

Assam Congress begins a people-centric campaign to develop its 2026 election manifesto

The Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) is set to launch its new campaign “Raijor Padulit Raijor Congress” (People’s Congress at the People’s Doorstep) on December 6 in Dibrugarh, aiming to reconnect with grassroots communities and gauge public concerns across the politically charged state.

Guwahati, Dec 07: On December 6 in Dibrugarh, the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) will begin its new campaign, “Raijor Padulit Raijor Congress” (People’s Congress at the People’s Doorstep), with the goal of reestablishing ties with local communities and assessing popular issues throughout the politically heated state. Senior leaders and APCC President Gaurav Gogoi will be present for the event, which will take place both in person and online. Bhupen Bora will oversee the campaign efforts, while Debabrata Saikia will coordinate them. A statewide initiative to gather residents’ ambitions using specially made Aspiration Boxes is at the heart of the campaign. Tea garden workers, farmers, women’s collectives, self-help groups (SHGs), students, and rural communities are just a few of the many organizations from which these comments will be collected. Under the direction of Manifesto Committee Chairperson MP Pradyut



Bordoloi, the contributions will be incorporated into the party’s Vision Document and 2026 election manifesto. “People from all castes and communities, from Sadiya to Dhubri, from Barak to Brahmaputra, form one Assamese community,” stated Bordoloi. Srimanta Sankardeva gave us our identity and vision, while Chaulung Sukaphaa united our land. Congress seeks to hear every-

one’s worries and goals and figure out how to make them a reality. We will start interacting with people in Dibrugarh on December 6 in order to rebuild Assam free from fear and corruption and create a manifesto for the future. The “Raijor Padulit Raijor Congress” will be established as a result. In order to symbolically kick off the campaign, community organizations such as tea tribal organizations,

student representatives, SHG members, and farmers’ groups will submit their goals on the spot during the launch. To show group ownership of the project, party employees and top officials will also submit entries. Following the launch, booth-level, mandal-level, and district committees will place Aspiration Boxes across Assam in public spaces such as marketplaces, community halls,

bus stops, playgrounds, tea garden labour lines, and outside schools and colleges. The campaign will start in Dibrugarh and gradually expand to all 35 districts, with more than 3,000 boxes expected to be deployed in phases. Publicity and outreach are being coordinated by MP Rakibul Hussain.

The campaign comes amid growing public dissatisfaction over several unfulfilled promises under the BJP government, in power since 2016. Concerns include recurring floods despite Brahmaputra dredging and reservoir projects, daily wages for tea garden workers still below promised ₹351, unresolved demands for ST status among certain communities, stalled women’s empowerment schemes, high maternal mortality, rising gender-based violence, child trafficking, poor rural health access, man-animal conflicts, and school dropouts. By placing people’s voices at the centre, the APCC hopes to craft a vision that reflects ground realities and signals the party’s commitment to addressing unfulfilled promises ahead of the next Assembly elections. Senior leader Ripun Bora is overseeing the campaign’s management, while Jitendra Singh, AICC General Secretary and In-charge for Assam Pradesh Congress Committee, will guide coordination across organisational levels to ensure its successful execution.

In Brief

Garo cultural heritage

Shillong: In an effort to honor and promote the rich cultural legacy of the area, the North Garo Hills District Administration is preparing to hold the colorful A-we Festival at the Mini Stadium in Resubelpara on December 9 and 10. Officials say that Meghalaya Tourism Minister Timothy D. Shira will open this year’s event, which will be a major boost to regional cultural projects and tourism marketing in North Garo Hills. The two-day festival will feature a diverse lineup of activities, including exhibitions of indigenous products, traditional handicrafts, and departmental showcases. A variety of cultural events—ranging from folk dance performances, traditional games, and music shows—will bring together artists and performers from across the region.

Kuki apex body reaffirms unity

Imphal: Former president Ch. Ajang Khongsai was re-elected to lead the Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM), the highest body of the Kuki tribes in Manipur, following the successful conclusion of the 31st General Assembly-cum-Election at Hengbung Village. The result confirms the community’s dedication to harmony, openness, and democratic governance. The assembly, held in a peaceful and highly participatory atmosphere, drew enthusiastic delegates from all constituent groups, regions, and sections of the Kuki community. Members collectively underscored their resolve to strengthen organisational integrity and advance socio-political welfare.

Woman held with brown sugar

Agartala: A young married woman was arrested on Thursday evening during a special police operation near the Teliamura railway station of Tripura’s Khowai District, after Tripura Police recovered brown sugar valued at over Rs 7 lakh from her possession. The local community has been deeply affected by the occurrence. Police sources said the woman hails from Khayerpur and her parental home is in Suryamaninagar of Agartala under West District.

East Jaintia’s widespread illicit coal mining is confirmed by a Meghalaya High Court panel

Shillong, Dec 07: In addition to confirming that illegal coal mining is still going on in East Jaintia Hills, a one-man committee established by the Meghalaya High Court has harshly criticized the district police for their inability to identify ongoing operations despite earlier accusations supported by video footage. The panel reported in its 34th interim report to the court that, despite the presence of representatives from the district administration, Coal India, and MSTC, no senior police official, including the district SP, attended the meeting on November 20.



The committee examined the state of compliance with earlier rulings from the National Green Tribunal (NGT), the Supreme Court, and the High Court. It looked into a number

of complaints from East and West Jaintia Hills as well as West Khasi Hills about illicit mining and transportation that were received earlier this month. The committee emphasized that sensitive areas would need increased surveillance, especially during the dry season when mining and transportation activities often rise, even though a field inspection at Nartiang found no evidence of coal movement. In another case, a complaint from Nongstoin was dismissed as unsubstantiated after the coal in question was verified to have been legally auctioned and lifted.

Manik Saha encourages Tripura tea to become independent

Agartala, Dec 07: Manik Saha, the chief minister of Tripura, has urged the Tripura Tea Development Corporation (TTDC) to focus on creating jobs and take a proactive approach to becoming an independent organization. The appeal was made during a review meeting with TTDC authorities and top Industries and Commerce Department officials on Thursday at the Civil Secretariat. TTDC Chairman Samir Ranjan Ghosh claims that the company has significantly reduced losses, with the financial deficit falling from ₹5.4 crore in 2023–2024 to ₹2.81 crore in 2024–2025. The chief minister emphasized that in order to boost sales, Tripura tea, which is renowned for its flavor



and scent, must preserve its quality while engaging in aggressive marketing. He also urged officials to promote the “vocal for local” initiative by ensuring higher consumption of Tripura tea within the state.

Assam minister Ranoj Pegu confirms talks on ST status, CCTOA to submit report in one month

Guwahati, Dec 07: In a significant development on the contentious issue of granting Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to six communities in Assam, the Coordination Committee of Tribal Organisations, Assam (CCTOA) held a crucial consultation with Tribal Affairs (Plains) Minister Ranoj Pegu today, December 4 at Janata Bhawan.

The meeting marks the beginning of an intensive month-long dialogue that could influence major policy decisions in the state. Speaking to reporters after the meeting, CCTOA Chief Coordinator Aditya Khakhari and ABSU president Dipen Boro said the organisation had submitted a detailed set of recommendations and objections to the ministerial team. “Minister Ranoj Pegu listened to our concerns seriously and elabo-



rated on the contents of the Group of Ministers (GoM) report. We have sought one month’s time to study the document thoroughly before providing our final feedback,” Khakhari said. He confirmed that a second round of discussions with the GoM will be held after a month, during which CCTOA will

engage Bodo intellectuals, legal experts, former MLAs and MPs to build a comprehensive position on the issue.

“Following the next round of talks, we will also seek meetings with the Chief Minister and the Union Home Minister,” he added. Khakhari reiterated that the organ-

isation’s stand remains unchanged: “The rights, safeguards and opportunities of existing Scheduled Tribe communities must not be diluted under any circumstances.” The CCTOA also raised concerns about the wider implications of the proposed move, particularly in areas such as national-level examinations, higher education admissions, and government recruitment. Today’s meeting follows the Assam Cabinet’s November 30, 2025 decision to examine the GoM report recommending ST status for six additional communities in the state.

Confirming the discussions, Education and Tribal Affairs Minister Dr. Ranoj Pegu later wrote on X that he had explained the GoM’s recommendations and the safeguards proposed for existing ST groups.

The XV FC grants for rural local councils in Mizoram

Aizawl, Dec 07: Under the XV Finance Commission for Rural Local Bodies in Mizoram, the Union Government has released the first installment of Rs 15.20 crores for FY 2025–2026. These funds are related to the fiscal year 2024–2025, according to a study. This release applies to all qualified Village Councils, including those in the state’s Autonomous District Council regions. “XV-FC funds for Rural Local Bodies (RLBs) are recommended by the Indian government through the Ministries of Panchayati Raj and Jal Shakti (Department of Drinking Water and San-



itation), and subsequently awarded by the Ministry of Finance. According to the study, “the allocated grants are recommended and released in two installments in a financial year.”

In Rupahihat, an eviction drive clears 38 bighas of encroached land

Guwahati, Dec 7: Nagaoon district administration, along with police and forest officials, executed a significant eviction operation on Friday targeting 38 bighas of encroached government and forest land in the Rupahihat area. This action follows a prior eviction in the Lutumari area on November 29.

The operation commenced at Bhakatgaon under Khatuwal Mouza, where many settlers had occupied forest land for an extended period. Prior to the eviction, notices were issued to over 100 families, prompting many to vacate voluntarily.

A substantial force of more than 1,000 police personnel, aided by four bulldozers, was deployed to facilitate the operation



smoothly and prevent disturbances. Reports indicate that approximately 80 percent of the encroached land was vacated before the eviction commenced, with the remainder clearing out during the operation itself. Senior officials from the concerned departments

are closely monitoring the eviction process on-site. The overarching goal of this drive is to safeguard government and forest land from future encroachments and to ensure these lands are utilized following official designations and records.

The tourism minister disputes the party’s endorsement of a colleague’s contentious remarks in the Arunachal polls

Itanagar, Dec 07: Ahead of the Panchayat and Municipal elections on December 15, Arunachal Pradesh’s political landscape is still heating up, with Tourism and Education Minister Pasang Dorjee Sona dismissing accusations against him as politically motivated. In an interview with, Sona stated that the accusations were illogical and that he would not speak further because the Supreme Court is currently considering the case. Sona distanced the

party from allegations that Panchayat and Rural Development Minister Ojing Tasing had threatened to deny government initiatives to districts that did not vote for the BJP. According to him, the contentious statement was Tasing’s personal view and should not be taken as the official stance of the BJP. The controversy erupted after Tasing, while campaigning in the Lower Dibang Valley district, reportedly asserted that villages and segments in which BJP candidates



lose would not receive development schemes. The remarks instantly drew

sharp backlash for allegedly using development programmes as leverage

during the election period, when the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) is in force.

NATIONAL

Sanchar Saathi app cannot be disabled or restricted

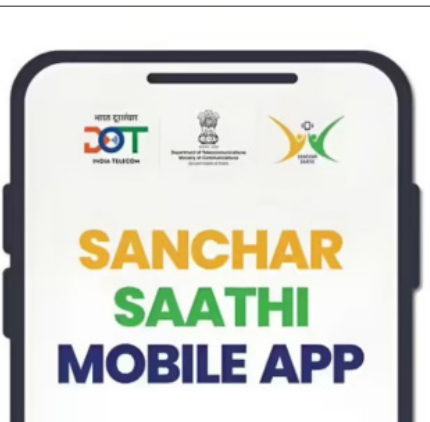
Central directive vs Minister

New Delhi, Dec 07: In an attempt to allay criticism and concerns about monitoring surrounding Sanchar Saathi, Union Telecom Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia stated on Tuesday that users are free to remove the software and that it is an optional mobile application for reporting cyber fraud. On the internet, however, users quickly pointed out that his statement went against a government regulation that stated that the app's features could not be limited or disabled. Social media users questioned whether the official instruction or the minister's statement should be considered, citing Clause 7(b) of a Ministry of Communications circular. Sanchar Saathi, a fraud-reporting app, must be pre-installed on all new handsets manufactured or imported for usage in India within ninety days, according to a directive from the Department of Telecom (DoT) to mobile handset manufacturers and importers. Many people voiced concerns about potential state spying and misuse, which led to a significant backlash.

The Opposition termed it a proof of the administration "pushing India toward dictatorship," accusing it of turning the country into a de facto dictatorship. Following the backlash, the telecom minister said, "If you want to activate it, do so. If you do not want to activate



it, don't. Delete it if you wish. It is entirely your choice." However, internet users were quick to point out that the minister's remarks do not align with the contents of the official circular issued by his ministry. Clause 7(b) of the directive under the Telecommunications (Telecom Cyber Security) Rules, 2024 says, "Ensure that the pre-installed Sanchar Saathi application is readily visible and accessible to the end users at the time of first use or device setup and that its functionalities are not disabled or restricted." Pointing out the contradiction, the Internet Freedom Foundation (IFF), a digital rights advocacy organization, coun-



tered the minister's remarks, stating that the "clarification is incorrect" and that the official directive clearly says Sanchar Saathi cannot be "disabled or restricted". Internet freedom activist and cybersecurity expert Nikhil Pahwa said the minister should be asked whether the directive has been withdrawn or is still in effect. "To news channels tweeting Scindia's video/statement on Sanchar Saathi, please ask him whether the directive is being withdrawn. The directive (see point 7b) says it's mandatory cannot be disabled. no withdrawal yet," he said. Political analyst Raju Parulekar, joining the discussion, tweeted, "This clarification is

incorrect" and "Till the Modi Regime doesn't issue a new Direction, as per Paragraph 10 of this Direction, nothing can be assumed. The Minister's Oral Statement will need a written confirmation." Several others flagged similar concerns on the issue. A user on X, Siddharth KM, while citing the clause, remarked, "The inherent desperation is louder than the clarification". Since the directive was issued on November 28, it has triggered massive pushback from multiple quarters, ranging from political leaders to tech experts. The Congress, joining the chorus of critics, labelled it a "snooping app" and demanded its immediate rollback. The party has also called for the directive to be withdrawn without delay. The Telecommunications Department directive mandated that all manufacturers and importers of mobile handsets intended for use in India must submit compliance reports to the DoT within 120 days from the date of issuance. The communication further warns that failure to comply will invite action under the Telecommunications Act, 2023, the Telecom Cyber Security Rules, 2024 (as amended), and other applicable laws. It also specifies that the directive has come into effect immediately and will remain in force until it is amended or withdrawn by the DoT

RS Chairman violates tradition on Rule 267 notices



New Delhi, Dec 07: The Opposition parties on Tuesday voiced dismay when Rajya Sabha Chairman C.P. Radhakrishnan broke from the practice of reading out names of members and the subjects nominated by them for discussion in the House under a regulation that necessitates suspension of all listed business.

Radhakrishnan simply stated that 21 notices in five distinct themes have been received for discussion under Rule 267. He rejected them, saying

these notices do not fulfil the standards outlined in two orders by his predecessor Jagdeep Dhankhar.

Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge, protested the departure from the practice by the Chairman. "The objectives of notices submitted under Rule 267, subjects and the names of members should be read out.

This has been the tradition. You did not read the subjects and the names. This is not fair," Kharge said.

Centre informs Supreme Court CIC chief selection on December 10 amid RTI vacancies

New Delhi, Dec 07: The Centre informed the Supreme Court on Monday that the high-powered selection panel, headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will meet on December 10 to appoint the new Central Information Commissioner. Besides Modi, the leader of the Opposition and a cabinet minister appointed by the Prime Minister, constituting the selection committee, will pick the next CIC chief, additional solicitor-general K.M. Natraj told a bench of Chief Jus-

tice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi.

The bench recorded the government's senior law officer's submission and deferred the matter by two weeks. Anjali Bhardwaj, Commodore Lokesh Batra (Retd), and Amrita Johri, three RTI activists, filed a joint petition with the court alleging widespread vacancies of various positions in the Central Information Commission (CIC) and the State Information Commissions (SICs), thereby undermining the goal of the Right

to Information Act, 2005.

During the brief hearing, advocates Prashant Bhushan and Rahul Gupta representing the petitioners complained that despite earlier instructions of the court, empty seats in the CIC had not been filled. Bhushan pointed out that the CIC has been without a chief information commissioner since September 14, 2025, and out of the 10 posts of information commissioners, eight are vacant. The backlog of cases at the CIC now stands at 30,134.



According to the counsel, in states too, despite large backlogs, several posts of commissioners are vacant. The Jharkhand and Himachal Pradesh SICs are defunct — with all posts of commissioners, including that of the chief, lying vacant.

The top court also gave directions to all the chief secretaries of the states to file affidavits indicating the number of sanctioned posts in the respective SICs, the number of vacant posts and the backlog of appeals and

•The Supreme Court deferred the matter for two weeks after recording the government's submission.

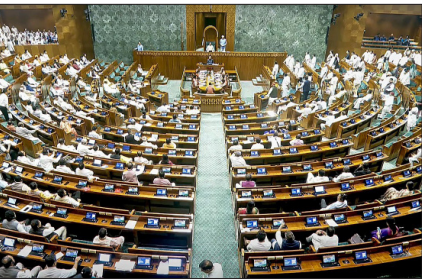
•The current backlog of cases at the CIC is at 30,134, with similar issues in several states, including defunct SICs in Jharkhand and Himachal Pradesh.

•The selection committee includes the Opposition leader and a cabinet minister, as stated by additional solicitor-general K.M. Natraj.

complaints.

Parliament agrees to SIR debate after Vande Mataram as govt, Opposition negotiate deal

New Delhi, Dec 07: Vande Mataram first, SIR next. On Tuesday, the Treasury benches granted the Opposition's request for a parliamentary discussion on the special intensive revision of electoral rolls, but they did so under the more general heading of "electoral reforms" and only after a debate commemorating the 150th anniversary of the national anthem Vande Mataram. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch the discussion on Vande Mataram in the Lok Sabha on Monday, the first working day next week, sources said. The debate on the broader ambit of "electoral reforms" would be taken up the following day on Tuesday, during which Modi is also anticipated to intervene. Both Houses will probably resume regular business on Wednesday after the deal ended the impasse in Parliament. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju announced the decision on X, saying: "During the All Party Meeting Chaired by Hon'ble Speaker Lok Sabha today, it has been decided to hold discussion in Lok Sabha on 150th Anniversary of National Song 'Vande Mataram' from 12 noon on Monday, December 8, and discussion on Election Reforms from 12 noon on Tuesday, December 9." The government managers



won, arguing that the "Opposition cannot dictate terms," despite the opposition's insistence that the SIR topic be discussed first. Trinamool Congress's leader in the Rajya Sabha, Derek O'Brien, said the Opposition had made a "tactical change" to protect the "spirit of Parliamentary democracy".

"A responsible opposition has done all it takes to get Parliament to function. We have been gracious and accommodating, even though we are up against a government who mock Parliament," O'Brien posted on X. He added: "Yes, a discussion on SIR was, and is, a top priority (people are dying). However, in the spirit of parliamentary democracy, we accepted the government's proposal about timing and made a tactical change.

We will expose the government in both

debates. Bring it on."Congress MP Manickam Tagore, however, termed the government agreeing for the SIR debate as a victory of the INDIA bloc. "INDIA wins. Arrogance finally bows to the unity of 240 & 100 MPs. Discussion on electoral reforms scheduled for Dec 9," Tagore said on X, highlighting how the last monsoon session had been virtually washed away as the government did not agree to discuss the SIR. Both sides clinched an agreement as the issue rocked both Houses for the second time on Tuesday. Slogan-shouting Opposition MPs stormed into the Well of the Lok Sabha and forced adjournments, demanding immediate discussion on the SIR. Similar scenes were witnessed in the Rajya Sabha. As the House assembled for the day, leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge said that the SIR is an urgent issue since 28 persons have died because of heavy work pressure on them. "I want the discussion to start now in the interest of democracy, citizens and the country," Kharge said. Parliamentary affairs minister Kiren Rijiju asked the Opposition to stop demanding a timeline. The members of the Congress and the Trinamool Congress entered the Well and started protesting. The House was adjourned till 2pm.

Siddaramaiah says politics not permanent, aide believes everyone must stand aside eventually

Bengaluru, Dec 07:

Following his breakfast meeting with DK Shivakumar yesterday, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah was heard telling Congress MLA Belur Gopalakrishna that he had "never really thought about" such discussions. This was a cryptic statement regarding leadership speculation. "Let it happen, whatever happens. Does my father own politics? Whatever occurs, let it happen. Politics is not permanent," he said, signalling that he was not concerned about ongoing chatter regarding the Chief Minister's position.

A day later, Public Works Department Minister Sathish Jarkiholi repeated the Chief Minister's remark, adding that no office in politics was permanent and



any decision on leadership transfers lay fully with the Congress High Command. He stated, "At some point, we have to step aside someday or another it has to happen," adding that if the party leadership so chooses, changes could occur even during the current term. He emphasized that even multiple tenures did not make anybody indispensable. He declared, "Even if someone becomes Chief Minister ten times, they must step down one day." "Power is not permanent for anyone. Sid-

daramaiah might leave after 30 months or before that as well." "Even during this term it may happen, everything depends on the High Command," he stated. Asked about suggestions of a '3+2' power-sharing mechanism, Jarkiholi replied he had no information. "No one has asked us about it," he added, adding that the party was waiting for guidance. "We won't do anything until the High Command requests it. If not, it is not feasible. On the delay in communication from Delhi, the

minister maintained that the schedule and resolution were known only to senior leaders. "When a resolution will happen, only the High Command and senior leaders know. Let's see how they resolve it," he said. He stated that MLAs and party workers wanted a "good atmosphere" in the party. Dismissing questions about a Dalit Chief Minister, Jarkiholi said there was "no such discussion". "Probably it won't happen this term The Chief Minister issue is finished. Let's not start it again. Please, let's close that chapter," he said. On a possible cabinet reshuffle, he said only senior leaders, the Chief Minister or the Deputy Chief Minister could speak on it. "Whether it will happen or not, we don't know," he said.

Supreme Court questions if the country should give the Rohingya a red carpet

New Delhi, Dec 07: The Supreme Court on Tuesday wondered whether Rohingya "refugees" should be granted a "red carpet welcome" at a time when the country was grappling with its own poverty, as it refrained from issuing any formal notice to the Union government on a plea alleging illegal custodial disappearance of five of them. "You know they are intruders. We have very, very sensitive and porous borders on the Northern side. You know what has been happening in the country. Even if someone has come here illegally, do you just want a red carpet for them?" Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, heading a bench, asked the counsel for the petitioner. The bench, which included Justice Joymalya Bagchi, made the stinging oral observation while dealing with a habeas corpus petition filed by social activist Rita Manchanda,



who, through her counsel, had pleaded that the Rohingya "refugees" were picked up by Delhi police early in May and their whereabouts are not known. "We also have poor people in this country. They are citizens. Are they not entitled to certain privileges and amenities? Why not concentrate on them? It is correct, even if somebody has entered unlawfully, we should not subject them to third degree methods," the bench observed. CJI Kant, however, wondered whether the petitioner was actually representing any person declared as a

"refugee" by the government of India under any official notification. "These people enter through tunnels and then say you (illegal intruders) are entitled to food, shelter, right to education for children etc. Do we want us to stretch the law like this? Asking habeas corpus, etc is a very fanciful ideal!" the CJI remarked. He added: "Where is the order of the Govt of India declaring the Rohingya as refugees? If there is no legal status of a refugee, and somebody is an intruder, and he enters illegally, do we have an obligation to keep that fellow here?"

Sonia Gandhi, Rahul lead protest against new labour codes, accuse Modi govt of destroying environment

New Delhi, Dec 07: While Sonia Gandhi and her son, Rahul, the leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, accused the Narendra Modi government of destroying India's environment by selling out to large corporations, several Opposition members of Parliament staged a protest on Wednesday calling for the removal of the new labor codes.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Sonia and Rahul were among those who demonstrated in Parliament House complex against the new labour regulations. MPs of the Congress, DMK, Trinamool and Left parties were also among those who joined in the protest in front of the Makar Dwar of Parliament.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, the TMC's Dola Sen, the DMK's K. Kanhi-mozhi and A. Raja, the CPM's John Brittas and CPI(ML) Liberation's Sudama Prasad were among those who participated in the protest. They held a large banner which read: "No to Corporate Jungle Raj,



Yes to Labour Justice."

The Congress has alleged that the 29 existing labour-related laws have been re-packaged into the four codes by the Centre which had last month notified the four labour codes, pending since 2020. The four labour codes are the Code of Wages (2019), Industrial Relations Code (2020), Code on Social Security (2020) and Occupational Safe-

ty, Health and Working Conditions Code (2020).

The codes increase working hours in factories from 9 to 12 hours and in shops and establishments from 9 to 10 hours. Trade unions had earlier criticised the codes for what they called unclear provisions on retrenchment and possible discretionary behaviour during the implementation by the central or state

■Key figures in the protest included Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, among others, holding a banner that stated: "No to Corporate Jungle Raj, Yes to Labour Justice."

■The new labor codes extend working hours: from 9 to 12 hours in factories and from 9 to 10 hours in shops and establishments.

governments. The rules raised the ceiling for mandatory government approval for carrying out closures, layoffs or retrenchment.

Other key changes include mandatory appointment letters to workers; universal social security coverage including for gig, platform, contract and migrant workers with PF, ESIC and insurance benefits; statutory minimum wages and timely payment across all sectors; expanded rights and safety for women, including night-shift work and mandatory grievance committees; and free annual health check-ups for workers aged 40 and above.

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

Agartala, Dec 07: The Tripura Directorate of Skill Development has entered into a new partnership with the Land Port Authority of India (LPAI) to expand skill training opportunities for women living in border areas.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on December 4 at the office of the Director of Skill Development. Under this agreement, the existing infrastructure at the Akhaura Integrated Check Post (ICP) will now be used to run dedicated training programmes for women. The facilities include a 30-seater conference hall, a smart classroom, meeting rooms and other training spaces. These will be made available from

the last week of December. Officials said the aim is to conduct simple and practical training courses that can help women gain skills that can support employment or small income activities.

Pradip K., Director of the Skill Development Department, said the initiative will focus mainly on IT-based training and basic accounting courses. He explained that women will be able to learn subjects like Accounting Assistance, GST, and Tally in an organised and accessible setting.

According to him, many women in the border areas do not have access to formal skill training centres, and using the land port infrastructure will help reduce this gap. He said the department



hopes the training will open up new opportunities for women who want to work or start small businesses. Debashis Nandi, Manager of the Tripura Integrated Check Post, said the collaboration

will not stop with Akhaura. Similar facilities at the Satabroom and Srimantapur ICPs will also be used soon for the same purpose. He said this will create a wider network of training hubs across

the state, especially in areas where regular training centres are not available. The plan is to ensure that women in these regions can learn skills that are needed in today's job market.

Biren Singh warns of a “existential crisis” in Manipur

Imphal, Dec 07: N Biren Singh, the former chief minister of Manipur, has issued a dire warning about the “widespread destruction” of the state's forests, calling for swift action to avert an imminent environmental disaster. Singh posted a video clip on X on Wednesday night, claiming it depicts illegal poppy plants and extensive deforestation in the Kolten and Selsi hill ranges of T. Waichong Sub-division in Kangpokpi district. Singh claimed the images clarify the reasons behind Manipur's frequent floods. “All our forests have been destroyed while we are trying to pull each other down. None of our leaders have spoken out against such wide-scale devastation,” the BJP



leader wrote. Singh questioned the inaction of the Forest Department, asking why no steps had been taken against those responsible. He alleged that armed militant groups are suspected to be behind the illegal poppy cultivation and deforestation in the region. “Unless we take concrete action, the state will face an existential crisis,” he warned, calling for urgent intervention to protect Manipur's fragile ecology and prevent further environmental degradation. His remarks come at a time when the state continues to struggle with ethnic tensions, displacement, and governance challenges—issues that observers say have diverted attention from escalating ecological threats.

Gaurav Gogoi notes the NH-37 between Jorhat and Dibrugarh is in deplorable condition

Agartala, Dec 07: During a parliamentary session on December 4, Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi brought up the bad status of National Highway-37 between Jorhat and Dibrugarh in Assam. He brought attention to a widely shared video that showed cars on the highway straining as a result of its declining state. Gogoi showed the footage, which showed cars traveling at incredibly slow rates, during the Lok Sabha's Question Hour.

He noted that although there are toll booths on the highway and vehicles pay between Rs. 100 and Rs.

130 every journey, the road does not adhere to the necessary quality standards. The highways in the video are better than those in Assam. In particular, the NH-37 stretch between Jorhat and Dibrugarh is in poor condition,” he stated. Union Minister Nitin Gadkari responded by admitting the damage and blaming it in part on the intense rains. He stated, “The road was damaged after the rainfall,” and promised to take immediate action.

After an investigation, the issue was resolved. I think everything will be alright. Gogoi's intervention



coincided with more general parliamentary debates, which included opposition lawmakers demonstrating against North India's air pollution.

Assam imposes immediate confiscation under the BNSS & outlaws all extremist and jihadi literature

Guwahati, Dec 07: Using Section 98 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023, the Assam government has announced a broad ban on all types of radical and jihadi publications associated with banned extremist organizations. The Political (A) Department issued a notification on December 3 that forbids the publication, circulation, sale, storage, and digital sharing of any content connected to Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT), Ansar-Al-Islam/pro-AQIS, Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), and similar prohibited organizations. The ruling comes after observations from the Judicial Department and a correspondence from the Law & ruling section of the Assam Police, both of which warned that such literature poses a major threat to India's sovereignty, internal security, communal harmony, and public order. Authorities emphasized that Section 35 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act already classifies these organizations as terrorist organizations. The government pointed out that recent investigations by the

Special Task Force and Assam Police, as well as intelligence reports and cyber-patrolling inputs, show that radical publications are still being circulated and possessed in paper and digital versions. According to reports, the prohibited materials promotes recruitment into extremist networks, offers ideological indoctrination, offers operational guidance, and glorifies violent jihad. The notification also states that such content violates several legal provisions, including Section 299 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (objectionable content) and Section 67 of the Information Technology Act (transmission of objectionable electronic material). It further qualifies as objectionable under Sections 98 and 99 of BNSS, empowering the State to order its immediate forfeiture. The Judicial Department, in its observations, said the continued availability of such propaganda risks radicalising vulnerable youth and aggravating social discord. The government emphasised that promoting enmity between groups, disrupting national integration or insulting

Petitioners highlight massive backlogs and widespread vacancies in the CIC and state information commissions as the court seeks affidavits from chief secretaries on sanctioned posts and pending cases

religious beliefs—offences under Sections 196, 197 and 299 of BNS—necessitate strict preventive action. Accordingly, the State has prohibited the printing, publication, distribution, exhibition, possession and digital storage of any content linked to the aforementioned extremist groups. The ban extends to websites, online portals, social media pages, encrypted messaging groups and digital channels disseminating such ideology. Assam Police, Special Branch, CID, district police chiefs and cybercrime units have been directed to enforce the order rigorously and initiate legal proceedings against violators. The notification comes into effect immediately.

Rajya Sabha returns Manipur GST bill to Lok Sabha for final approval

Imphal, Dec 07: The Rajya Sabha on December 2 returned the Manipur GST Bill to the Lok Sabha, moving the state a step closer to joining the nationwide GST 2.0 reform framework. The Lok Sabha had passed the bill a day earlier. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the legislation would finally extend long-delayed financial benefits to Manipur's businesses and people, strengthening revenue mobilisation in the conflict-affected state. Sitharaman criticised the Opposition for avoiding parliamentary debates relating to Manipur, accusing them of shedding “crocodile tears” while staying absent

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

Tanuska, Dec 07: Assam's young karate player Tanuska Borah has brought honour to the state by winning a gold medal at a major national event. Tanuska achieved this milestone at the All India Inter Zonal Karate Championship 2025, which was held at the Talkatora Indoor Stadium in New Delhi. The event saw the participation of players from different zones of the country, and Tanuska stood out with her strong performance. Tanuska trains at the Shadow Martial Art Academy in Nagaon. According to her coaches, she has been working hard for



several months, balancing her studies and sports practice. Her dedication paid off when she reached the finals of the championship. In the final match, she faced a tough play-

er from Telangana. Tanuska kept her focus throughout the bout and finally defeated the Telangana player to secure the gold medal for Assam. This is not the first time Tanuska

has shown such strong performance. Before the Delhi event, she had also won a gold medal at the North East Zone Karate Championship. In that competition, she managed to beat a player from Arunachal Pradesh and took the top position. Winning two important championships back-to-back has made her one of the most promising young karate players from the region. With these achievements, Tanuska has now become the first official national gold medalist from both Shadow Martial Art Academy and the Kalibor area.

Naga village GLOF survivors remain in shelters as rehabilitation continues

Kohima, Dec 07: More than two years after the devastating glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) of October 2023, residents of Naga village in Mangan district continue to live in temporary shelters as rehabilitation efforts progress. The massive flood, caused by the breach of South Lhonak Lake, destroyed homes, swept away infrastructure and left several people missing. Mangan Deputy Commissioner Anant Jain said the administration has followed established procedures for families of those still missing. When bodies remain



untraced after a prolonged period, families can apply for provisional death certificates, which are issued after verification. Immediately after the disaster, officials relocated affected families to relief centres, where between 100 and 110 people registered. Many continue to stay there as the government works on long-term rehabilitation measures and temporary housing support.

The northeast became India's growth engine thanks to the rail, road, and aviation revolution

Sarbananda Sonowal



Guwahati, Dec 07: On Thursday, December 4, Union Minister for Ports, Shipping, and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal gave Prime Minister Narendra Modi credit for the Northeast's “historic transformation,” claiming that the area has transformed from decades of neglect to a significant driver of India's strategic and economic development.

Sonowal told the media in New Delhi that there has been “an unprecedented shift” in growth, connectivity, and governance during the past ten years. He added that Modi has become “the grand architect of a new and resurgent Northeast” and that “the Northeast, once on the margins of policymaking, has now moved to the heart of national priorities.”

According to Sonowal, massive railway, road, air, and waterway projects have redefined mobility and economic integration, and improved connection

has been essential to the region's re-birth. With the completion of all significant gauge conversion projects, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Manipur, and Mizoram are now part of the broad-gauge network.

Access to isolated areas has been further reinforced by landmark projects including the Bhairabi-Sairang line, which was put into service in June 2025, and the Bogibeel rail-cum-road bridge. There are now four state capital rail link projects in progress: Meghalaya, Manipur, Sikkim, and Nagaland. Established in 2023, the Agartala-Akhaura cross-border train link between Bangladesh and India has become an essential international route. On highways, more than 11,000 km of national and strategic roads have been developed in the last decade, including the Shillong-Nongstoin-Tura corridor and key connectivity routes to Kohima, Itanagar and Gangtok.

Rodent outbreak wipes out 42% of crops

Aizawl, Dec 07: A severe rodent infestation has destroyed nearly 42 per cent of Mizoram's agricultural output this year, affecting more than 5,000 farmers across all 11 districts, according to the state Agriculture Department. The outbreak was triggered by the flowering of Bambusa tulda, locally known as Thingtam, a phenomenon that occurs once every 48 years and causes rodent populations to surge rapidly. Deputy Director (Plant Protection) Lalrindiki said over 1,700 hectares of farmland spanning 180 villages have suffered significant damage. While poisoning drives helped slow the spread, the rodent population began declining only after the harvest period. Mamit district recorded the most extensive losses with nearly 60 per cent crop destruction, impacting more than 2,000 families. Lunglei district saw similar devastation, affecting over 1,000 farmers. Hnahthial district reported the highest proportional loss, with 82.9 per cent crop damage.



BUSINESS

Abakkus Mutual Fund to debut with flexi-cap scheme

New Delhi: The newest entrant in the mutual fund (MF) business, Abakkus MF, is slated to debut its maiden equity scheme — Abakkus FlexiCap Fund — on December 8. Sanjay Doshi, who will oversee the program, stated that it will be administered in line with the asset manager’s MEETS approach, which combines management quality, earnings strength, structural opportunity, and disciplined timing. The launch will signal the re-entry of renowned fund manager Sunil Singhania into the MF market. However, he will not be personally managing the scheme and will mostly operate in an oversight capacity as member of the investment committee. “Abakkus firmly believes in bringing a focused, fundamentals-driven approach to equity investing. As a young AMC backed by decades of experience in managing listed equities, we see a clear opportunity to offer investors a differentiated flexi-cap strategy at a time when India’s growth story is strengthening,” Singhania said.

Angel One share price decreased 6% in trade

New Delhi: Shares of brokerage firm Angel One were under pressure on Wednesday, December 3, after the firm presented its business report for November 2025. The Angel One stock price plummeted 6.04 per cent to post an intraday low of ₹2,644.1 per share on the NSE on Wednesday. That said, the stock is still over 32 per cent higher than its 52-week low of ₹1,941 reached on the NSE earlier this year on March 13. Nonetheless, it is still 24.5% lower than its 52-week peak of ₹3,503.15 a share on the NSE, which was reached on December 9 of last year. The counter’s selling trend persisted on Wednesday even if the stock has somewhat recovered from its intraday lows. Angel One shares were down

4.70 percent from the previous close of ₹2,814.20 on the NSE at 11:13 AM, at ₹2,682. The benchmark Nifty 50, meanwhile, was down 110 points, or 0.42 per cent, at 25,921. A combined total of 1.5 million equity shares of Angel One worth roughly ₹417 crore had changed hands on the NSE and BSE by lunchtime. The southward movement in the stock price came after the brokerage informed the exchanges that in November 2025, its Gross Client Acquisition dropped 11.1 per cent to 0.50 million from 0.56 million reported in October this year. On a year-on-year (Y-o-Y) basis, it has plunged 16.6 per cent from 0.60 million reported in November last year. According to the exchange filing, Angel One’s overall

DOMS Industries increases 6%

New Delhi: DOMS Industries’ shares rose 6.4 per cent in trading, setting an intra-day high at ₹2,666.95 per share. The share price of DOMS Industries was trading at ₹2,653.4 at 9:48 AM, up 5.93%.

In comparison, BSE Sensex was down 0.27 per cent at 84,904.36. With a “Buy” rating and a target price of ₹3,250 per share, Antique Stock Broking has started covering DOMS Industries

stock, indicating a 22.8% increase from current levels.

The brokerage believes DOMS Industries is well prepared to develop at a faster clip in the total consumption area through capacity addition, distribution growth, and strong innovation pipeline. “DOMS has delivered a robust 24 per cent compound annual growth rate (CAGR) in sales over FY20–25. Motilal Oswal expects this healthy trajectory to contin-



ue, modeling revenue growth of around 20–21 per cent over FY25–28, underpinned by new capacity at Umbergaon, scale-up of newer categories, entry into adjacencies, and sustained product innovation,” the brokerage noted.



average daily turnover (ADTO), based on Notional Turnover, decreased 9.8 per cent to ₹53,486 crore from ₹59,294 crore. On an annual basis, however, it has climbed 25.4 per cent Y-o-Y from ₹42,649 crore reported in November last year. The brokerage’s retail turnover market share, based on option premium turnover, declined by 24 basis points to

20.3 per cent in November from 20.5 per cent in October. However, it has increased by 18 basis points from 20.1 per cent in the same month last year. In the F&O segment, it declined 13 basis points to 21.5 per cent from 21.6 per cent, while on a Y-o-Y basis it plunged by 46 basis points, according to the exchange filing submitted by the company.

Bitcoin reclaims \$93k due to increased demand



New Delhi: Following a protracted slide that saw Bitcoin fall below \$84,000, the leading cryptocurrency experienced a robust comeback, regaining the \$93,000 milestone on Wednesday, December 3. The bounce followed the Federal Reserve’s decision to pause its Quantitative Tightening (QT) program and infuse liquidity into the markets, bolstering short-term financial stability. This liquidity increase, paired with diminishing Bitcoin exchange reserves, analysts argued, has created an optimistic atmosphere for upward price momentum. The rebound has been further boosted by fresh institutional interest, with Vanguard lifting its crypto ETF restriction and Bank of America letting its advisers to advocate crypto investment. Bitcoin was trading at \$92,898.49 at the time of writing, up 6.51% from the previous day on a \$680.54 billion trading volume. The currency ranged between \$86,404 and \$93,003 during the session, according to CoinMarketCap. Despite the increase, Bitcoin is still about 26% behind its October 7 peak of \$126,198. Its market capitalization remains at \$1.85 trillion, still below the \$2 trillion threshold, but it keeps its position as the largest cryptocurrency by market size. The recovery driver, according to Riya Sehgal, research analyst at Delta Exchange, was Vanguard’s reversal of its Bitcoin ETF prohibition, which unlocked new demand through BlackRock’s SIBIT, recording over \$1.8 billion in trading activity within two hours. “BTC printed a \$5,000 daily candle — its strongest since May 2025 — lifting the broader crypto market. Total market capitalisation jumped 6.8 per cent to \$3.13 trillion, with BTC dominance rising to 59.1 per cent, signaling capital rotation toward major cryptocurrencies,” Sehgal said. Akshat Siddant, lead quant analyst at Mudrex, added that Bitcoin is staging a strong V-shaped recovery, with bullish momentum returning following the Fed’s liquidity injection of \$13.5 billion through overnight funding. US financial institutions have also increased their use of repo facilities, further supporting risk assets. “Simultaneously, Bitcoin exchange reserves have dropped to multi-year lows of 2.19 million BTC, contributing to buying pressure,” Siddant explained.

Adani Group proposes to invest \$15 bn to enhance passenger capacity at airports

• The expansion ties in with a projected increase in India’s air traffic, with passenger numbers expected to more than double to 300 million annually by 2030

New Delhi: In order to support India’s aviation development as it gets ready to list its airport unit, the Adani Group intends to invest \$15 billion to increase passenger capacity at its airports to 200 million annually over the next five years, according to people familiar with the situation. The idea entails building terminals, taxiways, and a new runway at the Navi Mumbai airport, which is due to open Dec. 25, said the persons, who asked not to be identified as the plans are private. Alongside, the group would conduct capacity expansions at Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Thiruvananthapuram, Lucknow and Guwahati airports, they said. About 70 per cent of capital will come from loans raised over five years, with the rest in equity, the persons added. The development coincides with an anticipated rise in air travel in India, which is predicted to more than double to 300 million passengers per year by 2030. By ramping up capacity to two-thirds of that amount, Adani is positioned itself as a key facilitator of this growth, while bolstering its argument for a planned initial share sale for its airports arm. The expansion — to boost total passenger capacity by more than 60 per cent — excludes 20 million at Navi Mumbai



and 11 million at Guwahati, opening this month, they said. A representative for the Adani Group didn’t immediately respond to an emailed request for comments. The upgrades focus on six airports leased during India’s second privatisation phase in 2020, previously managed by the state-run Airports Authority of India. India began privatising airports in 2006, with GMR Airports Ltd. and GVK Power & Infrastructure Ltd. acquiring New Delhi and Mumbai. Adani later bought GVK’s stake. The government now plans to privatise 11 more airports, bundling loss-making facilities with profitable ones. Adani Airport Holdings Ltd., India’s largest operator by number of airports, and GMR Airports, the largest by passenger traffic, are expected to lead the bidding. India is also building a second airport in Delhi to meet demand, while targeting 400 airports nationwide by 2047, from 160 now.

SC rejects Reliance plea over Rs. 30 lakh fine Not disclosing Jio-FB deal

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday denied Reliance Industries’ appeal against the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) judgment that upheld ₹30 lakh penalty for not disclosing the Reliance Jio arrangement with Facebook, according to a report by Bar and Bench. Reliance and its two compliance officers, Savithri Parekh and K Sethuraman, were fined ₹30 lakh by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) in June 2022 for failing to promptly clarify the Jio-Facebook deal to stock markets. The Prohibition of Insider Trading (PIT) Regulations were allegedly broken by the business and its representatives. Chief

Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi’s bench observed that the matter addressed by Sebi and SAT is essentially a factual matter, raising no significant legal problem for the court to take into consideration. According to Sebi, the ₹43,574-crore sale was mostly complete in March 2020. Reliance publicly announced the investment a few days after the businesses signed legally binding deal contracts in April 2020. However, Reuters, Financial Times, and several other media outlets had already reported that Facebook was close to acquiring a 10 per cent stake in Jio in March. The news had caused Reliance’s shares

to rise sharply. According to Sebi, the fine was to be paid within 45 days. However, Reliance moved SAT to appeal against the fines. In May this year, SAT dismissed Reliance’s plea. The tribunal said that by late February 2020, the deal details were already clear and serious enough to affect the company’s share price. The way the market reacted showed that this information was important. It also said that news leaks do not count as ‘public information’ unless the company itself confirms them. So, once the leak happened, Reliance should have issued a proper clarification. Because it did not, the tribunal agreed with the penalty.



S&P lifts Vedanta’s outlook to ‘positive’ on solid profits

New Delhi: The rating outlook for Vedanta Resources has been raised from “stable” to “positive” by S&P Global Ratings. The rating agency also confirmed the ‘B’ issue rating on the senior unsecured notes of Vedanta Resources, according to a statement. A rapid ramp-up of Vedanta Resources’ recently commissioned facilities in the aluminum industry, which would enhance the company’s cost structure and support its earnings and cash flow, is one of the factors mentioned by S&P. Additionally, it has ob-

served that the holding company’s lower interest costs will help to deleverage the balance sheet. “The positive rating outlook reflects the potential for an upgrade if Vedanta Resources continues its track record of reducing debt at the holding company and operating at a lower consolidated leverage, even as it pursues growth opportunities.” This could materialise as the company improves its cost structure from deeper backward integration. In our base case, we see a path for the company’s FFO-to-debt (funds



from operations) to improve to 30 per cent over the next 12-18 months,” it said in a statement. S&P

has also expressed a positive stance on Vedanta Resources’ earnings growth in the next few fiscals.

Swiggy plans \$10,000 cr share sale next week, three banks shortlisted

Swiggy’s board approved plans on Nov. 7 to raise up to ₹10,000 crore through a qualified institutional placement, subject to shareholder and regulatory approval

New Delhi: According to persons familiar with the situation, Indian food delivery service Swiggy Ltd. is getting ready to raise up to ₹10,000 crore (\$1.1 billion) from institutional investors as early as next week.

The Indian divisions of Citigroup Inc., JPMorgan Chase & Co., and Kotak Mahindra Capital Co. have been shortlisted by the business to oversee the share sale, according to the sources, who asked not to be named due to the confidentiality of the material. On November 7, the board of Swiggy approved plans to finance up to ₹10,000 crore through a qualified institutional placement, pending regulatory



and shareholder clearance. According to the people, the deal’s magnitude and timing could still alter. Swiggy, Citi-

group, JPMorgan, and Kotak Mahindra didn’t immediately respond to requests for comment.

Trent tanks 42% so far in 2025



New Delhi: The price of Trent shares fell 1.5% during Wednesday’s intraday trading, reaching a 52-week low of ₹4,165.05 on the BSE today. Trent shares have dropped 12% in the last month due to a sustained slowdown in revenue growth. In comparison, the BSE Sensex has climbed 1 per cent during the period. The Tata Group company, which has a portfolio of retail ideas, has underperformed the market thus far in 2025, plunging 41% compared to an 8% increase in the benchmark index.

Trent stock is likely to record its first calendar year fall in 12 years. According to BSE data, Trent’s stock price has previously dropped 3.5% in the year 2013. In the last two calendar years -- 2023 and 2024 -- Trent shares more than doubled investors wealth by climbing 126.30 per cent and 132.8 per cent, respectively, data indicates. Currently, Trent is trading at its lowest level since April 2024.

The stock had touched an all-time high of ₹8,345.85 on October 14, 2024. Trent has seen selling pressure on Dalal Street

as the company’s revenue growth has been trailing Street expectations over the past few quarters. In the first half of the financial year 2025-26 (H1FY26), Trent’s consolidated revenue reported an 18.4 per cent year-on-year (Y-o-Y) growth to ₹9,505.3 crore. The topline was hit by factors such as muted demand environment, newer addition of stores and expansion in Tier 2/3 towns, where growth trajectory remains tepid compared to other areas. The company’s gross margins declined by 97 basis points Y-o-Y to 44.2 per cent. However, earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (Ebitda) margins improved 178bps Y-o-Y to 17.4 per cent, while Ebitda grew by 32 per cent Y-o-Y to ₹1,651 crore.

This week’s Motilal Oswal section

Mumbai: India’s industrials, defense and railways ecosystem left the second quarter of FY26 on a largely steady foot, with sectoral indicators suggesting solid execution, stable margins and a strengthening export pipeline.

Revenue visibility across EPC and manufacturing clusters was maintained by activity in transmission, renewables, and defense, even though base ordering from private capital expenditures remained muted. Execution performance throughout the quarter was substantially in line with expectations, driven by mid-teen year-on-year revenue increase. Profitability remained solid, aided by consistent operating margins across most sub-segments. EPC businesses showed a minor softness in margins owing to a poorer revenue mix, while product manufacturers recorded a slight dip as commodity prices began to inch higher. Defence



players experienced temporary contraction due to uneven execution schedules, though full-year margins are expected to recover as delivery cycles normalise and indigenisation strengthens. Order inflows mirrored the first quarter trend, with momentum steady in power transmission and renewables while private capex orders remained muted. Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) players continued to benefit from strong tendering activity, even as timing-related delays persisted in some award processes.

Fans are dubbing Deepika wicked after she made fun of Ranveer’s IFFI appearance

New Delhi: On Sunday, a lot of people took notice of actor Ranveer Singh’s recent Instagram post showcasing his attire for the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) closing ceremony. Singh’s elegant outfit, which included a fitted black bandhgala, matching shoes, and dark sunglasses, immediately won praise from onlookers. After his wife, star Deepika Padukone, added a flirtatious comment that highlighted the couple’s playful chemistry on social media, the post became especially popular.

The actor’s looks at the event captivated Deepika, who commented, “Oh Soo Edible!” with a drooling face emoji. Their followers enthusiastically applauded this exchange, flooding the comment area. Reactions from fans were both amused and admiring. Comments included, “Lucky wifey,” and “just suggesting; look after yourself & Ranveer very well. Both



of you is asset to Indian audience.” The couple’s history has continued to be of interest to their fanbase. Ranveer Singh and Deepika Padukone began dating during the filming of Goliyon Ki Rasleela: Ram Leela, eventually marrying in November 2018 at Lake Como, Italy. In a notable public moment, they unveiled their wedding video five years later on Koffee with Karan, Season 8. The couple

welcomed their daughter, Dua Padukone Singh, in September 2024. Meanwhile, on the professional front, Ranveer Singh is set to appear in Dhurandhar, directed by Aditya Dhar, with a scheduled release on December 5. Deepika Padukone, following her role in Singham Again, will next be seen in the film King, starring alongside Shah Rukh Khan and Suhana Khan.

Zootopia 2 delivers historic \$556 million opening

New Delhi: Over the course of its five-day opening weekend, Zootopia 2, Disney’s most recent animated sequel, earned \$556 million globally. According to Sacnilk, the outcome surpasses prior industry forecasts and solidifies the franchise’s global appeal, setting a new record for the largest opening weekend by any animated picture. Strong attendance in several places helped Zootopia 2’s premiere, with China and North America accounting for a sizable portion of its profits. The movie made \$156 million in North America alone over the prolonged opening frame, which was one of Disney’s strongest beginnings in recent years and a notable comeback for the animation business. Family audiences coming to theaters helped the movie’s domestic performance even more; numerous theaters reported sold-out shows and excited audiences. Disney has been keen to revive the trend of animated film theatrical releases, and this strong turnout indicates a resurgence of that faith.



Siddhant Chaturvedi will portray filmmaker V Shantaram

New Delhi: Actor Siddhant Chaturvedi will play the lead in a biographical film on renowned filmmaker V Shantaram. Today, the film’s makers unveiled the first poster for V Shantaram: The Rebel of India Cinema. Chaturvedi’s first-look poster as V Shantaram was released and circulated on social media. “The Rebel Who Redefined Indian Cinema Is Back Where He Belongs — On the Big Screen,” the headline read. According to actor Siddhant Chaturvedi, accepting the part has been a big responsibility. “One of the biggest honors of my life is playing V Shantaram ji. I became more and more humbled as I read about his story. In addition to being a trailblazer in Indian and international cinema, he was a visionary who persisted in moving forward in spite of challenges. As an actor, entering his universe has been the most life-changing experience for



me. I was really inspired by his story and was reminded of the strength of tenacity. In a statement, he added, “It’s a lesson I hope to hold close, both in my work and in every moment of my life.” Director Abhijeet Shirish Deshpande said Shantaram’s work has shaped many aspects of Indian filmmaking and that bringing his story to the screen is a project he has long wanted to pursue. He added that Chaturvedi fit the part

the team had envisioned. The film will trace Shantaram’s career across major phases of Indian cinema - from the silent era to the introduction of sound and colour. V Shantaram is presented by Rajkamal Entertainment, Camera Take Films and Roaring Rivers Productions, and is produced by Rahul Kiran Shantaram, Subhas Kale and Sarita Ashwin Varde. It is written and directed by Abhijeet Shirish Deshpande.

Samantha Ruth Prabhu, Raj Nidimoru exchange rings at Isha Foundation

New Delhi: After a Redditor let it slip that actor Samantha Ruth Prabhu and filmmaker Raj Nidimoru would be tying the knot on Monday, their teams remained mum when contacted by Hindustan Times. However, come afternoon, Samantha herself made her relationship with Raj Instagram official by posting pictures of them exchanging rings and getting married at the Isha Foundation in Coimbatore. Take a look. Samantha and Raj are now officially married! The actor took to her Instagram on Monday to post pictures from their simple and sweet ceremony, writing 01.12.2025 with white heart emojis. The first picture shows Raj putting a ring on Samantha’s finger while they stand in front of Linga Bhairavi. Another shows her holding him



close while showing off her massive rock. Samantha also shared pictures from the traditional ceremony, which sees them taking aar-



ti and kneeling in front of the idol. The last picture is of a happy Raj and Samantha as they walk through a doorway decorated with

flowers. Raj wore a white kurta with a beige Nehru jacket for the wedding, while Samantha looked resplendent in a red and gold

saree with fresh flowers in her hair. Congratulatory messages poured in for the newly married couple from celebrities and fans alike. Anupama Parameswaran, Nimrat Kaur, Dimple Hayathi and several others left love for them under the pictures. While both Samantha and Raj remained mum about their relationship status, there was speculation that they were dating in early 2024. Many were confused because Raj had never announced his separation from his first wife, Shhyamali De, while Samantha had a public divorce from Naga Chaitanya in 2021. The couple soon began being spotted together in public at events, and there were also rumours of them moving in together, though Samantha’s team had denied the news back then.

Alongside Sunny Deol, Diljit Dosanjh soars as a strong IAF officer

Border 2



New Delhi: Diljit Dosanjh’s first look poster was released by the Border 2 creators on Monday. In the poster, the actor-musician is pictured piloting a fighter jet. Dosanjh’s high-octane billboard depicts him as an Indian Air Force officer in combat, defending the country with unwavering bravery and accuracy. Further information regarding Dosanjh’s persona has not been disclosed.

The spirit of India’s airborne defenders is embodied by Dosanjh’s persona. The film, which also stars Sunny Deol in the lead role, has a

nationalistic heart and an adrenaline-fueled intensity that appears to be captured in the poster. While nothing much about the story has been revealed yet, it is now clear that the audience can expect some aerial action in the story of valour that spans beyond the land. Directed by Anurag Singh, Border 2 brings together a powerful ensemble led by Deol, Medha Rana, Mona Singh and Sonam Bajwa. The film is being produced by Bhushan Kumar, JP Dutta and Nidhi Dutta. It is set to release on January 23, 2026 -- timed for the Republic Day weekend.

Yami Gautam criticizes the culture of extortion and paid negativity ahead of Dhurandhar

New Delhi: Actor Yami Gautam on Thursday shared a long note on social media, urging her colleagues in the film industry to end the culture of creating “hype” through marketing tools. Mentioning Dhurandhar and hinting that the film is becoming a victim of cancel culture, she wrote about the hard work her husband, director Aditya Dhar, put into making the film. Yami denounced paid tactics aiming to generate a bad perception of a film or a star. She wrote on X, “There is something I’ve been wanting to express since really long, I feel today is that day & I must. This so-called practice of paying money under the pretense of promoting a movie in order to build positive “buzz” for it, or else “they” would keep writing unfavorable reviews (even before the movie is published) until you give “them” money, which feels like extortion.” The actor, who recently had a powerful performance in Haq, went on to say that the industry has normalized creating hype or negativity, which is detrimental to the craft of storytelling. “Just be-



cause this arrangement is accessible to anyone—whether to ‘hype’ a film or spread negativity against another actor/a film—is a plague that is going to affect the future of our industry in a big way,” she said. Yami continued, “Unfortunately if anyone feels- it’s harmless & let’s do it be-



cause it’s the new ‘normal’, is mistaken. This monster of a ‘trend’ is eventually going to bite everyone.” The 37-year-old further highlighted the gap between real success and the superficial success celebrated in the industry today. “If truth is exposed about a million things under the garb

of who & what ‘success’ is over the past 5 years esp, unfortunately it’s not going to be a pretty picture for many,” she wrote. She went on to compare this concerning trend to the work culture in the South Indian film industries. “In South no one can dare do such things because the industry

stands united on lot of fronts. I urge our esteemed producers, directors & actors to come together in order to arrest this termite of a culture at this stage itself & discourage it,” she wrote. Referring to her husband’s vision and hard work on Dhurandhar, Yami added, “I say this as a wife of an extremely honest man who has given everything to this film with his undying hard-work, vision & grit along with his team to create something that I know India shall be proud of.” The actor expressed concern for both the industry and the audience, adding that viewers are being influenced in advance about whether they should like a film or not. “I say this as a deeply concerned member of the fraternity who, like many other industry professionals, wishes to see Indian cinema blossom with its best potential & not the other way around,” she said. Yami concluded, “Let’s not kill the joy of film making & presenting it to the world & letting the audience decide what they feel. We need to protect our industry environment.”

Sons don’t have to act, according to Madhuri Dixit



New Delhi: After returning to India after spending years in the US, actor Madhuri Dixit has discussed her family’s increasing online presence and the influence of digital media on their life. In a recent interview, Dixit discussed her husband Shriram Nene’s success as a YouTube health influencer and offered insights on their family’s readiness to take part in public discussions about life experiences and health.

The conversation takes place as Dixit gets ready for the December 19 launch of her new criminal thriller series, Mrs. Deshpande, which is helmed by Nagesh Kukunoor. The ac-

tor highlighted her husband’s accomplishments in producing digital content, particularly in the field of public health. “My spouse is incredibly tech-savvy. He has a number of YouTube videos where he discusses health, offers advice on food and wellness, and discusses ways to prevent various ailments. He performs incredibly well. In the most recent episode of Creator X Creator on SCREEN, Madhuri states, “People want to watch that because they want to learn.” Dixit addressed the balance between maintaining privacy and sharing family experiences online.

Samantha Ruth Prabhu’s “Maa Inti Bangaram” will mark Gulshan Devaiah’s Telugu debut

New Delhi: Alongside Samantha Ruth Prabhu, actor Gulshan Devaiah will make his Telugu film debut in Maa Inti Bangaram, the latter’s production. Nandini Reddy is the director of the movie, which is produced under the name Trala-la Moving Pictures.

After Subham, the movie marks Samantha’s second production endeavor. Devaiah stated that he has been waiting for a chance to work with Samantha and that he is currently working hard to get



ready for the project. The actor described his role as tough but did not reveal any specifics. “I’ve been waiting for a good opportunity to do something with Samantha and MIB came in at the right time it seems. I’m currently neck deep in preparation. I don’t want to say anything about my part or the film but it’s a pretty challenging part to play and I’m hoping I will put in the necessary effort & won’t mess it up. Let’s see,” Devaiah said in a statement.

Suriya cries as he pays last respects to AVM Saravanan

New Delhi: Producer AVM Saravanan died a day after his 86th birthday in the early hours of December 4. Social media is filled with tributes for the legend after news of his death broke. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin visited AVM Studios to pay his last respects, as did celebrities like Rajinikanth and Suriya. Pictures and videos of Suriya visiting AVM Studios in Chennai with his father, veteran actor Sivakumar, have



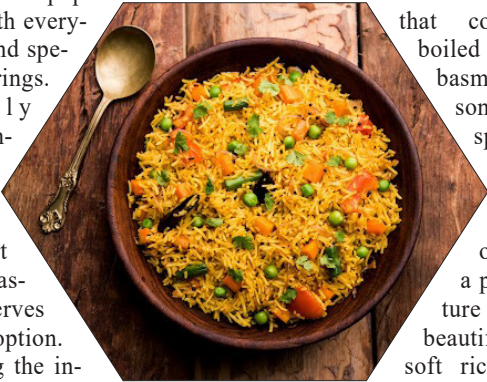
surfaced on social media. The pictures show both Sivakumar and Suriya looking bereaved

at the producer’s death. One picture also shows Suriya crying as he folds his hands

near Saravanan’s body. A video also shows Rajinikanth looking sombre as he pays his respects to Saravanan. After folding hands in front of the producer’s body as a mark of respect, he consoled the family. Talking to the press, the star recollected, “He was a wonderful person. I acted in 9 films under the AVM banner, and all of them were hits. He had immense faith in me and stood by me in my difficult times.”

Six recipes for pulao that are high in protein and ideal for winter

A high protein diet is essential for overall well-being as it significantly contributes to muscle building and repair, prolongs feelings of fullness, and enhances metabolic processes. Adequate protein intake is crucial for maintaining bodily functions and achieving nutritional balance. Pulao is a beloved one-pot dish that is both easy to prepare and suitable for various occasions. It typically consists of rice cooked with an assortment of vegetables, and can also include ingredients such as paneer or chicken, complemented by aromatic spices. The dish's mild spiciness, enticing fragrance, and well-balanced texture contribute to its popularity for both everyday meals and special gatherings. Especially during winter, when the desire for warmth and comfort food increases, pulao serves as an ideal option. By adjusting the ingredients in a standard pulao recipe, one can create a healthy, nutritious meal that is satisfying. There are also high-protein pulao variants available, catering to those



who seek to maintain flavor while prioritizing health, whether one opts for vegetarian or chicken-based recipes. A high protein diet is crucial for overall well-being, as it contributes to muscle building and repair, prolongs satiety, and enhances metabolism. Additionally, protein stabilizes blood sugar levels and bolsters immune function, which helps maintain consistent daily energy levels. Incorporating protein-rich ingredients with rice in dishes like pulao creates a balanced meal that provides essential nutrients while remaining light. This principle underlies the subsequent high protein pulao recipes, each of which merges flavor, comfort, and nutritional value effectively. Chana Pulao is a flavorful dish that combines tender boiled chickpeas with basmati rice, seasoned with aromatic spices, to form a hearty and nutritious recipe. The inclusion of chickpeas adds a pleasant firm texture that contrasts beautifully with the soft rice and caramelized onions, enhancing the overall mouthfeel. This dish is not only delicious but also rich in plant protein and fiber, making it an ideal choice for a satisfying vegetarian meal. For those interested, a detailed recipe can be found through the provided link. Paneer Pulao is a flavorful dish that features lightly sautéed paneer cubes combined with peas, cumin, and an array of fragrant whole spices. The paneer, known for its ability to absorb flavors, contributes a creamy richness to the overall dish, enhancing its taste profile. This pulao is not only delicious but also nutritious,



being high in protein and calcium, which makes it an excellent source of steady energy suitable for both children and adults. The dish can be easily prepared at home by following a recipe, which may be found through an online link. Rajma Pulao is a flavorful dish that combines cooked kidney beans (rajma) with a mild base of tomatoes and onions, served over fluffy rice. The kidney beans contribute a comforting texture and an earthy

flavor, enriching the overall taste of the dish. Notably nutritious, this recipe is high in plant protein and contains slow-digesting carbohydrates, making it an ideal meal for sustained energy and fullness throughout the day. For the full recipe, please click the link provided. Chicken Pulao is a dish made with marinated chicken pieces that are cooked alongside onions, green chillies, and a selection of whole spices until they reach ten-

derness. The process allows the rice to soak up the rich and natural juices from the chicken, creating a dish that is both flavorful and rich in protein. Compared to biryani, which is often heavier, Chicken Pulao is lighter while still being immensely satisfying for regular meals. Malai Chicken Tikka Pulao is a delicious dish that combines creamy yoghurt-marinated chicken tikka with fragrant rice. The use of malai, or cream, provides the dish with a silky and luxurious texture, enhancing the overall flavor profile without overshadowing the spices. This pulao is not only rich in protein but also indulgent, making it an excellent choice for festive meals or family gatherings, where it can serve as a centerpiece. The harmony of flavors and textures offers a fulfilling dining experience, showcasing the richness of Indian cuisine. Soya Pulao is a nutritious dish featuring protein-rich soya chunks that are cooked with an assortment of vegetables and flavored with basic spices such as turmeric, cumin, and garam masala. The soya chunks effectively absorb the surrounding flavors, leading to a rich, meaty taste that is both satisfying and fulfilling. This dish stands out as an economical and nutrient-dense choice, making it perfect for lunch boxes and meal prepping. For those interested, a recipe is available through the provided link.

Paneer Tikka Sandwiches: A Tasty Way to Include This Powerhouse of Protein in Your Meal

Paneer tikka sandwiches combine soft paneer, spices, and toasted bread to create a protein-rich meal that is easy and perfect for lunchboxes, or post-workout. Paneer tikka sandwiches combine the flavours of classic paneer tikka with the comfort of a toasted sandwich. According to FSSAI, paneer is naturally rich in protein and calcium, making it a useful ingredient for building strength and supporting daily energy. Its soft texture absorbs spices easily, which helps create a sandwich that is both satisfying and full of flavour. This makes paneer tikka a favourite for families looking for a tasty and filling meal. Paneer has an interesting place in Indian cooking because it works in both quick snacks and healthy meals. It cooks fast and doesn't need complicated preparation, which makes it perfect for busy days. The spices used in paneer tikka, like turmeric, cumin, and red chilli, add warmth and support digestion without making the dish too heavy. These spices also give the sandwich its familiar taste while keeping it suitable for cooking at home. Paneer tikka sandwiches are also easy to customise. Some people like them spicy, others prefer them mild, and kids enjoy them with simple flavours. According to research, fresh vegetables add crunch and fibre, making the meal more balanced. Grilling or toasting gives the sandwich a crispy outer layer while keeping



the paneer soft inside, which creates a comforting meal. This recipe fits well into your day, whether it is lunch or dinner. Paneer tikka sandwiches offer a simple way to enjoy a protein-packed meal that feels homemade, warm and satisfying without requiring long cooking time. **How To Make A Crispy And Delicious Paneer Tikka Sandwich** This classic paneer tikka sandwich is a flavourful, protein-rich option made with spiced paneer, veggies, and toasted bread. It fits well into lunchboxes or is perfect for a quick dinner. The smoky, tangy marinade gives every bite a delicious street-style taste without complicated cooking. **Instructions** Take a bowl and add curd, spices, lemon juice, salt, and oil. Mix it well. Add paneer cubes and marinate for 10–15 minutes. In a non-stick pan and sauté marinated paneer with onions and capsicum for 3–4 minutes. Place the mixture on bread slices. Toast in a tawa or sandwich maker until golden. Slice and serve warm.

Ten warming desi-style Mushroom recipes



Mushrooms stand out as a versatile ingredient, particularly in winter meals, where they add warmth and an earthy charm. They are naturally umami, allowing them to absorb spices and create rich, satisfying dishes without excessive fats. Various traditional Indian dishes utilize mushrooms, showcasing their adaptability—from light and aromatic options to indulgent gravies. Notable dishes include: Mushroom Do Pyaza Combines caramelised onions with juicy mushrooms, creating a comforting, mildly warm dish ideal for cold evenings, best enjoyed with chapatis. Achari Mushroom: Features tangy pickling spices that enhance the mushrooms' flavor, providing boldness and complexity perfect for winter cravings. Mushroom Masala: A hearty curry where mushrooms soak up a classic masala base, offering a warming experience that pairs excellently with rice. Mushroom and Peas: Wholesome with earthy mushrooms and fresh bursts from peas, this dish, when paired with rice, is comforting for relaxed winter meals. Pepper Mushroom Fry: A pepper-forward dish with a delightful texture, enhanced by aromatic curry leaves, making it suitable as a side or a standalone snack. Kadai Mushroom: Features smoky flavors from freshly ground spices, elevated by crisp capsicum, making even simple meals feel special. Veg Tikka: Juicy and smoky on the outside, this dish offers a satisfying bite perfect as a light appetizer on cold nights. Mushroom Biryani: A fragrant rice dish that offers depth and customizable spice levels, ensuring a warming yet lightweight meal. Creamy Mushroom Curry: Rich and slow-cooked, this dish, with its subtle smokiness, is best enjoyed with naan or parathas. Desi Mushroom Soup: Nourishing and soothing, this soup presents an earthy body without heaviness, offering a velvety texture ideal for chilly evenings. These dishes showcase mushrooms as a winter-friendly, versatile choice that can enhance everyday meals, providing comfort and satisfaction during the colder months.

Creamy Spinach Garlic Pasta Recipe, Winter Comfort Food Without Compromising Nutrition

Creamy spinach garlic pasta brings together winter comfort and everyday nutrition in one easy recipe. Spinach blends smoothly into pasta once it cooks down, giving the dish a richer texture and a mild flavour that's easy for everyone to enjoy. It's an easy way to slip in extra iron and fibre without changing the original taste of the pasta bowl. The garlic brings a gentle heat and a savoury depth, making the whole dish feel complete. Research shows that spinach is known for its ability to support energy and immunity, especially during winter when the body needs extra nutrients. According to a study, its natural iron helps reduce tiredness, while the fibre supports digestion and keeps the stomach comfortable after meals. These benefits blend naturally into the dish, since spinach wilts into the sauce and spreads evenly. A 2020 study says that garlic brings its own advantages by supporting digestion and adding a



soothing aroma that feels right for cold days. The creamy sauce keeps the pasta comforting but not too heavy. Milk or a light cream base gives it richness, and the spinach balances it with freshness. This combination makes the dish more nutritious than the regular creamy pasta while still keeping the soft, smooth texture that people enjoy. Kids often accept spinach more easily in pasta because the greens blend into the sauce. This recipe also fits well into a busy routine because it uses simple ingredients and cooks quickly. **Step-By-Step Guide To Make Creamy Spinach Garlic Pasta**

Creamy spinach garlic pasta is a warm, nutritious winter meal that combines soft spinach, mild garlic and a light creamy sauce. Spinach adds iron and fibre, while garlic supports digestion. The dish cooks quickly and works well for both kids and adults without compromising on flavour or nutrition. **Instructions** Cook pasta in salted water until soft but firm. Drain and keep aside. Heat butter or oil in a pan and sauté chopped garlic for 30–40 seconds. Add spinach and cook until it softens and reduces in volume. Sprinkle flour over the spinach and mix. Slowly add milk while stirring to avoid lumps. Add salt, black pepper, and cheese if using. Cook until the sauce thickens slightly. Add boiled pasta to the sauce and mix well so everything coats evenly. Cook for 1 more minute and serve warm.

Baking Gluten-Free Vanilla Cake At Home



release of energy. The batter mixes easily and does not require strong kneading, which simplifies the process for first-time bakers. This guide is designed to help you focus on simple steps, mixing, pouring, and baking with confidence. **A Beginner's Guide to Making Gluten-Free Vanilla Cake** This gluten-free vanilla cake is soft, light, and easy to bake, even as a first attempt. A simple mix of gluten-free flour, vanilla, and basic pantry ingredients gives you a reliable cake for any event.

Instructions Take a 7-8 inch round cake tin and grease it, line the base with parchment paper. Preheat to 180°C. In a bowl, add gluten-free flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Whisk to combine and remove lumps. In another bowl, whisk eggs and sugar until slightly thick and pale. Add oil, milk, and vanilla extract. Mix well. Add the dry mixture to the wet mixture in two parts, gently folding until smooth. Add lemon juice or vinegar last and mix lightly. Pour the batter into the prepared tin and tap gently to release air bubbles. Bake at 180°C for 25–30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean. Let the cake cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then transfer to a rack. Slice once fully cool. You can dust with powdered sugar or add a simple vanilla glaze if you like.

Winter Self-Care Guide: Sleep, Stress, And Small Joys That Improve Mental Health

Winter has a way of slowing life down with shorter days, quieter routines, and a natural pull towards rest. But this shift, while comforting for some, can also stir stress, disrupt routines, and create a sense of emotional heaviness. Mental wellness during winter isn't just about staying warm; it's about tuning into the season with intention, rediscovering slower pleasures, and understanding how sleep, lifestyle, and mindful grounding can shape our inner world. "If we can resonate with the outer world and weather, our inner world can feel more acceptable and more at peace with our life," says Ruchir Sodhani, Mental Health and Wellness Counsellor at CK Birla Hospitals, Jaipur. His approach emphasises grounding the mind through sensory experiences, such as feeling the winter sun to enjoying warm drinks and comforting seasonal foods.

According to Sodhani, modern life keeps us 'living in our heads,'

often fuelling repetitive thoughts and emotional spirals. He explains, "Stressors can lead us to endlessly mull over our concerns and we find it difficult to break free." Engaging the physical body through small pleasures, he says, breaks the spell and reinstates our agency to choose self-care and comfort. This mindful shift is especially important in winter, when the body naturally slows down and benefits from grounding routines like warm meals, gentle morning sunlight, or even simply noticing the cold on your skin. For many people, winter brings a surprising advantage: better sleep. "Sleep is generally more comfortable in the winter because of the lack of humidity and scorching temperatures," says Dr. Sabyasachi Mitra, Consultant Psychiatrist, CMRI Kolkata. Quality sleep, he notes, rejuvenates the nervous system and directly reduces stress levels. However, he cautions that holiday travel, common during winter, can interfere with this natural rhythm. Jet lag, unfamiliar sleeping environ-



ments, and increased alcohol intake can all offset sleep quality. "Alcohol disrupts the structure of sleep," he adds, highlighting the illusion of sleeping

easily despite poorer rest. Lifestyle patterns also shift during winter celebrations. With family gatherings, picnics, and festive meals, routines often get derailed. Dr. Mitra points out that food, alcohol, and smoking tend to increase during the season.

He says, "While indulgence is natural, the onus lies on you to restructure it as soon as the vacation time is over." Winter can support mental wellness if approached with awareness. Sensory grounding, mindful indulgence,

restorative sleep, and a quick return to healthy habits form a powerful combination. By embracing the season's slower pace while staying attentive to lifestyle shifts, you can turn winter into a period of emotional clarity, resilience, and renewal.

Samantha Ruth Prabhu Marries Raj Nidimoru, Her Pure Katan Silk Arpita Mehta Banarasi Saree Breaks the Internet

Samantha Ruth Prabhu has married filmmaker Raj Nidimoru in a serene, intimate ceremony held on Monday morning. Surrounded only by their closest friends and family, the couple exchanged vows and sealed their union. Samantha later confirmed the news by sharing the first official wedding pictures on Instagram, instantly sending social media into a frenzy. For her big day, Samantha Ruth Prabhu chose a breathtaking Arpita Mehta creation. She wore a hand-woven Banarasi saree crafted in pure Katan satin silk, painstakingly made by a single master artisan. The saree features delicate powder-zari buttis scattered across the drape, a Nishi-woven border, and refined beige-gold zardozi detailing using saadi taar, cutt dana, kasab, and tiny mirrors. The overall effect is a subtle yet opulent finish that elevates her traditional bridal ensemble.

She paired the saree with classic gold jewellery, creating an elegant, timeless look. Raj Nidimoru complemented her perfectly in a white



kurta and beige Nehru jacket. One photo also shows the couple exchanging rings, with Samantha proudly flashing her striking oversized wedding ring. A Hindustan Times report confirmed that the ceremony took place early in the morning at the Ling Bhairavi Temple inside the Isha Yoga Centre. The wedding was intentionally low-key, with just around 30 guests present.

Celebrities quickly flooded Sa-

mantha's post with warm messages. Hansika Motwani wrote, "Congratulations," Dia Mirza added heartfelt wishes with red heart emojis, and Upasana Konidela shared her excitement, saying, "Congratulations, soooooo happy — best best news ever." Rumours linking Samantha and Raj began surfacing in early 2024. Over the months, glimpses of their bond appeared on Samantha's social media, fueling speculation. Their profession-

al partnership also played a role in their closeness, Samantha starred in The Family Man 2 (2021), directed by Raj & DK, followed by Citadel: Honey Bunny (2024). The duo will collaborate once again for Rakt Brahmand: The Bloody Kingdom. Samantha was previously married to actor Naga Chaitanya, with the pair parting ways after four years of marriage. He later married actor Sobhita Dhulipala. Raj Nidimoru was earlier married to Shhyamali De, with reports of their divorce emerging in 2022. Samantha's comments section was filled with love from fans, many of whom had been eagerly awaiting confirmation of the wedding. One fan wrote, "Wishing you joy, love and happiness in your new life together," while another said, "Finallyyy! I was waiting for this post for so long. Stay blessed, Sam!" Several also gushed over her bridal look, with a popular comment reading, "Awww the saree, the detailing — omg CUT-ESTTTT SAM!"

Ayurveda's Answer To Urban Smog: Detox And Strengthen Lungs Naturally



Every winter, cities such as Delhi become covered in layers of thick smog, causing air quality levels to dip to hazardous ranges. AQI frequently exceeds 400, leading to respiratory discomfort, throat irritation, fatigue, and overall exhaustion. While masks and air purifiers can offer some support, Ayurveda provides a deeper, holistic approach, one that focuses on building resilience from the inside out. Using simple herbs, daily routines, and mindful breathing, Dr Puneet Dhawan, Founder & Director, Karma Ayurveda, shares natural ways to cleanse the lungs and strengthen them against pollution.

Ayurvedic Remedies to Support Lung Health

1. Nourishing the Lungs with Turmeric & Amla

Turmeric has long been recognised for its anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. A warm cup of turmeric milk helps calm irritated airways and supports the immune system, especially helpful when pollution affects the throat and nasal passages. Gargling with warm turmeric-infused water can also soothe irritation caused by smog. Amla, or Indian gooseberry, is another powerful Ayurvedic ingredient and a rich source of Vitamin C, known for combating oxidative stress triggered by

pollution. Drinking fresh amla juice each morning or simply eating one fresh amla can strengthen lung tissue, enhance immune function, and prevent pollution-induced dullness in the skin. Together, turmeric and amla form a strong natural defence against urban air toxins.

2. Cleansing and Shielding Through Daily Ayurvedic Rituals

Simple rituals can offer daily protection. Oil pulling with sesame or coconut oil for five minutes each morning helps strengthen the mucous lining of the mouth and throat—your body's first barrier against airborne pollutants. Neem water is another potent addition. Bathing with water infused with boiled neem leaves helps remove pollutants settled on the skin and hair, minimising irritation and preventing toxins from entering through the pores. Nasya therapy, a traditional Ayurvedic practice, involves instilling warm herbal oils or medicated juices into the nostrils. This clears nasal passages, reduces excess mucus, and restores doshic balance. As the nose is considered the gateway to the head, Nasya supports both respiratory and cognitive health, making it a powerful daily detox practice. 3. Breathing Practices to Detoxify the Lungs No Ayurvedic routine for respi-

ratory wellness is complete without pranayama. Anulom Vilom, or alternate-nostril breathing, is especially effective during high-pollution periods. Practised for 10–15 minutes daily, it helps clear the airways, increase lung capacity, strengthen respiratory muscles, and calm the nervous system. Since stress can worsen airway inflammation, pranayama's calming effect is particularly valuable.

The Ayurvedic Way Forward

As urban smog becomes an annual reality, strengthening the body rather than relying solely on external aids becomes essential. Ayurveda doesn't promise instant results; instead, it offers gradual, sustainable strengthening of the lungs and immune system. Turmeric milk, amla juice, oil pulling, neem-based hygiene, and mindful breathing may seem simple, but together they create a powerful protective shield against pollution. These practices not only support respiratory function but also enhance overall wellbeing, helping the body remain calm, energised, and resilient amid environmental stress. By integrating these Ayurvedic habits into daily life, city dwellers can better prepare for smog-filled months and continue to breathe a little easier even when the air outside isn't.

The Most Effective Ayurvedic Approaches For Long-Term And Healthy Weight Loss

Ayurveda supports sustainable weight loss through interventions that are simple, time-tested, and rooted in its three pillars of life, Aahar (Diet), Nidra (Sleep), and Brahmacharya (Knowing oneself). These principles have endured for centuries because they focus on natural, consistent lifestyle habits rather than complicated or glamorous routines. Dr Lipsa Shah, MD—Ayurveda in Gyn-Obs, Saifee Hospital, Mumbai, shares all you need to know: One of the strongest Ayurvedic approaches is a personalised diet and exercise plan based on one's unique constitution, a concept that remains unparalleled even today. Ayurveda emphasises strengthening digestion and metabolism, and even simple spices like cumin

and fennel can support this process. Another clinically relevant principle is that Ayurveda expects inch loss before weight loss, encouraging patients to focus on internal balance rather than rapid results. Quality sleep between 10 pm and 6 am is also a core intervention, as proper rest directly influences metabolism and is never overlooked in obesity treatment. For both children and adults, Ayurveda stresses that weight reduction must be slow, steady, and free of stress, especially in a world where dietary changes often follow one podcast or random piece of advice. Ayurvedic Panchakarma treatment plays an important supportive role by aiding detoxification, improving digestion, and enhancing nutrient absorption, all of which



indirectly support healthy weight management. Certain Ayurvedic medicines, when prescribed by a qualified consultant, can further help improve digestion and support liver metabolism. Basic dietary advice such as eating in a relaxed environment, chewing food well, following the four-

part principle of eating (2 parts solid food, 1 part liquid, 1 part empty), having early and light dinners, eating only when hungry, choosing seasonal and freshly prepared foods, replacing sugar with jaggery or dates, and drinking warm water serves as essential, sustainable guid-

ance. Emotional wellbeing while eating being happy and thankful is considered one of the most important elements. Together, these interventions form a consistent, personalised, and holistic approach that makes Ayurveda highly relevant for sustainable weight loss today.

SPORTS

Virat Kohli's Ranchi century spurs dreams of a Test cricket comeback

New Delhi: After Virat Kohli's incredible century at Ranchi in Sunday's One-Day International against South Africa, cricket enthusiasts have asked themselves, "If the master were to dedicate himself to one format in the twilight of his career, why shouldn't it be Test cricket?" The Indian Test team is in dire need of a player whose enthusiasm for the longest format aligns with their technical skill. Kohli's aggressive captaincy and his unshakeable belief in Test cricket's superiority made him a torchbearer for the format during an era when T20 leagues threatened to overshadow conventional cricket. His return wouldn't merely fill a batting position; it would revive an attitude that Test cricket remains the ultimate examination of a cricketer's skill and character. Kohli has never been a "big believer in a lot of preparation," according to him. For him, "cricket has been mental". the conviction



to thrive, the conviction to pursue greatness, and the conviction to be fierce and astute on the field. He can picture where the bowlers would target him, how the pitch will behave and if he can hit through the line. Even in the twilight of his career, he still remains ahead of those who are regulars in every format of the game. Kohli quickly adapted to the Ranchi pitch, which was designed

specifically for strokeplay, as soon as he set foot on the crease. Minutes after his century earned India a close victory in the opening ODI of the series against South Africa, India's most successful Test captain was quick to dispel all social media chatter about his return to the longest format. "Yes, that's how it's always going to be. I'm just playing one form of the game," Kohli

said after receiving the Man of the Match award for his majestic 135. He didn't specify which format, but since he is playing only one, with his eyes firmly fixed on the 2027 World Cup in South Africa, it has been safely assumed that he was referring to the 50-over game. No more an all-format player in India colours, his every innings is scrutinised more than ever.

Xabi Alonso under the heat at Real Madrid as board analyzes form, play and dressing room dynamics

Xabi Alonso's future as Real Madrid boss is uncertain amid concerns about his methods and dressing-room dynamics.

New Delhi: Real Madrid boss, Xabi Alonso, is facing growing uncertainty over his future at the Santiago Bernabeu, with doubts inside the club sharpening after a difficult run of performances and questions over key dressing-room relationships. A recent report from The Athletic claimed that sections of the squad are not fully convinced by Alonso's methods and suggested the next sequence of fixtures could go a long way in determining whether he stays in the job. Results have not collapsed, but the overall mood has shifted. Madrid have dropped points in games they were expected to control more comfortably, and the football has often looked tense rather than authoritative. In a club where style and control are almost as important as the scorelines, that combination has inevitably placed the head coach under the microscope. Inside the camp, the discussion is no longer just about tactics. Questions are being asked about how Xabi Alonso's ideas are landing with some of the senior players, whether the balance between structure and freedom is right, and if the coach has been able to keep the biggest personalities fully onside. When those doubts surface at Real Madrid, they very quickly become part of the manager's job security calculation. At the board level, there is no public move against Alonso, but the upcoming fixtures are being watched closely. A strong response - in terms of both results and performances - would ease the pressure and allow the club to present this



phase as a natural dip in a long season. A continuation of flat, unconvincing displays, especially in high-profile matches, would make it harder to ignore the noise around the bench. Alonso, for his part, has tried to project calm. He has spoken about the demands of managing Real Madrid, admitting that recent games have not met internal standards, and insisted that he is focused on solutions rather than speculations over his future. That stance is typical of coaches in his position, but it does not change the reality of what lies in front of him. In simple terms, the situation has reached a familiar point for a Madrid manager: the margin for error has narrowed. A decisive run of games now stands between Alonso and a stable second half of the season - or a scenario where talk of pressure gives way to serious conversation about a change in the dugout.

The youngest player to score a century in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy is Vaibhav Suryavanshi

New Delhi: In Tuesday's group-stage encounter between Bihar and Maharashtra in Kolkata, Vaibhav Suryavanshi got his first century in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy. The 14-year-old also became the youngest to achieve a ton in SMAT history, taking 58 balls to do so, slamming seven fours and as many sixes. His 35-ball century for Rajasthan Royals versus Gujarat Titans during the 2025 Indian Premier League season already makes him the youngest T20 centurion. After hitting his first fifty of the tournament off 34 balls, Suryavanshi experienced a brief run drought



with low scores of 14, 13, and 5 in the previous few games. The left-handed batter remained un-

beaten on 108 off 61 deliveries, helping Bihar post a total of 176 for three in 20 overs.

Fowler & James trust Liverpool's rebirth Not the first tough spell, nor the last

New Delhi: But even with that relief, the scale of Liverpool's crisis remains undeniable. Slot is overseeing the club's worst run in 71 years, with a squad battered by injuries, thin depth and a Champions League collapse that underlined just how stretched the team has become. Amid the scrutiny, India Today turned to Robbie Fowler and David James — two figures who understand the club's DNA — to assess where Liverpool stand. Slot is supervising the club's worst run in 71 years, with a squad decimated by injuries, scant depth and a Champions League failure that showed exactly how strained the team has become. Fowler pushed back firmly against suggestions that Liverpool's slump stems from dwindling motivation. "I think it would be a disservice and an injustice to the players if we start assuming they're not passionate or that they're getting bad results because they don't care. There's always a bigger picture. We all know they're not playing at the level they have shown in the past." He reminded that opponents now treat Liverpool as a scalp worth chasing. "They're facing the current champions, so opponents naturally raise their game. You don't just turn up and win every week. They're not trying to get bad results. Other teams are adjusting." Despite the downturn, Fowler maintains that belief inside the squad has not disappeared. "Still, there's always belief. We can guess why results haven't been great, but none of us truly knows the exact reason." When asked about the growing criticism of Arne Slot, Fowler stressed that external noise should



not dictate judgment. "People are entitled to opinions but being a footballer isn't about external pressure. Anyone at Liverpool is working tirelessly. He's a manager who just won the Premier League. He's going through a tough patch, yes, but we're confident Liverpool will bounce back." Liverpool's problems this season are also tied to availability. Alexander Isak and Florian Wirtz have both dealt with fitness setbacks, Giovanni Leoni's campaign ended early with an ACL injury, and Ibrahima Konate has struggled with recurring muscle issues. Even so, the win against West Ham offered welcome stability after a difficult spell. For Fowler and James, the situation is challenging but not unfamiliar for a club that has come through demanding periods before. Their view is that Liverpool's form can return once the squad regains balance, and this phase should be seen as part of a longer season rather than a defining crisis.

R Ashwin criticizes India's SA series squad selection

New Delhi: R Ashwin blasted the Indian team squad selection for the South Africa series as gametime for Nitish Kumar Reddy remained to be an issue following the triumph in Ranchi. Nitish was unused for the first game after he was recruited into the side as a replacement for Hardik Pandya, who is slowly returning to the field after the injury he sustained during the Asia Cup. Nitish was in the team to replace Hardik, according to BCCI chief selector Ajit Agarkar during the selection process for the Australia tour. He did, however, play two ODIs and was forced to miss the series' last game. In the T20I series that followed, Nitish sustained an injury that kept him out of contention and didn't play a single game. Speaking on his YouTube channel, Ashwin claimed that there is something wrong in the squad selection if Nitish cannot find a spot in the team during Hardik's absence. "If we are not able to find a place for Nitish Kumar Reddy in a team that does not have Hardik Pandya, then there is something wrong in the squad selection, seriously," said Ashwin. Ashwin said that Nitish is a player who can provide the team the same skillset that Hardik can provide, and tipped him to get better over time. However, he said that the exclusion of the all-rounder from the playing XI for the Ranchi ODI means that the squad selection needs to have a proper review. "Why was he picked? Because the fact that he can give what Hardik can give, and can get better over a period of time. But, if we can't find a place for Nitish Kumar Reddy in this particular XI, then the squad selection must be properly reviewed," Ashwin said. So far, Nitish has played all three formats for India but has seen himself in and out of the side. Even when he is playing, many feel that the all-rounder isn't used to his full potential by the Indian team management. Nitish has played a total of 16 matches across all three formats for India since making his debut for the team in 2024.



Lamine Yamal is not attempting to emulate Messi



New Delhi: 18-year-old Lamine Yamal has stated that he is not seeking to walk in the shoes of the renowned Lionel Messi. One of the best football prospects in the world right now, Yamal stated that he wants to leave his own mark at Barcelona. When Xavi gave Lamine Yamal his La Liga debut in 2023, he shot to fame. Then a 15-year-old, Lamine grabbed attention for his outstanding dribbling abilities on the right side, which quickly drew similarities with Lionel Messi. Over the course of the last two years, Lamine not only cemented his place in the Barcelona squad but also played a significant role in helping Spain win the Euro 2024 trophy. The young player is now considered one of the greatest football talents in the world, and many believe that if all goes according to plan, Lamine might leave a lasting legacy in the game like to that of Lionel Messi. In a recent interview with CBS, Yamal said that he respects Lionel Messi for everything he has done for world football and believes that

Messi is the best player in history. Interestingly, when Lamine was a toddler, he was bathed by Lionel Messi for a UNICEF campaign that took place in 2007. "I respect him for what he has been and what he is for football. To me, he is the best in history," Yamal said. Despite his deep admiration for Messi, Yamal made it clear that he is not trying to walk in the footsteps of the Argentine legend and that he wants to create his own legacy at Barcelona. "But neither do I want to be Messi, nor does Messi want me to be him," Lamine said. "My football is about fun. I play so people can enjoy watching. It is not about a million records or a million goals," he said, explaining the main difference in motivation between him and Messi. Lionel Messi left Barcelona in August 2021 after the club found themselves unable to keep him due to financial problems. He first joined Paris Saint-Germain and then moved to Inter Miami, where it appears he will finish his career.

Sports minister steps in as AIFF scrambles for league partner

New Delhi: In an effort to find a solution to the current situation, Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya will meet with representatives of all parties involved in Indian football on Wednesday, including the national federation, the sport's former commercial partner, and clubs. The All India Football Federation (AIFF) was unable to secure a new commercial partner for the top-tier league's operations, which led to the most recent crisis. In a letter to the AIFF, the ministry stated that "ISL Clubs, Prospective Commercial Partners, FSDL, Broadcasters & OTT Platforms, I-League & Lower Division Clubs, etc. will be crucial for effective deliberation in the matter." "... AIFF is requested to intimate the concerned stakeholders about the scheduled meeting and to make necessary arrangements to ensure their participation as per the schedule attached," the letter added. "It is also requested that representatives of Transaction Advisor, viz. KPMG India Services LLP may also be asked to attend all the meetings to provide required clarifications during the proposed meeting." As many as six meetings have been scheduled at the Sports Authority of India on Wednesday, including separate discussions with the ISL and I-League



clubs and FSDL. Last month, the Supreme Court had directed the ministry to step in to find a solution to the never-ending impasse, keeping in mind that it cannot be construed as an intervention that could lead to earning Fifa's wrath. On Monday, AIFF president Kalyan Chaubey met officials of East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting in the city.

The Australian Open doubles wildcard goes to Niki Poonacha

New Delhi: India's Niki Kaliyanda Poonacha has taken the biggest leap of his tennis career, winning a coveted main-draw wildcard for the 2026 Australian Open men's doubles after lifting the Asia-Pacific Wildcard Playoff title with Thailand's Pruchya Isaro on Friday. Throughout the week in Chengdu, China, the pair performed with assurance and poise, and in the final, they defeated Seita Kusuvara and Katsuki Nakagawa of Japan 6-4, 6-3 to secure their spot at Melbourne Park. For Poonacha, the achievement represents his long-awaited entry into a Grand Slam main draw. The 30-year-old Indian has spent much of his professional experience grinding through the ATP Challenger and ITF circuits, steadily earning his reputation as a dependable doubles specialist. A former world No. 98 in doubles with six Challenger titles to his résumé, Poonacha has been banging on the door of elite tennis for years. He now has an opportunity to display his skills on one of the most



prominent platforms of the sport thanks to the Australian Open wildcard. Isaro and Poonacha exhibited outstanding chemistry throughout the playoff, employing their strong serving patterns, crisp net play and confidence under duress to outplay more experienced regional rivals. Their victory adds another bright Indian name to the increasing pool of Grand Slam-bound doubles players — a space in which India has traditionally experienced success. The triumph has also earned Poonacha recognition back home. The Karnataka State Lawn Ten-

nis Association (KSLTA) on Saturday announced a cash reward of 1 lakh to honour his milestone achievement. The association's secretary, Maheshwar Rao, praised Poonacha's consistency and highlighted his contribution to continuing the state's strong tennis legacy. "We at KSLTA are extremely thrilled at Niki Poonacha's performance at Chengdu, where he won the Australian Open wild card qualifying event along with his partner, Pruchya Isaro," Rao said. "We are happy and proud that he continues the legacy of Rohan Bopanna, who just retired. We wish Poonacha and Pruchya Isaro all the very best in Australian Open 2026 and we are sure he will make our state and nation proud." Meanwhile, India's Sumit Nagal also featured in the singles draw of the playoff but exited in the quarterfinals. The 2026 Australian Open begins in Melbourne on January 12, where Poonacha will make his long-awaited Grand Slam debut — a breakthrough built on years of persistence, belief and hard work.