cuisine, art, and crafts, enhancing Meghalaya’s cultural landscape and boosting tourism and employment. The festival stands as a significant contributor to the state’s cultural and economic vitality, marking Meghalaya as a key player in India’s arts scene.

In Borbhagiya, wild elephants cause chaos

Dhekiajuli, Nov 17: Residents of Borbhagiya in Dhekiajuli are increasingly anxious as wild elephants from Orang National Park venture into their village almost nightly, causing extensive damage to crops. The ongoing harvest season has seen elephants consuming and trampling ripe paddy, resulting in significant losses for farmers. Additionally, numerous betel nut gardens have been ruined, further jeopardizing the agricultural livelihoods of the villagers. Despite repeated notifications to the Forest Department and Orang National Park officials, no effective measures have been implemented to control the elephant incursions or protect the affected fields, leading to claims of neglect from forest authorities. Distressed residents express urgent concerns over safety and the potential for serious accidents, calling for immediate intervention from authorities to safeguard their community and prevent further destruction.



We will never allow you to do this!: Pijush Hazarika blasts Rakibul Hussain’s statement on evictions

Guwahati, Nov 17: Assam after Congress leader and Dhubri MP Rakibul Hussain made a statement that has shocked many people in the state. Speaking to reporters, Hussain said that once the Congress comes to power in Assam, all eviction drives carried out by the Himanta Biswa Sarma government would stop.

He went on to say that all evicted families would get back their land. Hussain also added that the Congress party would “make arrangements to build houses” for those who were removed during the eviction drives. According to him, this was not just his suggestion but a decision approved by the Congress high command. People are questioning the logic



and responsibility behind such claims. Many are asking how the Congress can promise to return land that was already cleared legally by the government.

Some are also saying that this type of comment may encourage encroachment and could create serious problems for law and order. Reacting strongly, Assam BJP Minister Pijush Hazarika blasted Rakibul

Hussain’s statement. He said that such a promise is irresponsible and cannot be allowed under any circumstances.

Hazarika declared that “As long as HCM Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma is the Chief Minister, no one will even dare attempt this. We are fully determined and will resist with all our strength. We will never allow you to do this!!”

To improve farming infrastructure, an Agricultural Tool Bank was established in Margherita, Assam

Guwahati, Nov 17: In a significant move to enhance rural agricultural infrastructure, an Agricultural Tool Bank was inaugurated at Bhitropowai, Makumkilla, in Margherita, supported by the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives of North Eastern Coalfields (NEC), Coal India Limited (CIL), Margherita. This project aims to provide mechanized support to local farmers, addressing their pressing needs.

During the inauguration, two tractors and essential agricultural implements were formally handed over to farmers from the Bhitropowai Gaon Panchayat. This initiative is anticipated to improve access to modern farm machinery,



increase efficiency during peak farming seasons, and alleviate financial pressures on small and marginal farmers.

K. Mere, the General Manager of NEC, CIL Margherita, emphasized Coal India’s dedication to grassroots development through impactful CSR initiatives, stating that such projects would deliver direct ben-

efits to farmers who often face resource limitations. Gitul Chowluk from the Department of Agriculture, Tinsukia, acknowledged the invaluable efforts of Patkai Green FPC in bolstering farmer-led institutions and reiterated the department’s ongoing support for farmer collectives in the region.

Furthermore, Trinayan

Gogoi, Secretary of WE FOR YOU, reiterated the organization’s mission to enhance rural livelihoods by ensuring that farmers are equipped with the necessary tools, training, and ongoing support for sustainable agricultural practices.

Local farmers and community leaders welcomed this initiative, expressing their gratitude towards CIL for providing crucial assistance that aims to transform agricultural methods in the region.

The event concluded with a collective vote of thanks, highlighting a shared commitment to improve the agricultural landscape of Makumkilla and the surrounding villages within Margherita Co-District.

Nepali MIL textbooks are released by NCHAC CEM Debolal Gorlosa

Hailong, Nov 17: In a proactive measure to enhance linguistic diversity and advocate for inclusive education, Debolal Gorlosa, the Chief Executive Member of the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council (NCHAC), unveiled a collection of Modern Indian Language (MIL) textbooks in Nepali for primary school students during a ceremony at Kasipur LP School in Dima Hasao. This initiative, organized by the Assam Nepali Sahitya Sabha’s Dima Hasao district committee, seeks to introduce the Nepali language as a medium of instruction

for young learners, thereby reinforcing the cultural ties within the local Nepali-speaking community. The event was attended by notable figures, including Donpainon Thaosen, the Education Executive Member, Dhriti Thaosen, the BJP District President, and MAC Projith Hojai, among others.

During his address, CEM Gorlosa commended the Sabha’s effort, describing it as a significant milestone in the preservation and promotion of regional languages. He expressed the council’s commitment to supporting multilingual education in



alignment with the New Education Policy (NEP) framework. In his speech, Thaosen underscored the critical role of mother-tongue-based education in the holistic development of children and encouraged educators to fully utilize the newly launched textbooks in their teaching practices.

Debolal Gorlosa, Chief Executive Member of the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council (NCHAC), has made a considerable advancement in supporting linguistic diversity and inclusive education.

Massive Tirap tribal agitation set for November 25 in Dispur

Guwahati, Nov 17: The Tirap Autonomous District Council Demand Committee (TADCDC) has announced a large-scale agitation in Dispur on November 25, coinciding with the beginning of the Assam Assembly’s Winter Session. The announcement comes after the committee’s apex body held its final discussions on the immediate creation of the proposed Tirap Autonomous District Council (TADC) under Article 244(2) of the Constitution. In an official communication issued on November 15, the TADCDC urged all Aboriginal Tribal Organisations of the Tirap Tribal Belt, along with village chiefs, intellectuals, and socially aware citizens, to unite and participate in the mobilisation. The committee has set a target to gather around 5,000 volunteers in Dispur to press the state government for the formation of the autonomous council. The statement emphasized that the agitation aims to safeguard



the culture, traditions, and future of the tribal communities in the Tirap region, including the transferred areas of Margherita in Tinsukia district. “We appeal to all organisations to join this important cause. A united effort is essential for the protection of our identity and the future of our next generations,” the letter said. To ensure proper coordination and planning, the TADCDC has scheduled a preparatory meeting on November 17 at 1 PM at the Namou Club Conference Hall in Kumchai Singpho Village. The meeting will finalise mobilisation strategies and discuss the logistics of the proposed protest.

Vincent H. Pala claims that the government permits the illicit coal trade

Shillong, Nov 17: Meghalaya Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) president Vincent H Pala has accused those in power of facilitating and profiting from illegal activities in the state’s coal sector, stating that significant corruption has obstructed lawful coal transportation. He highlighted that despite official coal auctions and a high market demand, the government’s oppressive “gunda tax” has deterred even successful bidders from transporting coal, leading to a dysfunctional system. Reports indicate that only 3,563 metric tonnes of coal were sold out of 2,13,567.99 MT auctioned, amounting to just 1.67% of the total.

Pala criticized the government for inconsistent and manipulated coal data,



pointing out that coal auction winners are unable to transport coal due to rampant extortion along highways. He suggested that illegal collections not only diminish government revenue but also lead to the misappropriation of funds by individuals who use them for personal gain, such as bribing officials and building hotels and infrastructure.

He alluded to the mess caused by an

abrupt halt to mining enforced by the National Green Tribunal, emphasizing the lack of a coherent government policy to manage the situation. Pala argued that illegalities have become intertwined with governance, especially in the coal belts of Garo, Jaintia, and Khasi Hills, where economic despair has led to a rise in illegal mining. He expressed doubts regarding the accuracy of data collected by authorities, noting that what is reported as new mining may be inaccurately categorized.

Pala criticized the government’s disorganized management of coal mining and called for a structured policy and rehabilitation plan, suggesting that without proper systems, existing illegal activities will persist.

63rd Walong Day was observed

Itanagar, Nov 17: The closing ceremony of the 63rd Walong Day was held in Arunachal Pradesh to commemorate the bravery and sacrifices of Indian soldiers who fought in the 1962 Battle of Walong. Attendees included senior military officers, government officials, and war veterans. A vibrant celebration the day prior featured a light and sound show, drone displays, and cultural performances, highlighting the region’s artistic heritage while recounting the soldiers’ courage. The main ceremony included wreath laying at the Walong War Memorial and the unveiling of statues dedicated to the battle’s heroes. Local artists and the Indian Army showcased traditional cultural presentations. War veterans and participants were recognized for their contributions. The event reinforced the civil-military bond in the Walong area and underscored themes of pride and remembrance, reflecting on the enduring spirit of the Indian Army. Walong Day is observed annually in mid-November to honor the resilience shown by Indian soldiers against the Chinese Army during the conflict.

21 People Arrested for Supporting the Delhi Terror Attack Online

Guwahati, Nov 17: In a significant operation, Assam Police have arrested 21 individuals accused of expressing sympathy for the perpetrators of a recent terror attack in Delhi, highlighting the state’s strong stance against anti-national sentiments. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma emphasized a zero tolerance policy towards such activities. The arrests occurred across various districts, including Darrang, Goalpara, with detainees allegedly lauding the car bombing near the Red Fort on November 10, which resulted in 12 fatalities and numerous injuries. Sarma reiterated on social media that Assam will not condone any online support for terrorism and confirmed scrutiny of over 100 social media accounts connected to this issue. Investigations revealed that the planning for the attack had been underway since early November, based on findings from recovered diaries and ongoing police inquiries. Authorities continue pursuing leads to identify individuals who may have aided the assailants.

Assam’s chief minister will sign a memorandum of understanding with the British Museum to reintroduce Vrindavani Vastra under loan

Guwahati, Nov 17: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced a significant milestone for the state as it prepares to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the British Museum, enabling the loan of the sacred 16th-century Vrindavani Vastra back to Assam.

The Chief Minister referred to the textile, crafted by Mahapurush Srimanta Sankardev, as a “timeless masterpiece” that encapsulates Assam’s Vaishnavite culture through its intricate craftsmanship. He expressed the government’s



intent to bring this historic artefact home, affirming its rightful place in Assam.

In a social media post,

Sarma highlighted the occasion, describing it as a “big day for Assam and Bharat,” and emphasized the pillars

of governance focused on development and heritage. During his visit to the United Kingdom, he toured London’s waterfront and discussed efforts to modernize the Guwahati riverfront. Sarma also engaged with the Indian diaspora, acknowledging their contributions abroad. This initiative represents a crucial advance in Assam’s efforts to reclaim the Vrindavani Vastra, reaffirming the state government’s dedication to preserving its cultural heritage, a commitment that was announced earlier in August.

Assam prohibits pigs from traveling between districts

Guwahati, Nov 17: The Assam government announced an immediate ban on the inter-district movement of live pigs due to a concerning increase in African Swine Fever (ASF) cases as of November 17. This decision, led by the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department, also includes a prohibition on the sale of pork in seven districts—Dhemaji, Kamrup, Lakhimpur, Sivasagar, Darrang, Jorhat, and Dibrugarh—where infection rates are highest. ASF, which has a 100% mortality rate, has significantly impacted the state’s piggy industry, with 297 epicentres identified across almost all districts, including 84 in October alone, highlighting the rapid spread of the disease. The government’s directive, grounded in the Prevention and Control of Infectious and Contagious Diseases in Animals Act of 2009, aims to enforce strict containment to halt further infection spread. Officials indicated that the ban will remain in effect as long as necessary to combat the threat posed by this lethal disease to Assam’s livestock sector.

BUSINESS

LG Electronics Antique ‘Buy’ despite weak Q2

Mumbai: LG Electronics India Ltd reported a soft performance in the September quarter (Q2) of FY26, as adverse weather conditions and rising input costs weighed on profitability. Revenue for Q2 FY26 stood at Rs 6,170 crore, showing a 1 per cent year-on-year (YoY) increase.Profitability metrics weakened sharply. EBITDA declined 27.5 per cent YoY to Rs 550 crore, while the operating margin contracted 350 basis points (bps) to 8.9 per cent. Antique Stock Broking attributed the margin pressure to higher commodity prices and incremental spending on festive-season go-to-market activities. Profit after tax (PAT) for the quarter stood at Rs 390 crore, down 27 per cent YoY.Gross margin slipped 240 bps to 29.4 per cent, reflecting the cost im-

pact of rising raw material prices. Despite the weaker margin profile, the domestic brokerage noted that the company gained market share across key product categories within its home appliance and air solution segment.

The home appliance and air solution (H&A) division posted revenue of Rs 3,950 crore, broadly unchanged from the previous year. EBIT for the segment stood at Rs 320 crore, marking a 32.5 per cent YoY decline and the segment’s margin fell 400 bps to 8.2 per cent. The home entertainment (HE) segment reported revenue of Rs 2,230 crore, a 3 per cent YoY rise. Although, EBIT came in at Rs 280 crore, down 10 per cent YoY, with segment margins reducing 180 bps to 12.6 per cent.

CIAN Agro signs MoU with AMTZ multibagger stock crashes

New Delhi: CIAN Agro Industries & Infrastructure Ltd on Monday announced that it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Andhra Pradesh Medtech Zone Ltd (AMTZ) to jointly pursue opportunities in the supply and export of medical equipment and devices. On the financial front, CIAN reported a sharp turnaround in the July–September quarter (Q2) of FY26. The company’s consolidated net profit rose to Rs 19 crore from a loss of Rs 3.1 lakh in the same quarter last year. Revenue from operations surged to Rs 426.64 crore, significantly higher than Rs 126.38 crore re-

corded in the year-ago period. AMTZ, an integrated medical devices manufacturing zone, hosts more than 165 advanced facilities that cater to end-to-end medical device production. As part of the MoU, AMTZ has authorised CIAN Agro to represent. CIAN Agro shares slipped another 5 per cent on Monday to hit the lower circuit at Rs 1,302.75. With this fall, the stock has eroded 58.28 per cent of its value over the past month. However, on a year-to-date (YTD) basis, the counter still remains a multibagger, up 156.12 per cent.

India among global largest solar manufacturing bases by 2030

New Delhi: By the end of this decade, India will rank among the world’s largest integrated PV manufacturing bases. Between 2025 and 2029, an estimated 213 GW of new solar capacity will be installed, module manufacturing capacity is expected to surpass 280 GW, and cell capacity is expected to increase from 26 GW in 2025 to approximately 171 GW. EUPD Research, a globally renowned research group, published its latest analysis, “India’s Solar Surge: The Next Looming PV Price Shock?” The study outlines how the sector is entering a new chapter of maturity and global ambition as it shifts from a government-driven buildout toward a more competitive, technology-driven and sustainability-focused era.

The scale of this expansion is creating substantial export opportunities. At a capacity utilisation rate (CUF) of 65%, which represents the breakeven point for most manufacturers, India’s module export potential could reach about 143 GW by 2030.With the United States historically absorbing the majority of shipments but now constrained by tighter trade measures, manufacturers will need to deepen en-



gagement with Europe, the Middle East and Africa to sustain production levels and diversify market exposure. “India’s solar manufacturing surge has delivered scale, and the focus should now be on global competitiveness. Identifying the most resilient markets and their stakeholders, and meeting emerging sustainability and quality requirements will be essential for long-term success,” said Markus A. W. Hoehner, Founder and CEO of EUPD Group.India’s cost position has improved over the past year, with the spot price gap between Indian and Chinese Tunnel oxide passivated contact (TOPCon) modules narrowing from \$9/W to \$5.7/W between early 2024 and October 2025. This shift reflects advances in automation, scale, integration and production efficiency. However, minimum sustainable prices in India remain 14 to 17% higher

than in China and Southeast Asia, underscoring the need for continued technological and operational progress. Several structural advantages are strengthening India’s prospects in markets where sustainability considerations play an increasingly important role, including Europe. Freight costs from India to Europe represent about 5% of module prices compared with 8.7% for shipments from China, and shipping emissions on this route are about 65% lower. These factors support compliance with evolving European industrial and carbon-related requirements.

The proposed EU-India Free Trade Agreement could add further momentum through potential mutual recognition of testing and certification as well as opportunities for joint investment and technology cooperation.

Cryptocurrency adds a new layer of opacity traditional hawala networks



New Delhi: In one case cited by the report, a trader from Ghaziabad funnelled Rs 1.3 crore of crime-linked money in 2024 into a Dubai-based crypto wallet. In another, a Delhi businessman has been charged with moving over Rs 4,000 crore overseas using fabricated invoices and shell companies.

Agencies told the newspaper that more than Rs 1,000 crore generated from cyber fraud has already left India this year through crypto channels. These transactions mirror hawala’s informal structure but use blockchain pathways that make tracing more complex.

Traditional hawala typically connects two regions with a limited chain of intermediaries. With

crypto, however, transfers can pass through many more layers across several jurisdictions. The hybrid model has gained traction in areas such as real estate, betting, gold trade and offshore forex operations. While terror financing and cyber fraud remain high-risk indicators, many flows relate to black money or potential FEMA violations.

India recorded \$118.7 billion in remittances in 2023–24, with outward transfers under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme at \$31.73 billion. Various assessments cited in the report estimate that 20–40 per cent of total remittances may be routed informally through hawala. A growing share of these flows is now believed to move through

crypto mechanisms.

A traditional hawala deal rarely crosses four layers, a senior compliance officer at a leading Indian crypto platform told the newspaper but one can add potentially infinite layers and jurisdictions to fund flow, which in any case is protected by the inherent pseudonymity of blockchain transactions. In one case cited by the report, a trader from Ghaziabad funnelled Rs 1.3 crore of crime-linked money in 2024 into a Dubai-based crypto wallet. In another, a Delhi businessman has been charged with moving over Rs 4,000 crore overseas using fabricated invoices and shell companies.

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A traditional hawala deal rarely crosses four layers, a senior compliance officer at a leading Indian crypto platform told the newspaper but one can add potentially infinite layers and jurisdictions to fund flow, which in any case is protected by the inherent pseudonymity of blockchain transactions. India’s traditional hawala networks have rapidly adapted to cryptocurrencies, enabling illicit funds to move across borders with greater anonymity and speed

Mizoram woman embraces motherhood twice naturally at Manipal Hospital EM Bypass after years of battling kidney failure

Aizawl: In a story that redefines resilience and medical triumph, 37-year-old Lallianpuii from Aizawl, Mizoram, has achieved the extraordinary, she conceived naturally twice, first in 2023 and again in 2025, after undergoing two kidney transplants. Both her high-risk pregnancies were meticulously managed and delivered under the expert care of Dr. Rohit Rungta, Senior Consultant, Nephrology, Manipal Hospital EM Bypass, and Dr. Shilpita Banerjee, Consultant, Obstetrics & Gynaecology at Manipal Hospital EM Bypass, marking an exceptionally rare and inspiring feat in medical science. Lallianpuii was first diagnosed with chronic kidney disease over a decade ago and underwent her first kidney transplant in 2012. After developing

graft rejection, she required a second transplant in 2020. Despite the physical and emotional challenges of lifelong immunosuppressive therapy, she defied all odds by conceiving naturally twice. During her first pregnancy in 2023, Lallianpuii gave birth to a healthy baby girl after a carefully monitored journey that drew admiration from her medical team. Just two years later, in 2025, she once again conceived naturally and delivered a healthy male baby weighing 3.2 kg through cesarean section at 36+6 weeks. While discussing her case, Dr. Rohit Rungta shared, “Pregnancy in a kidney transplant recipient is rare and complex, as patients are on lifelong immunosuppressive drugs. What makes Lallianpuii’s case extraordinary is that

she conceived naturally not once, but twice, after two transplants.” Dr. Shilpita Banerjee, who handled both the pregnancies, shared, “Managing consecutive pregnancies in a renal transplant recipient is rare and requires meticulous coordination.” Expressing her joy, Lallianpuii shared, “After battling kidney failure and going through two transplants, I never imagined becoming a mother, even once. But with Dr. Rungta and Dr. Banerjee’s care and constant support, I have now been blessed with two beautiful children.” Her journey stands as a beacon of hope for women with chronic illnesses, proving that with medical expertise, perseverance, and faith, even the most impossible dreams can come true, not just once, but twice.



Sebi to decline Jane Street’s request for more data in trading ban case

New Delhi: India’s markets regulator will tell a court this week that it sees no reason to release additional data and documents to Jane Street, two sources with direct knowledge of the matter said, after the US firm appealed a securities trading ban.The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) temporarily barred Jane Street in July, alleging the firm used its trading strategies to “manipulate” a key benchmark index of banking stocks, leading to losses for retail investors.

Jane Street denied the allegations and regained access to the Indian market by depositing a penalty amount. It also filed an appeal in India’s Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) in September in which it sought additional data and documents. SEBI’s response, which has yet to be made public, will say that Jane Street’s appeal represents a delaying tactic by the US trading giant, one of the sources told Reuters.

“The documents and data being sought could

also undermine the ongoing investigation,” the second source added. Reuters reported in July that SEBI is examining detailed data of trading by Jane Street across all Indian benchmark indexes from January 2023 to May 2025.SEBI’s ongoing investigation is looking for trading patterns similar to one flagged in the July order, where large positions were taken in constituents of an index in both the cash and futures markets, the second source said

Medanta’s new Northeast helpline strengthens healthcare connectivity in emerging regional markets

Silchar: The Medicity, Gurgaon, repeatedly ranked India’s Best Private Hospital by Newsweek, has launched a dedicated helpline to address critical structural gaps in the Northeast’s healthcare landscape. The helpline 8904395588, active from 8 am to 8 pm, offers multilingual assistance in Assamese, Bengali, Nagamese, English and Hindi, helping patients with doctor selection, appointment bookings, and travel and stay arrangements. Additional languages will be added as part of phased expansion.Industry observers note that the initiative aligns with Medanta’s accelerated regional footprint strategy and responds to persistent challenges—limited tertiary infrastructure, communication barriers, and fragmented referral channels. Chairman and Managing Director Dr. Naresh Trehan said the move reinforces the hospital’s principle that “quality healthcare

should be a right, not a privilege,” particularly for underserved regions.

In Silchar, the helpline is expected to support a rising pool of patients from southern Assam who regularly travel to metros for advanced procedures. With Silchar’s medical demand growing but specialty care remaining limited, analysts say direct, multilingual guidance could reduce uncertainty, streamline planning, and support more organised outbound medical travel.

Medanta Group CEO Pankaj Sahni said the helpline complements the company’s broader Eastern India expansion, including a 400+ bed super-specialty hospital under construction in Guwahati, operational OPD services in Guwahati and Nagaland, and an ongoing health-awareness partnership with IDAN, Government of Nagaland.

UBS increases its price target while becoming cautious Shares of Bharat Forge

New Delhi: Global brokerage UBS has reiterated its sell call on the Bharat Forge stock. The stock had gained over 12% in the past month but according to brokerage, the stock can reverse all of those gains. However, UBS has raised its price target to Rs 1,230 per share, a fall of 11.9% from the current price. This comes on the back of the management commentary after Bharat Forge’s second quarter results. According to the brokerage, the management has indicated that the third quarter is expected to remain subdued, with recovery likely from the fourth quarter. UBS has noted the company’s near-term caution, yet pointed to a potentially stronger outlook from the fourth quarter, with future growth driven by the defence and aerospace



segments.The company’s second quarter results reflected continued weakness in the auto segment, though the defence segment remained robust with healthy margins supported by stringent cost control. Addressing sectoral growth, Bharat Forge disclosed that its aerospace business is projected to expand by 40% in financial year 2026, and similar growth is expected over the next three to four years. The company also reported that exports to North America are under pressure due to challenging demand conditions, which are antic-

ipated to persist through the second half of FY26. Company’s chairman and managing director Baba Kalyani reiterated the strategic focus on the home market, stating, “Our overall strategy is to pivot our business to the India-centric business, because we believe that India is going to be the largest growing market for the next 15–20 years.” Restructuring of the company’s EU steel business is under review, with updates anticipated by the end of the current fiscal. Meanwhile, Bharat Forge shares traded on a flat note at Rs 1385 in the afternoon session today. The day’s high and low were Rs 1,410 and Rs 1,382, respectively. Among Bharat Forge’s major competitors in the sector are Ramkrishna Forgings and MM Forgings.

Ajay Devgn Movie Hits Major Milestone, Collects Over ₹34 Cr in Opening Weekend De De Pyaar De 2 Box Office

Mumbai: De De Pyaar De 2, starring Ajay Devgn and Rakul Preet Singh, has finally hit theatres and is receiving strong reviews. The first installment, released in 2019, performed well at the box office, setting the stage for the sequel's success. While the new film opened to a decent start, it gained significant momentum over the weekend, boosting its overall collection. According to Sacnilk.com, the film earned Rs 13.75 crore on Day 3 (Sunday), an increase from its Day 2 earnings of Rs 12.25 crore. It had opened with Rs 8.75 crore on its first day. With this, the total collection stands at Rs 34.75 crore so far. The film recorded an overall occupancy of 24.94 per cent on Sunday, with evening shows drawing the highest footfall at 38.57 per cent.



This was followed by night shows at 25.94 per cent, afternoon shows at 25.64 per cent, and morning shows at 9.59 per cent. De De Pyaar De 2 picks up Ashish and Ayesha's story exactly where the 2019 film left off. In the sequel, Ashish visits Ayesha's parents

to seek their approval for marriage. Although they initially voice concern over the couple's significant age gap, they are stunned to discover that Ashish is the same age as Ayesha's father. The trailer also introduces a young man closer to Ayesha's age, someone her parents encouraged in hopes of steering her away from Ashish. Anshul Sharma directed De De Pyaar De 2, which features R. Madhavan, Gautami Kapoor, Jaaved Jaferi and Meezaan Jafri in key roles. Rakul Preet Singh was last seen as Antara Khanna in Mere Husband Ki Biwi, starring alongside Bhumi Pednekar and Arjun Kapoor. Ajay Devgn, meanwhile, has had a packed year with three releases: Raid 2, Son of Sardar 2 and Azaad. He also produced the film Maa.

Dhurandhar: Akshaye Khanna is 'The Apex Predator' in First Look

Mumbai: Aditya Dhar's upcoming film 'Dhurandhar', starring Ranveer Singh, Sanjay Dutt, Akshaye Khanna, R Madhavan, Arjun Rampal and others, is one of the most highly anticipated films of the year. As fans eagerly await the release of the film's trailer, the makers have been dropping intriguing character posters. Over the last few weeks, Ranveer Singh unveiled Arjun Rampal, Madhavan and Sanjay Dutt's first look posters from the film. Now, a day before the trailer release, he has finally shared Akshaye Khanna's intense first look poster from Dhurandhar.

On Monday, Ranveer Singh took to his Instagram account to share Akshaye Khanna's first look from Dhurandhar. The actor looks intense and menacing, sporting a blue shirt with blood splattered across his face. In his caption,



Ranveer called Akshaye the 'apex predator', giving a hint about his character, and revealed that the trailer of Dhurandhar will be out tomorrow. "The Apex Predator. #DhurandharTrailer Out Tomorrow at 12:12 PM. In Cinemas 5th December," he wrote. Check it out below! Soon after the poster was unveiled, director Siddharth Anand commented, "Can't wait! Bring it on already," while Zoya Akhtar dropped a heart-eyed and fire emoji. Many fans expressed their excitement for the release of the trailer tomorrow. Meanwhile, last week, the makers dropped Sanjay Dutt's poster. In the poster, he was seen rocking a rugged look in a white shirt with a thick beard and piercing eyes, hinting at a dark and powerful persona. Sharing the image on Instagram, Ranveer Singh described his character and wrote, "The Jinn." Dhurandhar, starring Ranveer Singh, Sanjay Dutt, Arjun Rampal, Akshaye Khanna, R Madhavan and others, is based on true events.

Fans demand Salman's Bigg Boss return

Mumbai: Filmmaker Rohit Shetty hosted the recent Weekend Ka Vaar, replacing Salman Khan since he was out of India due to his Da-Bangg tour, but it looks like the viewers of the show are disappointed with Shetty. During the recent Weekend Ka Vaar, Rohit Shetty made sure that he addressed all the issues, but unlike Salman, he chose a rather humorous approach. However, this gave the housemates an upper hand to argue, which didn't sit well with the viewers.

While Rohit Shetty was speaking to Gaurav Khanna and calling him fake, Amaal Mallik jumped in to make his point while the host was still present. The contestants overlooked Rohit and did not seem to care about his presence, continuing to argue with each other, which has angered social media users who are missing Salman Khan. One wrote, "This WKV was hella boring, watched it skipping parts and at an increased speed. Also, that Amaal charging and triggering at GK wouldn't have happened if it were Salman instead of Rohit Shetty. No one can deny that the respect and the much-needed fear he instills can be matched by nobody." "It's all about the stardom and mega-star status that Salman carries... housemates not only respect him but also fear him. Having hosted the show for 15 years, he commands an authority that prevents anyone from behaving disrespectfully in his presence or towards their fellow housemates," another commented.

Ananya Panday reacts to Himesh Reshammiya's viral 'Tu Meri' song



Mumbai: Ananya Panday and Kartik Aaryan are gearing up for their second collaboration, Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera. Recently, makers also released a motion poster that went viral immediately. Well, on Sunday, Himesh Reshammiya was seen singing the film's title track during his concert in Mumbai. It grabbed Ananya's attention, and she immediately reacted. Taking to her Instagram stories, Ananya Panday shared the video of Himesh Reshammiya and Kartik Aaryan's collab and wrote, "wait this is my new favourite song!!!!".

Kartik also took to his Instagram handle and shared the video with the caption, "legendary." Fans also reacted. Mumbai turned into a vibrant musical hub on November 16 as Himesh Reshammiya headlined the much-anticipated Mynta Glamstream Fest, delivering a power-packed evening brimming with unforgettable performances, cutting-edge fashion moments and roaring fan enthusiasm. Devotees of the iconic composer-singer gathered hours in advance, eager to experience a nostalgia-filled concert that promised to be nothing short of spectacular. The atmosphere hit a new peak when Kartik Aaryan made a surprise appearance during Himesh's live concert. The duo's unexpected collaboration instantly sent waves of excitement through the packed venue. Himesh, known for his warm and animated stage persona, welcomed Kartik with an affectionate hug, a gesture that quickly went viral across social media platforms.

Ahaan Panday begins 60-day intensive training for Ali Abbas Zafar film

Mumbai: Ahaan Panday became the heartthrob and an overnight star soon after the release of his debut film, Saiyaara, alongside Aneet Padda. Now, Ahaan is set for his next project, an action-packed Ali Abbas Zafar film with YRF. According to the latest report, Ahaan Panday will have a working birthday as he undergoes an intense 60-day prep for his next film.

According to a Pinkvilla source, "Ahaan will need to prep in action for over 60 days to perfect the kind of raw action that Ali wants him to do on screen. It is a pure coincidence that the date when he starts action training is his birthday! So, it's no days off for Ahaan as he will have a working birthday this year." The source further added, "Ahaan will have to train in various action disciplines to look like a brute force of nature when he un-



leashes his action avatar in Ali's film. Ali is carefully working with Ahaan to unlock something that people can't even imagine. Ali will be the guide in Ahaan's prep journey, as the director wants to present his star in a jaw-dropping manner. The captain of the ship is known for presenting the biggest superstars in auras that people have loved, and he is excited to work with a young star like Ahaan now and do something insanely exciting. We have to wait for the film's asset to know what he has in mind."

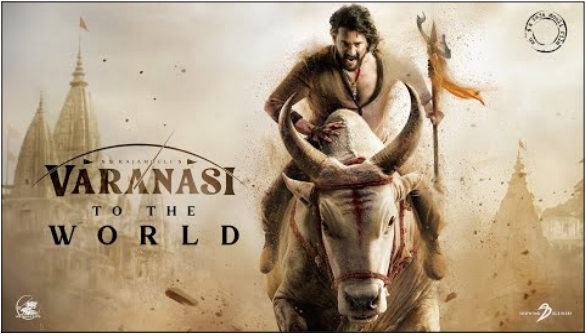
After the massive success of Saiyaara, Ahaan Panday will next be seen in Ali Abbas Zafar's action romance film, alongside Sharvari. Fans have been eagerly waiting for updates about the film. According to a Mid Day report, Bobby Deol has been roped in for the film as well. He will play Ahaan's adversary in the yet-untitled action drama. Ali Abbas Zafar will reportedly be heading to the UK in December for a month-long recce before the shoot kicks off in February 2026. They will be shooting the film in London, Birmingham, Manchester, and Leeds. Reportedly, Ali and Aditya are "confident" about the movie, especially after the success of Saiyaara. Saiyaara is a romantic drama directed by Mohit Suri and produced by Yash Raj Films.

Venkatesh confirmed for Drishyam 3



Hyderabad: Noted producer D Suresh Babu has confirmed that his brother and seasoned star Venkatesh will feature in the third instalment of one of Indian cinema's most successful franchises. "Whenever the third part happens, Venkatesh will be doing it in Telugu," says Suresh Babu. He adds that their long-standing association with producer Antony Perumbavoor has strengthened over the years. Describing Drishyam as an influential and impactful Indian film franchise, he notes that Venkatesh thoroughly enjoyed making the first two parts and felt a close connection to the character. "He earned both critical acclaim and box-office success, which is a rarity," says Suresh Babu. He also praised director Jeethu Joseph, calling him a powerhouse of talent. Starring Malayalam superstar Mohanlal with Meena, Ansiba Hassan, and Esther Anil in lead roles, Drishyam (2013) marked the birth of a franchise that went on to become a nationwide phenomenon. The crime thriller has been remade in six languages, including Sinhala and Mandarin, with each version achieving commercial success. The film is now also set to receive Hollywood and Korean remakes, highlighting its expanding global footprint. "Its brand equity has grown stronger over the years, built on family bonding woven into an engaging investigative narrative," he points out.

Rajamouli: Mahesh Babu's Lord Rama look in Varanasi gave me goosebumps



Hyderabad: SS Rajamouli's fascination for Indian epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata is known. The director too on many occasions earlier expressed interest to make a film on any one of the two classics. And at the title reveal event of his upcoming film Varanasi, Rajamouli shared an interesting experience. Rajamouli shared that he wasn't sure whether Mahesh Babu looks apt for the role of Lord Rama. Instead, he believes that the superstar has more traits that suit Lord Krishna. But before commencing Varanasi film shooting, he did a test shoot with Mahesh for the role of Rama. "Even when I started this film (Vara-

nasi), I never thought that I'd touch a chapter related to Ramayana," the director shares, adding that as he kept developing the story he felt like he was cloud nine. He said, "The first day when I was doing a photo shoot session with Mahesh Babu as Lord Rama, I had goosebumps." The director further revealed that he had kept Mahesh's Lord Rama photo as his mobile wallpaper. He concluded, "But later I deleted it because someone may see it".Rajamouli further shares that working for the film Varanasi has been a liberating experience. The taskmaster recalls shooting for an intense action episode that lasts approximately around 30

minutes. The action episode was shot for 60 days and the unit completed it recently. Rajamouli said, "Shooting for the episode every day was a challenge. There are many sub episodes as part of the main episode, and every sub episode needs to be interesting, engaging and creative. Thankfully, it came nicely. And that sequence will be one of my memorable episodes not only in my career but also in Mahesh's career." Elaborating on Mahesh's screen presence in that episode, the director said, "He looks handsome yet furious; generous yet enraged. Mahesh showed all the navarasas as Lord Rama. I am so lucky to have shot this episode."

Mahima Chaudhry urges early cancer screening after recovery



Mumbai: Mahima Chaudhry recently shared about her cancer journey and urged the importance of early testing and diagnosis for women. Speaking to ANI at the Young Women Breast Cancer Conference 2025, the actress shared how she found out about having cancer. She opened up about being diagnosed with breast cancer in 2022 and trying her best to be strong amidst the life-altering treatment. Mahima shared about having "no clue" that she had cancer. She opened up about going for a regular check-up when she found out about it. She had "no symptoms" and was clueless that the illness was spreading. She noted, "There were no symptoms. I

didn't go in for a breast cancer screening. I just went in for a yearly check-up. I had no clue I had breast cancer. Cancer is something that you can't recognise on your own early. It can only be detected early through tests. So if you keep going in for a yearly check-up, you will be able to

detect it early and seek early treatment..." She also shared that the difference in treating cancer now and when she was diagnosed is huge. The actress opened up about the medicines being cheaper now and pharmaceutical companies supporting cancer patients better.

Rekha wants comeback, asked Vijay Varma for film recommendations



Mumbai: Manish Malhotra and Rekha's friendship is no secret. Her regal and enigmatic image as a fashionista has found a home in the designer's sensibility – one that is all about timelessness and maximalism. Over the years, their professional equation has culminated into a deep friendship that goes beyond red carpets and film sets. Their latest collaboration featuring a magazine shoot caught the attention of fashion connoisseurs, leading many to wonder if Rekha is finally set for her big screen comeback.While she continues to make appearances at award shows and reality shows, she has kept herself away from the world of acting. So, now that Manish has announced Gustaakh Ishq, his debut production venture, does it mean that he'll be able to bring Rekha back to the screens through his

films? Speaking exclusively to News18 Showsha, his lead actor Vijay Varma makes an interesting revelation. And seems like the wait to see Rekha gracing the silver screen may soon come to an end! "In fact, for one of the roles in Gustaakh Ishq, Manish wanted to call Rekha ji. Then Vibhu (Puri, director) told him that it's too small a role for her," Vijay tells us. The character was a cameo appearance and required the veteran star to shoot for less than a day. But the team felt that a role with a small screen time wouldn't do justice to her legacy and body of work. And that's when another actor was brought on board. Vibhu shares, "It's a small but important and consequential role. The character leads Vijay's character to Naseer (Naseeruddin Shah) saab's character. MM kept insisting that we approach Rekha ji for that part. But then we thought that aadhe din ke kaam ke liye, we wouldn't want to call her. She deserves a bigger role. Both MM and Rekha ji are very fond of each other." Manish adds, "I was thinking along the lines of a friendly appearance.

Rajkumar Rao: I left daughter's birth to accept Patralekhaa's award



Mumbai: Rajkumar Rao and Patralekhaa are embracing a beautiful new chapter as they have become proud parents to a baby girl. The joyous news has spread across social media and fans have been showering the duo with heartfelt wishes.

The new father was spotted rushing out of an award event, sparking curiosity among fans and paparazzi alike. A series of viral videos from the Jagran Film Festival show Rajkumar Rao leaving the venue quickly after receiving an award on behalf of his wife, Patralekhaa, who won Best Actress. Despite being pressed for time, the actor stopped briefly to pose for photographers. With pride in his voice and a big smile, Rajkumar held up the trophy and said that the award belonged to Patralekhaa. He then added that he needed

to rush because he had "just come from the hospital," subtly hinting at the reason behind his excitement and hurry. On November 15, Rajkumar and Patralekhaa shared a joint statement announcing the arrival of their daughter. Their baby girl was born on the morning of their fourth wedding anniversary, making the moment even more special. In their heartfelt announcement, they wrote, "We are over the moon. God has blessed us with a baby girl."

They further added, "The greatest blessing God has given us on our 4th wedding anniversary." The news immediately went viral, with fans celebrating the couple's milestone both as partners and as new parents. Rajkumar Rao and Patralekhaa share one of Bollywood's most cherished and grounded love stories. Their connection dates back more than ten years and the two have often spoken fondly about how naturally their relationship blossomed. Raj-

kumar has repeatedly mentioned that he felt Patralekhaa was "the one" the moment he first saw her in an advertisement. Their bond grew deeper when they worked together in Hansal Mehta's 2014 film CityLights, a project that strengthened their personal and professional relationship. In October 2021, Rajkumar proposed to Patralekhaa in a heartfelt and intimate setting. The couple tied the knot a month later, on November 15, 2021, in Chandigarh. Their wedding ceremony was a serene, emotional affair attended only by close family and friends. Patralekhaa wore a stunning red sari adorned with a Bengali verse embroidered onto her veil, while Rajkumar looked elegant in an ivory sherwani. The simplicity and warmth of their wedding won the hearts of fans across the country.

New satellite will see through clouds to ‘weigh’ Earth’s forests

A first-of-its-kind satellite that will be able to see through clouds and leafy canopies to assess how the world’s rainforests are protecting the planet from climate change, has successfully launched. The Biomass satellite, from the European Space Agency, will “weigh” the Earth’s forests, revealing how much planet-warming carbon is being stored within trees and therefore kept out of the atmosphere.Until now the amount of carbon stored by the 1.5 trillion trees in the planet’s rainforests has been impossible to calculate.Led by European aerospace group Airbus, the project hopes to help scientists more accurately model climate change and track rates of deforestation. The satellite launched from ESA’s Kourou station in French Guiana.It has been affectionately named “space brolly” for its giant 12m diameter antenna which will expand outward when the launch process is complete.“We really want to interrogate these forests. We can actually look inside,” Prof John Remedios, director of The National Centre for Earth Observation, which proposed the idea to ESA, said after the launch.He said that it would be a major achievement “to actually know for the first time with high accuracy how much is actually in the Amazon, Congo, Indonesia”.The antenna will use radar with a very long wavelength - allowing it to see deeper inside forests and reveal branches and trunks obscured by the canopy.“Most



radars that we have in space today take wonderful images of icebergs, but when they look at forests they see the tops of the forest, the little twigs, the little leaves, they don’t penetrate down into the forests,” explained Dr Ralph Cordey, head of geosciences at Airbus. “But what we found was that by using a much longer radar wavelength, we could see down into the depths of trees and forests,” he said.The 1.2-tonne satellite will use an approach not dissimilar to that used in a CT scan, and analyse slices through the trees on repeat passes to build up a picture of how much woody material is present.It is this material that can be used as a proxy for the amount of planet-warming carbon dioxide stored.Currently scientists

have been measuring individual trees and trying to extrapolate, but this presents a “huge challenge” said Prof Mat Disney, professor of remote sensing, at University College London.“Our current understanding is really patchy, because it’s really, really difficult to measure,” he said. “Essentially, what we’re talking about is trying to weigh the amount of carbon that’s stored in one and a half trillion trees across the tropics.”Satellites are really the only way you can do that consistently.”On the ground measurements will continue to take place after the satellite is launched to verify the data it is sending back. Despite years of testing, the launch was challenging.“Certain things on the satellite are big, that includes its

big 12-metre, deployable antenna. It’s a bit like deploying an umbrella in space, only a very big one, so we will be looking for that to happen smoothly,” said Dr Cordey.Airbus brought in engineers from the American company L3Harris Technologies to their site in Stevenage to oversee the construction of the antenna-reflector.L3Harris are specialists in these large, unfurlable systems - expertise which is not currently possessed in Europe. The team is hoping to produce the first maps within six months, and will then continue to gather data for the next five years.These annual maps will not only show how much carbon is stored but how much is being lost through deforestation.“The kind of observations that we’ve had for 50 years from [other] satellites like Landsat are affected very heavily by clouds. And in tropical regions, we have clouds a lot of the time, so you may not see a chunk of tropical forest,” said Prof Disney.Another advantage of the longer wavelength of the Biomass satellite is that it can penetrate clouds giving a consistent, comparable view of a forest from one year to the next.It is this outcome which has motivated the scientists who have worked on the project for more than 20 years.“It’s exciting, because it’s going to tell us about how something that we perhaps take for granted,” said Dr Cordey. “Our forests, our trees, how they are contributing to the processes which govern our planet, and in particular, the processes behind climate change which are so important to us today and for the future.”

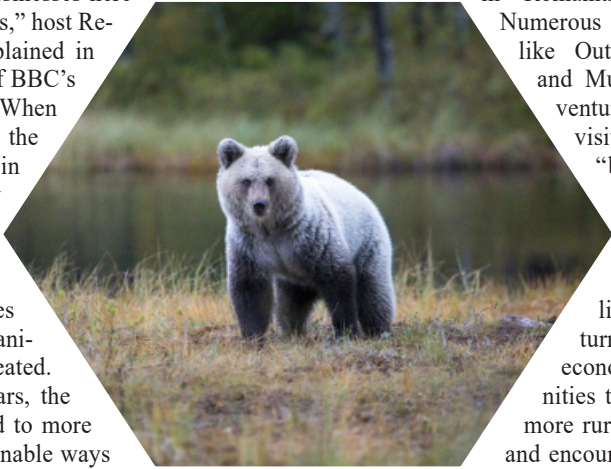
‘Wildfire sent years of work up in flames’

For years, conservationists have been working to bring native trees back to the spectacular Glen Rosa on the Isle of Arran.But a decade of effort was wiped out in days when a wildfire ripped across the valley earlier this month.“It was years of our work going up in flames,” Kate Sampson, the National Trust for Scotland’s senior ranger on Arran, told BBC Scotland News.“We just have to start again.”“We’ve lost 10 years of conservation work and effort but we just have to pick ourselves up.”The blaze began on Thursday 10 April and was not fully extinguished until the following Sunday.By the time the fire was out it had destroyed 27,000 trees as well as killing hundreds of reptiles.Much of the Glen Rosa valley was left looking like a charred and blackened moonscape, with little sign of the years of work from the National Trust for Scotland, which is responsible for the area.According to the trust, thousands of years ago the glen would have been a native woodland but it was left bare by human intervention such as grazing sheep and deer.It has been trying to restore the woodlands by introducing downy birch, sessile oak, hazel, willow, aspen and alder as well as endangered tree species such as Arran whitebeam. Then, two weeks ago, Ms Sampson could do nothing but watch as years of effort were destroyed.She was at the scene within minutes of the blaze starting on grassland at the bottom of the valley.“It was shooting up the hill really fast because of the dry conditions and the wind,” she told BBC Scotland News.“From then on in, it was disaster management.” As well as firefighters, local volunteers worked around the clock to try to keep the wildfire under control.Ms Sampson said: “The moorland was so tinder-dry and we had so much dead bracken and Molinia grass, so it just spread really fast across the moorland.“There wasn’t much we could do to stop it.”In the days after the fire, Ms Sampson and a group of naturalists surveyed the land to assess the potential impact of the wildlife.“It’s quite tough to see, it’s not just the trees that are gone, all the wildlife in the glen has been devastated too,” she said.“We had a group come and we monitored the glen but instead of monitoring live animals we had to record dead bodies.”“We had 72 dead slow worms, 25 dead adders, countless frogs and all dead as we walked the valley.” Ms Sampson ordered a live long worm from the scorched In the two weeks since the only come handful of still alive.“It’s hard to know the long-term impacts but the ecology has been totally disrupted and it’s going to take a long time for that to recover,” she said.Initial investigations have suggested the fire could have started when dry ground was ignited when sun shone through a discarded glass bottle but the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) has not confirmed a cause.



The European nation where bears roam free

Romania is home to the largest population of wild brown bears in Europe outside of Russia, with as many as 13,000 bears living in and around the largely untouched forests of the Carpathian Mountains. But while bear-spotting has long been a tourist attraction in Romania, it historically didn’t involve venturing into the forest.“It wasn’t that long ago that it was commonplace to see a bear kept in a cage outside of businesses here to attract customers,” host Reece Parkinson explained in a recent episode of BBC’s The Travel Show.When Romania joined the European Union in 2007, the country began to adhere to the EU Zoos Directive, which issues guidelines for how captive animals are to be treated. In the past 18 years, the country has turned to more humane and sustainable ways to show off one of Europe’s last truly wild corners and the brown bears who thrive here.Brown bears have roamed the



woods and mountains of Europe for millions of years. However, their numbers dwindled significantly as human civilisation expanded. Today, it’s estimated that roughly 36,000 bears live in the European part of Russia, but new research conducted by Romania’s Forestry Research Institute reveals that the nation’s brown bear population is much higher than previously estimated – a fact that has brought both opportunity and challenges to surrounding communities. On one hand, sustainable bear tourism in Romania is growing. Numerous tour operators like Outdoor Holidays and Much Better Adventures now offer visitors guided “bear-sighting” hiking trips into the forests where brown bears live. This, in turn, also brings economic opportunities to the country’s more rural communities and encourages continued conservation of the animals’ habitat.There’s even a dedicated safe haven: Libearty Bear Sanctuary, nestled in the south-



ern Carpathian Mountains in the town of Zarnesti, is the world’s largest brown bear sanctuary. It not only rescues and provides medical care to formerly captive bears who can’t be released into the wild, but also offers public tours, allowing visitors them to see the bears in a 69-hectare expanse of oak forests and grasslands. “In the last 20 years, Cristina Lapis and

her team [at Libearty Bear Sanctuary] have given a home to over 130 bears here in Transylvania,” said Parkinson.Unfortunately, not everyone is enthusiastic about their furry neighbours. As the bear population flourishes, so do dangerous encounters with humans.Some local farmers, many of whom have lost livestock to the bears, have lobbied for culling Romania’s

brown bear population. Visitors have also had conflicts with the animals, often because of unexpected encounters while hiking the mountains – several of which have turned deadly. Still Lapis, who runs the sanctuary, insists that such encounters are not the norm. “I know hundreds of thousands of cases where people who are used to the forest saw a bear and nothing happened. So [there] must be something special that an accident happened,” said Lapis. “When you go in the forest... it’s important to make noise. If you make noise the animal knows you’re coming and goes away.”Efforts are underway to try to find a happy medium that protects the bears and keeps visitors and livestock as safe as possible. The animals are protected under Romanian law, and reforestation and educational efforts are underway to prevent the bears from entering into human territory to feed and to teach humans what to do when they encounter a bear in the woods. Most life-threatening encounters with bears are due to human error, usually when a human startles a bear or interacts inappropriately with cubs, making mother bears defensive. Therefore, when hiking in bear country – whether in Romania or elsewhere – it’s important to talk loudly or clap your hands to give the animals time to avoid you. If you come upon a bear accidentally, make yourself as large as possible and back away.

Wales facing unrecognisable future warns commissioner

Wales faces an “unrecognisable future” without urgent action to protect the environment, tackle poverty and ill health, the country’s future generations commissioner has said.The unique job was created ten years ago with a law which now forces public bodies to consider the long-term impacts of all decisions.But Derek Walker, who was appointed to the role in 2022, told the BBC he had been “frustrated at progress” as the Wales Audit Office also warned of a failure to achieve “system-wide change”.The Welsh government said it would review the recommendations carefully before responding formally. As part of the role, Wales’ future generations commissioner writes a progress report every five years, to be published a year before a Senedd election.It provides advice on the actions required to protect the Welsh citizens of today as well as “those yet to be born”, Mr Walker explained. While pointing to successes such as Wales’ world-leading recycling rate and investment in sustainable transport, he warned of “significant” challenges.These include climate change and the collapse of nature, with 1 in 6 species currently facing extinction from Wales.There are also 273,000 homes at risk of flooding, a figure projected to double within 100 years, as a result of changing weather patterns and rising sea levels. While there is a Welsh government target for public sector organisations to reach net zero by 2030 - meaning they no longer contribute to global warming - the report found many concerned about whether they could actually achieve it and needing “significant additional resources”. On the other hand, the fact that there was no legally-binding nature recovery target in Wales meant that part of the problem “was not given sufficient priority” by the public sector, the report said. Tougher enforcement of those polluting the environment was also called for, with new legislation needed to give Natural Resources Wales powers to issue civil sanctions, such as stop orders and fines.Other challenges include poverty levels that remained

“unacceptably high”.Nearly one third (29%) of children in Wales live in poverty, while more than 1 in 5 of the population as a whole lived in relative income poverty between 2021-23.The report called on every public body to commit to a plan within two years that sets out how it would offer the voluntary Real Living Wage - so far only 13 out of 56 have done so.The commissioner also said Wales “cannot afford to keep treating preventable diseases without addressing their underlying causes”.NHS Wales spends £1 out of every £10 they have on diabetes, for instance, yet “most Type 2 diabetes cases are preventable” with healthy eating and exercise.Wales currently has the highest percentage of people living with diabetes in the UK, while around one in four adults are obese.Life satisfaction and anxiety levels among adults are worsening, and in 2025 many can expect to spend the last 20 years of their lives in ill health.As the NHS grapples with the population’s acute care needs, funding for preventative measures has been cut.The report described this as “an act of collective self-sabotage”, warning the health service was “increasingly overwhelmed with preventable diseases and accidents”.The commissioner also warned that “culture is in crisis” in Wales, insisting the arts were “not a nice-to-have” but rather vital to people’s well-being.The capacity of the Welsh public sector was described as being “at breaking point” due to rising demand and years of austerity.Wales became the first country in the world to legislate for the rights of citizens not-yet-born, when the Well-being of Future Generations Act was passed in 2015.Ten years on, today’s progress report finds “strong support” across the public sector.From Welsh government ministers down to those running schools and hospitals, they are now all meant to be evaluating the long-term impacts of their decisions and working collaboratively to tackle future threats such as climate change and growing health inequalities.

Fingerprints of city-sized icebergs found off UK coast

Icebergs as large as cities, potentially tens of kilometres wide, once roved the coasts of the UK, according to scientists.Researchers found distinctive scratch marks left by the drifting icebergs as they gouged deep tracks into the North Sea floor more than 18,000 years ago.It’s the first hard evidence that the ice sheet formerly covering Britain and Ireland produced such large bergs.The findings could provide vital clues in understanding how climate change is affecting Antarctica today. The scientists searched for fingerprints of giant icebergs using very detailed 3D seismic data, collected by oil and gas companies or wind turbine projects doing ocean surveys.This is a bit like doing an MRI scan of the sediment layers beneath the present-day seafloor, going back millions of years. The researchers found deep, comb-like grooves, interpreted to have been created by the keels of large icebergs that broke off the British-Irish ice sheet more than 18,000 years ago. Some of these scratch marks are as close as 90 miles (145km) to Scotland’s present-day east coast. “We found [evidence of] these gigantic tabular ice-

bergs, which basically means the shape of a table, with incredibly wide and flat tops,” said James Kirkham, marine geophysicist at the British Antarctic Survey and lead author of the new study, published in the journal Nature Communications.“These have not been seen before and it shows definitively that the UK had ice shelves, because that’s the only way to produce these gigantic tabular icebergs.”Ice shelves are floating platforms of ice where glaciers extend out into the ocean.By analysing the size of the grooves, the scientists estimate that these icebergs could be five to tens of kilometres wide and 50-180m thick, although it’s difficult to be exact.That means they would have covered an area roughly as big as medium-sized UK cities like Norwich or Cambridge. The icebergs are comparable in size to some of the smaller icebergs found off present-day Antarctica, such as blocks that calved from the Larsen B ice

shelf in 2002.Dr Kirkham described seeing such an iceberg when working in Antarctica two years ago.“Those of us working on this paper were standing together, gazing out onto this iceberg and thinking, ‘Wow, that’s probably a similar size iceberg to what was found off the shore of Scotland 18,000 years ago, right in front of us in Antarctica today.’” Hundreds of ice shelves surround about three-quarters of today’s Antarctic ice sheet, helping to hold back its vast glaciers.But if ice shelves are lost, the glaciers behind can speed up, depositing more and more ice into the ocean and raising sea levels worldwide.Exactly how this plays out, though, is “one of the largest sources of uncertainty in our models of sea level rise”, Dr Kirkham told BBC News.That’s partly because scientists have only been able to use satellites for a few decades to observe about 10 cases of ice shelves collapsing - hence the desire to look for examples further back in time.No ice shelf setting is the same, but the researchers say their findings from the former British-Irish ice sheet could help understand how Antarctica might respond to today’s rapidly warming climate.



Ophthalmologist Outlines Every Risk of Eye Infection Contact Lens Wearers Should Be Aware Of

Contact lenses are a convenient alternative to glasses, offering a wider field of vision and more freedom in daily activities. But behind the ease and aesthetics lies a serious health risk if lenses aren't handled with care. Corneal infections, some of which can lead to permanent vision loss, are a growing concern, especially among those who wear lenses for extended periods or neglect hygiene routines. "Contact lenses can disrupt the eye's natural defenses, particularly the tear film that protects the cornea," explains Dr. Neeraj Sanduja, Ophthalmologist and Founder of Viaan Eye and Retina Centre. "Improper use or storage creates an environment where harmful microorganisms can thrive," he adds. Among the most serious complications is microbial keratitis, a painful and potentially blinding infection of the cornea. It can be caused by bacteria, fungi, or amoebas



such as Pseudomonas aeruginosa and Acanthamoeba, all of which flourish in moist, contaminated environments like old lens cases or tap water. "Sleeping in contact lenses or extending their wear time significantly reduces oxygen supply to the cornea," warns Dr. Sanduja. "This makes the eye more vulnerable to infections and microtrauma." Common user errors, like failing to wash hands

before handling lenses, topping off old disinfectant instead of using fresh solution, or skipping regular case replacements, can introduce pathogens directly to the eye. "Lens-related infections often stem from poor hygiene," says Dr. Sanduja. "Even something as simple as swimming or showering with lenses on can expose the eyes to waterborne microorganisms like Acanthamoeba, which are very difficult to treat." Extended wear lenses or long hours of wear, even during the day, can gradually weaken the corneal surface. Some users also blink less when wearing lenses, leading to dryness that weakens the eye's natural barriers. "Microtrauma during insertion or removal and dry eye from reduced blinking further compromise the cornea," notes Dr. Sanduja. "The best way to stay safe is to follow hygiene protocols strictly, avoid water exposure, and never ignore discomfort."

Hepatitis Hiding: Not Just Stomach Ache

Hepatitis, a liver condition affecting over 300 million people, often mimics common digestive issues, making diagnosis difficult. It can be unintentionally neglected until the liver starts to fail. Hepatitis develops when the liver gets inflamed due to viral infections or toxins like alcohol and drugs. It can cause liver cirrhosis, liver failure, or even cancer if left untreated. Diarrhea, chronic fatigue, and weakness are common symptoms of Hepatitis, as the liver plays a crucial role in processing nutrients. Chronic fatigue can impact concentration and memory, making it difficult to perform routine tasks. Dark urine and stool may appear tea-colored, while jaundice is caused by the accumulation of bilirubin, a waste substance the liver typically eliminates. Jaundice indicates a serious symptom of liver stress or damage and requires immediate medical care. Managing hepatitis involves a combination of medical treatment and healthy lifestyle choices. Antiviral medications can help control the virus and prevent complications like cirrhosis or liver cancer. In severe cases, a liver transplant may be necessary, but many individuals can manage their condition effectively through timely medication and supportive care. Simple changes, such as avoiding alcohol, eating a nutritious diet, engaging in regular physical activity, and staying updated with vaccinations, can greatly enhance liver health. Acting early not only improves recovery chances but also helps prevent long-term complications associated with chronic hepatitis.

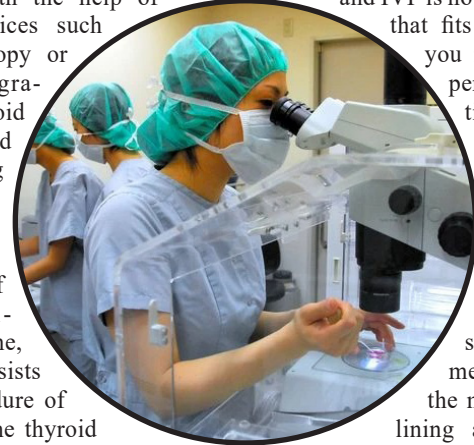


'Knowing Your Numbers' IVF And Miscarriage: Why It Matters

Couples who undergo the procedure of IVF (In Vitro Fertilization) hope that in such a way their family will be expanded, but at the same time there are fears and doubts. Miscarriage is one of the most emotionally traumatic process setbacks. Although a woman could miscarry at any pregnancy, the loss may have deeper emotional effects at IVF since every cycle would be associated with much physical, emotional, and financial resources. Getting to grips with the factors that may cause miscarriage and what might perhaps prevent it involves going deeper into, what many patients do not give much attention to; their numbers. These are levels of hormones, quality of an embryo, chromosomal measurements and measures of uterine health. It is about being informed, it is about being empowered, with regards to saying that you know your numbers. Such hormones as AMH

(Anti-Mullerian Hormone), FSH (Follicle-Stimulation Hormone), LH (Luteinizing Hormone), progesterone, and estradiol are involved mainly in the quality of eggs, the thickness of endometrium, and embryo implantation. The abnormal levels may decrease the success rate or in some cases will cause miscarriage. These interventions are made possible by regular monitoring, which enables fertility specialists to modify protocols and address imbalances before they can progress. Not every embryo is genetic viable. PGT-A could screen out aneuploid embryos and could determine chromosomally normal embryos, which were more likely to result in successful pregnancy. This is of great significance to the women who are past the age of 35 where their chances of several chromosomal abnormalities are very high hence the risk of miscarriage is high too. Implantation and maintenance of pregnancy may be

influenced by such structural problems as fibroids, polyps, or thin endometrium. Information about the thickness of the uterus lining, the flow patterns of the blood in your body, and anatomical defects is important prior to the embryo transfer. These problems can be identified with the help of imaging devices such as hysteroscopy or sonohysterography. Thyroid syndrome and blood clotting disorders are mainly cured with the help of conventional medicine, which consists of the procedure of removal of the thyroid hormones. Recurrent pregnancy loss is known to be caused by thyroid dysfunction, as well



as by such clotting disorders as anti-phospholipid syndrome or thrombophilia not diagnosed previously. These risks can be administered through simple blood tests, and when intervention is made early, the drug can highly benefit the outcome. Each person is distinct and IVF is not a treatment that fits all. Where you monitor the personal reactions made by your body this could be the way you consistently react to the stimulation medication to the manner your lining accumulates so that you as well as your doctor would adjust the protocols to achieve optimal results.

A neurologist discusses how daily routines impair brain health and how screen time contributes to sleep loss

Our always-on lifestyle is taking a hidden toll, not just on our energy levels, but on our brain health. Long days, never-ending digital alerts, and the urge to stay linked the whole time wear the brain down. Over months and years, this can pile up and boost the odds of bigger problems: fading memory, scattered attention, and in the worst cases, strokes or the creeping shadow of dementia. "Today's world moves fast, and our minds are feeling the heat," says Dr. Nasli R. Ichaporla, Director of Neurology at Sahyadri Super Speciality Hospital, Pune. What seems like harmless scrolling or

late-night work sprints can, over time, chip away at cognitive clarity, memory, and even mental resilience. "Even little things, like zoning out at a screen for too long, can lead to sore eyes and a foggy feeling," adds Dr. Ichaporla. "Over months and years, this can pile up and boost the odds of bigger problems." Dr. Ichaporla shares how common habits are endangering brain health and simple changes that can help reverse the damage. Screens are everywhere, from phones and laptops to TVs, and their overuse is affecting how our brains function. Extended exposure leads to screen fatigue, marked by burning



eyes and mental exhaustion. Blue light messes with sleep cycles, while constant notifications disrupt focus, increase stress, and create digital burnout. Multitasking across apps can even lower creativity and lead

to mental sluggishness by day's end. A sedentary lifestyle does more than impact physical fitness. It directly affects cognitive function. Long hours of sitting slow blood circulation, limiting the brain's access to oxy-

gen and nutrients. This can impair memory and even cause shrinkage of the hippocampus, the brain region essential for learning and comprehension, raising the risk of dementia over time. Modern diets, rich in sugar

and processed food, contribute to chronic inflammation that harms brain cells. A lack of nutrients like omega-3s, B vitamins, and antioxidants further weakens brain signalling and memory. The gut-brain connection is also key: poor diet can disrupt gut health, increasing risks of mood disorders and cognitive decline. Chronic stress isn't just emotional, it's physical. Prolonged stress elevates blood pressure, a major risk factor for strokes. Over time, it causes inflammation and arterial damage, increasing the likelihood of blocked or ruptured vessels in the brain, which can lead to either ischemic or hemor-

rhagic strokes. Sleep is vital for memory consolidation and cognitive clarity. But late-night screen use and work habits are cutting into vital rest. Without proper sleep, the brain's ability to file memories and process information is weakened, leaving us forgetful, foggy, and mentally fatigued. Brain health doesn't need drastic measures. Take regular screen breaks using the 20-20-20 rule, move daily, eat whole foods, prioritise sleep, and manage stress mindfully. And don't skip routine health checks – keeping your blood pressure, cholesterol, and sugar levels in check helps protect the brain long-term.

Is It Only a Fever? Identifying Chikungunya's Warning Signs This Monsoon

Once considered a fading threat, chikungunya is making an unsettling return across several parts of India and beyond. The virus, transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes, is no longer confined to seasonal outbreaks or tropical regions. Today, it's being fuelled by a complex mix of climate change, urban overcrowding, and increased human mobility. Doctors and public health experts are raising red flags as cases resurface in both familiar and new locations. "Chikungunya is re-emerging mainly on account of climate change, vector proliferation, urban congestion and human mobility," warns Dr. Subhashree Samantaray, Consultant, Infectious Diseases & Adult Immunisation, Manipal Hospitals, Bhubaneswar. Rising temperatures and erratic rainfall have expanded mosquito habitats, while rapid urbanisation, poor sanitation, and improper water storage in cities create ideal breeding conditions for Aedes mosquitoes – the primary vectors for the virus. Further compounding the issue is the importation of the virus by infected travellers into new areas, especially where competent vectors like Aedes

aegypti and Aedes albopictus are already active. The European CDC has already linked the 2025 resurgence of chikungunya to such international transmissions. The symptoms of chikungunya begin with sudden fever, debilitating joint pain, headache, rash, and fatigue. While fever typically lasts less than a week, the joint pain can linger for weeks or even months, affecting quality of life. "Several patients, particularly older individuals, have symptoms similar to chronic arthritis," says Dr. Samantaray. In rare cases, neurologic or cardiac complications can arise. The likelihood of relapse or recurrence varies based on individual, viral, and environmental factors. "A relapse often occurs in immunocompromised or elderly individuals after apparent recovery," she explains. At the community level, factors such as stagnant water, low herd immunity, and ineffective mosquito control accelerate the spread. What's worrying public health officials is the ease with which chikungunya can rebound. "Unlike some infectious diseases, it can't be shut down between places without sustained efforts," notes Dr.

Samantaray. The solution lies in targeted mosquito control- eliminating breeding sites, using repellents and protective clothing, improving waste and water management, and conducting regular fogging in high-risk areas. Although two vaccines have received regulatory approvals in several countries, they are not yet widely available. "The dosing and recommendations are still being standardised," she adds. With its dense population, irregular monsoons, and inconsistent sanitation, India remains particularly vulnerable. "Storing water during supply gaps often leads to inadvertent breeding grounds," she points out. Unless prevention becomes a sustained public health priority, chikungunya is poised to stay and spread. As chikungunya re-emerges with new intensity, it's clear that controlling the disease will take more than seasonal fogging or reactive public health campaigns. Until vaccines become widely accessible and standardised, prevention remains the most powerful defence – starting at home, in neighbourhoods, and in the way we manage our water, waste, and wellness.



Monsoon Air Fresheners Humidifiers and Nasal Allergies

The monsoon is a welcome break from the scorching summer heat. But for many, it also brings with it a surge in respiratory issues, particularly nasal allergies. While most people attribute this to the weather or increased mould and dust, there are often overlooked indoor culprits: air fresheners and humidifiers. Dr. (Prof) Amit Kumar, Senior Consultant & Director, ENT, Narayana Hospital Gurugram helps us explore how these seemingly harmless household items may be triggering and worsening your allergy symptoms during the monsoon. Monsoon increases the ambient moisture levels (the level of dampness), which creates a perfect environment for mould, dust mites, and mildew to thrive. These allergens are among the most common triggers for allergic rhinitis, an inflammatory condition of the nasal passages. Symptoms include sneezing, nasal congestion, itchy or watery eyes, and postnasal drip. While external weather is not something we can exercise control over, we can maintain good indoor air quality, which can play a huge role in either alleviating allergy symptoms or worsening them. Air fresheners are commonly used during monsoons to mask musty odours caused by dampness. However, they may be doing more harm than good. Most air fresheners be it sprays, plug-ins, or scented candles release volatile organic compounds (VOCs) such as benzene, formaldehyde, and phthalates. These chemicals can irritate the mucous membranes of the nose, eyes, and throat. For individuals already suffering from allergies or asthma, this can amplify their symptoms significantly. Studies have shown that regular exposure to synthetic fragrances can lead to increased sensitivity in the respiratory tract and, in some cases, chronic nasal congestion. Children, the elderly, and individuals with pre-existing respiratory conditions are particularly vulnerable. Tip: If you like using air fresheners, choose natural alternatives like essential oils for a diffuser which you can then use sparingly in well-ventilated spaces in your home. Humidifiers are used to balance air quality when the indoor air becomes too dry. Humidity makes the air warmer and the levels usually increase during the monsoon. Hence using humidifiers can be counterproductive to maintaining ambient air quality. Excess humidity (>50–60 per cent) creates a breeding ground for dust mites and mould spores, both of which are powerful nasal allergens. Poorly maintained humidifiers can harbour bacteria and mould. You can prevent them from being released into the air when the device is turned on, by cleaning the humidifiers regularly. This can lead to a condition known as "humidifier fever" caused from inhaling air contaminated by unclean humidifiers which mimics flu-like symptoms and aggravates allergic rhinitis.





Croatia qualify for 2026 World Cup, Netherlands close

New Delhi: Croatia booked their ticket to the 2026 World Cup in North America with an unconvincing 3-1 win over the in-form Faroe Islands on Friday as the Netherlands all but booked their spot in the finals too. Germany's qualification hopes still rest on their final Group A match on Monday at home to Slovakia despite a Nick Woltemade brace giving them a laboured 2-0 win at Luxembourg. After Geza David Turi had given the Faroes a shock lead, strikes from Josko Gvardiol, Petar Musa and Nikola Vlasic in Rijeka handed 2018 World Cup finalists Croatia their ticket to the finals in Canada, Mexico and the United States. Victory gave Croatia a six point lead over the Czech Republic at the top of Group L with just a single game left to play. "For Croatia, for the fans!" a jubilant Gvardiol posted on his X account. But it was a night when the underdogs struck fear into more illustrious

opponents, although without managing to strike a telling blow. The Faroes, who were on a three-match winning run and still harboured faint hopes of qualification, had the audacity to take the lead against opponents who only needed a draw to progress. Turi picked up the ball just inside the Croatia half and strode forwards unmolested before trying his luck from outside the box and benefiting from a heavy deflection to beat Dominik Livakovic in the Croatia goal on 16 minutes. The lead lasted only seven minutes before Manchester City defender Gvardiol lashed in an equaliser after some hesitant Faroes defending. With the evergreen Luka Modric still pulling the strings in Croatia's midfield at 40 on the occasion of his 193rd cap, the hosts gradually took control. And 12 minutes into the second half, Musa fired in at the near post to settle Croatian nerves.

SA defeated India in the first Test to grab a 1-0 series lead

Mumbai: Despite being bowled out for 159 on day one after choosing to bat first, World Test Championship winners South Africa executed a remarkable comeback to defeat India by 30 runs in the first Test at Eden Gardens on Sunday. Chasing a modest target of 124, South Africa dismissed India for only 93 in 35 overs on Day 3.

The 30-run victory also marked South Africa's first Test win in India after 15 years, as the visitors now hold a 1-0 lead in the two-match series. Off-spinner Simon Harmer starred with figures of 4-21, while the rest of the attack combined to dismantle India's batting order on a challenging pitch, where anything above 100 to chase was always going to be a tough ask. In the chase of 124, India sorely missed Shubman Gill, who was ruled out due to neck surgery and needed hospitalisation. After skipper Temba Bavuma's fighting 55 not out, and his handy 44-run stand with Corbin Bosch, South Africa's lead was extended to 123. Harmer's excellent bowling, along with key wickets from Marco Jansen, Aiden Markram, and Keshav Maharaj, helped the Proteas stun India and leave the crowd silent even as Bosch swept and reverse-swept Kuldeep Yadav for four and six respectively, before his off-stump was rattled by Jasprit Bumrah's inswinger. With steely composure and risk-free batting, Bavuma reached his first half-century of the Test with a streaky four to fine leg. Bavuma also scored his seventh fifty-plus inning in his last 11 Tests, earning warm applause from the crowd. Mohammed Siraj then delivered a decisive burst, rattling Harmer's off-stump with a length ball before trapping Maharaj lbw with a yorker to conclude South Africa's innings. India's chase of 124 began uncertainly as Jansen had Yashasvi Jaiswal poking at a length ball, which took the outside edge to keeper Kyle Verreynne, dismissing the opener for a four-ball duck. In his subsequent over, Jansen's extra bounce surprised KL Rahul, who edged to Verreynne. Facing a disciplined Jansen



and consistent off-spinner Simon Harmer, Jurel and Sundar survived nervous moments before the lunch break. The post-lunch session began with Jurel's fluent flicks and Sundar's patience helping India reduce their target to under 100 runs. It also helped that South Africa was briefly without Jansen, who left the field after lunch but returned quickly. There was a moment of drama when Bosch thought he had Jurel caught behind, only for the review to show the ball had missed the bat. Just as India looked settled, Harmer struck with his innocuous short ball, for which Jurel went on the back foot to pull but miscued it to deep midwicket. His dismissal resulted from South Africa's relentless pressure, which produced only one run from 20 deliveries. The crowd's disappointment was set to grow when South Africa believed they had Rishabh Pant caught at backward short leg off Maharaj.

But Harmer struck again when, on another innocuous delivery, Pant played a firm straight shot that returned to the off-spinner, who took a simple catch to dismiss the stand-in India captain for two. With Sundar displaying patience in his solid defensive batting, Jadeja demonstrated proactiveness by taking a boundary off both Jansen and Harmer.

Sanju Samson: The relentless talent wrestling with expectations and the Kambli paradox

Mumbai: In Indian cricket, Sanju Samson is a symbol of the Vinod Kambli conundrum. Everyone wants him to be successful, but he consistently finds new ways to thwart expectations. Samson's journey is one of unrealized potential and recurrent tragedy, much like Kambli's, who was a great talent endowed with moments of astounding brilliance but whose worldwide career ended tragically.

Samson's T20I journey is a devastating struggle between frustration and optimism. He was hailed as a future stalwart for India's T20 team after emerging as a dynamic IPL star and a shining example of technical skill. However, despite several auditions, he is not the A-list star that was anticipated. Sadly, Samson's role has evolved from a cameo to an extra warming the bench. Over a decade and 51 caps, Samson has delivered electrifying innings—three T20I centuries highlight his potential to dominate bowling attacks. Yet, these dazzling peaks are often followed by disappointing troughs of low scores, including an alarming tendency to get out for ducks. He has registered six ducks in his career, frequently in crucial pressure moments, and even when he is in good



form. His string of dismissals this year suggests pace bowling, even on Indian pitches, often undoes him. In the five-match T-20 series against England, where he got the opportunity to open, Samson aggregated just 51 runs, getting caught every time the ball hurried on to him. Samson's career average in T20I is a paltry 25.51, the lowest among top-order batters with 50-plus matches. But even this number is misleading. In his ten years with the Indian T-20 squad since his debut in 2015, Samson has beaten this average just twice, implying consistent failure resuscitated by

occasional brilliance. For instance, his three hundreds in 2024 lifted his average to around 45. But for these scores, Samson would have averaged below 20. This shows he often fails, within the first 10 balls, hinting at over-eagerness or flaws in technique. The Indian team, brimming with talent, alongside promising newcomers, leaves limited room for tolerance of inconsistency. Thus, despite the many auditions Samson has been granted over a decade, his place in the team has hovered precariously, reflecting a career that, while punctuated by moments of undeniable talent

Sanju Samson's T20I career remains a compelling saga of breathtaking promise and persistent struggle - a journey where repeated opportunities collide with inconsistency and inner battles, shaping what many see as cricket's own Vinod Kambli paradox.

and promise, has rarely justified the repeated faith shown by selectors through sustained, match-winning performances. Samson's exit from Rajasthan Royals, a franchise he captained, points to a deeper problem—inability to cope with pressure.

According to RR owner Manoj Badale, Samson crumbled under the "physical and emotional drain" of leading the franchise. "I think having our worst season in 18 years took a lot out of him," said Badale in a video posted on the official handle of RR. In 2025, Royals finished second from the bottom. Samson struggled with injuries and a dip in form, scoring just one 50 in his nine innings.

If Samson decided to start afresh because of his mental and physical struggles, it is not a great sign. It shows his propensity for opting for the flight option instead of fighting when faced with a challenge.

P Harikrishna Draws First Game With Martinez Alcantara Arjun Erigaisi Draws Levon Aronian at FIDE World Cup

New Delhi: Grandmaster P. Harikrishna started his fifth round with a relatively easy draw against Jose Eduardo Martinez Alcantara, while Arjun Erigaisi signed peace with a solid Levon Aronian at the FIDE World Cup in Goa on Friday. Up against someone who has defied the odds to reach the fifth round, Harikrishna knew that Jose Martinez could be a force to reckon with. However, the immense experience of the Indian came to the fore as he chose the Two Knights variation as Black against the Italian Opening of the Peruvian-Mexican Grandmaster. Martinez had two upset victories in his last two matches - against Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan and Alexey Sarana of Serbia - but this time he did not get much with his white pieces against the Indian, who has himself been in top form here with very clean games thus far.

The middlegame featured routine manoeuvres, with Martinez having an extra pawn at the cost of a fractured pawn structure. His choice of going for a queen exchange in the middlegame was indication enough that he had not found his best rhythm in this round. If there is one thing that does not bother Harikrishna much, it's the endgame. The Indian is known for his expertise in this department, and despite being a pawn down, he had no problems whatsoever in securing a draw in 41 moves. Erigaisi tried his best to put pressure on Aronian with his white pieces, but the Armenian-turned-American was always on his guard.

The players reached a rook-and-pawns endgame



with Arjun having an extra pawn, but the nature of the position suggested that it was always closer to a draw than any serious advantage for him. Aronian, twice winner of the World Cup, did not have many troubles in restoring peace. With just 16 players out of the 206 participants who started the event remaining in the fray, most of the players decided against taking undue risks and chose to wait for the next game. As a result, the all-Russian duel between Andrey Esipenko and Aleksey Grebnev ended in a draw without much ado, while Armenian Gabriel Sargissian also got the same result against Nodirbek Yakubboev of Uzbekistan. In another drawn game among the eight

boards, Alexander Donchenko of Germany signed peace with Liem Le Quang of Vietnam. The USD two-million prize money event will see some heated battles in the rounds to come as the players train their eyes on a place in the top three in order to qualify for the next Candidates Tournament. The Candidates will be played next year to determine the challenger for D. Gukesh in the next World Championship contest. Fabiano Caruana of the United States, Anish Giri of the Netherlands, and Matthias Bluebaum of Germany have already qualified for the event, while Indian R. Praggnanandhaa is also almost assured of a place among the eight qualifying spots.

Jannik Sinner beats rival Carlos Alcaraz to retain ATP Finals title

Mumbai: Jannik Sinner retained the ATP Finals title on Sunday after beating Carlos Alcaraz 7-6 (7/4), 7-5 and ending a turbulent season with victory over his great rival.

Italian Sinner brought the house down. The 24-year-old also bounced back from a three-month ban which chopped out a large chunk of his season despite the World Anti-Doping Agency accepting that the banned substance clostebol last year. Sinner has

Sinner has now won 31 straight matches on indoor hard courts, a run which stretches back to the 2023 championship match at Turin's Inalpi Arena.

now won 31 straight matches on indoor hard courts, a run which stretches back to the 2023 championship match at Turin's Inalpi Arena which he lost to Novak Djokovic. Four more wins on indoor hard courts would draw him



level with Djokovic's tally set between 2012 and 2015 -- the second-highest in the

Open era but some way behind John McEnroe's record of 47.

Bring back Mohammed Shami: Ganguly tells Gautam Gambhir after Kolkata Test loss

Kolkata: Following the defeat to South Africa in Kolkata, former BCCI President and India captain Sourav Ganguly suggested that Gautam Gambhir bring Mohammed Shami back into the Test lineup. After 15 years on Indian soil, the Proteas wrote a remarkable Test victory, but India lost the match by 30 runs. The last time Shami participated in a Test match was in 2023, when he played for India against Australia in the World Test Championship. The pac-

er has since been passed over for the England tour and the series against South Africa and the West Indies. According to chief selector Ajit Agarkar, Shami's conditioning was inadequate and he lacked sufficient game experience. Speaking to Sports Tak, Ganguly said that Gambhir should have faith in the trio of Shami, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj going forward. The current Cricket Association Of Bengal president said that Shami and the spinners can win Tests



for India.

World Boxing Cup Finals

India off to perfect Minakshi, Preeti, Ankush & medals

New Delhi: Reigning world champ Meenakshi Hooda, Preeti Pawar, Ankush Phangal and Narender Bernal powered India to a flawless opening as all four secured medals with dominant wins on the opening day of the World Boxing Cup Finals. With the tournament restricted to only the world's top-eight pugilists in each category, the Indian quartet swept through the opening round to enter the last-four stage, guaranteeing podium finishes at the Shaheed Vijay Singh Pathik Sports Complex. Reigning world champ Meenakshi (48kg) set the tone early, dictating a high-tempo bout against Kazakhstan's Bolat Akbota from the opening bell through clean and accurate punching. Preeti (54kg) followed with an equally electrifying display using quick feet and sharp combos to overwhelm Uzbekistan's Nigina Uktamova — a former youth world champ — in a



fully attacking performance. Later, Ankush (80kg) produced one of the day's most composed performances, soaking up early pressure before shifting gears with clever combination play. Finding openings with precision, he landed telling blows to keep Japan's Go Wakaya at bay en route to a unanimous win. In the 90+kg division, Narender delivered a gritty performance — pushing through a cut above his eye with disciplined defence and powerful body-head combinations to secure a strong 4:1 victory over Ukraine's Andrii Khaletskyi. Later in the

day, Ankush Phangal (80kg) produced one of the day's most composed performances, soaking up early pressure before shifting gears with clever combination play. Finding openings with precision, he landed telling blows to keep Japan's Go Wakaya at bay en route to a unanimous win. In the 90+kg division, Narender delivered a gritty, authoritative performance — pushing through a cut above his eye with disciplined defence and powerful body-head combinations to secure a strong 4:1 victory over Ukraine's Andrii Khaletskyi.