

Tripura LoP Accuses CM Manik Saha of Spreading Falsehoods to Conceal BJP–TMP Rift

Agartala, Jan 07: Leader of the Opposition in the Tripura Assembly and CPI(M) state secretary Jitendra Chaudhury on Wednesday launched a sharp attack on Chief Minister Manik Saha, accusing him of repeatedly spreading false and baseless propaganda to divert attention from growing infighting within the ruling BJP–Tipra Motha Party (TMP) alliance.

Chaudhury, also a member of the CPI(M) Politburo, alleged that Chief Minister Saha was misusing a constitutional post and acting more like a BJP spokesperson than the executive head of the state government.

He claimed that the Chief Minister was blaming the CPI(M) for every negative development in the state, including incidents of violence, lack of coordination, and internal conflicts between the BJP and its junior ally, TMP.

Rejecting Saha’s allegation that the Left was attempting to seize power “through the backdoor,” Chaudhury termed it a desperate effort to mask what he described as a collapse of governance in the state. “The Chief Minister is using unparliamentary language and spreading fabricated narratives that mislead the people and undermine the dignity of his office,” the Opposition leader said, adding that Saha appeared to be misled by his close aides. Chaudhury further alleged that TMP had a tacit understanding with the BJP even before formally



joining the ruling alliance in 2024. He claimed that the party’s electoral strategy in the 2023

Assembly elections helped divide the Left’s vote base, paving the way for the BJP’s return

to power.

According to him, internal conflicts within the ruling alliance have surfaced since TMP joined the BJP-led government in March 2024, leading to incidents of violence and public confrontations between coalition partners.

Strongly refuting the Chief Minister’s claim that the CPI(M) had introduced insurgency in Tripura, Chaudhury described the allegation as “historically false and morally offensive.” He pointed out that Left leaders, workers and supporters were among the main victims of extremist violence in the past. “A prominent minister and many CPI(M) leaders and workers were killed by extremists earlier in Tripura,” he said.

Accusing the Chief Minister of dragging the CPI(M) into the BJP–TMP power struggle, Chaudhury also alleged widespread corruption within the ruling alliance. He warned that continued misuse of the Chief Minister’s office for partisan attacks would erode public trust in democratic institutions. He urged Manik Saha to stop spreading misinformation and reminded him that, as Chief Minister, he represents the entire state and not any single political party.

Meanwhile, addressing a public meeting at Chawmanu in Dhalai district on Tuesday, Chief Minister Manik Saha said the BJP was

working to establish healthy, development-oriented politics in Tripura and could not be intimidated through violence or tension.

The Chief Minister stated that despite the state government allocating 39.06 per cent of the 2024–25 budget to the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC), some parties continued to claim that funds were not being released.

“The BJP is strong not only in the country but across the world. Sometimes we are threatened that the party or the Chief Minister will not be allowed to enter TTAADC areas. The more we are told not to enter, the more we will go inside. We will reach every household in the tribal areas,” Saha said, in remarks seen as an oblique reference to ally TMP.

The politically significant 30-member TTAADC, which covers nearly two-thirds of Tripura’s geographical area and is home to over 12.16 lakh people—most of them from indigenous communities—has been governed by TMP since 2021.

Ahead of the TTAADC elections, all major political parties, including the BJP, its allies TMP and IPFT, and opposition parties CPI(M) and Congress, have intensified efforts to consolidate tribal support, which constitutes nearly one-third of Tripura’s population of around 4.2 million.

Mizoram’s ‘CHERRY BLOSSOM’ tourism event woos big crowds

Aizawl, Jan 07: A tourism event – ‘Tlaizawng Paradise’ – is drawing crowds at Phuaibuang village in Saitual district of Mizoram.

Cherry blossom, locally known as ‘Tlaizawng’, is a major highlight of the event, and quite aptly so, as cherry blossom blooms at Phuaibuang and nearby regions in this time of the year, drawing visitors during the season.

The two-day event features an array of adventure tourism activities, including cave exploration, mountain hiking and mass angling.

Mizoram Assembly Speaker Lalsiabzama inaugurated the event on Tuesday, aimed at promoting tourism, boosting the local economy and encouraging conservation of natural resources. Speaking at the inaugural programme, Lalsiabzama said the event was

organised to attract tourists by highlighting the natural beauty and rich biodiversity of Phuaibuang and its surrounding areas.

He emphasised that unity and cooperation among local communities were key to the sustainable growth of tourism in the state.

Around 600 participants took part in a mega angling event on the Tuivai river near Phuaibuang village on Tuesday.

Additionally, local handicraft and handloom products are being showcased at the Phuaibuang playground, alongside cultural and musical performances, providing a platform for local artisans and artists to display their creations.

“The event is expected to promote eco-tourism while creating livelihood opportunities for the local population,” an official said.

Debabrata Saikia urges Assam government to provide relief to farmers hit by cyclone and cold wave

Guwahati, Jan 07: Leader of the Opposition in the Assam Legislative Assembly, Debabrata Saikia, has called upon the Assam government to provide urgent financial assistance to farmers whose mustard crops were severely damaged by the recent cyclone and cold wave across the state. In a letter addressed to Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, Saikia said that mustard growers in many districts have suffered heavy losses after strong winds flattened large areas of standing crops. He said that in some places, entire fields of mustard ready for harvesting were destroyed, putting thousands of small and marginal farmers under serious financial stress. The Opposition leader stated that government departments have already submitted initial loss assessments, and crop damage worth more than ₹8.9 crore has been recorded so far. However, he said the real scale of loss



could be much higher and farmers now fear being pushed into debt due to crop failure, rising costs and unpaid agricultural loans. Saikia pointed out that the state government had earlier launched the Winter Mustard Mission to boost mustard cultivation and support farmers with seeds, machinery and technical assistance. But despite these initiatives, farmers

have been unable to withstand natural calamities such as the latest cyclone and severe cold wave. He also mentioned that many farmers covered under the Bajaj Allianz crop insurance scheme since 2018–19 are yet to receive compensation. He warned that delayed relief and paperwork problems would further worsen the economic condition of affected households.

Saikia urged the government to immediately conduct fresh surveys and release adequate compensation without delay.

He suggested that the authorities also publish full details of expenditure and progress under both the Winter Mustard Mission and farmers’ welfare schemes introduced in recent years. Calling the present situation “deeply worrying” for rural Assam, he stressed the need for long-term measures such as irrigation support, seed relief, improved water management and debt protection. He said without timely intervention, more farmers may fall into long-term financial distress. The Opposition leader appealed to the Chief Minister to treat the issue with urgency and ensure that genuine beneficiaries receive support fairly and transparently. He said the livelihoods of poor and marginal farmers depend on the state’s response to the crisis.

Mizo language learning centre to be set up in Kamalanagar

Aizawl, Jan 07: A Mizo language learning centre will be set up at Kamalanagar, the headquarters of the Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC), in south Mizoram’s Lawngtlai district.

The decision was taken at a meeting attended by officials of the District School Education Board, headmasters and representatives of the Mizoram Chakma Students’ Union (MCSU).

Mizo National Front legislator from Tuichawng constituency and CADC member Rasik Mohan Chakma was also present at the meeting.

Chakma underscored the growing importance of working knowledge of the Mizo language for candidates seeking government jobs in the state.

He also said he would contribute funds from his MLA quota to establish the centre at Kamalanagar, also known as Chawngte, to prepare aspirants for the Mizo language proficiency test conducted by the Mizoram Public Service Commission.

Gold biscuits worth Rs 19 cr seized in Tripura

Agartala, Jan 07: Assam Rifles personnel, in coordination with the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), seized gold biscuits and unaccounted cash during a joint operation conducted at Shantipara and Dhaleswar localities of Agartala.

Around 14 kg of gold biscuits valued at Rs 19 crore and Indian currency amounting to Rs 2.87 crore were recovered during the operation which was carried out on the basis of specific intelligence inputs, an official source said.

The confiscated gold and currency have been handed over to the DRI for further investigation and legal proceedings.

Assam Rifles maintained that the operation reflects the continued vigilance of the force and its collaboration with sister agencies in curbing smuggling and maintaining security in the region.

Clean elections not possible without correct NRC, says AASU leader Samujjal Bhattacharya

■ **Samujjal Bhattacharya**, Chief Advisor of the All Assam Students’ Union (AASU), emphasized the necessity of a verified National Register of Citizens (NRC) for fair elections in Assam.

Guwahati, Jan 07: All Assam Students’ Union (AASU) Chief Advisor Samujjal Bhattacharya has said that elections in Assam cannot be truly fair unless the state has a correct and fully verified National Register of Citizens (NRC).

He stated that since 1985, no election in Assam has been conducted on the basis of a completely genuine voter list, and this remains a serious concern for democracy in the state. Bhattacharya was speaking at a large workers’ meeting organised by the Morigaon District Committee of AASU at the Morigaon District Library. According to organisers, more than 2,000 student workers attended the programme. During the meeting, he administered a pledge to the

AASU members, asking them to stay committed to the protection and welfare of Assam. He told them that devotion to the state and the Students’ Union should remain a guiding principle in their work. Speaking to the media later, Bhattacharya stressed that an accurate voter list is not possible without a proper NRC. He said that the NRC prepared under the supervision of the Supreme Court should be treated as the main base document. At the same time, he said that the register

must be corrected where required so that the final NRC is error-free and reliable. He also said that AASU is planning to approach the Supreme Court again on this matter in the coming days. According to him, both the Central and State governments should also move the court, so that the issue can be resolved in a lawful and permanent manner. Referring to recent complaints about irregularities in updated voter lists, Bhattacharya said that there are reports



of new voters being added in large numbers, sometimes within the same families. He said that if these reports

are verified, the names of wrongly added voters should be removed immediately. He also demanded that the

election authorities explain how such mistakes occurred and ensure that officials responsible for any lapses are held accountable. He clearly stated that the voter list must be correct “at all costs”. Apart from the NRC issue, the AASU leader also spoke about protecting the land rights of indigenous communities in Assam. He said that the land of indigenous people must be safeguarded through strong policies and legal measures, and this responsibility cannot be ignored.

Akhil Gogoi misleading people over voter list claims: Dilip Saikia

Guwahati, Jan 07: Assam BJP president Dilip Saikia today said that Independent MLA Akhil Gogoi is trying to mislead the people of Assam by making false claims regarding the voters’ list and internal party discussions. Speaking at a press conference, Saikia said the screenshot shared by Akhil Gogoi on Monday was from a video conference held on January 4, and added that the same information had already been posted on Facebook and X earlier. He said there was nothing new in what Akhil Gogoi had shown, and accused him of trying to create confusion. “Whatever Akhil Gogoi is saying has no value. His statements are not worth even five paise,” Saikia said. Saikia also criticised leaders of the INDIA bloc, saying different leaders were making different claims about the number of doubtful voters. “Someone says 60, someone else says 31. People die, names are deleted, some names remain. It is the duty of the Election Commission of India to check all this,” he said. He added that political parties

also have the right and responsibility to verify names in the electoral rolls. According to Saikia, there are many reasons why names may be missing or wrongly included in the voter list. He said some people die and their names remain, while in some cases newly married women do not find their names in the list. He said parties often hold internal discussions and video conferences on such matters, and there is nothing wrong in doing so. Saikia further said that every citizen wants a correct and transparent voter list. He pointed out that in Assam, Special Intensive Revision (SIR) has not taken place, although Special Revision has been done. He said the BJP has demanded that SIR should also be carried out in the state, as it has been done in other parts of the country. He claimed that SIR helps in identifying genuine and natural citizens who are eligible to vote. Referring to the NRC process in Assam, Saikia said it did not produce the expected results and was rejected. He alleged that during the Congress government, the names of many non-citizens were added to the voter list.



He said having one’s name in the voter list alone does not prove citizenship. Saikia said SIR is usually conducted after long intervals, sometimes after 10 to 20 years, and helps verify voter eligibility. “We welcome SIR in the rest of India, and we want it in Assam

too. We want a perfect voter list where doubtful names are removed,” he said. On the voter list controversy related to the Dighalipukhuri area in Guwahati, Saikia said both parties involved can file a complaint if they believe there is wrongdoing. He said

if any unknown name appears in an urban locality like Dighalipukhuri, it should be cross-checked, and corrections will be made if required. Saikia said the BJP wants fair elections and an accurate voter list for all genuine citizens of Assam.

Meghalaya Police recover 55 suspected live ammunition in South West Garo Hills

Aizawl, Jan 07: Fifty-five anti-aircraft live ammunition, suspected to be hidden in a forested area either by militants of the Assam-based United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) or the erstwhile Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA), were recovered on Tuesday by Meghalaya police in South West Garo Hills district. The recovery was made based on reliable source information by the police that led them to a bamboo grove near Santogre village, under Salmanpara police station. During the search operation, the Police team unearthed ammunition buried in the bamboo grove near Santogre village. Altogether, 55 number of suspected live anti-aircraft ammunition were seized at the spot in the presence of independent witnesses,” Vikash Varma, the district police chief of South West Garo Hills, said. He said investigation is underway to ascertain the source and other related details. A police official said, the



anti-aircraft ammunition must have been hidden by the erstwhile GNLA or ULFA militants which were known to be active in those areas bordering

the India-Bangladesh border. Garo Hills region in western part of Meghalaya was used as a transit route and safe haven by the ULFA and

other militant groups. Police recovered a cache of suspected live ammunition during a joint search operation in Meghalaya’s South West Garo Hills district on Tuesday, officials said. The operation was carried out by teams from Salmanpara and Ampati police stations at a bamboo grove near Santogre village, which falls under the jurisdiction of Salmanpara Police Station. The search was conducted following specific intelligence inputs. According to a statement issued by Superintendent of Police Vikash Varma, the police team unearthed 55 suspected live anti-aircraft ammunition that had been buried at the site. The ammunition was seized on the spot in the presence of independent witnesses, in accordance with prescribed legal procedures. Police said a detailed investigation has been launched to trace the source of the ammunition and to identify those involved in its concealment.

Mizo Language Learning Centre to be set up

Aizawl, Jan 07: A Mizo language learning centre is set to be established at Kamalanagar, the headquarters of the Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC) in south Mizoram’s Lawngtlai district, officials announced. The decision was made following a meeting attended by officials from the District School Education Board, headmasters, and representatives of the Mizoram Chakma Students’ Union (MCSU). Rasik Mohan Chakma, the Mizo National Front (MNF) legislator from Tuichawng constituency and CADC member, was also present at the meeting. Chakma emphasized the increasing importance of proficiency in the Mizo language for individuals seeking government jobs in the state. He further announced that he would contribute funds from his MLA quota to help establish the learning centre in Kamalanagar, also known as Chawngte. The centre aims to prepare candidates for the Mizo language proficiency test conducted by the Mizoram Public Service Commission. The initiative will be carried out through a collaborative effort among the Chakma, CADC authorities, and the MCSU. The MCSU (Central) will be responsible for managing the centre, while the CADC education department will offer logistical support, officials confirmed.



Assam LoP requests that CEC address anomalies

Guwahati, Jan 07: Assam’s Leader of Opposition Debabrata Saikia wrote to Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, alleging “serious irregularities” in the draft electoral rolls of the state, published after a Special Revision (SR). The senior Congress leader demanded the halt of the finalisation of the electoral rolls until “all irregularities are thoroughly verified and resolved” to ensure the removal of any unauthorised or “unknown” voter entries. Assam has registered a 1.35 per cent increase in the number of voters as per the integrated draft electoral roll for the state, published on December 30 after the SR was conducted, with months left for the assembly elections. “I am writing to express my deep concern regarding serious irregularities observed during the ongoing SR of electoral rolls in Assam. Media reports and ground-level feedback indicate unauthorised inclusion of non-Assamese speaking voters and other procedural lapses that threaten the integrity of the electoral process,” Saikia said in his letter to Kumar on Monday. He alleged that specific instances have come to light where “unknown” persons have been added as voters in households without the knowledge of residents. Saikia cited examples of four non-Assamese individuals enrolled at House No 44 and 15 on Tayabulla Road in Guwahati unbeknownst to the family, while voter entries have been seen against non-existent Household No 00 in the Nazira constituency. “Such malpractice often goes unnoticed, potentially leading to these ‘unknown’ voters casting their ballots... The inclusion of entries under such fabricated designations not only breaches procedural norms but also severely compromises the verifiability and integrity of the electoral roll, casting serious doubt on the authenticity of the entire revision process,” the Congress legislator claimed. Sounding caution, Saikia said such samples of “violations” pose a “grave threat” to the democratic values and the security of the people of Assam, including the constitutional rights and socio-cultural heritage. “Additionally, this incident reinforces Rahul Gandhi’s allegation to the ECI regarding vote manipulation in the electorate’s consciousness and exposes an extensive systemic problem,” he added. Reacting to the opposition’s allegations on draft roll, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that anyone who has any objections can “fill Form No 6, 7 and 8 to effect changes in the final electoral roll” as per the established norm. “Instead of crying foul in the media, the opposition should follow set procedures if they have any genuine concerns,” he added. Saikia also pointed out that the electoral draft has seen the “removal

of more than 10 lakh individuals for various reasons”, but the emergence of discrepancies suggests that the credibility of the electoral roll has been “compromised”. “Therefore, data verification is of the utmost importance before finalisation of the electoral roll... These malpractices do not merely violate procedural norms; they represent a breach of the fundamental protections enshrined in Clause 6 of the Assam Accord and disregard the Hon’ble Supreme Court’s directive to uphold this constitutional safeguard,” he said. In this context, such irregularities can be construed as an alleged attempt to “manipulate” the upcoming electoral process, thereby “undermining” the decisive voice of the legitimate electorate of Assam, the Congress leader said with apprehension. “These discrepancies not only violate electoral guidelines but also undermine public trust in the democratic process. Considering these issues, I urge the Election Commission of India to take immediate steps to safeguard the credibility of the electoral roll and ensure a free and fair electoral process,” he added.

Saikia demanded that the CEC conduct a swift and transparent investigation into all reported discrepancies and make the findings public. “Halt the finalisation of electoral rolls until all irregularities are thoroughly verified and resolved, ensuring the removal of any unauthorised or ‘unknown’ voter entries,” he said. Saikia also asked the poll panel to implement a uniform addressing system and strengthen verification protocols to prevent such issues. “Elections are the cornerstone of our democracy, and any compromise in the accuracy of electoral rolls erodes public confidence and democratic values. I trust the ECI will take decisive action to uphold the sanctity of the electoral process in Assam,” he added.

The draft roll reflected a total of 2,52,01,624 electors, representing a 1.35 per cent increase from the previous final roll published in January 2025. A total of 7,86,841 additions and 4,47,196 deletions have taken place from January 6 to December 27 last year. During the SR process, 4,78,992 deceased electors and 5,23,680 shifted voters were identified. Another 53,619 multiple entries were detected. The Election Commission, however, said that these names have not yet been deleted. These will only be processed for removal or shifting after formal applications are received during the current claims and objections period. Claims and objections can be filed from December 27 to January 22, with special campaign dates fixed for January 3-4 and January 10-11. The final electoral roll will be published on February 10.

Woman’s charred body recovered from isolated plantation in Tripura

Agartala, Jan 07: Police are probing the recovery of a half-burnt woman’s body from a secluded rubber plantation at Kalitila on the outskirts of Agartala in Tripura, with investigators suspecting an attempt to destroy evidence after the crime. The body was found when a local youth entered the plantation to collect firewood and noticed a dog behaving unusually. When he approached the spot, he discovered the animal feeding on human remains that appeared to have been partially burnt. He alerted nearby residents, who then informed the police.

A team from Srinagar Police Station, led by Sub-Inspector Narayan Sen, reached the site soon after. The police station is located about a kilometre from the plantation. A forensic unit, dog squad and an executive magistrate were also deployed to examine the scene. Inspector Arunadoy Das, Officer-in-Charge of Srinagar Police Station, said initial observations indicate that the deceased was a married woman, estimated to be between 25 and 30 years old. He added that investigators believe the murder may



not have taken place at the plantation. According to the police, preliminary evidence suggests the woman was killed elsewhere and her body was later dumped in the rubber plantation, where it was set on fire using oil, dry leaves and branches, apparently to erase traces of the crime. The victim’s identity has not yet been established. Police officials said no missing per-

son complaint matching the woman’s age has been registered at Srinagar Police Station or neighbouring police stations so far, but details have been shared across all police stations to aid identification.

The police said the investigation is ongoing and that a clearer picture will emerge only after the post-mortem examination is completed.

Two women PREPAK cadres arrested in Manipur for abducting minors

Imphal, Jan 07: Two women linked to a banned militant outfit were arrested in Manipur’s Thoubal district for their alleged involvement in the abduction of three minors for recruitment into the organisation, police said on Wednesday. The accused, identified as cadres of the proscribed People’s Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (Prepak), were apprehended from the Khangabok area on Monday, a senior police officer said. The arrests followed an investigation into the reported abduction of three children

from Kakching Khunou Ngaikhong Leikai in Kakching district on Sunday. The accused have been identified as Ningthoujam Roshidiya (24), a resident of Khangabok Khulakpam Leikai, and Bidya (30) of Thoubal Haokha Maning Leikai, both in Thoubal district. The officer said the minors were rescued from Uchiwa Awang Leikai in Imphal West district and later reunited with their parents. A vehicle allegedly used in the kidnapping was also recovered. Following the resignation of Chief Minister N Bi-

ren Singh, President’s Rule was imposed in the state. The Manipur Legislative Assembly, which has a term until 2027, remains under suspended animation. Police said efforts are underway to trace and arrest other accomplices involved in the incident. Security forces have been conducting sustained search and combining operations across Manipur since ethnic violence erupted in May 2023. The unrest, involving Meitei and Kuki-Zo groups, has so far claimed more than 260 lives and displaced thousands.

Two-day eco-tourism festival ‘Tlaizawng



Aizawl, Jan 07: A two-day tourism festival, ‘Tlaizawng Paradise’, focusing on eco-tourism, conservation of natural resources and the promotion of local livelihoods, kicked off in Mizoram’s Saitual district on Tuesday. The event was inaugurated by Mizoram Assembly Speaker Lalbiakzama, marking an effort to highlight the region’s natural attractions while encouraging sustainable tourism practices. Speaking at the inaugural function at Phuaibuang village, Lalbiakzama said the event was organised to attract tourists by highlighting the region’s rich natural beauty and biodiversity. He emphasised that community unity and collective participation are essential for the sustainable development of tourism in the state. Phuaibuang and its surrounding areas are well known for their cherry blossoms, locally called ‘Tlaizawng’, which serve as a major attraction for visitors. The festival also features a range of adventure tourism activities, including cave exploration, mountain hiking and mass angling. According to officials, around 600 participants took part in a mega angling event held in the Tuivai river near Phuaibuang village on Tuesday.

Assam research scholar Bhoirob Gogoi wins prestigious MUNA MedLife Award in Italy

Guwahati, Jan 07: Assam’s Bhoirob Gogoi, a research scholar of the Department of Botany at Bodoland University in Kokrajhar, has brought laurels to the institution by winning the prestigious MUNA MedLife Award for Best Oral Communication at the 2nd Mediterranean Union Annual Meeting, held recently in Naples, Italy. Gogoi was honoured for his oral presentation titled “Microbial and Biostimulants Assisted Phytoremediation of Nitro-PAHs- A Microcosmic Study”. The research focuses on sustainable and eco-friendly approaches for the remediation of emerging toxic nitro-polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (nitro-PAHs) using plants, microbes, and biostimulants. The study highlights the role of microbial-assisted technologies in improving soil health and promoting long-term environmental sustainability in align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals SDGs. The research presents innovative solutions for mitigating environmental pollution and makes a significant contribution to the fields of environmental biotechnology and remediation. The work was carried out under the supervision of Prof. Hemen Sarma, Head of the Department of Botany, Bodoland University, whose academic guidance and mentorship were instrumental in the successful completion of the study. Prof. Sarma, who is also recognized among the top 2% of scientists globally, expressed pride in Gogoi’s achievement, noting that such international recognition reflects the growing global impact of high-quality research emerging from Bodoland University. The MUNA MedLife Award is conferred upon researchers who demonstrate excellence in scientific communication, originality, and innovation. This achievement marks a sig-



nificant milestone for both Bodoland University and the scientific community of this region. His success on an international platform underscores the strength and potential of Indian research in addressing global environmental challenges through sustainable and nature-based solutions. Members

of the academic fraternity of Bodoland University have congratulated Bhoirob Gogoi and Prof. Hemen Sarma for this notable accomplishment, which is expected to inspire young researchers to pursue high-impact research with international relevance and societal importance.

Frontline staff get new field gear to strengthen wildlife protection at Mouling National Park

Itanagar, Jan 07: In an important move to support wildlife protection work in Arunachal Pradesh, frontline forest staff of Mouling National Park in Upper Siang district have been provided with new field gear to help them carry out patrolling and monitoring duties more effectively. The gear distribution programme was held on Tuesday, January 6, at the Nature Interpretation Centre in Jengging. The event was organised jointly by the Forest Department and the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE) as part of an ongoing effort to improve conservation capacity inside the protected area. During the programme, Range Officer of Jengging, Obian Jonkey, welcomed the participants and explained the main purpose of the initiative. This was followed by an address from Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Bittem Darrang, who said that frontline staff are the backbone of forest protection work on the ground.



He said that proper equipment helps field workers carry out patrols safely and efficiently, especially in difficult terrain. According to him, supporting frontline workers is an important step toward protecting the rich wildlife of Mouling National Park. A total of 34 frontline personnel received field gear from DFO Darrang, former Pakke Tiger Reserve Field Director Tana Tapi, and Dr. Rajkamal Goswami, Fellow at ATREE and Lead for ATREE–Arunachal Pradesh. Speaking at the event, Dr. Goswami shared details of ATREE’s collaborative work in the park, including field surveys, joint patrols and camera-trapping. He also presented photographs of rare and endangered animals recorded during recent camera-trap exercises. He added that ATREE plans to involve field staff more closely and increase community participation in conservation activities. Former Pakke Tiger Reserve director Tana Tapi highlighted how committed frontline workers can transform wildlife protection in sensitive areas. He spoke about the success of Pakke and encouraged the staff of Mouling National Park to remain motivated and dedicated to their duties. The programme ended with a vote of thanks by Range Officer Sisibiyang Nopi of Ramsing Wildlife Range. She said that teamwork between the Forest Department and local communities is essential for both conservation and development.

Two women arrested in Manipur for abducting minors to recruit for banned outfit

Imphal, Jan 07: Two women said to be members of a banned insurgent group were arrested in Manipur for allegedly abducting three minor boys with the aim of recruiting them into the outfit. The arrest took place in Thoubal district, police said on Wednesday. According to police, the two accused women belong to the banned People’s Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak, also known as PREPAK. They were picked up from the Khangabok area on Monday after an investigation was launched into the disappearance of the children. The three minors had gone missing from Kakching

Khunou Ngaikhong Leikai in Kakching district on Sunday. This led to a complaint, following which police teams started tracing their movement and questioning people in the nearby areas. Police later found the three boys at Uchiwa Awang Leikai in Imphal West district. The children were rescued safely and handed over to their parents after formalities. A car suspected to have been used in the kidnapping was also recovered during the operation. Police said they are treating the case of child abduction and attempted recruitment very seriously, especially in view of the fragile law and order situation in the state.

Under-reporting of crimes remains a big challenge in Nagaland, says Deputy Chief Minister Yanthungo Patton

Kohima, Jan 07: Nagaland Deputy Chief Minister Yanthungo Patton has said that the under-reporting of crimes continues to be one of the biggest challenges for the police in the state. He stated that proper policing can only be achieved when people feel confident enough to report crimes without fear or hesitation. Patton made these remarks on January 6 while speaking at the inauguration of the new Superintendent of Police office building and police barrack in Wokha district. Apart from being the Deputy Chief Minister, he also holds charge of the Home and Border Affairs departments. He said that many crimes in Nagaland still remain unreported, and

this creates serious difficulty in understanding the real law-and-order situation. According to him, when people do not file complaints, it becomes hard for the police to plan properly, improve services, or deploy manpower in the right manner. Patton appealed to citizens across the state to come forward and report crimes as soon as they take place. He said that prompt registration of complaints helps victims get justice and also strengthens the policing system as a whole. The Deputy Chief Minister explained that correct data is important for the police, as it guides future planning and resource allocation. If cases go unreported, he said, the records will never show the true picture.



The event was attended by Nagaland Director General of Police Rupin Sharma, senior officials, and representatives from civil society. Patton first inaugurated the newly built police barrack and then the Superintendent of Police office building. He described these facilities as an important addition to law-enforcement in-

frastructure in Wokha district. He congratulated the Wokha district police for successfully completing the projects and expressed confidence that the new infrastructure would make police operations smoother and improve working conditions for personnel. He also said that better facilities would help boost morale among police officers. Patton again assured that police recruitment in Nagaland will continue to be free, fair, and based only on merit, without interference or favoritism. He thanked Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio for supporting infrastructure and development initiatives. He also expressed gratitude to the land donor who helped make the project possible.

School timings revised in Assam’s Kamrup (Metro) district due to cold spell

Kamrup, Jan 07: Authorities have announced revised school hours, postponing the start of classes by an hour for all schools in Kamrup (Metro) district from today due to the prevailing cold weather. An official order issued by Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kamrup (M) stated that In view of the prevailing cold weather conditions, and keeping in mind

the health and safety of students and as per direction received from the District Commissioner, it has been decided to reschedule the class timings of all government and private schools in the district with effect from 07-01-2026 to 13-01-2026. The revised school timings for primary schools is 10 am – 1:30 pm, for upper primary schools 10 am – 2 pm, and for sec-

ondary and senior secondary schools is 10 am – 2:30 pm. “This order is issued in the interest of public safety and student welfare. Any deviation from this order shall be viewed seriously. This order comes into force with immediate effect. All pre-scheduled examinations, if any, shall be conducted as per earlier notifications,” the order stated.

Yaba tablets seized

Sichar, Jan 07: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said a woman was arrested after banned Yaba tablets worth Rs 3 crore were seized from her possession in Cachar district. These tablets, also called ‘crazy drug’, contain a mixture of methamphetamine and caffeine and have been banned in India. In a post on X on Tuesday night, Sarma said, “Based on reliable inputs, @cacharpolice apprehended a woman and seized 20,000 YABA tablets worth Rs 3 cr from her possession.”

Meghalaya honeymoon murder case to be featured in new crime docu-series ‘Honeymoon Se Hatya’

Shillong, Jan 07: A new crime documentary series will soon begin streaming online, focusing on real-life cases where wives were accused of killing their husbands. The series is titled ‘Honeymoon Se Hatya’, and it will start streaming from January 9. The main story in the series is based on the Meghalaya honeymoon murder case involving Raja Raghuvanshi and his wife Sonam. The makers of the series have chosen this case as the central storyline. After telling this case in detail, the series will also look at four other murder cases from different parts of the country. These include the Meerut blue drum murder case, the Bhiwani influencer murder case, the Mumbai tile murder case from Nalasopara, and the Delhi electric shock murder case.



All these cases had earlier received wide attention at the national level. The documentary aims to show how these crimes took place and what led to them, instead of only repeating what was already reported in the news. The makers say the idea is to look closely at what happens inside mar-

riages, how relationships sometimes break down, and how stress and conflict can slowly grow within homes. According to the platform behind the series, the intention is not only to recreate the crimes but also to understand the emotional and social background around them. They say that marriages

today face many kinds of pressures, and sometimes problems inside families are not visible to the outside world until something serious happens. Speaking about the new series, Kaveri Das, Chief Channel Officer at &TV and Business Head for the OTT platform, said that this project is part of their effort to tell more meaningful and emotional stories. She said that understanding the pressure and struggle within marriages is important in today’s society. She explained that many times small conflicts in households remain hidden. People may not talk about them openly, and over time these problems may grow. She added that the stories shown in this series highlight how these silent tensions can sometimes lead to tragic situations.

Cold wave grips Tripura as state records sharpest temperature deviation in country

Agartala, Jan 07: Tripura has been witnessing an unusually cold spell over the past several days, with daytime temperatures falling well below the normal seasonal level. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the state has recorded the lowest deviation from normal maximum temperatures in the entire country during this period. Officials from IMD Agartala said that since January 1, the maximum daytime temperature in Tripura has remained consistently lower than usual. IMD Agartala Director, Dr Partha Roy, explained that the difference between normal and actual daytime temperatures has been significant for nearly a week. He said the state recorded deviations ranging from 3°C to 9°C below normal, which is rare for this time of the year. Dr Roy said that January 5 was particularly notable.

On that day, Tripura recorded a maximum temperature of only 16.8°C. This was 8.6°C

below the seasonal normal and marked the highest negative temperature deviation anywhere in the country. Bihar followed with a deviation of around 7°C below normal, but Tripura remained the lowest. He added that these readings matched IMD predictions, which had already warned of temperatures remaining 3°C to 6°C below normal. The IMD has further stated that the cold spell is expected to continue for the next two to three days. Daytime temperatures are likely to stay 3°C to 5°C below normal during this period, after which a slight rise may occur. However, minimum temperatures are not expected to change much and are likely to hover between 11°C and 13°C over the next five days. Along with the cold, the state is also facing foggy weather. The IMD has issued a dense fog warning for the next two days. Dense fog may occur at one or two locations in every district, and a yellow alert has been issued

in several places. Some areas may also see shallow fog conditions. Transport operators and commuters have been asked to remain cautious, especially during early morning hours when visibility is expected to drop. In view of the prevailing conditions, advisories have been issued for the transport sector for today and tomorrow.

Drivers have been urged to slow down, use fog lights where available, and avoid unnecessary travel during peak fog hours. Officials said fog-related disruptions cannot be ruled out if the current pattern continues. The state government has also taken precautionary steps to ensure public safety. Schools across Tripura will remain closed until January 10 due to the persistent cold and foggy weather.

This decision has been taken keeping students’ health and safety in mind, particularly because early school hours coincide with dense fog timings.

AICC appoints sr party observers for Assam polls

Guwahati, Jan 07: The Congress on Wednesday appointed former Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Baghel and Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar as senior party observers for the Assam Assembly polls.

Besides Baghel and Shivakumar, Congress leader Bandhu Tirkey will also be an observer for the Assam polls, informed a press release issued by All India Congress Committee (AICC).

Last week, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra was named as chairperson of the Congress party’s screening committee for Assam.

This is the first organisational task assigned to Priyanka Gandhi Vadra after her role as All India Congress Committee general secretary in charge of Uttar Pradesh.

Sensational Incident of Domestic Violence in Dimao, Sivasagar; Accused Dies After Police Firing

Sivasagar, Jan 07: A shocking incident of domestic violence triggered panic in the Dirai Tea Garden area of Dimao in Assam’s Sivasagar district on Tuesday night. A man allegedly attacked his wife and a neighbour with a sharp weapon following a domestic dispute. The accused later died after being shot by police.

According to eyewitnesses, the incident took place around 8 pm amid dense fog and biting cold, when sudden commotion erupted in the tea garden labour line.

The accused, identified as Ranjit Pandav, chased his wife with a sharp dao (machete), threatening to kill her. As the terrified woman screamed for help, neighbour Motin Pandav rushed to the spot to intervene and stop the quarrel.

As soon as Motin entered the courtyard to rescue the woman, Ranjit Pandav—who was hiding at the back of the house—attacked him

with the dao. Motin collapsed in the courtyard after sustaining severe injuries and was left covered in blood.

The accused also repeatedly assaulted his wife with the sharp weapon.

Upon receiving information, Dimao police rushed to the scene. On spotting the police, Ranjit Pandav attempted to flee towards a betel nut plantation. Police fired at him to stop the escape, and the bullet hit his leg. He was taken to Demow

Government Hospital in a critical condition, where he later succumbed to his injuries during treatment.

Meanwhile, the seriously injured Motin Pandav and the woman were rescued and referred to Assam Medical College Hospital (AMCH) for advanced treatment.

Tension continues to prevail in the tea garden area following the incident. Police have launched an investigation into the matter.

Stable government possible in Chakma Council, says Mizoram Cabinet

Aizawl, Jan 07: The Mizoram Council of Ministers has said that there is no need to extend Governor’s Rule in the Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC), as a stable government can still be formed there. This decision was taken during a meeting held on Wednesday at the Cabinet Room of the Chief Minister’s Office in Aizawl. The meeting was chaired by Chief Minister Laldhuma. The Governor of Mizoram had written to the State Government seeking its advice on two important matters related to the Chakma Autonomous District Council. The first question was whether a fresh Inquiry Commission was needed to examine the functioning of the Council. The second question was whether Governor’s Rule should continue in the CADC for another term. On the first point, the Council of Ministers stated that an Inquiry Commission had already been set up earlier to study the functioning of the Chakma Autonomous District Council. The report of this Commission had been completed and submitted. After that, a Study Team headed by the Chief Secretary was also formed to review the functioning of all three Autonomous District Councils in Mizoram. This report too has already been submitted. In addition, the Deputy Commissioner of Lawngtlai district had also sent a separate report on the CADC. The Council of Ministers noted that these three reports together already provide sufficient information about the functioning of the Chakma

Council. Therefore, the Cabinet concluded that there is no need to set up yet another Inquiry Commission on the same subject. The second major point discussed in the meeting concerned the continuation of Governor’s Rule in the Chakma Autonomous District Council. The Cabinet noted that out of the 20 elected Members of District Council (MDCs), 16 members belong to one party that is capable of forming the government. Earlier, the High Court had also directed that all possible steps should be taken to explore the formation of an elected government. Based on this situation, the Council of Ministers had earlier recommended that the party with majority support should be allowed to form the government, instead of running the Council under Governor’s Rule. However, despite this recommendation, Governor’s Rule was imposed. During today’s meeting, the Cabinet pointed out that even after the term of the current Governor’s Rule has expired, the political situation inside the Council remains unchanged. The same party still has the support of 16 members out of 20, which is a clear majority. The Council of Ministers said that this shows that the party is still in a position to form a stable government. The Cabinet further said that there is no sign of political instability or any other special reason that could justify the extension of Governor’s Rule for another six months. Since the majority group remains intact, the state government is of the opinion that democratic governance should



resume in the Chakma Autonomous District Council. The Council also felt that allowing an elected government to function would be more appropriate than continuing with special administrative arrangements. According to the Cabinet, there is a clear opportunity to restore normal political functioning in the CADC through the formation of a stable elected council. With this, the Mizoram Government has formally conveyed its stand to the Governor, stating that there is no need for a fresh inquiry into the Chakma Autonomous District Coun-

cil, and that Governor’s Rule should not be extended further as a government can be formed by the majority party. The Chakma Autonomous District Council, located in Lawngtlai district, is one of the three autonomous councils in Mizoram. It was created to provide self-governance to the Chakma community in matters of local administration and development. Political developments within the council have been closely followed in recent months, particularly after Governor’s Rule was imposed.

Let’s be clear: if the Palestine Action hunger strikers die, the government will bear moral responsibility

They are far into the lethal zone. Three people who are being held in prison on charges connected with the protest group Palestine Action have been on hunger strike for 45, 59 and 66 days. A fourth prisoner, Teuta Hoxha, ended her strike this week, after 58 days. She could suffer lifelong health effects. The remaining strikers, Heba Muraisi, Kamran Ahmed and Lewie Chiaramello, could pass away at any time. The 10 IRA and INLA hunger strikers who died in 1981 survived for between 46 and 73 days. Muraisi, whose strike has lasted the longest, is, according to supporters, now struggling to breathe and suffering uncontrollable muscle spasms – possible signs of neurological damage. Yet the government refuses to engage. It created this situation. The C The hunger strikers’ demands seem reasonable to me: release on bail; the right to a fair trial (they claim the government has withheld key documents); lifting the ban on Palestine Action; and shutting down Elbit Systems – which has supplied weapons to a state engaged in genocide – in the UK. All these things, I believe, should be happening anyway. And they are of course negotiating positions. Whether all would need to be met for the strike to end cannot be known until the government engages. Its refusal to talk could condemn the strikers to death. It should not be necessary to risk your life to demand fair treatment and just decisions. But when everyone in power has stopped listening, there are few remaining options. rown Prosecution Service states that the maximum time a prisoner can spend on remand is 182 days (six months). Yet Muraisi and Ahmed were arrested in November 2024, and are not due to be tried until June at the earliest, which means they will be remanded for 20 months. Chiaramello, who was arrested in July 2025, has a provisional court date in January 2027, which means 18 months in prison without trial. The limbo of remand is often devastating to prisoners’ wellbeing. Government figures, for example, show that the rate of suicide among remanded prisoners is more than twice that among sentenced prisoners. Extreme periods of remand like these are an offence against justice. This is one aspect of what campaigners call “process as punishment”, an approach that now dominates the treatment of protest groups. Even if you are never convicted of a crime, your life is made hell if you dare, visibly and publicly, to dissent. The three prisoners, and others charged with the same offences, are being held under “terrorist conditions”. This means they are allowed only minimal communications and visits. They’ve also been banned from prison jobs for “security reasons”, denied books, newspapers, library and gym visits and subjected to “non-association orders”. In October, Muraisi was suddenly transferred from HMP Bronzefield, 18 miles from London, where her family lives, to New Hall prison in Yorkshire, which



is too far away for her sick mother to visit. After she had been moved, she was told it was because of the risk of association with another prisoner on the same wing at Bronzefield. Yet none of the hunger strikers has been charged with, let alone sentenced for, terrorist offences. They have been charged with ordinary criminal offences, such as burglary, criminal damage and violent disorder. Muraisi and Ahmed are alleged to have broken into a factory run by Elbit Systems, Israel’s largest weapons manufacturer, and damaged equipment, while Chiaramello is alleged to have entered RAF Brize Norton during a protest in which Palestine Action sprayed warplanes with paint. These events took place before Palestine Action was proscribed as a terrorist group, a highly controversial decision that is being challenged in court: the decision is expected very soon. But never mind the presumption of innocence, never mind the presumption against retrospective application of the law: because the CPS says there is a “terrorism connection”, they’re being treated as if they were convicted terrorists. On 26 December, a group of United Nations rapporteurs – the kind of people who, in days gone by, were heeded by governments – expressed grave concern about the treatment of these prisoners, which, they said, included “reported delays in accessing medical care, use of excessive restraint during hospital treatment, denial of contact with family members and legal counsel, and lack of consistent independent medical oversight, particularly for detainees with serious pre-existing health conditions”. They had “serious questions” about our government’s compliance with international human rights law, “including obligations to protect life and prevent cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment”. But once you’ve labelled someone a terrorist, it seems,

you can do almost anything to them and get away with it. The silence on this issue across almost all the media is something to behold. The government bears moral responsibility for these prisoners. Yet it appears to have no intention of exercising it. Lawyers, MPs and doctors have repeatedly beseeched ministers to engage with the issue. They flatly refuse, claiming that to do so would be to “create perverse incentives that would encourage more people to put themselves at risk through hunger strikes”. There is no evidence for this, and given the extremely unusual nature of this action (it is the biggest coordinated, sustained hunger strike by prisoners since the IRA’s in 1981), it seems highly unlikely. The government has sought to create the impression that such events are common – “over the last five years we have averaged over 200 hunger strike incidents every year” – so no unusual response is required. But what it appears to be referring to is brief refusals of food by individual prisoners, a completely different situation from an imminent risk of death by starvation. More than 800 medical professionals have now signed a letter to the justice secretary, David Lammy, warning that prisoners face a “medical emergency”, which “is being managed incorrectly”. That letter was written on 27 November. The government has yet to respond. Instead, it appears to mock the hunger strikers’ predicament. When Jeremy Corbyn MP asked the justice minister Jake Richards, in parliament, whether he would meet their legal representatives to try to resolve the situation, Richards answered with a sharp “No”, prompting laughter in the chamber. In December, the speaker of the Commons remarked that Lammy’s failure to respond to the MPs asking for a meeting about the issue was “totally unacceptable”. But the failure continues.

Venezuela ‘turning over’ \$2bn in oil to US, Trump says, in move that could cut supply to China

Donald Trump has said Venezuela will be “turning over” \$2bn worth of Venezuelan crude to the United States, a flagship negotiation that would divert supplies from China while helping Venezuela avoid deeper oil production cuts. “This Oil will be sold at its Market Price, and that money will be controlled by me, as President of the United States of America, to ensure it is used to benefit the people of Venezuela and the United States!” Trump said in a post online. Venezuelan government officials and state company PDVSA did not provide comment. Venezuela has millions of barrels of oil loaded on tankers and in storage tanks that it has been unable to ship due to the blockade imposed by Trump, as part of the pressure campaign that culminated in the toppling of Nicolás Maduro who was seized from his country by

US forces over the weekend.

Top Venezuelan officials have called Maduro’s capture a kidnapping and accused the US of trying to steal the country’s vast oil reserves, however Tuesday’s agreement is a strong sign that the government is responding to Trump’s demand that they open up to US oil companies or risk more military intervention. Trump has said he wants interim president Delcy Rodríguez to give the US and private companies “total access” to Venezuela’s oil industry. US energy secretary Chris Wright is in charge of executing the deal, Trump said, adding that the oil will be taken from ships and sent directly to US ports. Supplying the trapped crude to the US could initially require reallocating cargoes originally bound for China, two sources had told Reuters earlier on Tuesday. China has been

Venezuela’s top buyer in the last decade and especially since the United States imposed sanctions on companies involved in oil trade with Venezuela in 2020.

US crude prices fell more than 1.5% after Trump’s announcement, with the agreement expected to increase the volume of Venezuelan oil exported to the US. That flow of oil is currently controlled entirely by Chevron, PDVSA’s main joint venture partner, under a US authorisation. Chevron, which has been exporting between 100,000 and 150,000 barrels per day of Venezuelan oil to the US, is the only company that has been loading and shipping crude without interruption from the South American country in recent weeks under the blockade. It was not immediately clear if Venezuela would have any access to proceeds from the supply. Sanc-

tions mean PDVSA is excluded from the global financial system, its bank accounts are frozen and it is blocked from executing transactions in US dollars. Hours before Trump’s announcement on Tuesday, Rodríguez hardened her tone against the US, saying in a televised address that “no external agent governs Venezuela” – a clear rebuttal to the US president’s claim that, after the capture of Maduro, the US would now run the South American country. It marked another shift in tone from Maduro’s former vice-president. After being sworn in as president by Venezuela’s supreme court on Saturday, Rodríguez released a conciliatory statement late on Sunday in which she “invited the US government to work together on an agenda of cooperation”.

In Tuesday’s address, however, Rodríguez reverted to harsher

language, describing Saturday’s strike – the first large-scale US military operation on South American soil – as a “terrible military aggression” and a “criminal attack” whose “absolutely illegal outcome, in violation of international law”, was the “kidnapping” of Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores.

“We are a people who do not surrender, who do not give up, and we are here, governing together with the people. The government of Venezuela rules in our country – no one else. There is no external agent governing Venezuela. It is Venezuela, its constitutional government, and the consolidated power of the people,” said Rodríguez, who had served as Maduro’s vice-president since 2018. She declared a week of mourning for members of the military killed in the raid.

Trump’s raid in Caracas: oil matters, but it’s not the whole story

It’s all about oil. That was the reason Nicolás Maduro, the Venezuelan leader illegally abducted by US forces at the weekend, had given for Donald Trump’s fixation with his country. A better way to think about Venezuela is that oil was necessary but not sufficient.

The presence of vast reserves made Mr Trump’s interest understandable – if Venezuela’s main export was bananas this would not have happened. But oil alone cannot explain the timing or scale of the move. Venezuelan crude is extra-heavy as well as expensive and slow to bring online; it will not immediately transform US energy systems, nor rescue refineries that have already adapted to years without it. Instead, oil is the “prize” around which other agendas



cohere. These include future profits for US firms; modest downward pressure on oil prices; depriving China of a meaningful ally in America’s backyard; putting pressure on Cuba; and US domestic political signalling in Florida.

Each gain is small. But collectively Mr Trump could

justify a high-profile, theatrical – and unlawful – intervention even if the economic returns are incremental. Oil has been Venezuela’s curse as well as its blessing. Built on oil rents since the 1920s, Venezuela’s booms overvalued its currency and made it import-dependent. A political pact in the 1960s that

divided hydrocarbon spoils according to vote share amplified the damage, leaving Caracas dangerously exposed when oil prices collapsed in the early 1990s. That shock hastened a failed coup led by a young military officer, Hugo Chávez. Six years later, Chávez was elected president, pledging

to deploy oil wealth to reduce poverty and inequality.

This year history looks like it is repeating itself. In 2002, the Bush administration covertly backed a business-led coup that briefly toppled Chávez. The interim government dissolved democratic institutions and signalled a reversal of state-led oil sector reforms. But mass protests saw Chávez’s return. The episode proved formative.

It hardened the regime and entrenched an ideological state machinery. This treated political opposition as an existential threat and used oil cash to develop patronage networks and secure military support. When oil prices collapsed a year after Chávez’s death in 2013, his Venezuela collapsed with them: dollars vanished; food and medicine

became scarce; living standards tumbled. Ad hoc fixes followed – and corruption flourished. The gap between Mr Maduro’s “man of the people” image and the rising wealth of insiders finished off the regime’s legitimacy. Small wonder, then, that Mr Trump left Mr Maduro’s deputy, Delcy Rodríguez, in charge.

US sanctions worsened Venezuela’s slump, but lifting them alone will not restore growth: the industrial base has been hollowed out and skilled labour gone. If US oil majors take a larger share of revenues, Caracas will be more cash-strapped than before. It is hard not to recall Iraq – not because Venezuela is Iraq, but because of how the decision was made. No single rationale was decisive about Caracas.

Beyond Defining Terror



Terrorism serves a distinct audience and is fundamentally a political tactic that employs violence to convey messages, as articulated in the edited book “Terrorism: Patterns of Internationalisation” by the author and Ekaterina Stepanova. The essence of terrorism hinges on its visibility, aiming to capture attention beyond its immediate victims; the ultimate goal is to engage entities that can’t be confronted through traditional military means. The political underpinning of terrorism is evident in the actions of groups like Hamas and the Shining Path, whose violent acts are a means of asserting their presence.

The discussion emphasizes that there is no need to redefine terrorism. The atrocities exemplified, such as the actions of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) against Hindi speakers in Assam, illustrate how terrorists deliberately target populations to attract political attention. Historical examples underscore that the motives behind terrorism have remained consistent, whether in ancient Roman

spectacles or modern incidents like the Mumbai attacks on 26/11, where the Lashkar-e-Toiba aimed to demonstrate India’s vulnerability on the global stage. High-profile attacks, such as the assault on the Indian Parliament in December 2001, were strategically designed to send strong messages both locally and internationally. The terrorists’ choice of targets reflects a calculated effort to breach security and accomplish specific messaging objectives. The Baisaran massacre of 2025 further exemplified this tactic, highlighting the symbolic gestures intended to provoke and send direct threats to political leaders.

Ultimately, the text argues that a deep understanding of terrorism must lead to proactive strategies and decisive actions to counteract its effects. It advocates for a reassessment of the definitions of terrorism to inform tactical responses, with particular emphasis on learning from past events to formulate effective strategies in national security against the persistent threat of terror.

Emmvee among 12 stocks with fresh brokerage interest for upto 60% rise Adani Power, Groww,

New Delhi: Select stocks including Thyrocare Technologies, Billionbrains Garage Ventures (Groww), Skipper, Paras Defence, SAMHI Hotels, Canara Robeco AMC, Adani Power, Oswal Pumps, Leela Palaces Hotels & Resorts, Zydus Wellness, Emmvee Photovoltaic Power and Baazar Style Retail have seen fresh interest from the various brokerage firms, who have recently initiated their coverage on these stocks. The host of brokerages including Phillip Capital, Motilal Oswal Financial Services, Systematix Institutional Equities, Aditya Birla Money, Antique Stock Broking, BoB Capital, JM Financial Nuvama Institutional Equities, Nirmal Bang Institutional Equities, Ventura Securities and Jefferies. All stocks have ‘buy’ ratings on them with an upside potential of 60 per cent. Here’s what brokerage said on these stocks: Thyrocare Technologies Ltd is a pan-India diagnostic chain focused on a low-cost, high-volume B2B model with deeper domestic presence offering over 1,000 tests covering both routine and specialized tests. This enables it to run a faster-growing B2B diagnostic business at affordable prices, while earning industry leading margins, said Phillip Capital. “Unlike peers with significant B2C retail operations, Thyrocare runs a B2B-focused diagnostic business through the franchise-and-partnership route, with limited centralized processing labs and a larger focus on standardized preventive/wellness test packages. We initiate coverage with a ‘buy’ rating, valuing the stock at Rs 640, bridging the valuation gap with peers,” it said. Billionbrains Garage Ventures Ltd (Groww) has scaled rapidly to emerge as



the largest retail broking platform within almost four years of its launch. It held a market share of 26.8% in November 2025. Originally, a niche mutual fund platform, it now commands a meaningful market share in stocks and derivatives. Groww is well-positioned to compound earnings in a structurally underpenetrated Indian capital markets ecosystem, said Motilal

Oswal. “Groww has evolved into a full-stack investment platform spanning broking, commodities, MTF, credit, and wealth management, with 14.8 million active users across products by the end of 1HFY26. We expect Groww’s broking revenue contribution to dip to 67% in FY28 from 85% in FY25. We initiate coverage on the stock with a ‘buy’ rating and a one-year target of

Rs 185,” it added. Skipper is India’s largest manufacturer of transmission line (TL) towers, with installed capacity of 3,75,000 MTPA as of 2QFY26 end. With capacity now ramped up, a surge in export order booking is expected, said Systematix. Skipper is well positioned to benefit from the multi-year domestic T&D capex cycle, with Rs 9.15 lakh crore of investments planned over FY23-32, said Systematix. “It plans to nearly double its tower manufacturing capacity to 0.6 million TPA by FY29. It intends to increase its export revenue share to 50 per cent in 1HFY26 over the next 3-4 years. With an order book of Rs 8,800 crore as at 2QFY26 end and order inflow expanding at 22% CAGR, we estimate revenue/EBTIDA/PAT of 20%/24%/34% CAGR over FY25-28E” it added with a ‘buy’ and a target price of Rs 490. Paras Defence (Paras) is transitioning from a component-led defence supplier to a high value, system-oriented defence and space electronics company, anchored in optics & optronics and complemented by scalable defence engineering platforms. We believe Ebitda margins to further expand 55bps by FY28 from FY25 levels of 27.3%, said Aditya Birla Money. It combines deep design ownership under the IDDM framework, a diversified and expanding order book and a favourable sift in revenue mix towards higher-margin optical systems, positioning it for accelerating growth with sustained margin expansion over the medium term. This will result in revenue/EBITDA/PAT growth of 35%/36%/38% over FY25-28E, it said with a ‘buy’ rating with a target price of Rs 1,020.

IDFC First Bank Shares Trading near 52-week high



New Delhi: IDFC First Bank Ltd shares, which are trading near their 52-week high, have received a positive recommendation from global brokerage Nomura. Shares of the Mumbai-based private lender are set to hit a price target of Rs 105, according to the brokerage. This suggests a 25% upside from Tuesday’s closing price of Rs 84.78. The stock hit a 52 week high of Rs 87 on January 2, 2026. IDFC First Bank shares gained 1.75% to Rs 86.20 in opening deals on Wednesday. IDFC First Bank stock trades lower than the 5-day, 10 day, but higher than the 20-day, 30 day, 50-day, 100-day moving, 150 day, and 200 day moving averages. The banking stock rose 37.41 per cent in a year but lost 1 per cent in two years. Total 2.34 lakh shares of the firm changed hands amounting to a turnover of Rs 2 crore. Market cap of the firm rose to Rs 73,682 crore. The brokerage expects IDFC First Bank to record a 39% compound annual growth rate (CAGR) in core Pre-Provisioning Operating Profit from financial years 2026 to 2028. This performance is attributed to a projected reduction of 50 basis points in cost-to-assets, a 14 basis points improvement in Net Interest Margins (NIMs), and a 35 basis points decline in credit costs. These factors are expected to boost the bank’s Return on Assets (RoA) to 1.2% and Return on Equity (RoE) to 11.8% by the 2027 financial year. Nomura also highlights the bank’s transition from a wholesale-led lender to a granular, retail-focused model and the development of a robust liabilities franchise as key strengths. The bank’s fee income profile stands out, exceeding 2% of average assets and outperforming its peers. Analyst consensus reflects broad optimism about IDFC First Bank’s prospects.

Titan Company: Should you buy this Jhunjhunwala stock post Q3 updates

New Delhi: Shares of Titan Company Ltd are in focus on Wednesday after the Tata group firm said its revenue grew 40 per cent YoY in the December quarter, led by strong growth in jewellery. The jewellery business grew 41 per cent YoY led by average selling price (ASP) increase, gold exchange program, and strong wedding season. The growth in studded jewellery growth was in mid-twenties for the quarter. Rekha Jhunjhunwala held 5.32 per cent stake in Titan as of September 30, 2024. The stake in worth in excess of Rs 19,000 crore. JM Financial said overall standalone revenue for the Tata group firm is expected to grow 38 per cent YoY led by 40 per cent YoY growth in jewellery business (ex-bullion). “We expect jewellery EBIT margin of 10.8 per cent (ex-bullion sales; down 40 bps YoY adjusted for custom duty losses in the base). Overall, we estimate standalone Ebitda/PAT growth of 60 per cent/64 per cent YoY,” it said. Antique Stock Broking said the jewellery business recorded like-for-like growth in low thirties. Watches, eyecare and emerging businesses segments



delivered 13 per cent, 16 per cent and 14 per cent, respectively. Increase our estimates and maintain BUY recommendation with a revised target of Rs 4,500 (previously Rs 4,400), valuing the stock at 60 times P/E on 1HFY28 estimates,” Antique said. Centrum Broking said Titan’s Q3 updates were largely positive. “Buyer growth remained muted due to sharp gold price inflation; however, studded jewellery continued to witness buyer growth. Jewellery EBIT margins will remain

under pressure due to higher growth in gold vs stud jewellery. In the watches segment, the company sustained its double-digit growth momentum for the seventh consecutive quarter, driven by analog watches.” The brokerage said the eyewear business witnessed a sequential pickup in growth momentum despite ongoing store rationalisation. “Given the strong growth trajectory, we expect earnings upgrades for the stock and maintain a BUY rating,” it said.

Marwadi University is set to become the host venue for the prestigious VGRC

Kohima/Aizawl: Building upon the success of Vibrant Gujarat, Marwadi University is set to become the host venue for the prestigious Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conferences (VGRC). Organised by the Government of Gujarat, the conference will be scheduled from 11th to 12th January 2026. With the objective of taking not only Saurashtra but the entire state of Gujarat to global prominence in the field of education, the university has submitted a proposal of ₹1,000 crore investment MoU to the Education Department, Government of Gujarat. The proposed investment will support the development of state-of-the-art academic infrastructure, including new academic blocks with advanced laboratories, modern sports facilities, and next-generation hostels. Additionally, a dedicated 10,000 square feet centre for innovation and start-ups will be established, along with a separate academic block for continuing education aimed at working professionals and entrepreneurs. Emphasizing the theme “Vocal for Local”, VGRC will be organised across four zones of Gujarat—North, Saurashtra-Kutch, South, and Central Gujarat. The event is also set to witness global participation from countries including Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, and the Netherlands, along with organizations like JETRO, ICBC, USISPF, World Bank, and the Russian Federation. Expressing delight at this auspicious opportunity, Dhruv Marwadi, Trustee, Marwadi University, shared, “It is a matter of great pride for us to host the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conferences for the Kutch-Saurashtra region.” R.B. Jadeja, Provost, Marwadi University, shared, “We



are proud to contribute to Gujarat’s progress and the larger vision of Viksit Bharat@2047. VGRC embodies the true spirit of connecting local potential with global opportunities.” Over the course of two days, participants will engage in seminars, exhibitions, MoU signings, B2B-B2G meetings, buyer-seller meets, and vendor development programs. The itinerary will cover topics including AI, Digital Marketing, Sustainability, Circular Economy, Auto & Precision Engineering, etc. With a strong focus on key sectors including MSMEs, start-ups, skill development, tourism, culture, and food processing, the conference aligns with the visions of Viksit Bharat@2047 and Viksit Gujarat@2047.

IndusInd Bank reports deposit decline in Q3; loans fall 13%

New Delhi: Shares of IndusInd Bank Ltd were in focus in Tuesday’s trade, January 6, after the private sector lender released its quarterly business update for the December quarter after market hours on Monday. The stock was trading 1.83 per cent higher at Rs 916.45 on the NSE around 11:36 am, as investors assessed the operational performance and brokerage commentary. While the business update highlighted pressure on loan growth and deposits, brokerage firms largely maintained a longer-term constructive view, citing consolidation in FY26 and a recovery from FY27 onwards. IndusInd Bank reported a 13 per cent year-on-year decline in loans for the December quarter. Net advances stood at Rs 3.18 lakh crore, compared with Rs 3.66 lakh crore in the year-ago period. IndusInd Bank reported a 13 per cent year-on-year decline in loans for the December quarter. Net advances stood at Rs 3.18 lakh crore, compared with Rs 3.66 lakh crore in the year-ago period. Total deposits declined to Rs 3.94 lakh crore in the December quarter, down from Rs 4.09 lakh crore last year. However, deposits improved 1 per cent quarter-on-quarter from Rs 3.89 lakh crore at the end of September. Retail deposits also mir-



rored a similar trend, showing year-on-year pressure but modest sequential improvement. The lender’s CASA ratio stood at 30.3 per cent, down from 34.9 per cent a year ago and 30.7 per cent in the September quarter. The moderation in CASA continues to raise concerns around funding costs, especially in a competitive deposit environment.

Can FY26 Advance GDP estimate scale past 7.5% Check what the data means ahead of Budget

New Delhi: The first advance estimate of India’s FY26 gross domestic product (GDP) is due today. This number is crucial as it forms the base for all Budget 2026 calculations. The data will be released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI). FY26 real GDP expected at 7.5% The Reserve Bank of India, in its latest Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting held in December, forecasted FY26 GDP growth at 7.3%. In last year’s Budget, nominal GDP growth was assumed at 10.1%. The Union Budget is scheduled to be presented on Sunday, February 1. Once the GDP estimate is released, the government assumes a certain level of nominal GDP growth for the next year. This, in turn, determines how much fiscal deficit is feasible and how much tax growth can be expected. In simple terms, the higher the nominal GDP growth, the greater the potential tax collections. It is

also important to note that MoSPI is expected to announce a new GDP series with a revised base year. The Union Budget 2026 is set to be tabled in Parliament on February 1. This year, February Budget will follow tradition, with preparations underway for a February 1 presentation. Budget preparations are in progress, with the finance ministry holding consultations with key industry bodies and ministers from various sectors. This will be followed by the Halwa ceremony, which marks the start of the final and confidential phase of Union Budget preparation. India’s first advance estimate of FY26 GDP will serve as the base for Budget 2026 calculations. The estimate guides assumptions on nominal GDP growth, which in turn determines the fiscal deficit room and expected tax collections. The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is set to release the first advance estimate of India’s FY26 GDP today. We will bring you



all the updates, expectations, and analysts’ views on this crucial GDP data, which will form the basis for the upcoming Union Budget 2026.

Swiss bar in deadly blaze had missed six years safety checks

Switzerland: The Swiss bar where 40 people were killed in a fire at the New Year had not been subjected to any annual safety inspections since 2019, the mayor of the ski resort of Crans-Montana said on Tuesday.Swiss authorities have been searching for explanations for the blaze, which tore through the “Le Constellation” bar in the early hours of January 1. Most of the victims were teenagers.We are deeply sorry. We had no indication that the checks had not been done as requested,” Crans-Montana Mayor Nicolas Feraud told reporters, adding that bars in the town are meant to have such inspections each year.Prosecutors have said the fire was likely caused by sparking candles igniting the ceiling of the bar’s basement, which was covered in a foam material used for soundproofing.A video from New Year’s Eve 2019-2020 shared by Swiss broadcaster RTS showed revellers carrying similar sparklers in bottles as a waiter warns: “Watch out for the foam!”Reuters could not immediately verify the video. Feraud said his team was not aware this type of party had taken place there.Feraud said the “Le Constellation” had passed its last inspection in 2019. The soundproof foam on its ceiling was considered acceptable at the time, and a fire alarm was not required due to the bar’s size.These soundproof panels have never been inspected, as our safety managers apparently did not deem it necessary,” Feraud said.He said the law does not oblige authorities to verify such materials, but “the courts will have to determine whether this should have been done regardless”.Authorities are investigating the two people who ran the bar on suspicion of crimes including homicide by negligence. On Sunday, police said circumstances did not currently merit them being put under arrest, triggered the blaze had now been banned inside the town’s venues. Safety teams will immediately carry out extra inspections, he added.In addition to the 40 dead, at least 116 people were injured. The large number of victims has led to questions about whether the bar was overcrowded.

Minister visits Somaliland, angering Somalia

London: Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sara visited Somaliland on Tuesday on a trip that was denounced by Somalia, 10 days after Israel formally recognised the self-declared republic as an independent and sovereign state.Israel is the only country that has formally recognised Somaliland’s move to break away from Somalia, which described Israel’s decision on recognition as an “unlawful step” and said Scar’s visit as a “serious violation” of its sovereignty.In a statement on X, Sara said that he had held talks “on the full range of relations” with Somaliland’s president, Abdirahman Mohammed Abdullah, in the capital Hargeisa.“We are determined to vigorously advance relations between Israel and Somaliland,” Sara wrote on X, alongside images of him meeting the Somaliland leader at the presidential palace. Somaliland’s information ministry earlier said on X that Sara was leading a high-level delegation. It gave no further details but a senior Somaliland official told Reuters before the meeting with the president that the Israeli foreign minister was expected to discuss ways to enhance bilateral ties.Saar said Abdullah had accepted an invitation from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to make an official visit to Israel.Somalia’s foreign ministry said in a statement that Saar’s visit amounted to “unacceptable interference” in its internal affairs.Abdullahi said last month that Somaliland would join the Abraham Accords, a deal brokered by Washington in 2020 that saw Gulf states the United Arab Emirates — a close partner of Somaliland — and Bahrain establish ties with Israel.In a statement on Facebook,



Somaliland’s foreign ministry said: “Somaliland’s president thanked Israel and its citizens for their decision to recognize Somaliland, this will have a big influence on the economy and development of Somaliland.”Somaliland, once a British protectorate, has long sought formal recognition as an independent state although it has signed bilateral agreements with various governments on investments and security coordination.Israel’s decision to recognise Somaliland follows two years of strained ties with many of its closest partners over the war in Gaza and policies in the West Bank.Netanyahu has said Israel will pursue

cooperation in agriculture, health, technology and the economy. Following his visit, Saar said “local professionals” from Somaliland’s water sector would visit Israel in the coming months for training. Somaliland lies in northwestern Somalia, shares land borders with Ethiopia and Djibouti and sits across the Gulf of Aden from Yemen, from where Iran-backed Houthis have launched missile and drones at Israel since October 2023, when the Gaza war beganOmar Mahmood, a Somalia analyst at the International Crisis Group think tank, said Israeli engagement was probably driven by Somaliland’s strategic lo-

cation but that security coordination was possible without Israeli military installations there.Saar said on Tuesday that mutual recognition and the establishment of diplomatic ties was not directed at anyone. Somaliland has denied recognition allows for Israel to establish military bases there or for the resettlement of Palestinians from Gaza. Israel has advocated for what Israeli officials describe as voluntary Palestinian migration from Gaza.Reporting by Giulia Paravicini, Vincent Mumo Nzilani, Abdi Sheikh and Alexander Cornwell; Editing by Alex Richardson, Ros Russell and Timothy Heritage

Ukraine security guarantees to include binding commitments, draft summit statement says

Paris: Ukraine’s allies will agree that security guarantees must include binding commitments to support Kyiv in the case of a future armed attack by Russia, according to a draft statement prepared ahead of a summit in Paris.“These commitments may include the use of military capabilities, intelligence and logistical support, diplomatic initiatives, adoption of additional sanctions,” said the draft, which still needs approval by the leaders of the “Coalition of the Willing” of allies of Ukraine in Paris later in the day.Make sense of the latest ESG trends affecting companies and governments with the Reuters Sustainable Switch newsletter. Sign up here.U.S. President Donald Trump’s special envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump’s son-in-law Jared Kushner have arrived at France’s Elysee Palace for the summit, to be attended by more than 27 leaders. The meeting is meant to finalise as much as possible contributions to future security guarantees to reassure Kyiv in the event of a ceasefire with Russia, which invaded its neighbour in 2014 and again at full scale in 2022.The draft text underscores how discussions on security guarantees have advanced in recent weeks, even though Moscow has given no public sign that it would accept such arrangements.Until recently, much of the focus was on pledges of military aid for Ukraine’s forces and possible contributions to an international reassurance force.But diplomats say attention is now shifting to legally binding guarantees to come to Kyiv’s aid in the event of another attack by Moscow. The possibility of a military response is likely to trigger debate in many European countries, diplomats say.Kyiv has long said it cannot be safe without guarantees that are comparable to the NATO alliance’s mutual defence agreement, to deter Russia from attacking again. Moscow wants any peace deal to bar Ukraine from military alliances.President Volodymyr Zelenskyy will take part in the meeting in the French capital as part of broader efforts to put together a common Ukrainian, European and American position that could then be taken to Russia.These talks are meant to deliver more protection and strength for Ukraine. We are counting on our partners’



support and on steps that can guarantee real security for our people,”

Zelenskyy said on X as he arrived in France.Talks to bring the almost four-year conflict to an end have accelerated since November. However, Moscow has yet to signal willingness to make concessions after Kyiv pushed for changes to a U.S. proposal that initially backed Russia’s main demands.A senior European official said there was hope that firming up the coalition’s guarantees would also help cement U.S. commitments, which have been broadly

outlined in bilateral discussions with Ukraine.The draft statement for Tuesday’s meeting also said that allies will participate in a U.S.-led ceasefire monitoring and verification mechanism.“There will be a continuous, reliable ceasefire monitoring system. This will be led by the U.S. with international participation, including contributions from members of the Coalition of the Willing,” the draft statement said.The draft statement also foresees continued, long-term military assistance for Ukraine, as well as a multinational force for Ukraine.

Thirty-two Cubans killed during US attack on Venezuela

Paris: Cuba, a long-standing ally of Venezuela, has for years supplied Maduro with his personal security detail and has personnel throughout the Venezuelan military.Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel said the country had been providing protection to Maduro and his wife “at the request” of Venezuela. US spies had been monitoring Maduro’s movements for months before US forces struck, according to US General Dan Caine. Gen Caine said that they had learned where the former leader moved, lived, travelled, ate, and worked.The New York Times reported that the CIA had also recruited a “Venezuelan source” who it says informed the Americans of Maduro’s exact location. Many of those killed are believed to have been part of Maduro’s close security detail, who were with him at the time.Venezuela has not confirmed how many people were killed, but its armed forces have said that a “large part” of Maduro’s security team were among the casualties.An official statement from the Cuban government read: “Our compatriots fulfilled their duty with dignity and heroism”.The total death toll - according to an unnamed Venezuelan official cited by the New York Times - stood at 80 and was expected to rise. BBC News has not independently verified that report.In the days following the seizure of Maduro, questions have been raised over whether the Trump administration could consider a similar operation against Cuba, which, like Venezuela, has had decades of adversarial relations with the US. Speaking to reporters on Sunday, US President Donald Trump said military action would not be necessary because “Cuba is ready to fall”.He continued: “I don’t think we need any action. Looks like it’s going down. It’s going down for the count.”On Saturday, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio described Cuba as a “disaster” run by “incompetent, senile men”.“If I lived in Havana, and I was in the government, I’d be concerned - at least a little bit,” Rubio said.In July last year, Trump signed a memorandum imposing tighter restrictions on Cuba. reversing moves by his predecessor, Joe Biden, easing pressure on the Caribbean island nation.The White House said it would end “economic practices that disproportionately benefit the Cuban government, military, intelligence, or security agencies at the expense of the Cuban people.

Trump warns new Venezuelan leader

London: In several TV interviews on Sunday morning, Rubio defended the US’s military operation in Venezuela, stressing the action did not mean the US is at war with the South American country.We are at war against drug trafficking organisations. That’s not a war against Venezuela,” Rubio told NBC’s Meet the Press on Sunday morning.The secretary of state also told CBS that if Venezuela doesn’t “make the right decisions”, the US “will retain multiple levers of leverage to ensure that our interests are protected”.That includes the “quarantine” the US has placed on Venezuela’s oil, he said.We’re going to judge everything by what they do, and we’re going to see what they do,” he added.Trump also threatened Venezuela’s neighbour Colombia, in comments to reporters aboard Air Force One.He did not rule out military action against Colombia, saying “it sounds good to me”, and called Colombian President Gustavo Petro “a sick man”.Colombia is very sick, too, run by a sick man, who likes making cocaine and selling it to the United States, and he’s not going to be doing it very long,” Trump said.Maduro, who leads the United Socialist Party of Venezuela and has been in power since 2013, has frequently been accused of repressing opposition groups and silencing dissent in Venezuela, at times with the use of violence.He is widely seen by opponents within his country as well as by foreign governments as having illegitimately won Venezuela’s 2024 election.Venezuela’s left-wing leader and his wife, Cilia Flores, were captured at their compound and flown to the US, as part of a dramatic special forces operation in the early hours of Saturday that also saw strikes on military bases. The couple have since been charged with weapon and drug offences and are set to appear at a court in New York on Monday.Maduro has denied being a cartel leader and has accused the US of using its “war on drugs” as an excuse to try to depose him and get its hands on Venezuela’s oil.While US officials have said that no American troops were harmed in the attacks, Venezuela’s Defence Minister Vladimir Padrino said a “large part” of Maduro’s security team and “soldiers and innocent civilians” were killed in the US operation.When

asked why congressional authorisation wasn’t sought before the US operation in Venezuela, Rubio told ABC it “wasn’t necessary because this wasn’t an invasion”.He described it as a “law enforcement operation”, and said Maduro was arrested on the ground by FBI agents.You can’t notify Congress of an operation like this because “it will leak”, he added.Speaking to US media outlets, Rubio was asked if the US recognises Rodríguez as the legitimate president of Venezuela.He answered that “this is not about the legitimate president” as the US does not recognise the regime as legitimate.Some Democratic lawmakers have condemned the administration’s actions.House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries said the secretive military operation, which was conducted without approval from Congress, “was not simply a narcotics operation”.It was an act of war,” Jeffries told NBC’s Meet the Press.”This was a military action involving Delta Force, involving the army, apparently involving thousands of troops, involving at least 150 military aircraft, perhaps involving dozens of ships off the coast of Venezuela and South America.”Jim Himes, the most senior Democrat on the House intelligence committee, told CBS Face the Nation he had had “zero outreach” from the Trump administration, adding “no Democrat that I’m aware of has had any outreach”.In an interview with ABC This Week, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer questioned the legality of the US operation. Schumer said that while he believes Maduro is a horrible person, “You don’t treat lawlessness with other lawlessness”.We have learned through the years when America tries to do regime change and nation building in this way, the American people pay the price in both blood and in dollars,” Schumer said. Both Schumer and Jeffries vowed to support a resolution that, if passed in both houses, would prohibit Trump from taking any further action in Venezuela without Congressional approval.In a joint statement, the governments of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Uruguay and Spain said the US’s military actions “constitute an extremely dangerous precedent for peace and regional security and endanger the civilian population”. His comments to US magazine

The Atlantic came as the country’s deposed president Nicolás Maduro was set to appear in a New York court on Monday.

The US accuses Maduro, who is charged with drug trafficking and weapons offences, of running a “narco-terrorist” regime, a claim he denies.Rodríguez - who served as Maduro’s vice president - adopted a conciliatory tone at her first cabinet meeting on Sunday, offering co-operation with the US.We invite the US government to collaborate with us on an agenda of co-operation orientated towards shared development within the framework of international law,” she said.

Backed by Venezuela’s Supreme Court and the military, she will be sworn in as president on Monday in Caracas, at 08:00 local time (12:00 GMT).US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has insisted the US is not at war with Venezuela, after air strikes in Caracas on Saturday led to Maduro and his wife being taken into custody and transported to the USinterview with The Atlantic on Sunday, Trump said of Rodríguez: “If she doesn’t do what’s right, she is going to pay a very big price, probably bigger than Maduro.”He added that for Venezuela,”Regime change, anything you want to call it, is better than what you have right now. Can’t get any worse”.Donald Trump Nicolás Maduro shown after his arrest, wearing headphones and a blindfold, grey zipped jumperDonald TrumpTrump posted a picture of Maduro on board the USS Iwo Jima after his arrestOn Saturday, Trump had vowed the US would “run” the country until “a safe and proper and judicious transition” was possible.Trump also promised US oil companies would move into the country to fix infrastructure “and start making money for the country”.Despite the US president’s claims, Maduro’s allies remain in charge.The Cuban government has said 32 “brave Cuban combatants” died when US forces attacked and captured Maduro and his wife. Cuba - a longstanding socialist ally of Maduro - has announced two days of national mourning.Jeremy Bowen: Trump’s action could set precedent for authoritarian powers across globe.

Smriti Mandhana Turns Heads In Tarun Tahiliani Jumpsuit Worth 63,100

 Smriti Mandhana is no stranger to commanding attention, whether it's with her bat on the field or her fashion choices off it. Known for her powerful performances, the cricketer is now equally making waves online for her refined and confident style. Her latest appearance at a recent event is proof that elegance comes naturally to her. For the occasion, Smriti stepped out in a striking jumpsuit by celebrated Indian designer Tarun Tahiliani, styled by celebrity stylist Bornali Caldeiraa. Sharing images of Smriti on January 5, the designer described the look as a perfect balance of grace and strength, highlighting his signature foil jersey jumpsuit enhanced with delicate embroidery at the waist. Crafted in an ivory-gold foil-embossed jersey fabric, the ensemble features a deep V-neckline and a dramatic backless cut. Strategic side cut-outs sculpt the waist, while a cinched under-bust detail adds structure. Pearl and sequin embroidery elevate the waistline, and the fitted bodice flows into ultra-flared pants that fall effortlessly into a floor-length, waterfall-style hem creating a fluid yet powerful silhouette. The Classic Foil Jersey Jumpsuit worn by Smriti is available on the designer's official website and is priced at ₹63,100. Keeping things understated, Smriti let the jumpsuit do all the talking. She paired it with minimal jewellery dangling earrings, a bracelet, and a ring. Her hair was styled in a soft side part, left open with gentle waves for a relaxed finish. For makeup, she chose a clean, glowing look with feathered brows, soft brown eyeshadow, mascara-defined lashes, rosy blush, a pink-toned lip colour, and a subtle highlighter, perfectly complementing the elegance of her outfit.

Soha Ali Khan has always approached fitness with discipline and consistency, often giving her followers a glimpse into her workout routines and balanced lifestyle on social media. Ringing in 2026 with intent and intensity, the actor chose to kick off the year with a dedicated leg-day session at the gym, setting a strong, focused tone for the months ahead. In a video shared on Instagram, Soha is seen powering through a series of compound lower-body exercises, including squats, goblet squats, cable lunges, and Romanian deadlifts. Each movement is executed with controlled form, steady pacing, and visible concentration, highlighting her strength, stability, and training experience. Rather than rushing through reps, she maintains precision, making the workout as inspiring as it is effective. For her gym look, Soha opted for functional athleisure wearing a single-shoulder sports bra paired with high-rise tights and sleek training sneakers. The outfit was practical, comfortable, and perfectly suited for a demanding strength session. Still, it was her flawless technique and unwavering focus that truly stood out, reinforcing her reputation as someone who trains smart and with purpose. Sharing her motivation behind the workout, Soha wrote that her first session of the new year had to be all about legs. She described the four exercises as compound movements she genuinely believes in, noting that they engage multiple muscle groups and deliver long-term benefits. According to her, these are the kinds of workouts your “future self” will thank you for—especially when strength, balance, and mobility matter more than ever.

Want to try Soha Ali Khan's leg-day routine? Here's how it works:

Squats

Soha Ali Khan Starts 2026 With A Powerful Leg-Day Workout At The Gym



A foundational lower-body movement, squats target the glutes, thighs, and core. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, push your hips back, bend your knees, and lower down before driving back up to standing.

Goblet Squats

Performed while holding a dumbbell or kettlebell close to the chest, goblet squats help improve posture and balance. The added weight encourages better form while increasing muscle engagement.

Cable Lunges

Cable lunges introduce resistance and control to traditional lunges. Using a cable machine, step forward into a lunge while maintaining stability and alignment.

Romanian Deadlifts

This exercise targets the hamstrings and glutes. Holding weights in front of your thighs, hinge at the hips while keeping the back straight, then return to standing. Starting the year with a strength-focused workout, Soha Ali Khan proves that fitness goals don't need dramatic resolutions, just consistency, intention, and strong fundamentals. And honestly, her leg-day motivation is hard not to admire.

A 1-week social media break could boost your mental health

For young adults, cutting back on social media for a week resulted in a significant reduction in anxiety, depression, and insomnia in a new study published in JAMA Network Open. Trusted Source. Participants in the study reported 16% fewer anxiety symptoms, 24.8% fewer symptoms of depression, and 14.5% less insomnia. The study involved 373 individuals ages 18 to 24, each of whom was paid \$150 to participate. Of the cohort, 277 were female, 73 were male, 12 were non-binary, 9 were transgender, and 2 were listed as ‘Other’. Participants were allowed to reduce their screen time as they saw fit. They reduced their use across all platforms. However, Instagram and Snapchat were the platforms with the highest rates of continued use. Individuals were more likely to forgo TikTok than Instagram or Snapchat. Facebook and X were the platforms most likely to be visited less during the study. The study's findings join an ongoing conversation among experts regarding the effects of screen time and social media on mental health, particularly for young adults and teens. A meta-study published in June 2025 found widespread evidence that taking a break from social media can be beneficial in general. Social media, while it can help one connect with others, can also take an emotional toll if one is not cautious. “Upward social comparison,” said Gupta, “i.e., comparing oneself to idealized portrayals of others’ bodies and lives, contributes to low self-esteem, anxiety, and depressive symptoms.” With platform algorithms optimized to keep audiences engaged, many find themselves missing out on real-world experiences as they continue scrolling, “blunting the emotional benefits of actual interactions,” Gupta added. As those algorithms improve, it becomes increasingly likely that a focus on social media diverts attention from other, potentially more positive and productive real-life events.



Gupta also pointed out that physical activity becomes less likely when one is glued to a screen, resulting in the loss of mood-enhancing endorphins. Gupta cited the “displacement hypothesis,” which asserts that time spent in front of screens directly displaces time available for sleep. She explained, “Repeated notifications alter brain-reward pathways and reinforce the fear of missing out (FOMO), making it harder for individuals to disengage from devices, especially at night.” “Notably, studies show that mere ownership of a device or its presence in the bedroom, even without active use, is associated with poorer sleep outcomes,” Gupta added. Once online in bed, screen time “induces a state of cognitive and emotional hyperarousal. Engaging feeds, news, emails, and social interactions interfere with both sleep initiation and sleep maintenance.” There is also ample research indicating that the blue light emitted by mobile phone screens can impede healthy sleep, although some phone manufacturers have features that mitigate this somewhat. Therapist and counselor John Sovec, MA, LMFT, noted that, “When it comes to the concept of a digital detox, it is important to also recognize that electronic screens are a reality in the day-to-day life of most young adults.” “Parents,” he said, “can consider having open, honest conversations about their concern of overusage and collaborate with their kid to create a

screen usage plan. Explore with them a commitment for both of you to cut your screen time by 25%.” It may be possible to reduce screen time further once the initial adjustment is made and as time goes by, Sovec added. “Try implementing a no-screen hour after school or before bed, and fill the new free time with fun activities involving friends or family,” offered Sovec. “Instead of feeling like you need to constantly be focusing on social media and electronic entertainment,” he proposed, “choose a day to take off from screens and gadgets.” Despite widespread suspicions of harm, the impact of social media is a challenging area to study clinically, making it difficult to establish conclusive findings. “A randomized controlled trial,” Gupta explained, “would require participants to be assigned either to use or completely abstain from social media, while controlling for numerous confounders such as baseline mental health, personality traits, and offline stressors.” Gupta noted, regarding this study, that “We must be cautious when interpreting self-reported screening questionnaires, particularly in mental health research. Individuals might underestimate and underreport their symptoms.” Another issue with the study, she pointed out, is that the participants’ baseline social media use was less than 2 hours daily, which is far less than the average 4 to 5 hours typical of this age group. “This limits the generalizability of this data.”

How To Make Homemade Vegetable Stock: A Step-By-Step Guide



Homemade vegetable stock is one of the most versatile and rewarding staples you can prepare in your kitchen. It's the foundation of countless soups, stews, risottos, and sauces, and it adds depth of flavor without relying on meat or heavy seasonings. Making it at home not only ensures freshness and control over ingredients, but also helps reduce food waste by using vegetable scraps that might otherwise be discarded.

Store-bought stock can be convenient, but it often contains excess sodium, preservatives, or lacks the rich complexity of homemade versions. By simmering a mix of vegetables, herbs, and spices, you create a fragrant liquid that enhances any dish. The beauty of vegetable stock lies in its flexibility; you can tailor it to your taste, use what's available in your fridge, and even adjust the flavor profile depending on the cuisine you're cooking.

Ingredients (for about 2 liters of stock): 2 medium carrots, chopped | 1 large onion, quartered (no need to peel) | 1 celery stalk, chopped | 2 garlic cloves, smashed | 1 bay leaf | 1 sprig fresh thyme (or rosemary) | 3 parsley stems | ½ teaspoon black

peppercorns | ½ teaspoon coriander seeds (optional, for warmth) | 2 liters water | Salt to taste (optional; many prefer unsalted stock for flexibility)

Prepare the vegetables: Wash and roughly chop the carrots, onion, and celery. Precision isn't necessary since the vegetables will be strained out later.

Build the base: Place all vegetables, herbs, and spices in a large stockpot. Add the water and bring to a gentle simmer over medium heat.

Simmer slowly: Reduce the heat to low and let the mixture simmer uncovered for about 1.5 to 2 hours. The water should ripple gently, not boil vigorously. This slow ex-

traction allows the flavors to meld without clouding the stock.

Strain the liquid: Once reduced by about half, strain the stock through a fine sieve or cheesecloth into a clean container. Press the vegetables lightly to extract maximum flavor, but avoid mashing them, which can make the stock cloudy.



Samantha Ruth Prabhu makes a comeback to Telugu cinema with her husband Raj Nidimoru’s creation
Maa Inti Bangaaram



Mumbai: Samantha Ruth Prabhu continues to stretch her boundaries as an action actress following her spectacular roles in the Amazon Prime series Citadel and The Family Man 2. Samantha will allegedly undertake her action stunts with little to no assistance from body doubles in her most recent film, Maa Inti Bangaaram, which is her comeback to Telugu cinema after a break. The actress re-

vealed the teaser-trailer’s release date on Wednesday along with a new poster from the movie.Samantha is seen standing inside a bus in the new billboard while wearing a saree. Her fierce gaze conveys that she is prepared to confront the adversary.It’s interesting to note that Raj Nidimoru, Samantha’s husband, is the film’s creative force. On December 1, the pair tied the knot in a private ceremony at Co-

imbatore’s Isha Foundation. For this new endeavor, Samantha and Nandini Reddy are getting back together after their successful movie Oh! Baby. Diganth and Gulshan Devaiah are also members of the cast.Earlier in a chat, Samantha, who is also a producer on Maa Inti Bangaaram, discussed what went into the production.”We’re creating a place for compelling stories that stick with you long after the credits have rolled. According to Samantha, “Maa Inti Bangaram is born from that belief—it celebrates love, belonging, and the everyday values that hold us together.”Samantha noted, “My journey from actor to producer has been about growth with both learning and un-learning,” as she considered her experience as a producer. The goal has been to create stories that speak to the heart and transcend the frame.”For me, producing isn’t just about making movies; it’s about curating voices, working with various kinds of talent, and creating work that feels authentic and enduring while being sellable,” she said.Regarding her career, Samantha last appeared as a guest in Subham (2025).

Pulkit Samrat and Varun Sharma, the Fukrey pair, make a comeback with a mythical comedy

Mumbai: Rahu Ketu’s creators have unveiled a trailer that promises a deeper cosmic message while providing a glimpse into a movie where mythology blends with chaos and comedy. An unusual voyage fusing modern humor with old tradition is hinted at in the video.Piyush Mishra’s narration, which adds context and gravity, is a standout aspect of the trailer. Rahu and Ketu’s mythological origins are introduced in his unique voice. Before diving into a plot where those ideas clash with contemporary absurdity, it grounds the narrative on traditional beliefs. The film’s cosmic connotations are clearly linked to the use of folklore as a starting point. Varun Sharma and Pulkit Samrat, who lead the cast, have excellent on-screen chemistry and noteworthy comedic timing.”Fan-



tasy worlds have always fascinated me, so what truly excited me about Rahu Ketu was stepping into this colorful, chaotic universe rooted in comedy,” stated Pulkit in an official release. Being a part of that journey and witnessing legendary concepts come to life in an entertaining and approachable way was

truly delightful, especially for children.”The humor in Rahu Ketu is deeply situational and rooted in human flaws,” Varun continued. Not only do we make people laugh, but we also serve as a mirror, complete with chaos, insanity, and plenty of fun. The energy that propels the trailer and the movie itself is most-

ly derived from the interactions between the leads. Shalini Pandey plays a self-assured, energetic role. The moral foundation of the movie revolves upon her character.”Rahu Ketu has been one of the most fun journeys of my career,” Shalini remarked, reflecting on her experience. The process was immensely fulfilling since Vipul Vig has such a clear vision while allowing his actors to follow their own impulses. Zee Studios and Blive Productions supported the movie with such faith and enthusiasm that it really comes through on screen, and working with my fellow actors was a true pleasure. I can’t wait for people to see the movie.The attraction of the teaser is further enhanced by the supporting cast, which includes Amit Sial and Chunky Pandey.

Master Chef India 9 : A gentle simmer of comfort, culture, and storytelling



Mumbai: The ninth season of MasterChef India, an Indian culinary reality show, debuted on television on Monday, January 5. The show welcomed back its beloved celebrity chefs, Vikas Khanna, Ranveer Brar, and Kunal Kapoor, as judges, carrying on the same feelings and spirit that the format is known for. In addition to emphasizing speedy auditions, the first episode revealed a significant change for this season: competitors would compete in pairs.The episode, which lasted about

an hour, traveled from Delhi to Rajasthan and from Mumbai to Punjab in search of individuals who not only cook well but also stand for something greater. The program seeks out narratives, people who are passionate about a cause, and people who want to use food to highlight the beauty of their culture. In this way, MasterChef India stays true to its core values.The show is fundamentally still a reality television program that primarily targets viewers in the heartland. Every dish becomes

more than just food, and every episode veers toward emotion. The identical pattern is used in the season opener, which establishes the emotional tone right away.The first episode can only achieve so much in the absence of real competition and a more thorough investigation of invention or technique. Instead, it presents its contestants as individuals who are eager to shatter stereotypes: a chef from Bikaner who wants to demonstrate that age is no barrier for women showcasing their talent; a Maharashtra-based YouTube home cook who hopes her elaborate recipes will finally be taken seriously; and a father-daughter team that represents their small community’s cuisine. Master-Chef India aims to capture the richness and diversity of Indian culture through these tales. The concept is straightforward and has proven successful in the past, particularly in a nation that values emotionally charged narratives. Contestants are presented in a way that encourages viewers to select favorites, make early investments, and anticipate seeing their abilities develop even before the competition formally starts.

Rapper Flipperachi of FA9LA teases another hit song in Dhurandhar 2

Mumbai: Audiences recognized right away that Fa9la wasn’t just a background track when it played during Akshaye Khanna’s ominous entrance in Dhurandhar. Flipperachi, a singer-producer from Bahrain, became well-known in India as the song quickly spread from movie theaters to social media feeds, inspiring dance videos, response videos, and repeat plays.The musician, whose real name is Hussam Aseem, has found the fallout from Dhurandhar to be extremely overwhelming. Flipperachi stated, “To be honest, it’s crazy,” in an exclusive chat. Every day, my direct messages are exploding. I am unable to keep up with those who are simply tagging me in the song and finding it enjoyable. Thus, it has been an extremely bizarre period.Even if his celebration doesn’t seem to be over, he provided a more comprehensive exclusive update, suggesting that his connection to the Dhurandhar realm would continue until part 2.He first attempted to remain silent when asked if he was also working on Dhurandhar 2, which is scheduled for release next year, but eventually gave a hint. ”I guess there’s



something, but I was going to keep it a secret. He grinned broadly and said, “I wouldn’t want to tell you everything about it, but yeah, there might be something.When talking more about the song, Flipperachi didn’t realize how popular Fa9la had gotten in India right away. He almost unintentionally heard the news. He remarked, “I remember when they first told me, your song is booming in India, I was like, what?” He added that he didn’t realize the extent of the influence until much later, particularly after the song became inextricably linked to Akshaye Khanna’s villainous introduction.

Jeethu Joseph confirms the release window for the Malayalam version of Drishyam 3 with Mohanlal



Mumbai: The third installment of the beloved Drishyam franchise is scheduled to make a big-screen comeback. Jeethu Joseph discussed the long-lasting effects of the Drishyam series on viewers and himself while disclosing the release schedule. “Drishyam is a movie that has influenced lots of people,” the director stated while speaking at the ceremony. I’m still affected by it. You can therefore see the film in theaters during the first week of April without having any high expectations. The official release date will be revealed shortly. On January 30, a different film called “Valathuvashathe Kallan” would be released. I have no doubt that it would make a fantastic film. With both of its earlier installments, the Malayalam franchise, which revolves around Georgekutty’s unwavering attempts to defend his family following a murder committed in dire circumstances, has garnered critical praise and enormous box office success.The Hindi version of Drishyam 3 is scheduled to open in theaters in October, while the Malay-

alam version is preparing for an April release. Panorama Studios owns the rights to the Hindi movie, which will be directed by Abhishek Pathak, who earlier directed Drishyam 2, which starred Tabu and Ajay Devgn.However, the project recently gained attention due to rumors that Akshaye Khanna chose not to participate in the third round. Producer Kumar Mangat Pathak addressed the matter, telling The Times of India that the actor left the movie the day before Dhurandhar’s premiere. Pathak explained that money was not the only reason for Akshaye’s departure, stating that his fee had been renegotiated three times. He further disclosed that the production company was eventually compelled to file a lawsuit after Akshaye’s character, IG Tarun Ahlawat, stopped returning calls due to conflicts about the hairstyle.Although an official confirmation is still pending, Jaideep Ahlawat was signed for a part in the movie amid the controversy.On October 2, 2026, the Hindi version will be released in theaters.

Days Before the Wedding, Neena Gupta’s Fiance “Ditched” Her

Mumbai: Neena Gupta, who is renowned for leading an independent life, revealed a lesser-known aspect of her life. She defied social norms in the 1980s by having an unmarried child. She was a single mother raising her daughter, Masaba. But Neena wanted to get married before making that bold decision. Days before the wedding, her fiancé broke up with her.Neena remembered the man stepping back during a chat without giving a good reason.”I was engaged to a man who abruptly broke up with me. I imagined that I was pregnant and that the ring ceremony had already taken place. I went to Delhi to buy jewelry and clothes, and all of a sudden I received a call from him informing me that we would not be getting married at this time. He told me he needed to have his sinus surgery done when I asked what had happened,” Neena recounted.Six months after putting off the wedding, the same man proposed to her, which made things strange.”I believed that the operation might be performed at a later time, therefore it wasn’t even a serious problem. I still don’t know why the wedding was called off. His parents never told me what had transpired, despite my repeated inquiries. After six months, he returned and declared his desire to wed me. “F**k off,” I said. I no longer wish to wed you. Neena spoke openly. ”I asked him, ‘First tell me why you wanted to postpone the wedding,’ even at that point. I was not informed by him. Therefore, you have no idea what someone is going through. Let’s not judge others based on their choices since we must make decisions out of helplessness,” she stated.

The viral Karina Kubiliute, who was connected to Kartik Aaryan, has updated her Instagram bio

Mumbai: After his vacation photos from Goa went viral, Kartik Aaryan became the focus of internet rumors and excitement. The internet went crazy when Kartik was connected to a “mystery woman” in a Reddit thread. The lingering rumors have now been put to rest after the mysterious woman was identified and updated her Instagram bio. In her Instagram bio, Karina stated, “I don’t know Kartik, I’m not his gf, I’m on holiday with my family.”Currently studying in the UK, Karina Kubiliute is an 18-year-old Lithuanian student, while some Reddit users have also claimed that she is Greek.

Official confirmation of either detail is still pending. After astute social media users noticed striking parallels in the photos that Kartik and Karina shared, rumors started to circulate. Users pointed out that both photos included the same beach



loungers, matching towel designs, and even a volleyball court in the backdrop. Screenshots flooded Reddit with rumors that they were vacationing together, and the rumors quickly spread. When other internet users asserted that Kartik had been following Karina on Instagram prior to their im-

ages garnering public exposure, the rumors gained further traction.

Up until today, Kartik has not addressed the web rumors.Regarding his career, the actor most recently starred with Ananya Panday in the movie Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tu Meri. At the box office, the movie’s

December 2025 release was met with mixed reviews. His next appearance is in the romantic film Naagzilla: Naag Lok Ka Pehla Kaand, which also stars Sreeleela and Anurag Basu.

The latter is tentatively named Tu Meri Zindagi, according to unconfirmed reports.

After 19 years of marriage, Nicole Kidman and Keith Urban have finalized their divorce



Mumbai: Keith Urban and Nicole Kidman are legally unmarried and divorced.The Grammy-winning country singer and Oscar-winning actor’s 19-year marriage was dissolved on Tuesday by a Nashville, Tennessee, judge.

In a court document, the judge declared the couple’s asset and child custody arrangements adequate and approved their divorce.In September, Kidman filed for divorce. Most people were surprised by the superstar separation, but it was obviously planned for some time. On the day of her filing, every legal matter pertaining to assets and custody had been resolved and signed.Before a divorce may be finalized in Tennessee, couples with minor children must wait 90 days. Together, Kidman and Urban, both 58, have two teenage daughters. According to their divorce decree, they experienced “marital difficulties and irreconcilable differences.”According to the agreement they signed, Kidman would be the chil-

dren’s primary residential parent. It implied that they will continue to live in Nashville, where they have spent their entire lives. The document outlines a fairly equal distribution of their joint assets and declares that neither parent would require spousal or child support. Kidman and Urban, two of Australia’s biggest celebrities in recent years, got married in Sydney the year after meeting in Los Angeles in 2005. Throughout their two decades together, they were regulars on the red carpet, with Kidman going to music events like the Academy of Country Music Awards and Urban accompanying his wife to the Oscars. Even though the couple had openly and affectionately discussed several marital issues, there were still few obvious indications that a divorce was imminent.Urban’s marriage was her first, while Kidman’s marriage to Tom Cruise from 1990 until 2001 was her second. Kidman and Cruise also have two older kids.

Madhya Pradesh Court Challenges 100% Women Reservation in Nursing Colleges

New Delhi, Jan 07: The Madhya Pradesh government's nursing college recruiting campaign, which reserves all 286 academic positions for women, has been contested before the state High Court. The plea, which was submitted to the Jabalpur bench, claims that the action violates Supreme Court decisions regarding reservation limits and fundamental rights and unconstitutionally excludes male candidates. The Madhya Pradesh Staff Selection Board's recruitment announcement for its Group-1, Sub-Group-2 Combined Recruitment Examination 2025 offers women full reservation for all positions in government nursing institutes, including Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Sister Tutor. There are 218 Sister Tutors, 28 Assistant Professors, and 40 Associate

Professors among the 286 positions. There were no positions designated for male applicants. Naushad Ali and other Jabalpur residents filed the suit, claiming that the hiring procedure breaches Articles 14, 15, and 16 of the Constitution, which forbid sex-based discrimination and ensure equality before the law. Attorney Vishal Baghel argued on behalf of the petitioners that gender-based exclusion from teaching positions is not permitted by the Indian Nursing Council's (INC) guidelines or recruitment regulations. Additionally, he contended that the announcement is legally problematic because 100% reservation violates the 50% ceiling established by the Supreme Court in the historic Indra Sawhney ruling.

The High Court requested a response from the state administration during the



hearing on December 29 and mentioned that the deadline for applications is January 7. The petitioners told the court that male candidates would be permanently barred from applying if quick relief was not granted, making the ap

peal futile. The court then scheduled a follow-up hearing for January 7 and ordered the government to record its decision in writing within a day. The Staff Selection Board told the court during the hearing that a final po

sition will be explained on January 7 and that a decision had been made to include male candidates in the recruiting process. Justice Vishal Dhagat of the Principal Bench of the High Court is hearing the matter.

JNU returns to the national spotlight with anti-PM slogans

New Delhi, Jan 07: Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) has once again gained national attention following a protest on campus when contentious slogans were purportedly chanted against Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The incident, which happened late on January 5, prompted a police investigation, the university's administrative action, and strong political reactions. A group of students protested the January 2020 hostel attack event on the JNU campus, according to the university administration. Slogans purportedly mentioning the Prime Minister and the Home Minister were shouted throughout the protest. The dispute escalated after a video of the sloganeering became popular on social media. The demonstration took place one day after activists Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam in the 2020 Delhi riots conspiracy case were denied bail by the Supreme Court of India. In February 2020, protests over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) sparked violence in northeast Delhi that resulted in over 700 injuries and 53 fatalities. The administration of Jawaharlal Nehru University took a firm stance, denouncing the incident and said that students found to have raised "objectionable slogans" will face the "strictest disciplinary ac

tion." "The administration has promised strict action against students who raised objectionable slogans against the Prime Minister and the Home Minister," JNU said in a statement posted on its official social media account. Universities should not be permitted to become into hateful laboratories since they are hubs for creativity and new ideas. One essential right is the freedom of speech and expression. "Any form of violence, unlawful behavior, or anti-national activity will not be tolerated under any circumstances," the statement continued. Students implicated in this incident will face disciplinary action, which may include immediate suspension, expulsion, and permanent debarment from the university. According to university sources, guilty students may be suspended immediately, expelled, or in extreme circumstances, permanently barred. The security division of the university has formally asked that a formal complaint be filed. The department stated in a formal letter to the Station House Officer (SHO) of Vasant Kunj (North) that students affiliated with the Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) organized the program, which started at approximately 10 p.m. A complaint was received late in the evening, according to Delhi Police, who also stated that they are seeking legal advice.

Mustafizur Rahman of Bangladesh joins the Pakistan Super League following his IPL exit



New Delhi: After abruptly leaving the Indian Premier League, Bangladeshi fast bowler Mustafizur Rahman has found a new home in franchise cricket. The left-arm pacer will play in the next Pakistan Super League. The action coincides with broader conversations among cricket boards and event organizers following his IPL release. The Board of Control for Cricket in India requested that the Kolkata Knight Riders release Mustafizur, citing "developments all around." Mustafizur's dismissal was a major financial and political

decision because KKR had signed him for Rs 9.20 crore at the IPL auction after a bidding war with other teams. Even though the PSL draft has not yet taken place, the Pakistan Super League announced via its official social media account shortly after Mustafizur's IPL exit that he will participate in the upcoming event. Mustafizur will return to the PSL after an eight-year absence with the announcement of the draft, which is set for January 21. His most recent league appearance came while playing for the Lahore Qalandars. Growing doubt about Bangladesh's participation in the forthcoming T20 World Cup in India has coincided with Mustafizur's move to the PSL. Clarity on the issue was delayed since the International Cricket Council and the Bangladesh Cricket

Board were unable to hold the planned online meeting to address Bangladesh's concerns. Due to tense political ties, the BCB has voiced concerns about sending its team to India and has formally asked that its World Cup group-stage matches be moved to Sri Lanka. Bangladesh is now slated to play three games in Kolkata, including matches against England and the West Indies, and another match against Nepal in Mumbai. The ICC is currently considering a number of possibilities, from sending a BCB delegation to travel to India and evaluate the security situation to moving Bangladesh's matches to Sri Lanka. If a deal cannot be reached, a more drastic scenario—though still improbable—would be Bangladesh's withdrawal from the competition.

In the Maharashtra Tiger Reserve, 15 endangered Indian vultures were released

New Delhi, Jan 07: As part of its ongoing vulture conservation initiative, the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) released fifteen critically endangered Indian vultures at the Melghat Tiger Reserve in Maharashtra, according to officials. On April 23 of last year, the scavenging birds were moved from the Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre in Pinjore to the Somthana Range of Melghat in the Amravati district. They were then housed in a pre-release aviary to assist them adjust to the local environment, they claimed. On December 19, 2025, all of the vultures were fitted with GSM and satellite tags so that researchers could monitor their movements and survival once they were released back into the wild. In order to encourage the birds to emerge spontaneously, food was provided outside the enclosure and the aviary gates were remotely unlocked on January 2. This marked the beginning of the gentle release process. According to a statement from BNHS conservation biologist Bhaskar Das, the program encountered difficulties like scarce food supplies, the lack of a resident vulture population to guide the captive-bred birds, and the persistent presence of dangerous veterinary medications in the



environment." These challenges were addressed by establishing feeding stations and sourcing safe cattle carcasses through active partnerships with gaushalas," he stated. In front of assistant forest conservator Ganesh Tekade, BNHS director

Kishor Rithe and Somthana range forest officer Vinil Hatwar executed the release with assistance from BNHS employees. "Long-billed vultures have made Melghat their stronghold. Rithe stated, "We hope the birds will learn to live here again."

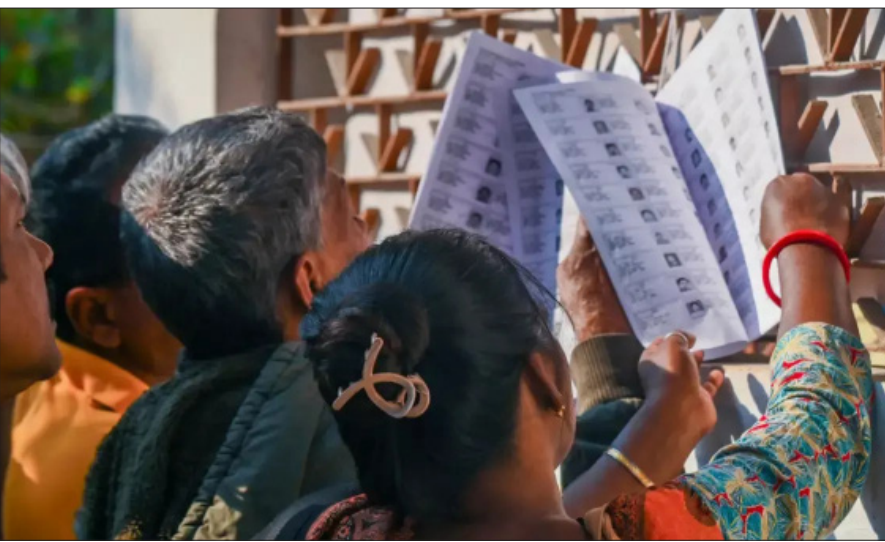
Nick Kyrgios leaves Brisbane early in 2026

New Delhi: In just 47 minutes, Aryna Sabalenka defeated Cristina Bucsa of Spain 6-0, 6-1 to secure her spot in the third round of the 2026 tournament. Nick Kyrgios, making his eagerly awaited singles comeback after over a year away, was unable to advance and lost in straight sets to American Aleksandar Kovacevic, while Sabalenka's strong victory marked a commanding start to her championship defense. After their recent exhibition match, both players came to Brisbane in the spotlight, but only Sabalenka was able to convert that focus into on-court triumph. After breaking Bucsa's serve three times, the world No. 1 quickly established herself and finished the first set in just 22 minutes. Sabalenka finished the match with 18 winners against just nine unforced errors, demonstrating her aggressive purpose. This is a noteworthy performance as she prepares for the Australian Open, which starts on January 18. "Definitely my serve worked really well," Sabalenka remarked following the game. "I performed a few serve-and-volleys, which is amazing. I'm really pleased with the level. I'm glad to be back. Playing in front of all of you is always fun for me. I gave a fantastic performance. Throughout the match, Sabalenka's serve proved to be crucial. She performed a clinical performance that equaled the fastest victory of her career and ended the match with an ace.

After SIR, 2.89 crore voters were removed off Uttar Pradesh's draft electoral records

New Delhi, Jan 07: After Uttar Pradesh's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) enumeration phase concluded, the state Chief Electoral Officer's (CEO) office reported that Lucknow had the most electors removed from the draft electoral roll, at 30.04%. The number of voters in the city decreased to 27,94,397 on January 5 from 39,94,535 on October 27, according to UP CEO Navdeep Rinwa. With 28,37,991 voters on October 27 and 20,19,852 on January 5, Ghaziabad had the second-highest deletion rate. Rinwa said on Tuesday that 18.70 percent of names were eliminated from the draft voter list before it was released during the state's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) Enumeration Phase. "The Uttar Pradesh draft electoral roll was released today following the SIR Enumeration Phase,"

Rinwa stated. There are 12,55,56,025 electors. From November 4 to December 26, the Enumeration Phase took place. Our BLOs visited each home and provided the voters with their enumeration form. They picked up the enumeration form once again after signing it. Over 2 crore 28 lakh 76 thousand people were either discovered dead or had multiple entries in the voter list. Additionally, it was discovered that many had moved from the place where they cast their ballots. He added that anyone can use the official website to input their EPIC number, which will provide information about the booth and the serial number associated with the name. "When we released the voter list today, 18.70 percent of those names had been eliminated after counting. Many people



in Uttar Pradesh are now anticipated to check their names in the draft voter list. A list of missing, shifted, dead, and duplicate voters (ASDDR) has also been provided. Filling out Form 6 with the provided declaration form will take one month. He said that

a booth-by-booth list of individuals whose names were present before to October 27 but were absent from the draft voter list has been announced, along with the explanation for their removal. After the state's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) Enumeration Phase

was finished, Navdeep Rinwa declared on Tuesday that the draft electoral roll would be published. The draft voter list has 2.89 crore names removed. Navdeep Rinwa told the media, "We received about 12 crore, 55 lakh enumeration papers."

Jay Shah's ICC Takes a Strict Position Regarding Bangladesh's Request

New Delhi: Following the controversy surrounding bowler Mustafizur Rahman, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) requested a site change, but the International Cricket Council (ICC) denied the request. In addition to asking the ICC to move its T20 World Cup 2026 matches to Sri Lanka, the BCB decided to outlaw IPL telecasting in the nation this year after Mustafizur Rahman was cut from the Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) squad for this year's IPL season. However, Bangladesh's request has been turned down by the top cricket body, which is led by Jay Shah. To stay warm in the bitter cold, some ground crew members even started little fires close to the arena. According to sources, the ICC informed BCB via a virtual call on Tuesday that it was turning down its request to play Bangladesh's

matches in Sri Lanka because of security concerns. The Bangladeshi men's national squad must travel to India to compete in the T20 World Cup, according to a warning from the ICC to the BCB. They risk losing points in the main event if they don't comply. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), the BCB, or the ICC have not yet released an official statement regarding Tuesday's call. This year's T20 World Cup is scheduled to take place in Sri Lanka and India from February 7 to March 8. Bangladesh, who are in Group C, will play three games in Kolkata to start their campaign. They will play the West Indies on February 7, Italy on February 9, and England on February 14. On February 17, they will travel to Mumbai to finish the group stage against Nepal.

With 600 runs in VHT, the India star speaks out against the NZ ODIs' rejection



New Delhi: Devdutt Padikkal, who is now playing in the Vijay Hazare Trophy, has already scored more than 600 runs. It appears that he performs best in one-day cricket. However, he is still unable to secure a berth in India's ODI squad. Even

though Padikkal often scores a lot in domestic cricket, it is still very difficult for him to break into India's elite white-ball system. Instead of focusing on lost chances, Padikkal has a very realistic view of the selection process, acknowledging that there is still fierce competition for spots on the team. Padikkal responded, "I wouldn't say it was disappointing," when questioned about being left out of the ODI series against New Zealand. "Yes, I was watching the choices to see what would emerge. However, I also realized that there are a lot of batters in the line and that everyone has been performing exceptionally well. Additionally, pushing into that one-day side is not that simple. He believes

that each professional athlete must possess this patience. And once more, you have to come to terms with that as a cricket player. He clarified, "And you have to just try to do your job and keep scoring runs." Padikkal's strategy had to change due to the explosive nature of the Indian Premier League (IPL), even if his basis was based on the conventional values of the longest format. It took careful planning and coaching to go from a classical style to a high-strike-rate T20 game. "My game was shaped in a particular way because I grew up wanting to play Test cricket. "Making those adjustments to ensure that I am keeping up with the current way T20 cricket is played was definitely a challenge," Padikkal said.

The left-hander credits Royal Challengers Bangalore's (RCB) support personnel for a large portion of this development. "To be honest, all the credit for that goes to DK (Dinesh Karthik) and Andy (Flower) at RCB," he went on, giving his coaches credit. "To be honest, they really helped me realize what I needed to accomplish by guiding me through that phase and teaching me how to maximize my game in the T20 format. I wasn't really considering playing that phase after 7-14 earlier since I was so accustomed to playing in the power play." The one-day format is about rhythm, whereas T20 is about maximization. In 50-over cricket, Padikkal believes he has discovered a natural "pattern" that enables

him to anchor innings while maintaining pressure. "That tempo and that rhythm are crucial in one-dayers. Fortunately, I discovered that early in my 50-over career, and I now have a solid understanding of how to construct my innings. And I believe it has greatly aided me in my 50-over career thus far," he said. His format's tactical strategy is straightforward but efficient: For me, it's quite simple. It all comes down to first battling that new ball, then reapplying pressure to the bowler and adjusting your game accordingly." It usually goes like that, especially if you are batting first. Additionally, you can definitely modify your strategy based on the score when you are hitting second," he said.

Message to Anushka Sharma? Fans spot Virat Kohli’s special cardigan at Mumbai airport

Virat Kohli’s Stylish Mumbai Airport Arrival Before ODI Opener

New Delhi: Former captain Virat Kohli returned to India on Tuesday, January 6, as he prepares to resume competitive action in the New Year. Kohli was spotted arriving at Mumbai airport, where he took time out to click selfies with fans. On arrival, Kohli was observed wearing a sharp black cardigan embroidered with a red heart and the letter ‘A’ beneath it, paired with a blue t-shirt and sky blue jeans. The distinctive emblem quickly became a subject of social media speculation, with many fans interpreting it as a subtle nod to his wife Anushka Sharma. The gesture resonated with supporters, underlining Kohli’s longstanding connection with his family and his public persona off the field. Wearing a broad smile, Kohli appeared relaxed as he was surrounded by paparazzi at the airport. Kohli and Anushka had welcomed the New Year in Dubai, where the celebrity couple were seen posing with restaurant staff on New Year’s Eve. Kohli also greeted his fans on New Year’s Day by sharing a photo from his holiday with Anushka. The couple posed for the picture with their faces painted in colours. “Stepping into 2026 with the light of my life,” Kohli wrote as the caption. Virat Kohli recently made his much-anticipated return to the Vijay Hazare Trophy, featuring in the List A competition for the first time in 15 years. The former India captain has looked in imperious touch so far, following up a superb 131 with a fluent 77 in his two outings. During this run, Kohli also crossed the 16,000-run mark in List A cricket, becoming the fastest player to reach the milestone and eclipsing Sachin Tendulkar’s record. Kohli’s domestic form comes on the back of an outstanding ODI series against South Africa, where back-to-back centuries and a fifty helped



India secure a 2–1 series victory. With the national squad set to assemble in Vadodara on January 8 ahead of the ODI series against New Zealand, Kohli arrived in Mumbai a day early. Kohli’s domestic form comes on the back of an outstanding ODI series against South Africa, where back-to-back centuries and a fifty helped India secure a 2–1 series victory. With the national squad set to assemble in Vadodara on January 8 ahead of the ODI series against New Zealand, Kohli arrived in Mumbai a day early.

Kohli was initially expected to play another Vijay Hazare Trophy match for Delhi on January 6 but opted against featuring in the game held in Alur, near Bengaluru. Shubman Gill will lead the Indian side in the three-match ODI series, marking his first appearance for India since being dropped from the squad for the T20 World Cup in February. Meanwhile, former captain Rohit Sharma was also seen training in Mumbai as he prepares for the upcoming ODI assignment against New Zealand. Like Kohli, Rohit featured in two Vijay Hazare Trophy matches last month in Jaipur.

pur. Virat Kohli’s return to the Vijay Hazare Trophy in 2026 has been highly impactful, signaling his renewed commitment to domestic cricket and providing a significant morale boost to both fans and teammates. His performances stood out, as he not only amassed centuries and maintained impressive consistency but also achieved milestones like becoming the fastest player to 16,000 List A runs and surpassing major records previously held by other legends. By excelling in the tournament and leading Delhi with crucial innings, Kohli demonstrated the importance of experienced players participating in domestic competitions to maintain their competitive edge and inspire young talents. His presence brought greater attention to the tournament, raised playing standards, and helped shape India’s squad selection and preparation ahead of the high-profile ODI series against New Zealand. Kohli’s form and attitude provided selectors confidence in relying on senior players for upcoming international fixtures, influencing selection conversations around other veterans and motivating rising stars like Shubman Gill and Shreyas Iyer as they returned to the squad. Kohli’s domestic form comes on the back of an outstanding ODI series against South Africa, where back-to-back centuries and a fifty helped India secure a 2–1 series victory. With the national squad set to assemble in Vadodara on January 8 ahead of the ODI series against New Zealand, Kohli arrived in Mumbai a day early. Shubman Gill will lead the Indian side in the three-match ODI series, marking his first appearance for India since being dropped from the squad for the T20 World Cup in February, upcoming ODI assignment against New Zealand. Like Kohli, Rohit featured in two Jaipur.

Sindhu, Satwik-Chirag make winning start at Malaysia Open



Kuala Lumpur: Returning from a prolonged injury lay-off, PV Sindhu began the new season on a winning note along with the formidable men’s doubles pair of Chirag Shetty and Satwicksairaj Rankireddy as they entered the second round of the Malaysia Open Super 1000 badminton tournament here on Wednesday. The 30-year-old former world champion, who had opted to withdraw from all BWF World Tour events in October last year to recover from a foot injury, defeated Chinese Taipei’s Sung Shuo Yun 21-14, 22-20 in a 51-minutes showdown of the women’s singles opening round. The 18th-ranked Sindhu showed no signs of discomfort as she overcame the lower-ranked Sung for the second time to take her head-to-head to 2-0 and set up a round-of-16 clash with world No.9 Tomoka Miyazaki of Japan. Miyazaki, a 2022 world junior champion, advanced after her 10th-ranked opponent, Sim Yu Jin of South Korea, retired hurt when the Japanese was leading 21-19, 1-2.

Sindhu has a 1-1 record against Miyazaki, whom she beat in the 2025 China Masters during their last meeting. Later, Satwik and Chirag, the former World No.1 pair, saw off Chinese Taipei’s Yang Po-Hsuan and Lee Jhe-Hue 21-13 21-15 in 35 minutes to also

enter the pre-quarterfinals. The Asian Games champions, who had reached the semifinals of the season-ending BWF World Tour Finals in December, will face Malaysia’s Junaidi Arif and Roy King Yap. The mixed doubles pair of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto, ranked 17th in the world, however, bowed out in the round of 32 after losing to the lower-ranked American duo of Presley Smith and Jennie Gai 15-21, 21-18, 15-21 following a hard-fought 56-minute contest. Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand, who won their second Syed Modi International Super 300 crown in December, put up a fight before losing 9-21 23-21 19-21 in a 66-minute battle against Indonesia’s Febriana Dwipuji Kusuma and Meilysa Trias Puspitarsari.

The Panda sisters, Rutuparna and Swetaparna also faced defeat, going down 11-21 9-21 in a lop-sided contest against second seeded Malaysians Pearly Tan and Thinaah Muralitharan. Earlier, Sindhu looked in fine fettle as she took an early 6-2 lead and did not look back, overpowering her opponent in the opening game. However, the second game turned out to a fiercely-contested one with Sindhu trailing 4-11 at one stage before finally levelling it at 13-all. But the unrelenting 28-year-old Sung kept pushing and took a three-point lead at 17-14 before the Indian again displayed her fighting qualities to claw back and level at 17-all. At 20-all, Sindhu grabbed the decisive last two points to win the contest. In the doubles competition, Satwik and Chirag came into the match with an overwhelming 6-0 record and the Indian duo stamped its authority to lead from start to finish in the opening game.

Kobbie Mainoo Resumes United Training Following Ruben Amorim’s Sudden Exit

Manchester: Manchester United midfielder Kobbie Mainoo was back on the training pitch on Tuesday, offering a timely boost ahead of United’s Premier League trip to Burnley at Turf Moor later this evening. The 20-year-old has been out of action since mid-December after suffering a calf problem prior to the away fixture against Aston Villa. His most recent appearance came as a substitute in the thrilling 4-4 draw with Bournemouth on December 15, after which he missed games against Newcastle United, Wolverhampton Wanderers and Leeds United. Mainoo’s return to training puts him back in contention, though a late call will be made on his availability. United’s preparations have been overshadowed by significant off-field developments, with the club opting to part ways with head coach Ruben Amorim earlier this week. The decision followed public criticism of the club’s board after the Leeds draw, comments that reportedly led to a breakdown in relations behind the scenes. Amorim leaves after 14 months in charge, having guided United to the UEFA Europa League final last season.



son. Despite the abrupt end to his tenure, United remain sixth in the Premier League with 31 points, and the club believes a change was necessary to maximise their chances for the remainder of the campaign. Former midfielder and academy coach Darren Fletcher has stepped in as interim manager and oversaw Tuesday’s session. Speaking ahead of the Burnley game, Fletcher said Mainoo would be closely monitored before a decision is taken. “Kobbie trained today, but we’ll see how he comes through tomorrow to decide whether he’s going to be in the squad,” Fletcher told MUTV.

United are also set to regain key midfield options, with Bruno Fernandes and Mason Mount both expected to be fit again. Fernandes had been sidelined with

a hamstring issue, while Mount was forced off at half-time against Newcastle. However, United remain without Matthijs de Ligt and Harry Maguire, and several players are still away at the Africa Cup of Nations. As United begin a new chapter under interim leadership, Mainoo’s possible return could add much-needed balance and energy to the midfield as they look to steady their season on the pitch. - Kobbie Mainoo was back on the training pitch on Tuesday, marking his first session since suffering a calf problem before United’s away fixture against Aston Villa in mid-December. - His last appearance came as a substitute in the 4-4 draw against Bournemouth on December 15, after which he missed matches against Newcastle, Wolves, and Leeds. The

midfielder’s recovery comes at a crucial time, with United struggling for consistency and missing several senior players due to injuries and international commitments. Ruben Amorim was dismissed on Monday morning, ending his 14-month tenure at Old Trafford. - Amorim’s reign was marked by tactical struggles and limited opportunities for academy talents like Mainoo, who featured in only 11 of 20 league games this season, all as a substitute.

Mainoo’s lack of playing time under Amorim had fueled speculation about a possible loan move, with Napoli among the clubs linked. - His return coincides with a fresh start under interim manager Darren Fletcher, who has taken charge for the Burnley fixture. - Fletcher confirmed that Bruno Fernandes and Mason Mount are also expected to return for the Burnley clash, providing a significant midfield boost. He emphasized caution in managing player workloads, especially with upcoming fixtures against Brighton and other top-flight opponents. - A late decision will be made on Mainoo’s availability, s

Pravin Kumari Overcomes Barriers

New Delhi: Pravin Kumari has spent most of her life standing her ground, first against social barriers in a remote Himachal Pradesh village, and now between the goalposts on the football field. A fighter by instinct, the 26-year-old Pravin has fought social resistance, limited resources and personal hardship to carve out her place in the game, emerging as one of the prominent faces of Himachal Pradesh’s growing women’s football movement, as per a press release from SAI Media. And at the Khelo India Beach Games 2026 being played at the Ghoghla Beach here in Diu, it was Pravin’s never-say-die attitude, despite taking a heavy knock on her leg, that helped the Himachal Pradesh women’s team register a come-from-behind win over hosts Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu in their debut women’s Beach Soccer match on Monday. The 26-year-old Pravin made several crucial saves to ensure that the hosts did not run away with the match at the start of the third quarter and inspired her team to score goals late in the match to football.

Raja Das Wins KIBG 2026 Gold, Impresses in Pencak Silat

Daman: When Raja Das is not practising his Pencak Silat skills, the 33-year-old helps his father supply ice to local blood banks in Kolkata. His father has worked for decades as a street hawker and Raja has been assisting him since childhood while also pursuing his dream of making a name for himself in the sport. The West Bengal player has consistently won medals at the national level over the years, and on Tuesday, he clinched a gold at the Khelo India Beach Games 2026 at Ghoghla Beach, beating defending champion and local favourite Prasanna Bendre, according to a release. A commerce graduate, Raja was always fascinated by martial arts and found his calling in pencak silat, a full-body fighting form that incorporates strikes, grappling, and throwing, as well as weaponry.

Since childhood, I have always been fascinated towards martial arts, but never truly liked karate and taekwondo. I was more inclined toward choreography, especially weapon choreography, and that’s how I landed in the sport. After a lot of research, found out Pencak Silat was part of the



2018 Asian Games,” said Raja, who began training for the sport back in 2017. Raja’s early ambition took him as far as Indonesia, where he was part of an advanced training camp ahead of the 2018 Asian Games. But the dream had to wait. “At that time, I had just started out and didn’t have any international exposure. I couldn’t qualify, but that experience showed me the level I needed to reach,” he recalled. Things took a turn for the worse when he lost his younger brother in a tragic train accident in Howrah in 2018, and he had to take on additional responsibility of supporting the family’s financial needs.

We do what we have to do to support the family. I assist

my father in his work, but the income is meagre. My family is fully supportive of my choice, and that’s where all the strength comes from,” said Raja, who has now also done a physical therapy course to help earn some extra money when he is not training for his competitions. The gold medal in Khelo India Beach Games 2026 in Diu is just another milestone in Raja’s chequered career. A silver medalist at the Khelo India Beach Games in 2025 and again at the 22nd National Games in Goa, the 33-year-old has steadily risen to become one of India’s most consistent artistic pencak silat practitioners. Raja Das has also dominated the domestic circuit, winning in Abu Dhabi.

Are clubs paying to play ISL? How AIFF is making Indian football cry

New Delhi: Indian football’s problems did not magically disappear with the confirmation of the 2025–26 Indian Super League season. If anything, they simply changed costume. The league is back on the calendar, yes, but behind the February kickoff date lies a far less celebratory reality. ISL clubs are now paying substantial sums just to exist in the competition, after being cornered into approving a single-leg home-and-away season driven more by urgency than vision. The pressure moment came during a high-stakes meeting involving the sports ministry and the All India Football Federation. Club representatives walked in expecting a discussion. What they got instead was a binary choice.



Say yes immediately, or risk drifting further into uncertainty. There was little time to consult owners, fewer answers to long-term questions. Shortly after, sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya announced that the ISL would begin on February 14, with all 14 teams taking part. That announcement solved one problem. It exposed several others. With the season already delayed and com-

mercial clarity still missing, AIFF placed a single operating model on the table: a single-leg home-and-away league, internally budgeted at Rs 24.26 crore. On paper, the numbers look reassuring. AIFF claims it will contribute 40 per cent, roughly Rs 9.70 crore Only 10 per cent of that amount is guaranteed AIFF money The remaining portion depends on landing a commercial partner exists.

Jemimah Rodrigues Confronts Stern Test as She Aims to Ace Enormous Delhi Capitals Captaincy Challenge

Jemimah Rodrigues Replaces Meg Lanning as Capitals Captain

New Delh: Jemimah Rodrigues has always been a player of immense promise, but pressure moments often exposed cracks. World Cup semi-finals, finals, even the 2024 WPL final, where she fell for a duck, highlighted the gaps in her game. Yet the last few months have rewritten her story. Jemimah has learned the art of thriving under pressure, turning past disappointments into fuel. The World Cup semi-final against Australia became her defining moment: two early ducks gave way to a scintillating century against a cricketing powerhouse Now, a new challenge awaits. Jemimah will lead the Delhi Capitals in WPL 2026, stepping into the colossal shoes of Meg Lanning. Lanning never won a title at DC but left behind a culture only a world champion could craft. The World Cup proved Jemimah’s batting mettle; the WPL will test her captaincy. Can she convert talent into leadership? The spotlight is on her as she seeks to balance skill, strategy, and temperament in equal measure. Jemimah may not have captained India at the highest level, nor led a WPL side, yet to call her inexperienced would be a



disservice. For those who follow women’s cricket closely, her leadership credentials were on full display in 2023. Jemimah may not have captained India at the highest level, nor led a WPL side, yet to call her inexperienced would be a disservice. For those who follow women’s cricket closely, her leadership credentials were on full display in 2023.

In the Senior Women’s T20 Challenge, she guided Mumbai to their first-ever title in the tournament’s history—a remarkable feat in a competition long dominated by Railways, who had won 11 crowns before. The final was a statement: Mum-

bai stormed to a six-wicket victory over Uttarakhand, asserting dominance with poise and clarity. But Jemimah’s impact went beyond strategy and field placements. She led from the front with the bat, finishing the tournament as the top scorer with 473 runs from 10 games at an average of 67.57 and a strike rate of 134.75, including a sublime 112 against Andhra. Her performance wasn’t just about numbers; it set the tone for her teammates, blending inspiration with execution. If leadership is measured by influence, temperament, and results, Jemimah’s Mumbai triumph proves she has the pedigree to command any side she leads.

For the past three seasons, Jemimah wasn’t at the helm, but she had a front-row seat to leadership in its finest form, rubbing shoulders with Meg Lanning. With five World Cups as captain to her name, Lanning is the very definition of cricketing authority—and three seasons in close quarters with such a charismatic leader leaves an imprint that goes beyond the scoreboard. Yes, last year I picked her brains a little on captaincy Over the last I spoke to her got the Capitals.