

Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma distributes MMMUA cheques to support beneficiaries

Sadiya, Oct 31: At a program held in Sadiya today, Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma gave checks totaling Rs. 10,000 in seed capital to 27,573 women who were beneficiaries of Self Help Groups (SHGs) under the Mukhya Mantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan for Sadiya Legislative Assembly. This is a significant step towards bolstering women-led entrepreneurship in Assam.

The program demonstrates the Assamese government's dedication to giving women financial autonomy and enabling them to significantly impact the rural economy of the state. In the Sadiya constituency, there are 12,31 urban and 26,342 rural beneficiaries of the abhiyan. Speaking to the recipients during a function at the playground of Sadiya Government Higher Secondary School, Chief Minister Dr. Sarma stated that the State government's goal with the Mukhyamantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan is to create a new Assam where women may live with dignity as the heads of their families. Over 40 lakh women participate in the state's approximately four lakh self-help groups, according to Dr.



Sarma. Since the establishment of these organizations, women have left their houses, connected with banks, been aware of different government programs, and started actively participating in community service. According to him, Assamese women's self-help organizations have been

repaying bank loans totaling about 21 thousand crore rupees. Since almost 90% of women have paid back their loans on time, Assam's self-help groups have gained praise across the country.

Other states have invited a number of groups to discuss their experience

es.

The "Lakhpati Baideus" of Assam have also been invited by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Delhi to take part in the Republic Day and Independence Day festivities. Assamese Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have participated in national shows,

showcasing and selling their items to widespread acclaim. According to the Chief Minister, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told Assam to work toward empowering its women in line with his plan to establish three crore "Lakhpati Baideus" in India during a meeting in Jorhat. Motivated by the Prime Minister's appeal, the State government established MMUA to assist Assamese women in achieving financial independence following careful consultation with prosperous female entrepreneurs.

Dr. Sarma emphasized how women have bolstered the state economy and their families by participating in self-help groups. The Chief Minister brought up the accomplishments of Monika Das, a member of the Borshi Self-Help Group from Sonowal village No. 1, citing instances from the Sadiya constituency. She started a shoe and sandal company with the help of the State Livelihood Mission and a loan of one lakh rupees obtained through the group's bank connection. According to a press release, she now makes roughly 8,500 rupees a month, raising her family's level of living.

In Brief

Accident

Nagaon: On Thursday, a tragic incident in Barhampur, Nagaon district, resulted in the deaths of two individuals who slipped into a septic tank under construction. The accident occurred when a construction worker, identified as 35-year-old Sayed Razak Mohammad (alias Bhaiti), slipped into the tank while removing wooden boards and succumbed to asphyxiation.

In a bid to rescue him, 40-year-old Mantu Bordoloi, a homeowner and sub-inspector with Assam Police, also fell into the tank and lost his life. The community is mourning the loss, particularly as Bordoloi left behind a wife and young child. The local police and SDRF collected the bodies for post-mortem examinations, and an inquiry is currently being conducted to determine the incident's circumstances, leaving the community in deep shock.

Kohima mourns murdered Basketball Star

Kohima: The Kohima District Basketball Association (KDBA) held a candlelight vigil at the D. Khel Basketball Court in memory of a 22-year-old athlete, who was found dead in Kohima, suspected to be a murder. The athlete was a notable player, winning gold at the Nagaland Olympics 2022 and competing in the Under-23 National Basketball Championship. KDBA president Khrielasakuo Keretsü expressed grief and called for a thorough investigation, condemning the violence that took her life. The bereaved family thanked the community for their support, while emotional messages from local sports organizations urged authorities to expedite the investigation and ensure justice.

Zubeen Garg's last film

Guwahati: An emotional wave swept across Assam as fans gathered for the premiere of Zubeen Garg's final film, *Roi Roi Binale*. The event was both a celebration and a mourning, with theaters packed from early morning, particularly in Guwahati where devotees formed long queues. Fans expressed their grief and admiration, sharing heartfelt tributes to the late singer-actor. In Kokrajhar, excitement was palpable as audiences anticipated the first screenings, leading to sold-out shows and additional screenings due to high demand. The deep emotional connection between Zubeen Garg and his fans was evident as they honored his legacy, marking a significant moment in Assamese culture.

Royal Global University's fifth convocation concludes



Guwahati, Oct 31: The Assam Royal Global University (RGU) celebrated its Fifth Convocation in Guwahati, honoring 1,967 graduates, including 32 Ph.D. recipients and 1,093 undergraduates. Distinguished degrees were awarded to notable figures: Dr. Naresh Trehan received a Doctor of Science, Sanjiv Gonenka and Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi were honored with Doctor of Letters, and Mahesh Agarwal received a Doctor of Law. Assam Governor Shri Lakshman Prasad Acharya urged graduates to embody compassion and unity while praising the university's alignment with the National Education Policy. The event featured speeches from notable guests, the presentation of awards, and the recognition of academic excellence, including the Chancellor's Gold Medals awarded to Deep Deka and Tanmayee Devchoudhury. Chancellor Dr. Pansari expressed a vision to nurture future leaders for India by 2047, emphasizing environmental consciousness.

Arunachal Pradesh University holds first convocation, women shine with majority of top honors

Itanagar, Oct 31: In a landmark moment for higher education in Arunachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh University in Pasighat held its first-ever convocation ceremony for the 2023-25 batch, marking a proud milestone for the state's first public university.

The ceremony celebrated the achievements of its inaugural graduates and placed a strong spotlight on the academic success of women students. Governor and Chancellor Lt Gen (Retd.) KT Parnaik presided over the ceremony and congratulated the graduating students for their hard work and dedication.

He urged them to pursue their goals with purpose and discipline, reminding them that education is a lifelong pursuit. Among the five gold medal recipients, Lemsang Bangyang from the Department of Education received the prestigious Chancellor's Gold Medal with a remarkable CGPA of 9.30 — the highest in the batch. A standout feature of the convocation was the strong performance of women students, who made up over 66% of the successful graduates. Calling it a major step in social transformation, Governor Parnaik



remarked, "Educate a woman, and she educates the whole family, in fact the whole state," emphasizing the university's growing role in empowering young women in the region. Addressing the gathering, the Governor encouraged the university to enhance industry connections, update courses to meet emerging job demands, and prepare students to be "work-ready and world-ready." He also suggested the introduction

of Tribal Studies as a department and recommended starting a community radio station to strengthen community linkages and outreach. Vice-Chancellor Prof Tomo Riba highlighted the progress made by the young institution, while acknowledging current challenges, including 48 vacant teaching posts. He announced plans to open nine new departments, extend academic reach by affiliating government

colleges in Peyong and Kanubari, and deepen community involvement by adopting Anganwadi Centres and supporting TB patients. Local MLA Tapi Darang, Education Commissioner Amjad Tak, senior officials, BRO representatives, military personnel, and academic and community leaders attended the ceremony, making it a significant event for the state's educational landscape.

Academia and civil society organizations urge granting RAMSAR status to the Roumari-Donduwa wetland complex

Tezpur, Oct 31: A one-day workshop on "Conservation of Wetlands of Laokhowa Wildlife Sanctuary, Kaziranga Tiger Reserve" was held on 26th October, 2025 at Nowgong Girls' College. The event was jointly organised by the Centre for Sustainable Development, Nowgong Girls' College, and the Kaziranga Tiger Reserve (KTR) to deliberate on strategies for conserving the Laokhowa wetlands and their vital role in maintaining biodiversity. The workshop, moderated by Dr. Smarajit Ojah, OSD, Directorate of Higher Education, Assam and Ashish Saikia, Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Nowgong Girls' College, brought together more than 60, researchers, educators, conservationists, students, and forest officials to discuss collaborative measures for the protection and sustainable management of wetland ecosystems. Dr. Sonali Ghosh, IFS, Director of Kaziranga Tiger Reserve, delivered the keynote address, mentioned that Laokhowa and the adjoining Burhachapori wildlife sanctuaries were buffer components of the Kaziranga Tiger Reserve and functioned as connectivity corridors for wild animals migrating between Kaziranga-Orang landscape.

Following this, Dr. Nilutpal Mahanta,

Senior Manager, WE Foundation, India, made a presentation on "Methodology of Documenting Avian Species of Wetlands." A detailed presentation on the Rowmari-Donduwa Wetland Complex was delivered by Dr. Smarajit Ojah, Neeraj Bora, Research Scholar, Nagaon University, and Chiranjib Bora, Research Scholar, Gauhati University. Dr. Bhuvan Chandra Chutia, Assistant Professor, Department of Zoology, Nowgong University, and Bipul Kr. Bora, Associate Professor (Retired), Department of Botany, ADP College presented perspectives on the roles of Educational Institutions, students and civil society in conservation of wetlands of the region. Dr. Pranab Jyoti Bora of WWF-India and filmmaker Prasanta Kr. Bordoloi spoke on the unique birdlife and wetland ecology of Laokhowa and the wider Kaziranga landscape. Dilwar Hussain of the Laokhowa-Burhachapori Wildlife Conservation Society urged declaring the Rowmari-Donduwa complex a Ramsar Site, highlighting its ecological vulnerability and need for habitat restoration. Noirita Priyadarshini of Tezpur University noted that the Rowmari-Donduwa Wetland Complex meets eight of nine Ramsar site criteria due to its rich biodiversity and value for migratory



birds. A video compilation by Suhashini Handique, M.Sc. student, Gauhati University, was screened during the session, featuring interviews of renowned birders, Prachi Mehta, Sujon Chatterjee, Dr. Udayan Borthakur, Dr. Rajeev Basumatary, Anuj Saikia, and Bitupon Kolong, among others, who highlighted their field experiences and observations on the rich avifaunal diversity and thriving wetland ecology of the Rowmari-Donduwa area, which were recorded by them as expert enumerators during the recently concluded 6th Waterbird Bird Census 2025, conducted in Kaziranga Tiger Reserve. India's Ramsar network now spans over 13.6 lakh hectares, covering prominent sites such as the Sunderban Wetland (West Bengal), Chilika Lake

(Odisha), and Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan), along with new additions like Gokul Jalashay and Udaipur Jheel in Bihar. As of October 2025, India hosts 93 Ramsar sites, making it one of the leading Asian countries in wetland conservation. The Rowmari and Donduwa Wetlands in Laokhowa WLS span 2.5-3 sq km, hosting over 120 bird species, including globally threatened ones like the Knob-billed Duck, Black-necked Stork, and Ferruginous Pochard. Dr. Kulen Ch. Das, Principal of Nowgong Girls' College, also delivered a concluding address, appreciating the proactive involvement of students and researchers and reaffirming the College's commitment to sustained wetland conservation efforts.

Kohima mourns murdered Basketball Star



Kohima, Oct 31: The Kohima District Basketball Association (KDBA) on Wednesday held a solemn candlelight vigil at the D. Khel Basketball Court in memory of a 22-year-old woman athlete, whose tragic death has shocked the sporting fraternity and the wider community in Nagaland. Her body was found below her residence at Old Ministers Hill in Kohima on October 25, 2025, in what authorities suspect to be a case of murder. The late athlete was a promising basketball player who had represented Nagaland with distinction. She won gold at the Nagaland Olympics 2022 and also competed for the state in the Under-23 National Basketball Championship earlier this year, earning admiration for her skill and dedication. Addressing the gathering, KDBA president Khrielasakuo Keretsü expressed deep grief and anger over the loss, describing her as more than just a player.

"She did not just play the game; she was the heart of the game. A tragic act of violence stole a bright light from our world," he said. Keretsü condemned the brutal incident and urged law-enforcement agencies to conduct a thorough investigation and ensure the culprits face the strictest punishment. "We strongly condemn this inhumane act," he said, pledging that the association would continue fighting against "the darkness that took her life." Speaking on behalf of the bereaved family, Lawrence Solo extended gratitude to the community for their support during this painful time. Emotional messages of condolence from the Nagaland Basketball Association and Kohima District Cricket Association were read, with both organisations urging the authorities and the SIT to expedite the probe and bring the perpetrators to justice with transparency and urgency.

Bihar MLAs' new HT caste database to track the election pulse

Patna, Oct 31: As Bihar approaches the polls in November, HT is launching a comprehensive caste database of the state's legislators, documenting 3,629 MLAs elected across 15 assembly elections from 1962 to 2020.

Given the significance of caste in Bihar's political landscape, the database provides granular details down to each sub-caste or jati, moving past broad social categories like Scheduled Castes (SC), Other Backward Castes (OBC), or upper castes. This initiative is particularly timely following the Bihar government's 2023 caste survey, which presented a detailed breakdown of the population at the jati level.

The database omits MLAs elected from constituencies that became part of Jharkhand after the 2000 bifurcation and similarly adjusts for constituency changes around the 1977 delimitation.

Data was sourced from the Bihar Vidhan Sabha's archive, the Election Commission of India's statistical reports, and various official and historical records, necessitating months of meticulous research and fieldwork. Validation involved interviews with over 10 MPs and MLAs who had won elections prior to 1990,



HT is introducing a caste database for Bihar's legislators, comprising 3,629 MLAs from 1962 to 2020, aimed at improving political analysis prior to the November elections.

significantly aiding in verifying uncertain caste details.

Bihar's caste and sub-caste diversity, alongside regional variations, complicates the accuracy of this database, and while efforts have been taken to ensure reliability, minor errors may persist. HT's data journalism team plans to leverage this database for in-depth journalism that explores the intersections of society and politics in Bihar throughout the electoral campaign and post-election analysis.

Fund-raiser and Wayanad district collector Siddaramaiah: Ashoka

Bengaluru, Oct 31: The opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) criticized Karnataka's Chief Minister Siddaramaiah over a social media promotion by the Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation (KSTDC) for a tour package to Wayanad, Kerala.

The BJP leader, R Ashoka, questioned the motivations behind the post, which suggested that Wayanad offers both thrill and tranquility through activities like trekking and waterfall chasing. Ashoka accused Siddaramaiah of misusing state resources for Wayanad, stating that he quickly approved significant financial aid for the district while neglecting northern Karnataka,



which has suffered from flooding and crop losses. He asserted that the chief minister's actions seemed more like "high command appeasement" than genuine governance, expressing anger that financial support is funneled to Wayanad while

urgent relief for affected northern districts is absent.

C.T. Ravi, another BJP leader, echoed this sentiment, suggesting that KSTDC should redirect its promotional efforts to destinations within Karnataka instead of promoting tour-

ism in Kerala. However, fact-checker Mohammed Zubair countered these criticisms by highlighting that similar promotions for Wayanad had occurred during the previous BJP government's tenure, sharing evidence of past KSTDC posts.

In response, Congress MLC Saleem Ahmed dismissed the BJP's concerns as politically charged and criticized them for focusing on trivial controversies, citing prior mocking of initiatives like the Shakti scheme that benefits women. The Karnataka state tourism department has yet to issue any comments regarding the criticisms raised by the BJP.

Five luxury tents gutted as fire engulfs resort in Rajasthan's

Jipur, Oct 31: A fire erupted at a luxury tent resort in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, late Thursday, causing panic among tourists but resulting in no casualties. The blaze, which originated around 9 PM during a music event, destroyed five tents and was exacerbated by strong desert winds. Resort staff and tourists attempted to extinguish the fire before fire services arrived approximately 30 minutes later. Valuable furnishings were damaged, and tourists, mainly from Maharashtra, were relocated to other tents. Local residents criticized the district administration for the absence of a fire tender, typically stationed nearby during peak tourist season. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

State to contest HC's decision to remain on public event curbs

Bengaluru, Oct 31: The state cabinet convened on Thursday to make significant decisions regarding recent high court rulings and administrative measures. A central decision was reached to appeal against the high court's stay on a government order that required prior approval for public events in government-owned spaces. Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil indicated that this decision came after thorough discussions within the cabinet.

Additionally, internal reservations were addressed, with a proposal for the Chief Minister, alongside the Social Welfare Minister and relevant officials, to draft a bill for discussion in an upcoming cabinet meeting. However, no formal discussion on this matter occurred due to previous meeting cancellations. The cabinet granted approvals for sever-



al key projects, including a budget of ₹360 crore for the construction of 2,200 new classrooms in government schools, to be managed by the Public Works Department (PWD). The execution will differ by division, with district-level oversight from local officials.

Another initiative, the Karnataka Strengthening Coastal Resilience and Economy (K-SHORE) project, received administrative approval of ₹20.47 crore for hiring a technical and management consultant. The cabinet also sanctioned

the issuance of a request for proposal under the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurements Act for this project, authorizing the Karnataka Eco Restoration Society to complete the agreement process with the selected bidder and to engage in a contract with the World Bank. Moreover, the cabinet approved the development of four existing ports—Karwar, Old Mangaluru (Bengre side), Old Mangaluru (city side), and Malpe—under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, utilizing a Repair, Oper-

ate, Maintain, and Transfer (ROMT) framework to enhance operational efficiency and local employment, ultimately stimulating economic growth.

Lastly, a land allotment of 1,457.8 square meters in Mandya for constructing a Congress Bhavan was approved, alongside a decision to lease 9 acres and 38 guntas of land in Kolar district to the Gas Authority of India Limited for the establishment of a Compressed Bio Gas (CBG) plant, which will manage significant amounts of organic waste from local municipalities. This land will be leased at a nominal rate for a duration of 25 years.

Cong pays tributes to Indira on death anniversary

She taught us that India's self-respect is the most important thing

New Delhi, Oct 31: On the occasion of the 41st death anniversary of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Congress leaders, including Rahul Gandhi and Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, paid homage at Shakti Sthal and her memorial at 1, Safdarjung Road.

Kharge described her as "the epitome of courage" and acknowledged her significant contribution to preserving India's unity, calling her a "symbol of resilience, courage, and visionary leadership" whose dedication to the nation's progress remains an enduring inspiration. Rahul Gandhi, in a heartfelt message, referred to her as "Bharat ki Indira," highlighting her unmatched fearlessness and teaching about the importance of India's identity and self-respect.

Congress leader Jairam



Ramesh reminisced about an extraordinary outreach trip Indira Gandhi undertook in 1977 to support families affected by caste violence, citing it as a crucial moment in her political revival. He noted that just a day after this outreach, she met with her former political rival Jayaprakash Narayan, illustrating her ability to bridge divides.

Ramesh lamented her assassination by her bodyguards in 1984, underscoring her commitment to India's sovereignty and integrity, which she paid for with her life. K.C. Venugopal, another Congress leader, reflected on her lifelong dedication to the freedom struggle and her leadership during challenging times. He reaffirmed the party's commitment to honor her vision for India.

The official Congress X handle also expressed heartfelt tributes, acknowledging her as a figure of strength and leadership who continues to inspire millions. Indira Gandhi remains a central figure in India's political history, noted for her unparalleled contributions and sacrifices for the country.

RSS All-India all India executive board meeting begins

Bhopal, Oct 31: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is holding a three-day all-India executive meeting in Kachnar city, Madhya Pradesh, inaugurated by RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat and Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale. The first day's discussions focused on organizing over one lakh Hindu conferences nationwide. A total of 407 attendees, including top RSS leaders and regional representatives, are participating. The meeting is planned as a closed session to address various topics, including the preparations for upcoming campaigns and commemorative events for significant anniversaries. Tributes were also paid to influential figures who recently passed away and to victims of various disasters across the country.



Modi claims that Nehru is keeping Patel from fully integrating Kashmir

New Delhi, Oct 31: Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during a speech commemorating the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in Ekta Nagar, Gujarat, articulated Patel's aspiration for the complete integration of Kashmir into India, comparable to his successful unification of over 550 princely states.

Modi criticized Jawaharlal Nehru for obstructing this vision, asserting that the division of Kashmir resulted in a prolonged period of suffering for the nation due to the Congress party's historical failures. He highlighted Patel's philosophy that emphasized the importance of action over historical narration, claiming that Patel's policies played a pivotal role in shaping India's post-independence trajectory.

Modi expressed concerns about ongoing threats to India's unity, pointing to foreign infiltrators as a significant issue that previous governments had ignored, citing a propensity for vote-bank politics. He called for a decisive national campaign to eradicate such infiltrators, declaring a commitment to safeguard India's demographic integrity and internal security. Furthermore, Modi pledged to combat Maoism, attributing the Congress party's problems to a 'slave mentality' inherited from



British colonial rule.

He commended Patel's role as a fundamental architect of India's national integration and pledge on Rashtriya Ekta Diwas to uphold his vision of a unified and resilient India. Modi's remarks not only paid homage to Patel's historical contributions but also sought to galvanize public sentiment towards a collective fight for national integrity and self-reliance, positioning the current government's policies as a continuation of Patel's enduring legacy.

Montha resulted in 5,625cr in losses: Naidu

Lucknow, Oct 31: Day after his comment regarding Bihar, Khesari Lal Yadav questioned Prime Minister Modi about the state's development in comparison to Gujarat. Concurrently, Andhra Pradesh reported significant damages from Cyclone Montha, estimating losses at ₹5,265 crore, with agriculture sustaining ₹829 crore in damages and the roads and buildings sector accounting for ₹2,079 crore. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu emphasized the importance of advance planning and swift responses in minimizing cyclone impact.

He detailed measures such as geotagging households and rapid power restoration, noting that supply was reestablished within three hours this time, whereas it previously took nearly ten hours. Naidu commended the dedication of officials and field staff for their effectiveness in road clearance and coordination among departments. The damage report will be submitted to the Central Government for assistance, with officials advised to assess crop conditions quickly in the most affected districts. In Telangana, CMA. Revanth Reddy held a video conference to discuss relief operations in flood-impacted areas and prioritized the safety and rehabilitation of affected individuals. Preliminary assessments reported severe damages, particularly in Warangal and Nalgonda. The CM also stressed the importance of swiftly relocating soaked paddy and ensuring the protection of farmers' stocks. An aerial survey of the damaged regions is scheduled to facilitate further assessment of the situation.

"Silent Nitish" and "26-second presser": Congress is taken aback by the NDA Bihar manifesto launch

Patna, Oct 31: As the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) unveiled its manifesto ahead of the Bihar assembly elections, senior Congress leader Ashok Gehlot expressed concern over the brevity of the announcement, noting it lasted only "26 seconds". The event included key figures such as Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Chaudhary, BJP President JP Nadda, and several Union ministers. Gehlot criticized the NDA for what he termed a "dangerous sign for democracy," questioning Kumar's absence from speaking about the manifesto and calling for the NDA to present a comprehensive account of their governance during the past two decades. Gehlot dismissed the NDA's manifesto as a "string of lies" and suggested that the hasty conclusion of the press conference indi-



cated a lack of commitment to the manifesto's promises. He stated that not allowing Kumar to present the manifesto was a sign of disrespect toward the people of Bihar, further emphasizing that the short duration of their press briefing was unprecedented. The upcoming elections are crucial, with the NDA and the Mahagathbandhan (grand alliance) set to compete on November 6 and 11, with results expected on November 14. The NDA, which includes the BJP, JD(U), LJP, HAM(S), and RLM, is contesting seats equally be-

tween the BJP and JD(U) at 101 each, with other parties competing for fewer seats. In terms of policy proposals, the NDA's manifesto pledges over one crore government jobs, the establishment of a "mega skills centre" in each district, financial support of up to ₹2 lakh for women, and initiatives aimed at the welfare of extremely backward classes. It also promises a legal guarantee for the minimum support price (MSP) for farmers, showcasing a range of ambitious commitments for the Bihar assembly election scheduled for 2025.

Chittoor mayor murder A court in Andhra Pradesh sentenced five of the convicted to death

Chittoor, Oct 31: On Friday, a sessions court sentenced five individuals to death for the murders of Chittoor Mayor Katari Anuradha and her husband, Katari Mohan. The couple was killed in a brutal attack inside a municipal corporation office in 2015.

The court identified the prime accused as Chandrasekhar, along with GS Venkatachalapathi, Jayaprakash Reddy, Manjunath, and Venkatesh. The horrific incident occurred in Novem-



ber 2015 when the assailants entered Anuradha's chamber, opened fire at close range, and proceeded to stab the couple. Both victims were severely injured; Anuradha sustained significant

injuries to her face and abdomen, leading to her death en route to the hospital. Mohan was subsequently taken to the Christian Medical College hospital in Vellore, where he also succumbed to his injuries. The attack was executed in the middle of the day, amplifying its shock value and public outcry, particularly as Anuradha was a member of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP). The court's ruling reflects the severity of the crime and the impact it has had on the community.

SC rejects chief secretaries' virtual presence for sleeping over orders on stray dogs

New Delhi, Oct 31: On November 3, the Supreme Court (SC) mandated the appearance of chief secretaries from states and Union territories (UTs) to explain non-compliance with the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules, 2023, addressing ongoing issues related to stray dogs. The court, emphasizing personal accountability, rejected requests for virtual appearances, indicating that the authorities seemed to be disregarding its directives. The SC's disapproval stemmed from most states and UTs failing

to submit compliance reports regarding ABC implementation, despite a three-month deadline set in August. The court summoned the chief secretaries for personal explanations and exempted only Telangana and West Bengal, which had complied. Justice Vikram Nath highlighted the potential for international embarrassment due to repeated incidents involving stray dogs, signaling that non-compliance could result in consequences. The Supreme Court has been involved in monitoring dog management



practices to align public safety with humane treatment of strays, requiring sterilization and vaccination efforts rather than mass capture. Following a series of dog-bite incidents, including a tragic death, the court modified earlier directives to ensure

humane handling of stray animals, calling for a uniform framework across the country. Additionally, the SC ordered the creation of dedicated feeding spaces for stray dogs and stipulated that animal welfare organizations and individuals must finan-

cially contribute to municipal efforts aimed at improving conditions for these animals. This intervention reflects the court's ongoing attempts to balance animal welfare and public safety amidst growing concerns regarding stray dog management.

■ No virtual appearances were permitted by the court, which emphasized the necessity of physical presence. The court expressed disappointment over the government's inaction despite having rules in place.

Mizoram needs ‘Double-Engine Government’ to boost growth, says Jitendra Singh



Aizawl, Oct 31: Union Minister Jitendra Singh has argued that Mizoram requires a “double-engine government”—with the same party in power at the Centre and in the state—to accelerate development and ensure the smooth execution of welfare schemes. Speaking at the BJP office in Aizawl on October 29, Singh said alignment between the state and central governments would help Mizoram gain faster access to national programmes and financial support. “When a state government is not aligned with the ruling party at the Centre, people are often deprived of benefits from central schemes,”

Singh stated, urging voters to elect BJP representatives to bring what he described as a stronger development push. Singh, who is Minister of State for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, asserted that BJP-ruled states have performed better in governance and growth compared to states led by other parties. The minister expressed confidence that the BJP would secure victory in the upcoming Dampa Assembly bypoll, adding that the party is steadily strengthening its position even in Christian-majority Mizoram, traditionally dominated by regional parties and the Con-

■ Union Minister Jitendra Singh emphasized the need for a “double-engine government” in Mizoram, advocating for alignment between the state and central government to enhance development and welfare scheme implementation.

gress. The by-election, scheduled for November 11, was necessitated by the passing of sitting MNF MLA Lalrintluanga Sailo in July. Reaffirming the Centre’s commitment to the Northeast, Singh said the NDA government has placed a high priority on the region’s development, citing improved connectivity, infrastructure projects, and social welfare initiatives. Singh, on a two-day campaign tour for BJP candidate Lalhmingthanga in Dampa, asserted that significant changes have been evident in key sectors over the past decade. Five candidates are contesting: Vanlalsailova (Zoram People’s Movement), R. Laithangliana (Mizo National Front), John Rotluangliana (Congress), Lalhmingthanga (BJP), and K. Zahmingthanga (People’s Conference).

Accident

Nagaon, Oct 31: Two people died in a terrible tragedy on Thursday in Barhampur, Nagaon district, after slipping into a septic tank that was still under construction. The Barhampur locality is still feeling the effects of the catastrophe. Local sources claim that a construction worker slipped into the septic tank in the morning while attempting to remove the wooden boards. Despite his best efforts, the worker—later identified as 35-year-old Chalchali resident Sayed Razak Mohammad alias Bhaiti—died from asphyxiation. Tragically, Mantu Bordoloi, a 40-year-old homeowner and Assam Police Sub-Inspector, too fell into the septic tank while attempting to save the worker. In a tragic event, Bordoloi lost his life, prompting widespread grief in the vicinity. The bodies were collected for post-mortem examination immediately after the police and SDRF were notified. Two families are devastated, with Bordoloi leaving behind a wife and a young child. An inquiry is underway to investigate the circumstances of the incident, as the community remains in shock.

153 crore rupee construction scam exposed at Tezpur University

Tezpur, Oct 31: Along with the prolonged protests continuing inside Tezpur University, it has become imperative to take action against all those involved regarding the corruption incidents that have occurred within the university, possibly requiring investigation by a high-level agency like the CBI. Notably, apart from cases where various positions were inherited from husband, wife, to children within the university, recently the scandal that occurred under the pretext of housing construction in Tezpur University is shocking. After the university failed to honor artist Zubeen Garg, students accused teachers and staff of corruption, exposing financial irregularities and a ₹153 crore construction scam during ongoing protests. It is noteworthy that on May 29, 2019, according to the agreement between Tezpur University and APWD, construction work for a total of nine buildings, including student hostels and classrooms, costing Rs. 153.71 crore under project 09 (Nine), was carried out. It is further noted that, as per the terms, APWD was entrusted with the work according to the instructions provided against the loan received from the Higher Education Finance Agency (HEFA) for this construction, without forwarding it to the Central Coordination Department. APWD managed the project for the university, from design



to execution, through M/s Sri Gautam Construction Company Ltd. However, due to substandard work and missing materials in Lachit Hostel and nine houses, the project’s condition became deplorable and was even halted once. On August 18-19, 2023, for the first time, and on November 6-7, 2023, for the second time, a third-party institutional committee was formed to review the progress and standards of the buildings, although based on the committee’s observation, not a single report was sent to the State Public Works Department on November 30, 2023. The poor state of Lachit Hostel after one rainy season exposes the substandard work, yet higher authorities remain indifferent despite ongoing protests. It also raises questions whether the entire circle, responsible for various financial irregularities throughout the university, is involved.

Mass Joining Drive: 125 Families Enter BJP in Golaghati CM Saha

Sepahijala, Oct 31: At a joining program hosted by the Golaghati Mandal, 487 voters from 125 families formally joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), marking a noteworthy breakthrough. Chief Minister Dr. Manik Saha, who oversaw the joining process, gave the new members a hearty welcome into the party.

Speaking to the crowd, Dr. Saha said that the BJP’s dedication to development and sound governance continues to motivate people throughout Tripura and that he was pleased to see the public’s confidence in the party expanding. “We are working with the commitment to ensure all-around development of all the Janajati communities in the state,” CM Saha wrote in a post on X. We have already raised the Janajati Samajpatis’ honorarium in this way. The only BJP that treated the Maharajas with the respect they



deserved. As a sign of their faith in the BJP, members of Janajati communities are joining us throughout the state, motivated by PM Shri Narendra Modi Ji’s development initiatives. spoke to the Karyakartas today at a Golaghati Mandal-organized joining event in

Sepahijala district’s Pekuarjala ADC Village, where 487 voters switched to the BJP. The BJP’s grassroots presence in the area will be strengthened by the immigrants’ engagement, party leaders and local karyakartas said in a warm welcome.

Senior Assam Police officers reshuffled in major transfer drive

Guwahati, Oct 31: The Assam government has announced a series of significant transfers affecting senior police officers across the state, marking another round of administrative changes within the force. Padmanabh Baruah, an IPS officer from the 2016 batch who was serving as Deputy Commissioner of Police (West) in Guwahati, has been appointed as Senior Superintendent of Police for Udalguri district. The transfer, which partially modifies an earlier notification from October 17, 2025, takes effect immediately upon his assumption of charge, replacing Pushkin Jain who has been transferred. Meanwhile, Pushkin Jain, a 2017-batch IPS officer, moves from his position as SSP Udalguri to head the Crime Investigation Department’s unit dealing with crimes against women and children in Guwahati. He will take charge of the existing vacancy in this critical role. In another development, the transfer of Jagadish Das, a 2004-batch APS officer who was moved from Senior Superintendent of Police in Sadiya to Deputy Commissioner of Police (Border) in Guwahati on 17 October, has been kept in abeyance pending further orders from the department. The government has also posted Anjan Pandit, a 2010-batch APS officer who previously commanded the 7th Assam Police Battalion in Charaikhola, Kokrajhar, as Senior Superintendent of Police for CID (Zonal-I) in Guwahati. This appointment modifies an earlier notification dated October 17. All transfers have been ordered in the interest of public service by the Home and Political Department through notifications dated October 30, 2025.

Monoculture threatens ecological balance, Meghalaya Governor warns at NEHU conference

Shillong, Oct 31: Meghalaya Governor Chandrashekhar H. Vijayashankar has cautioned against widespread monoculture practices, warning that over-reliance on single-crop cultivation risks causing severe ecological imbalance. He stressed that safeguarding biodiversity is essential not only for the environment but also for long-term economic stability and sustainable rural livelihoods. Speaking at the 48th All India Botanical Conference and International Symposium on Plant Diversity and Bioeconomy at North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU) in Shillong, the Governor said biodiversity remains the bedrock of India’s bioresource wealth. He urged policymakers, scientists, and institutions to focus on sustainable agricultural models that protect genetic diversity and encourage community-led conservation. Highlighting Meghalaya’s natural strengths, Vijayashankar pointed out that the state’s turmeric leads the country with a curcumin content of 8.9%, underscoring its potential in India’s growing bioeconomy. “We must promote agricultural systems that strengthen biodiversity and support local livelihoods,” he said, calling for science-driven policies and grassroots participation. The Governor commended NEHU’s



leadership in advancing botanical research and encouraged the university to enhance its role as a centre for innovation and collaboration. He also invited visiting delegates to experience Meghalaya’s ecological and cultural richness, saying the state presents a successful model of balancing development with nature conservation. The three-day conference, running from October 29 to 31, marks the first time the prestigious Indian Botanical Society has held its annual meeting in the Northeast. The inaugural session included the lighting of the ceremoni-

al lamp and the felicitation of distinguished botanists from across India. Indian Botanical Society president Prof. S.K. Barik described the event as a milestone for the region, while NEHU Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof. Umdor and Society Secretary Prof. Seshu Lavana praised NEHU’s expanding research ecosystem. Guest of Honour Prof. Anil Tripathi, Director of IISER Mohali, announced Meghalaya’s adoption of the CSIR Aroma Mission to promote livelihoods through aromatic crops, and called for a unified national syllabus for plant sciences.

Security Forces Nab Woman Rebel in Imphal East

Imphal, Oct 31: Security forces in Manipur have arrested a woman operative of the proscribed Kangleipak Communist Party (City Meitei) faction during an intelligence-led operation at Wangkhei Andro Parking area in Imphal East district. The arrested individual has been identified as Wahengbam Kiran Singh, 45, officials confirmed on Wednesday. Authorities said the arrest was made as part of a wider crackdown on extortion networks and underground activities in the state. Over the past weeks, security forces have increased combing, cordon, and search operations across several parts of Manipur, with a focus on tracking down individuals linked to insurgent groups active in the region. In a separate counter-insurgency operation conducted the same day, personnel seized a cache of arms and ammunition from Ngairangbam Maning Loukon in Imphal West district. The recovered items include a modified .303 rifle with a magazine, two country-made single-barrel guns, a pistol with a magazine, two hand grenades without detonators, and multiple rounds of ammunition. Officials said the sustained operations reflect a coordinated effort to dismantle militant networks and curb unlawful activities that have troubled the state for years. Security agencies emphasised that such efforts aim to restore peace, enhance public safety, and address armed underground movements that continue to pose challenges to law and order in Manipur.

Tragedy Strikes as Two Girls Drown in Boko

Boko, Oct 31: Two little girls sadly drowned in a pond close to their home on Thursday, casting a shroud of melancholy over Tamuldi hamlet in Boko. The deceased have been identified as Zainab Khatun, 6 years old, daughter of Tamser Khan of Tamuldi, Boko, and Meherjan Nessa, 7 years old, daughter of Mohibur Rahman of Shyampur, Darrang. They were cousins. Meherjan had come to see her maternal uncle’s home in Tamuldi, according to local sources. The two kids unintentionally fell into a neighboring pond when they were playing together in the afternoon.

Tripura Shines with 4 MW Rooftop Solar Achievement

Agartala, Oct 31: Tripura has taken a major step in its clean-energy journey, crossing the 4 megawatt mark in solar power generation under the Pradhan Mantri Suryaghar Muft Bijli Yojana. According to the Tripura State Electricity Corporation Limited (TSECL), a total of 16,965 households have registered for the rooftop solar scheme, with 1,210 homes already equipped with solar panels. These households are collectively generating 4 MW of renewable energy, helping reduce the state’s dependence on traditional power sources and supporting efforts toward sustainability and energy security. Officials say the transition to solar is not only meeting domestic electricity needs but is also bringing income



opportunities for many residents. So far, 187 consumers have begun selling surplus energy back to the power grid, earning a combined

₹53,514, which has been directly credited to their bank accounts. For many families, sunlight has turned into a source of both power and additional

earnings, marking a quiet revolution in household-level energy production. TSECL officials noted that this shift reflects a dramatic change in Tripura’s rural-power landscape. “Earlier, sunset meant darkness in many homes. Today, the same sun is the source of both light and income,” the corporation said, adding that solar adoption is helping communities build resilience and self-reliance. The corporation described the initiative as a model of people-driven sustainable development, emphasising that the impact extends beyond power poles and transmission lines. Instead, it represents a transformation rooted in households and aspirations, lighting homes while empowering residents financially.

Earthquake and fire safety drills held in Kokrajhar

Kokrajhar, Oct 31: In line with the Great Assam School Shakeout programme initiated by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) in Kokrajhar conducted earthquake and fire safety drills in 447 schools. The initiative aimed to enhance disaster preparedness among students, teachers, and staff through exercises like the ‘Drop, Cover and Hold On’ technique and mock fire response demonstrations. The program also included awareness sessions to train disaster management committees and ensure efficient response capabilities, promoting a disaster-resilient community.

BUSINESS

Medanta to build 400+ bed super-speciality hospital in Guwahati with Rs 500 cr investment

Guwahati: Medanta – Global Health Limited, one of India’s leading private multi-specialty tertiary care providers, has announced plans to establish a state-of-the-art, 400+ bed hospital in Guwahati. The new facility, coming up at Industrial Estate, Sarusajai along NH-27, marks a major push in Medanta’s mission to expand advanced healthcare access in underserved regions. With an estimated investment of ₹500 crore, the hospital will provide tertiary and quaternary care across a wide range of super-specialties.

Founded by Padma Bhushan, Padma Shri, and Dr. B.C. Roy Awardee Dr. Naresh Trehan, Medanta is modeled on global medical leaders including Mayo Clinic and Johns Hopkins. Currently, Medanta operates six hospitals across Gurgaon, Indore, Ranchi, Lucknow, Patna, and Noida with over 3,300 beds. Besides Guwahati, expansion plans are underway in Mumbai and Delhi, adding



2,000 more beds. The upcoming Medanta unit is expected to significantly boost Guwahati’s healthcare landscape, which has rapidly evolved as the Northeast’s medical hub. With increasing demand for advanced treatments and medical tourism potential from neighbouring states and border regions, experts believe the project will elevate Guwahati’s healthcare infrastructure and strengthen its position as a key regional healthcare destination.

“We believe quality healthcare should be a right, not a privilege,” Dr. Trehan said, emphasizing Medanta’s vision for accessible, high-end medical care. The facility will offer comprehensive transplant programs, advanced oncology, cardiology, neurology, orthopaedics, and robotic surgeries. It is also expected to create 5,000–7,000 direct and indirect jobs, boosting the region’s socio-economic development.

PNB MetLife expands footprint in Assam, opens new branch in Lakhimpur

Lakhimpur: PNB MetLife India Insurance Company Limited has strengthened its presence in Assam with the launch of a new branch in Lakhimpur, reflecting its focus on expanding insurance access in tier-II and tier-III markets. The announcement was made in Guwahati on October 30, 2025. With this launch, the insurer now operates four branches across Assam.

The company said the expansion is aligned with its strategy to take insurance services closer to customers through on-ground support and advisory. “Trust has always been the foundation of PNB MetLife’s relationship with its customers. With 177 branches now across India, we are not only expanding our reach but also strengthening the assurance that cus-



tomers can depend on us at every step. Our focus is to be present where they need us most—bringing protection closer, making it simpler, and helping them plan their financial future with confidence,” said Sameer Bansal, MD & CEO, PNB MetLife.

The entry into Lakhimpur is expected to boost insur-

ance penetration in a region witnessing rising financial awareness and demand for long-term savings and protection solutions. With small businesses, salaried earners and farmers increasingly exploring formal financial instruments, the new branch is likely to improve access to insurance consultation,

claims support, and personalised financial planning services.

PNB MetLife currently reaches customers through 177 branches and over 20,000 bancassurance partner locations nationwide, offering a wide distribution network for its protection and savings products.

Kolkata gets its first premium senior living address on the Ganges

Kolkata: Marking a milestone in the city’s evolving real estate landscape, Srijan Realty has launched Primus Ganges, Kolkata’s first premium senior living community, set along the banks of the Hooghly within the township of Srijan Ganga City in Batanagar. The development responds to demographic shifts in Bengal, where one of India’s lowest urban birth rates (11 per 1,000) and rising life expectancy are steering demand toward dignified, independent, and community-driven senior housing.

India’s senior living segment is expected to grow at a double-digit CAGR

over the next decade, according to Mordor Intelligence. Even as overall residential sales in Kolkata dipped 10% QoQ in Q2 2025, niche developments such as premium riverfront and senior-focused homes remain resilient, underscoring shifting consumer priorities toward wellness-centric living.

Real estate analysts note a growing appetite for lifestyle-led projects in the city, especially among retirees and families planning long-term care options. Kolkata’s cultural affinity for community living, combined with the appeal of riverfront residences, positions senior living as a strategic in-

vestment category. Experts expect this segment to accelerate as nuclear families rise and seniors seek independent yet supportive environments.

Developed in partnership with Primus Lifespaces, the project offers secure and wellness-focused living, dedicated healthcare services, and active-ageing recreational spaces. “We aim to redefine senior living with independence, comfort and community,” said Keshav Agarwal, Director, Srijan Realty. Nutritionist Hena Nafis added that senior communities have evolved into a “strong, future-ready investment category.”

Narayana Health enters UK market with ₹2,200-crore acquisition of Practice

Mumbai: Narayana Hrudayalaya Ltd, which operates the Narayana Health network, announced the acquisition of UK-based Practice Plus Group Hospitals in a deal valued at around ₹2,200 crore (GBP 188.78 million). The purchase, structured as an all-cash transaction, involves acquiring 100% of the equity shares of Practice Plus Group Hospitals Ltd. The acquisition will be executed through Narayana Hrudayalaya UK Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Health City Cayman Islands Ltd, the company said in its filing to the BSE. The acquisition marks Narayana Health’s first major entry into the UK healthcare market, where Practice Plus Group operates 12 hospitals and surgical centres specialising in orthopaedics, ophthalmology, and general surgery. The deal positions Narayana Health among the top three healthcare providers in India by revenue and significantly broadens its international footprint. Practice Plus Group is the fifth largest private hospital chain in the UK, performing around 80,000 surgeries a year. The move comes at a time when demand for surgeries in the UK’s private sector is expected to grow substantially, amid sustained pressure on the public healthcare system. Dr. Devi Prasad Shetty, Founder and Chairman



of Narayana Health, called the acquisition “an incredibly exciting step” in the company’s global expansion “Like Narayana Health, Practice Plus Group recognised that the majority of patients were struggling to access healthcare, while only a minority could afford costly private treatment,” said Dr. Shetty. “Together, we are a perfect fit, and I look forward to welcoming Practice Plus Group to Narayana Health to help many more patients receive the care they need.” Practice Plus Group Chief Executive Jim Easton said, “Dr. Shetty and Narayana Health have an enviable reputation for high-quality, efficient healthcare with a human touch. I’m excited about what our hospitals and surgical centres can achieve with their

expertise and commitment behind us.” Narayana Health said the integration of Practice Plus Group’s hospital division would leverage its technology-led operational model to drive innovation, efficiency, and long-term value for patients and stakeholders across both regions. Founded by Dr Shetty and headquartered in Bengaluru, Narayana Health operates a comprehensive network of hospitals across India and the Caribbean. The group employs over 18,800 professionals, including nearly 4,000 doctors and specialists, and manages facilities offering primary to super-specialty tertiary care. Its subsidiaries include Narayana One Health (NH Integrated Care) and Narayana Health Insurance..

Godrej Consumer Q2 FY26 results

New Delhi: Godrej Consumer Products reported a 6.5 per cent profit decline in the second quarter of fiscal year 2025-26. The consumer goods company posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 459 crore in Q2 FY26. Godrej Consumer’s net profit in Q2 FY25 was at Rs 491 crore. Furthermore, Godrej Consumer reported a 4.33 per cent YoY revenue growth in the quarter.

The company reported Rs 3,825 crore consolidated revenue from operations in Q2 FY26. In the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal year, the FMCG major’s consolidated revenue was Rs 3,666 crore. Godrej Consumer’s board of directors has approved an interim dividend of Rs 5 per equity for FY26. The company has fixed November 7 as the record date for determining the names of eligible shareholders. Godrej Consumer Products said that it has signed a definitive agreement to acquire the FMCG business under the ‘Muuchstac’ brand via slump sale from Trilogy Solutions. The company said that it will acquire a 100 per cent stake in the business for approximately Rs 400 crore to Rs 500 crore. The company said the brand is one of India’s fastest-growing men’s grooming brands, with a strong leadership position in the men’s facewash segment.

MSDE, Aditya Birla Capital Foundation & BITS Pilani launch startup challenge to foster entrepreneurship in NSTIs

Guwahati: The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), along with Aditya Birla Capital Foundation (ABCF) and Pilani Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Society (PIEDS) of BITS Pilani, on Thursday launched the Navonmesh Protsahan Sparsha: Kaushalta se Udyamita, an innovation and start-up challenge aimed at fostering entrepreneurship among students of National Skills Training Institutes (NSTIs).

The initiative, managed by PIEDS and supported under ABCF’s CSR programme, will target over 10,000 NSTI students pursuing skill training across 33 NSTIs in India, including NSTI(W) centres dedicated to women.

The challenge will focus on innovation in IT/ITeS, automotive, apparel, electronics & hardware, power, and capital goods sectors, offering mentoring, resources, prizes and incubation to help students turn ideas into market-ready ventures.



Highlighting the significance, MSDE Secretary Debashree Mukherjee said, “Every skilled individual carries the potential to become a job creator... this challenge will empower young innovators to transform ideas into sustainable ventures, strengthening India’s Aatmanirbhar vision.”

The initiative could strengthen the Northeast’s skill ecosystem, particularly as the region sees rising demand for trained talent in manufacturing, IT services, and electronics repair in Guwahati. Local skill centres and emerging start-up hubs in Guwahati are expected to benefit as NSTI-trained innovators explore entrepreneurship, potentially boosting employment and MSME growth in Assam.

The programme also seeks to address the limited innovation support available to the technical and vocational education segment, which includes over 13 lakh students across ITIs and NSTIs nationwide.

Maruti Suzuki Q2 results: Profit up 8% at Rs 3,349 crore revenue climbs 13%

New Delhi: Maruti Suzuki India Ltd (MSIL), the country’s largest carmaker, on Friday recorded a 7.95 per cent year-on-year (YoY) rise in its consolidated net profit for the July-September 2025-26 quarter (Q2 FY26). During the quarter under review, profit stood at Rs 3,349 crore as against Rs 3,102.5 crore in the year-ago period. Revenue from operations grew by 13.07 per cent to Rs 42,344.2 crore in Q2 FY26 from Rs 37,449.2 crore in the corresponding period last year. Meanwhile, shares of MSIL slipped 1.53 per cent to a day low of Rs 15,958.10 after the company announced its earnings. Despite the dip, the stock has still delivered robust gains of nearly 46 per cent over the past year, supported by fresh initiatives from its Japanese parent, Suzuki Motor Corporation. SMC President Toshihiro Suzuki said the automaker plans to introduce eight new sport utility vehicles (SUVs) in India over the next five to six years. The company aims to reclaim its market share lost to competitors and strengthen its position in the fast-growing SUV segment. Market analysts believe that upcoming launches and improving rural demand could further support Maruti’s growth trajectory. Ravi Singh, stock market expert, said that new product



introductions and a pickup in rural consumption may lift sales, potentially driving 25–30 per cent upside by next Diwali, provided market conditions remain favourable. Vinit Bolinjkar, Head of Research at Ventura Securities, also expressed

optimism about the stock, highlighting continued strength in demand and product pipeline. Maruti Suzuki remains the largest passenger vehicle maker in India. Its parent, Suzuki Motor, currently holds a 58.28 per cent stake in the company.

Kolkata leads India in crypto profitability as Gen Z drives investment boom

Kolkata: Kolkata has topped the national profitability charts in crypto investments for Q3 2025, with 77.4% of investor portfolios in profit, according to the latest edition of CoinSwitch’s flagship report, India’s Crypto Portfolio: How India Invests. The report, based on insights from over 2.5 crore users, highlights the city’s strong performance despite ranking sixth nationally in crypto adoption.

The findings show a significant shift in India’s investor demographics, with Gen Z (18–25) emerging as the largest crypto investor group for the first time at 37.6%, marginally ahead of Millennials (26–35) at 37.3%, followed by the 36–45 age group at 17.8%. The report also notes that established large-cap assets lead investor portfolios at 36.3%, followed by mid-caps (31.9%), blue-chip assets (24.3%), and small-caps (7.5%).

Market watchers attribute Kolkata’s strong profitability to a data-driven and pragmatic investor base. Local investors are displaying a mature investment mindset—balancing blue-chip stability with calculated exposure to emerging tokens. This mix, industry experts say, reflects rising financial literacy and disciplined long-term digital asset planning in the city, strengthening Kolkata’s position as a diversified and growth-driven crypto hub.

“India’s crypto market is entering a mature phase,” said Balaji Srihari, Vice President, CoinSwitch. “The next phase will be shaped by Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.” July 2025 marked the busiest trading month, driven by Bitcoin’s record rally and the U.S. GENIUS Act. Top crypto cities remained Delhi, Bengaluru, and Mumbai as Tier-2 markets continued accelerating adoption.



Aneet Padda at Animal Shelter: Urges Fans to Rescue Strays

Mumbai: Aneet Padda has emerged as one of the biggest breakthrough stars of 2025 following the historic success of Saiyaara, which became the highest grossing love story in the history of Indian cinema. Post the massive success of the film, the actress’ social media following grew exponentially. Today, she broke the internet once again as she dropped a very sweet and heartwarming post of her visit to an animal shelter on the outskirts of Mumbai. Aneet spent an entire day spending time with strays and rescued animals and encouraged everyone to help them in their own way.

Aneet visited Kanchan’s Global Foundation, a non-profit dedicated to rescuing, rehabilitating, and caring for animals in need in Mumbai and was seen playing with and feeding the strays staying at the shelter. The caption of her post read, “Spent some time with these souls who love without language. Left with fur on my clothes and calm in my chest. Thank you, Kanchan’s Global Foundation, for the reminder of what matters. Kanchan’s Global Foundation is, a non-profit dedicated to rescuing, re-



habilitating and caring for animals in need. Feeling inspired seeing their amazing work...Please visit @kanchanglobalfoundation to know more about their mission and see how you can make a difference... if you want to. A big thank you to them for letting me spend time with these cuties and getting so much love in return...”. Check out the post below!

Meanwhile, on the work front, Aneet will next be seen in Maddock Horror Comedy Universe (MHCU) film – Shakti Shalini. The film is scheduled to release on December 24, 2026. The post-credit scene of Thamma introduces Aneet Padda as Shakti Shalini, and her character is described as

“the creator, the destroyer, and the mother of all,” in the teaser. Recently, a video that surfaced on social media showed Aneet Padda watching the Thamma post-credit scene in a theatre. As soon as her character Shakti Shalini was introduced, Aneet was seen beaming with joy and grinning ear-to-ear, visibly ecstatic. She giggled happily upon seeing her name on the big screen.

Aneet Padda’s debut lead role in Saiyaara, opposite Ahaan Panday, established her as one of Bollywood’s most promising talents. The film became a historic box office success, minting over ₹570 crore worldwide, and is regarded as the highest-grossing love story in the history of Indian cinema.

Farrhana Bhatt Plays Out Eviction with Shehbaz Badesha

Mumbai: Tensions may be high in Bigg Boss 19, but Farrhana Bhatt and Shehbaz Badesha managed to bring comic relief. A new promo shows the duo mock-acting their elimination, with Shehbaz playfully saying, “Aa, tujhe nikalte hain (Come, let’s evict you).” After Shehbaz convinced Farrhana to act out her eviction, she tried to put on a crying face and stood still. Playing the role of Bigg Boss, Shehbaz asked her to head toward the exit.

Farrhana stepped forward and said, “Bigg Boss, darwaza khol dijiye” (Bigg

Boss, please open the door). In response, Shehbaz made a funny door-opening sound and replied, “Khula hi hai” (It’s already open), before dramatically pretending to cry. The video was shared on JioHotstar’s official Instagram page. Fans took over the comments section, praising Farrhana’s role in the reality show. One user wrote, “Farrhana ke bina ye season adhura hai” (This season feels incomplete without Farrhana), while another added, “Maturity is when you realise that Farrhana is the soul of this season.”

A fan commented, “The most real one from day one is Farrhana,” while another praised her strategy, saying, “Koi agar khel raha hai sahi se is ghar mein toh woh hai Farrhana” (If anyone is playing the game right in this house, it’s Farrhana). The latest episode of Bigg Boss 19 saw a high-energy captaincy task between Pranit More and Shehbaz Badesha, with Mridul Tiwari serving as the sanchalak. One user wrote, “Farrhana ke bina ye season adhura hai” (This season feels incomplete without Farrhana), while another

added, “Maturity is when you realise that Farrhana is the soul of this season.” The latest episode of Bigg Boss 19 saw a high-energy captaincy task between Pranit More and Shehbaz Badesha, with Mridul Tiwari serving as the sanchalak. During the third round, Gaurav sustained a minor injury. Following last week’s double elimination of Baseer Ali and Nehal Chudasama, fans are eagerly anticipating more twists in the upcoming Weekend Ka Vaar episode. Bigg Boss 19 airs daily on JioHotstar at 9 PM and Colors TV at 10:30 PM.

SRK Is ‘Excited’ for King: Superstar On Working with Deepika Padukone Again

Mumbai: It is no secret that Shah Rukh Khan will soon be collaborating with Deepika Padukone once again for his upcoming movie – King. While everyone is eagerly waiting to watch their favourite stars reunite on screen, a social media user also asked SRK about the same during his recent ‘Ask SRK’ session on X (formerly Twitter). On Thursday, when Shah Rukh Khan conducted an ‘Ask Me Anything’ session on X, one of the fans talked about King and wrote, “So excited to see you and DP together again.” To this, the Bollywood superstar responded by saying, “Me too haha.”

In September, Deepika took to her Instagram handle and shared exciting news about reuniting with Shah Rukh Khan



for King. She dropped a picture showing their hands clasped together and wrote, “The very first lesson he taught me almost 18 years ago while filming Om Shanti Om was that the experience of making a movie, and the people you make it with, matter far more than its success. I couldn’t agree more and have applied that learning to every decision I’ve made since. And that’s probably

why we’re back making our 6th movie together?” Shah Rukh Khan’s King will also star Suhana Khan in the lead. Munjya star Abhay Verma will also play a key role in the film. Details about the film’s plot are not known as of now. Previously, at the Locarno Film Festival, Shah Rukh Khan opened up about King and said, “It is an action drama, it’s a Hindi film. It’ll be interesting. I’ve been wanting to do a film like that for some time, and I really wanted to do a film like this for seven, eight years. We just felt Sujoy would be the right choice, because we wanted it to be very emotionally correct. We are all coming together to make a cool, massy, action, emotional film.”

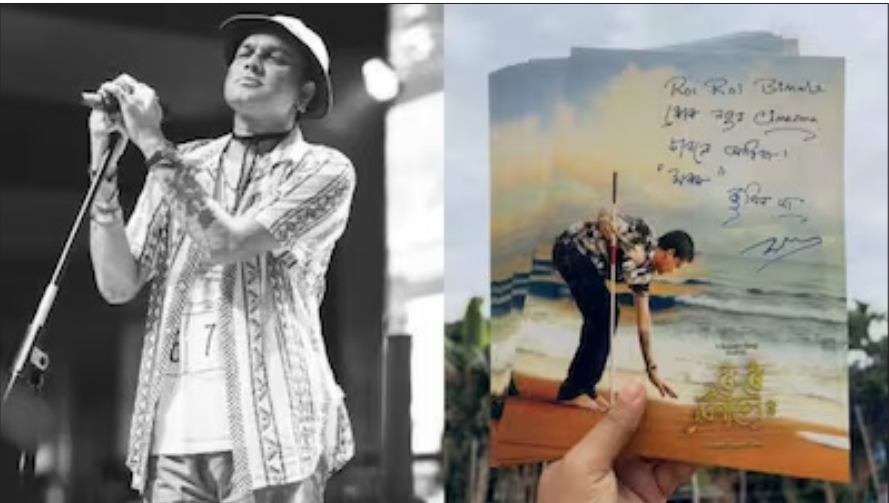
The Icon’s Last Request: Zubeen Garg’s Letter to Fans Before Demise Goes Viral

Agency: Weeks after Zubeen Garg’s death, a handwritten note of the singer has gone viral, which has also left fans emotional. The note was a part of the promotional campaign for Garg’s upcoming project, Roi Roi Binale, which will now be his last release.

In the note that Zubeen Garg wrote before leaving for Singapore, Zubeen Garg wrote, “Wait, wait a little my new film is coming. Do come and watch it. Love, Zubeen Da.” The film’s director, Rajesh Bhuyan, opened up about the note in an interview with ETV Bharat and said, “On September 15, before his departure, Zubeen and I discussed the plans for ‘Roi Roi Binale’. He wanted to promote this film differently from his earlier projects like ‘Mission China’ and ‘Kanchanjangha’.” Garg’s Roi Roi Binale released on Fri-

day (October 31). The film is said to be a personal project of the singer. Previously, the film’s director Rajesh Bhuyan revealed that the musical Assamese movie will also feature “original voice” recordings of Zubeen. “We were working on this movie for the last three years. The story and music of the movie were by Zubeen Garg... This was the first musical Assamese movie... We had completed almost all the work on the movie, except for the background music...,” the filmmaker told ANI.

Zubeen Garg passed away on September 19. Garg was rescued from the sea by Singapore police and immediately rushed to a nearby hospital. He was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit, where doctors monitored his condition and provided intensive care. Despite these efforts, the



singer sadly succumbed to his injuries. The singer had travelled to Singapore to participate in the North East Festival, where he was scheduled to perform on the day of the incident. Assam CID’s Special Investigation Team is investigating Zubeen Garg’s death case. So far, they have questioned several people related to

the case. The five accused in the case — main event organiser Shyamkanu Mahanta, Zubeen Garg’s Manager Siddharth Sharma, his cousin Sandipan Garg and two PSOs Nandeswar Bora — were also remanded to judicial custody and lodged in the Baksa jail. Earlier this month, Singapore police issued a statement stat-

ing that they haven’t found any foul play based on the preliminary investigation of Zubeen Garg’s death. It claimed that several “speculations” and “false information” were being spread on social media regarding the singer’s death and therefore urged everyone not to spread unverified information.

Actress: Priyanka Chopra Fails to Help South Asians



Agency: In a candid revelation that has stirred debate across entertainment circles, actress Sweta Keswani, best known for her role in the popular TV series Ba, Bahu Aur Baby has made striking remarks about global star Priyanka Chopra Jonas. While acknowledging Priyanka’s phenomenal rise from Bollywood to Hollywood, Keswani claimed that the actress has not done much to support or uplift other South Asians in the American film industry. Speaking about representation in Hollywood, Keswani told a publication that although Priyanka’s achievements are “incredible and well-deserved”, her journey has been “largely self-serving”. Praising American-Indian writer and producer Mindy Kaling, Keswani said,

“She (Priyanka) is not Mindy Kaling. She is not helping other South Asians. She is only helping herself, to be very honest. She only thinks about herself.” Drawing a sharp comparison between the two actresses, Keswani added that Kaling’s work stands out because she actively creates opportunities for others. “What Mindy Kaling is doing is amazing because she is actually writing, producing, and helping other South Asians advance in this business, which is already very tough for Asian women,” she remarked.

Keswani also opened up about her own experiences in Hollywood, noting that even within the South Asian community, there exists a sense of exclusivity. “I think there are cliques everywhere. Some people like some people, some people call some people, and they form cliques. Unfortunately, I am not in any South Asian cliques,” she admitted.

Farah Khan On Nepo Baby Backlash: Outsiders Are “Struggling To Pay Rent”

Mumbai: Choreographer and filmmaker Farah Khan, known for creating some of Bollywood’s most iconic films and dance numbers, has opened up about her humble beginnings and the challenges she faced before achieving success. During a candid chat with tennis star Sania Mirza on Serving It Up With Sania, Farah admitted she completely understands the frustration outsiders feel towards “nepo babies” in the film industry. “I can understand when people come from outside to Mumbai and have anger towards nepo babies. I can understand where that anger comes from, because they’re struggling to pay their rent every month. For them, their (star kids) struggles seem very frivolous,” she said.

Farah, who grew up in a financially unstable household, revealed that her early life struggles continue to shape her mindset even today. “Till now, I’m insecure about money. For me, I need to be financially secure to relax, that’s the only insecurity I have. That drive to keep working is always there,”



she said. Recounting her childhood, the filmmaker shared, “We saw our dad go from being very rich to very poor, and for several years, we lived hand to mouth.” Despite achieving immense success in Bollywood, she confessed that her fear of financial instability still drives her work ethic. Speaking about the current trend of celebrities sharing their struggles to appear more relatable, Farah remarked, “Nowadays, everyone wants a struggle story. Even those who haven’t really struggled are trying to create one out of something weird. But I’m happy that my kids won’t have one.” Farah’s real-life journey, however, is nothing short of inspiring. With no formal dance training, she

taught herself choreography by watching music videos and practising tirelessly. Her big break came with Pehla Nasha from Jo Jeeta Wohi Sikandar (1992), after which she choreographed numerous hit songs like Ek Pal Ka Jeena, Sheila Ki Jawani, and Desi Girl. She later turned filmmaker, debuting with the Shah Rukh Khan-starrer Main Hoon Na (2004), followed by Om Shanti Om (2007) and Happy New Year (2014), solidifying her status as one of Bollywood’s most successful women directors. Despite her success, Farah’s humility and honesty continue to strike a chord with audiences, reminding everyone that behind the glamour lies a journey of perseverance and grit.

Ayushmann Khurrana’s Film Hits Rs 3 Crore Mark on Day 10 Thamma Box Office

Mumbai: Thamma, starring Ayushmann Khurrana and Rashmika Mandanna, shows no signs of slowing down. Now in its second week, the film continues to perform strongly at the box office despite a slight dip in recent days. Maintaining steady momentum, it has already crossed the Rs 100 crore mark and made a place as one of the year’s most popular entertainers.

According to trade website Sacnilk, Thamma made an estimated Rs 3.25 crore net in India on Thursday, bringing its total domestic haul to Rs 108.25 crore. Earlier this week, the film collected Rs 4.3 crore on Monday, Rs 5.75 crore on Tuesday, and Rs 3.65 crore on Wednesday. The film opened to Rs 24 crore, grossing Rs 55.6 crore within the first three days and Rs 95.6 crore by the end of its first week. Released alongside Harshvardhan Rane’s Ek Deewane Ki Deewaniyat,



Thamma has clearly emerged as the audience’s favourite. Its winning mix of creepy undertones, sharp comedy, and stellar performances by Ayushmann Khurrana and Rashmika Mandanna has struck a chord with viewers. Dinesh Vijan’s next horror-comedy, Thamma, is produced by Maddock Films and joins Stree, Roohi and Bhediya in his growing filmography. Thamma, directed by Aditya Sarpotdar, is the

fifth installment of the Maddock Horror comedy franchise. Along with Rashmika and Ayushmann, the film also stars Nawazuddin Siddiqui and Paresh Rawal.

The film goes into the mysterious world of vampires, with Ayushmann Khurrana and Rashmika Mandanna playing lovers destined to be together in an incredible love story. However, the introduction of Nawazuddin Sid-

diqui’s character alters the story. Thamma, which debuted on October 21 around Diwali, has been a roller-coaster of excitement and fun. Thamma is part of Maddock’s Horror Comedy Universe, which includes Stree (2018), Bhediya (2022), Munjya (2024), and Stree 2. Following Thamma, the universe will expand with Bhediya 2, starring Varun Dhawan and Shakti Shalini, as well as Aneet Padda.

Devoleena: Unfiltered Mom Life Revealed



Mumbai: Devoleena Bhattacharjee, who welcomed her baby boy, Joy, in December last year, often shares sweet glimpses of her life as a new mom with her fans. While she mostly posts pictures from her family’s trips or festivals, this time she decided to show the other side of being a mother. In her post, the actress, best known for playing Gopi Bahu in Saath Nibhana Saathiya, shared a candid look at the “imperfect but beautiful” life after embracing motherhood.

On October 30, Devoleena shared two pictures on Instagram, in which she was seen feeding her son, who was sitting in a highchair. Dressed in a casual T-shirt and shorts, she was seen adoring her son’s shenanigans with a bowl of food in her hand. Meanwhile, he continued playing with a plate as she tried to feed him. “They say motherhood changes you... and it truly does,” Devoleena began her note.

Srija Out of Bigg Boss Telugu 9

Agency: With each passing day, the Bigg Boss Telugu makers are making the show more competitive and interesting. Recently, the eliminated contestants Srija and Bharani made a re-entry into the house, much to the surprise of many. The decision also drew flak from a section of viewers. Buzz is doing the rounds on social media that Srija has been eliminated from the house in a soon-to-be-telecast episode. Bharani became a permanent member in the house. Srija could be leaving the house in tonight’s episode. It remains to be seen whether she really got evicted from the house or has been sent to a secret room. In the meantime, take a look at her pictures inside the house.

Curtis clarifies Charlie Kirk remarks

Agency: Jamie Lee Curtis is addressing the backlash over her emotional response to the death of Charlie Kirk, who was known for his strong support of the MAGA movement. Last month, the Oscar-winning actress appeared on the WTF with Marc Maron podcast, two days after the 31-year-old right-wing political activist was fatally shot. He was giving a speech at Utah Valley University on September 10 when he was killed.

During her appearance on the podcast, Jamie tearfully said that she “disagreed with him on almost every point,” but hoped he felt “connected to his faith” when he died. While some praised the 66-year-old actress for expressing empathy despite political differences, others criticised her for appearing to excuse Kirk’s controversial views, particularly his rejection of transgender rights, which is an issue close to Jamie as one of her daughters, Ruby, is transgender.

North Korea bans this popular dish, deems it treasonous



In a shocking clampdown on Western cultural influences, North Korea’s leader, Kim Jong Un, has apparently prohibited the consumption and sale of Budae-Jjigae, a spicy noodle soup that is traditionally prepared with Hot Dogs or Spam. The dish, which originated in pro-Western South Korea but gained popularity in the North over the past few years, has been declared treasonous, and violators will face severe punishment. As per a report that originally appeared in The Sun, local vendors have been threatened to stop selling the dish immediately. One of the vendors was even quoted as saying, “Sales of Budae-Jjigae in the market have stopped. The police and market management have said anyone caught selling it will be shut down.” Serving or selling the dish is said to come under a punishment of deportation to labour camps where severe conditions will form a re-education process. Kim Jong Un’s decree fits into a pattern of ridding the regime of what it regards as the imposition of Western influence. Hot dogs and other types of Western delicacies are identified with Western culture, and so their consumption has been increasingly checked. Other popular South Korean fare such as Spicy Rice Cakes have also had a ban previously for similar motives. Despite this strict stance on Western foods, the consumption of canines remains permissible in North Korea, showing the regime’s selective approach to food policies. The restrictions are not only on food but extend to a wider range. North Koreans wishing to divorce might face one to six months of labour camp imprisonment since separation is deemed “anti-socialist.” Authorities also issued warnings in December that Christmas celebrations might result in death, thereby clearly showing how the regime dominates people’s lives, including personal and cultural life. Budae-jjigae, or Army Base Stew, was born when leftover ingredients such as Spam and Hot Dogs, brought to Korea by American servicemen, were mixed with more traditional Korean elements like Kimchi and Ramen. For South Koreans, it represents a culinary expression of their country’s melange of cultures and comfort food; in North Korea, it is strictly forbidden. According to international reports, these bans are in line with North Korea’s history of standing against perceived ideological impurities. For now, Budae-Jjigae and its western parts have joined a growing list of cultural elements unacceptable in the reclusive nation.

Tiffin recipes made with leftover Palak Paneer

In most Indian households, preparing saags is a common tradition during winters, as leafy greens give your body the much-needed dose of nutrition required to sustain the cold weather. One such saag-based delicacy is Palak Paneer, which is extensively prepared during this time of the year. However, there are times when you don’t feel like eating this dish in the same old way, and then we have got your back with some interesting ways to tweak this desi dish and make some creative tiffin recipes. So, follow us through these tiffin recipe ideas and enjoy! Palak Paneer Paratha This is one of the simplest ways to tweak your regular Palak Paneer by turning it into some delicious and healthy parathas. Simply mash the leftover Palak Paneer and mix it into whole wheat flour along with spices like cumin, garam masala, and red chili powder. Knead it into a dough and roll it out into flatbreads. Cook the parathas on a griddle with ghee or oil until golden brown. These parathas make for a filling and healthy tiffin option. Palak Paneer Sandwich Leftover Palak Paneer can easily be turned into a hearty sandwich filling. Take two slices of whole wheat multigrain bread and spread a generous amount of mashed Palak Paneer in between. You can add some cucumber slices or tomatoes for added crunch and freshness. Grill the sandwich for a crispy texture. This makes for a nutritious, easy-to-carry tiffin snack. Palak Paneer Pulao Transform your leftover Palak Paneer into a flavorful pulao. Heat some oil in a pan and sauté onions, ginger, and garlic. Add some spices like cumin and garam masala. Toss cooked rice and mixing well. Cook for a few minutes until heated through. Garnish with fresh coriander leaves, and you have a quick and satisfying lunchbox meal. Palak Paneer Quesadilla Give a Mexican twist to your palak paneer by using it as a filling for quesadillas. Spread some mashed Palak Paneer on a tortilla, sprinkle cheese on top, and fold it in half. Toast it on a hot pan until both sides are crispy and golden. Cut into wedges and serve with a side of salsa or sour cream. This fusion recipe will definitely spice up your tiffin box. Palak Paneer Rolls For a portable and easy-to-eat option, use your leftover Palak Paneer to make wraps or rolls. Take a soft tortilla or roti and spread a thin layer of palak paneer on it. Add some shredded cabbage, carrots, or onions for crunch. Roll it up tightly and slice into bite-sized pieces. These rolls are perfect for a quick tiffin lunch or snack. Palak Paneer Fritters Turn your leftover Palak Paneer into crispy fritters that are perfect for a tiffin box treat. Mash the palak paneer and mix it with besan, spices like cumin, ajwain, and chili powder, and a bit of salt. Form small fritters and fry them until golden brown and crispy. Serve with a tangy chutney for extra flavor. These fritters are not only delicious but also a great way to use up leftovers. Palak Paneer Casserole A hearty casserole is a great way to repurpose Palak Paneer. Mix leftover Palak Paneer with cooked pasta or rice. Add a handful of grated cheese and bake the mixture in a casserole dish for about 20 minutes until bubbly and golden on top.



Student hospitalised after eating jawbreaker candy

Jawbreaker candies are infamous for their rock-hard texture, often causing injuries to those who try to bite into them. A 19-year-old Canadian college student, Javeria Wasim, recently experienced the harsh reality of why the candy lives up to its name. Wasim ended up in the hospital with a fractured jaw after attempting to bite into one of the oversized confections. Since then, she hasn’t been able to take anything solid and is on a liquid diet. According to reports, the mishap started when Wasim and a friend came across the trendy sweet while out shopping. Known for its tough exterior and sizey appearance some as big as a snooker cue the pair thought it looked cool and bought the largest one they could find. We got a giant one, the biggest size they had,” Wasim recalled to People magazine. The duo even asked the store owner whether it was safe to bite into the candy but could not resist their curiosity. When Wasim decided to test her luck, things quickly went wrong. “I bit into it and only made a hole, and my jaw started to hurt,” she explained. Her friend noticed immediately that one of her teeth was loose, and her front tooth appeared damaged. Minutes later, the duo called



an ambulance upon realising the injury was more severe than it seemed. At the hospital, X-rays and a CT scan revealed fractures in Wasim’s jaw. She was taken

for emergency surgery to reposition her jaw the next day. The surgeons put a bar along the top and bottom gums and wired her jaw shut for six weeks to help her

heal. “I was crying a lot; everything was blurry,” she remembered the traumatic experience. The ordeal has left Wasim traumatised. “I used to have [jawbreakers] as a little kid, but I’d never seen anyone bite into the big ones,” she admitted. Due to the challenges of a liquid diet and post-surgery recovery, she has sworn off candy entirely. “I may never eat another one in my life,” she confessed. Wasim now advises people to be more cautious with jawbreakers. “Just lick them, even if it takes weeks to get to the center,” she advised, hoping her experience will serve as a warning and prevent similar injuries. Jawbreaker candies are hard, multi-layered confections often made by repeatedly dipping sugar syrup onto a rotating core. Renowned for their durability and large size, some jawbreakers can reach dimensions comparable to a snooker ball. Their extreme hardness makes them difficult to bite, posing significant risks to teeth and jaws. Biting into these candies may cause chipped teeth, dislodged fillings, or even serious jaw damage, as they are supposed to be dissolved slowly. As the name “jawbreaker” implies, this is one candy that needs to be savored cautiously by licking, not by trying to chew.

4 Ways to remove Coconut Shell in just a few minutes

Extracting coconut flesh from its tough exterior layer may seem like a tough task. This is because a coconut has a thick, fibrous exterior and can be quite challenging to break open. Extracting coconut shells is a labor-intensive process. It involves breaking the tough husk, removing fibrous coir, and cracking the hard shell. The process requires sharp tools, strength, and precision to avoid damaging the shell or injuring oneself. Traditional methods make it even more challenging, demanding patience and significant physical effort. Well, if you too struggle with the same, then here are some simple methods to open a coconut shell without putting in much effort. Here are four methods you can use to quickly and easily remove the coconut shell. Crack open the coconut To begin with, use a sharp object like a clean nail or screwdriver to poke through the three brown, circular spots of the coconut. Drain the water into a bowl for later use or to drink. Hold the coconut in one hand and use the hammer or mallet to tap around the center of the coconut. You should focus on creating a crack around its middle, rather than tapping too hard at the top or bottom. With a few strong taps, you should see the coconut shell begin to crack. Once it splits open, gently pull the two halves apart. You can then easily remove the coconut meat from the shell by prying it out with a butter knife or a spoon. If the flesh is stubborn, you can place the halves in the freezer for about 10-15 minutes before attempting to separate the meat from the shell. Use an oven: If you are dealing with a particularly tough coconut shell, the heat of the oven can help loosen the shell and make it easier to remove the coconut meat. This method works particularly well for mature coconuts with a harder shell. Preheat the oven to 180°C, then poke holes in the eyes of the coconut and drain out the coconut water. Place the coconut on a baking sheet. Put the coconut in the preheated oven and bake it



for about 10-15 minutes. The heat will cause the shell to expand and crack, making it easier to break open. Once the coconut has cooled slightly, use a hammer or mallet to gently tap the cracks until the shell splits open. The coconut meat should easily come away from the shell. Boiling the coconut shell Boiling the coconut is another effective method that softens the shell and flesh, making it easier to remove. This is ideal if you prefer a cleaner separation of the coconut meat from the shell. To use this method, poke holes in the coconut eyes and drain out the coconut water. Place the coconut in a large pot of water and bring it to a boil. Let it boil for about 10-15 minutes. This step softens the shell and helps separate the meat from the inside. After boiling, remove the coconut from the water and allow it to cool enough to handle. The heat will have

loosened the flesh, making it easier to remove. If you are not in a hurry and want an easier time separating the coconut meat from the shell, try freezing the coconut. After cracking the coconut open using one of the above methods, place the halves in the freezer for a few hours. The cold temperature will cause the coconut meat to contract slightly, which will make it much easier to remove from the shell when you attempt to pry it out. Coconut shells are versatile and eco-friendly. They can be used as natural planters for small plants or herbs, decorative bowls, or candle holders. Crushed coconut shells make excellent organic mulch for gardens. They are also crafted into jewelry, keychains, and other handicrafts. Additionally, coconut shells can serve as sustainable fuel or be transformed into activated charcoal for purification purposes.

How coffee and chocolate can boost your mood and immunity



Winter is the season of cozy blankets, crackling fires, and indulgent treats. Yet, it also comes with its challenges — shorter days, colder weather, and an increased risk of catching colds or feeling low. Fortunately, two beloved staples, coffee and chocolate, are here to save the day. Far from being mere indulgences, these two superfoods can uplift your mood and strengthen your immunity during the winter months. Here’s how they do it. The Strength Of Coffee During Winter: To many individuals, coffee is the trusted reviver. The morning ritual is more than an accustomed routine; it is a practical approach for people to begin their day. However coffee has its own advantage which is more than just getting you up and out of bed. Winter days can sometimes leave a person feeling sad, even when the sun is out but strong which in turn is referred to as seasonal affective disorder (SAD). Having a cup of fresh brewed coffee can help relieve such feelings since it has caffeine which often enhances dopa-

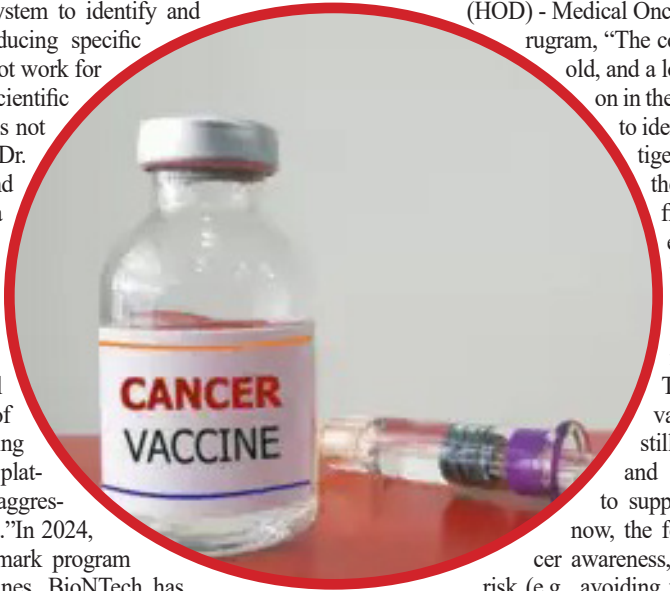
mine releases in the body, strengthening the central nervous system. One can easily warm themselves up on a cold winter’s day by having a cup of coffee which not only hot beverages do but also helps alleviate experiences of tiredness and gloominess. Improvement in Immunity: Caffeine drinks like coffee are known to be a source of antioxidants such as polyphenols which provide anti-inflammatory benefits as well as enhance immunity. When winter approaches, it triggers the season of colds and flu and in cases like those, antioxidants can be very essential as they prevent one’s body from contracting a cold, or the flu or any other viruses. According to findings of some studies, it was also found that regular coffee drinkers have a better chance of reducing their risk of developing chronic diseases. Energy and Focus: During winter we have short days and relatively long nights. The temperature outside drops, and it’s easy to cut down precious coffee time. We can however rely on caffeine from coffee and it helps us remain productive. Be it work,

or preparing for family reunions, coffee never leaves your side. Helps to Maintain Your Wavelength with Health Claims: While coffee is superb for energizing us in the morning, it is chocolate that best pairs with us to end the day. Its smooth, sweet, and thick mouthfeel makes it a staple in winter. But if you’re ever in doubt about the richness of chocolate, let it be known that there’s great value in chocolate given its multiple health benefits. Antidepressant: There is a strong rationale, supported by scientific evidence, for why certain compounds like theobromine and phenylethylamine in dark chocolate can make you feel ecstatic. These compounds influence serotonin levels in the brain, a neurotransmitter associated with calmness and stress relief. Serotonin helps achieve the tranquility people seek after stress is alleviated. Thus, enjoying a piece of dark chocolate makes perfect sense—it not only helps combat stress but also brings a comforting warmth, especially on a cold night. Protection Against Infections: Once again, dark chocolate manages to

regain a lot of its lost reputation, as it’s also packed with Flavonoids, which are well known to increase the efficiency of the immune system. These mechanisms promote sufficient blood circulation, suppress swelling, and even assist the body in fighting off germs. So if you’re looking to stray away from the potential threats that a lower temperature brings, treating yourself to dark chocolate is a must. Improved Blood Flow: Quarantine and self-isolation during the winter months have kept a lot of people from being active, which as a result has led to a lot of underlying heart problems. According to extensive research, integrating dark chocolate into one’s diet means that there would be a decrease in blood pressure levels as well as having enhanced cholesterol. This makes it an excellent addition to your winter wellness routine. How to incorporate coffee and chocolate into your winter diet? The versatility of coffee and chocolate makes them easy to include in your daily routine. Here are some creative and healthy ways to enjoy them this winter: Morning Boost: Start your day with a cup of black coffee or a latte made with oat or almond milk. Add a sprinkle of cinnamon or toasted rosemary for a seasonal twist that boosts antioxidant levels and also awakens your taste buds. Afternoon Treat: Combine coffee and chocolate by making a mocha. Mix your favorite milk base coffee with a full spoon of 58%-65% dark chocolate for having natural sweet without adding extra load of sugar. It’s a perfect pick-me-up for chilly afternoons. Healthy Desserts: Incorporate dark chocolate into your desserts. From chocolate-dipped fruits to a warm cup of melted chocolate have it completely vegan in 58% of Dark chocolate which is not overly sweet and has a fruity flavor profile that implements your choice of fresh fruit, or either you can have its nostalgia sweet and milky by using 42% Milk chocolate.

Russia claims groundbreaking development of mRNA-based cancer vaccine

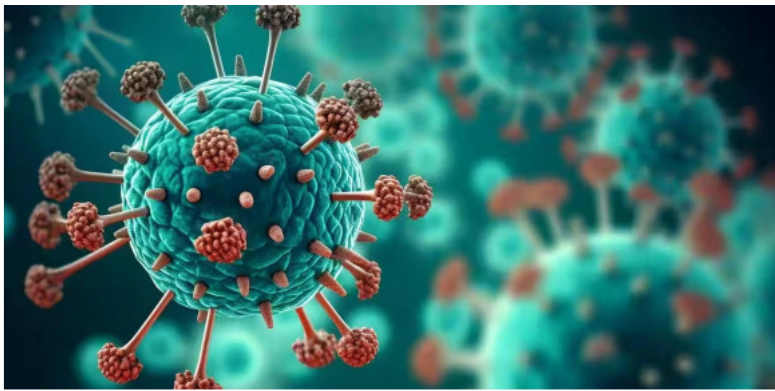
Cancer remains a severe disease, with high incidence and mortality rates, particularly in India, due to lack of awareness, inadequate medical services, and limited screening and preventive measures. Russia recently announced a breakthrough in cancer treatment, claiming to have developed a personalised mRNA vaccine to treat and cure cancer. The vaccine, set to launch in early 2025, will reportedly be provided free of charge to eligible Russian cancer patients. Russia's mRNA cancer vaccine uses artificial intelligence to create a personalised treatment based on a genetic analysis of the patient's tumor. The vaccine trains the immune system to identify and destroy cancer cells by producing specific antibodies. However, it may not work for all cancer types, and detailed scientific data about its development has not been disclosed. According to Dr. Naveen Sanchety, Director and Head Oncosurgery, Sarvodaya Healthcare, Faridabad, "mRNA-based cancer vaccines are being researched in various clinical trials across the world. In the United States, interim results of a phase I trial have reported promising data of Cure vac Vaccine, highlighting the potential of mRNA-based platforms in the management of aggressive cancers like glioblastoma."In 2024, the NHS also started a landmark program for personalised cancer vaccines. BioNTech has collaborated with the NHS to realize the potential of personalised vaccines in cancer treatment. This collaboration aims to provide up to 10,000 patients with personalized cancer vaccine treatments in the United Kingdom by 2030. The Russian vaccine is not for healthy individuals for the prevention of cancer. It has been made for patients who are already having cancer. mRNA cancer vaccines are a form of immunotherapy tailored to each patient's disease. They work by training the immune system to recognize, destroy, and prevent the spread of cancer cells through the development of specific antibodies. While Russia's announcement marks progress, it is only a small step toward comprehen-



sive cancer treatment. Cancer cells constantly evolve, making it challenging to develop a universal mRNA vaccine. Furthermore, Russia has not provided detailed information about the vaccine's targeted cancer, clinical trials, or approvals. It is not yet clear that a Russian vaccine has been made for which type of cancer and to be used at what stage, and what is the level of evidence behind their claim? All varieties of cancer, and even in the same variety of cancer, all patients are different; therefore, it is unlikely that one cancer vaccine will be helpful for all cancer patients. According to Dr. Mohit Saxena, Consultant & Head Of Department (HOD) - Medical Oncology, Manipal Hospital Gurgaon, "The concept of a cancer vaccine is old, and a lot of research has been going on in the last few decades. The idea is to identify mutations called neoantigen on cancer cells and to train the body's immune system to fight against cancer. However, apart from Sipuleucel-T for metastatic prostate cancer patients, none of them has been found to be successful in treating cancer patients. The development of cancer vaccines for other cancers is still in the experimental phase, and further studies are required to support or reject the claim."For now, the focus should remain on cancer awareness, lifestyle changes to reduce risk (e.g., avoiding tobacco and alcohol), vaccinations against HPV and hepatitis, and implementing cancer screening programs where possible. Cancer patients should be treated with standard treatments like chemotherapy, radiotherapy, surgery, targeted therapy, or immune checkpoint inhibitors, as these standard treatments have proven their effectiveness. Cancer vaccines like the Russian vaccine are investigational, and in the absence of strong clinical evidence, such types of cancer vaccines might be useful either for the treatment of cancer patients in addition to the standard treatment or for those cancer patients for whom all standard treatment options have been exhausted, though further studies are required.

HMPV cases in India rising, 3 infants identified so far

While the entire world is concerned about the HMPV outbreak in China, the first case of the virus has been detected in India's Bengaluru city. "A 3-month-old female infant, who was diagnosed with HMPV after being admitted to Baptist Hospital, Bengaluru with a history of bronchopneumonia. She has been since discharged. An 8-month-old male infant, who tested positive for HMPV on January 3, 2025, after being admitted to Baptist Hospital, Bengaluru, with a history of bronchopneumonia. The infant is now recovering," the government has confirmed. It is important to note that neither of the affected patients have any history of international travel, the official statement confirms. Reports further say citing the state health department that the sample of the baby was not tested in their lab instead the reports have come from a private hospital. "The reports have come from a private hospital and we have no reason to doubt the tests of the private hospital," a health department source had told the media. The state health department had released an advisory on Saturday saying there has been no case of HMPV detected in Karnataka, thus making this the first case. "I don't think we should be pressing the panic button, because HMPV is not a new virus, it's an existing virus. The reports come out as this is the first case in India, which is not true. It's an existing virus and certain percentage of people do get affected by this virus, and it is not something new. The child that got affected got no travel history, they are local people. China's outbreak they are saying it is a new variant of HMPV. We don't have the full details, and government



of India is yet to provide full details to us, and maybe they are also trying to get more information," Karnataka Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao told the media. "It is emphasized that HMPV is already in circulation globally, including in India, and cases of respiratory illnesses associated with HMPV have been reported in various countries. Furthermore, based on current data from ICMR and the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) network, there has been no unusual surge in Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) or Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI) cases in the country," the Centre has said. Amidst concerns around HMPV, Dr. Atul Goel, Director-General of Health Services has reassured the public that there is no cause for alarm. He explained that HMPV is similar to other respiratory viruses, typically causing mild cold-like symptoms, with flu-like symptoms in very young or elderly individuals. Dr. Goel emphasized that hospitals in India are fully prepared to handle the seasonal rise in respiratory infections, with adequate supplies and beds available. He urged people to follow basic hygiene practices, and take

general precautions to stay safe during the winter season. Union Health Ministry has posted on X. Dr. RR Dutta, HOD, Internal Medicine, Paras Health, Gurgaon explains: There has been no significant increase in respiratory illness cases beyond the expected seasonal variations. Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) is a respiratory virus that usually causes mild symptoms like cough, fever, and nasal congestion, similar to the common cold. In certain vulnerable groups, such as young children, the elderly, and those with weakened immune systems, it may lead to flu-like symptoms or complications like bronchitis or pneumonia. However, there is no cause for concern at this time as the situation remains under control. "With recent reports in the media about the spread of HMPV disease in China, the government of India, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare issued a statement on Jan 4 that HMPV is like any other respiratory virus which causes a common cold and flu-like symptoms during winter season, especially among the younger and older age groups," the Union Health Ministry has said.

A guide to Whistler, Canada, from the godfather of freeskiing

Cradled in British Columbia's magnificent Coast Mountains 120km north of Vancouver, the town of Whistler is a snow-sports haven. It's also home to Whistler Blackcomb, North America's largest ski resort. Biggest isn't always best, of course. But Whistler Blackcomb's terrain – more than 8,000 acres of endless cruisers, adventurous glades, steep bowls and back-country possibilities – is revered for good reason. The diversity at the bottom of the hill is similarly impressive. Boosted by its role in hosting the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics, Whistler boasts an array of restaurants, cultural experiences and high-profile events. Named after the twin peaks looming above, Whistler Blackcomb has long been a bucket-list destination and stomping ground for the planet's best skiers – including freeskiing legend Mike Douglas. Douglas – aka: "the godfather of freeskiing" – arrived from Vancouver Island at just 18 years old, back when Whistler's ski scene was dominated by the Whistler and Blackcomb resorts (they merged in 1997) and the population was just around 3,000. Within two years Douglas made both the BC and Canadian freestyle teams. He has stood at the vanguard of Whistler and wider ski culture ever since. Does he long for those early days? "I actually don't think I'd want to go back," he says, explaining that Whistler is now a much more holistic community, with excellent amenities and cultural programming. Unlike other famous ski towns, Whistler still feels like a thriving hometown. From daycares to gymnastics programmes, "raising a family here has made me appreciate the community even more". Ultimately, Douglas reflects, "how this [amazing] community is what kept me here. People are really progressive and forward thinking. Everything is possible." Not that paradise is perfect; even Whistler's hallowed powder is vulnerable to climate change. Douglas remembers how "thick and full" Horstman Glacier on Blackcomb peak once was. "It was hard to imagine that in my lifetime I would see that essentially completely disappear," he says. Observ-

ing these changes first-hand helps motivate his work with Protect Our Winters to mobilise the snow-sports community and get climate-positive policies on the national agenda. "Outdoors people who participate in these sports have an obligation to try and protect these environments." Here are Douglas' favourite ways to enjoy Whistler. Skiers seeking a shot of energy before hitting the slopes will find Rockit Coffee Co by the base of the Creekside Gondola (one of the resort's original lifts) at the end of Peak to Creek; one of Douglas' favourite runs. Rockit is actually in Whistler Creekside, 4.2km south of Whistler; you can travel between the two by ski and ski lifts. "[It's] my go-to coffee shop these days," he says. Rockit's big draw is its ambience. "It's got a fully committed retro-music vibe and feels warm and cosy inside," says Douglas. "Always good tunes, great coffee and tasty food." The walls are festooned with '70s-style posters, art, gadgets and curios; one wall is simply a Tetris jumble of old-school speakers and subwoofers. Visitors can warm up by the wood stove, hang out on window stools or get comfy in an egg-shaped capsule chair. Given most tourists stay in the main village, Creekside is a great spot to soak up the local atmosphere, says Douglas. He doesn't live far away himself. "Now that I've got an e-bike, I've been using that to go skiing sometimes," he says. "I'll ride over to Rockit and just lock it up, riding wearing my ski boots!" Descending 1,529 vertical metres over seven miles, Peak to Creek is one of North America's longest continuous ski runs – without a single flat section requiring ski-pole pushing or binding unclipping. It starts on Whistler peak, offering a sensational 180-degree view of the southern Coast Mountains, and winds all the way down (with diversions aplenty) to the base of the Creekside Gondola. "[It's] a classic," says Douglas. The run is a leg-burner in the best snow conditions, but a particular challenge when it hasn't been groomed all the way – which is often. "It can get pretty gnarly down at the bottom there!" Douglas says. "It's a good all-rounder, a big challenge – and something that people often come here and want to try and do

by the end of the week." Thankfully it finishes next to Dusty's, a beloved pitstop serving beers and massive BBQ plates on the terrace or by the fireplace. "The pulled-pork sandwich is always a fave there," says Douglas. Douglas also recommends Whistler's Harmony Ridge and Blackcomb's Cloud Nine as similar runs offering sweeping vistas and epic cruise potential. Vallea Lumina Night Walk is an immersive, after-dark, multimedia forest adventure. Following clues and cryptic radio transmissions in search of two lost hikers, participants proceed through a mystical storyline rendered with holograms, lasers, music and more. It's designed in collaboration with Moment Factory, which has staged Cirque Du Soleil events. "Honestly, I remember that when I first heard about it, I thought it sounded cheesy as hell," Douglas admits. "I didn't really have much interest – until I started hearing from people that went to it." The reviews were so good that he had to check it out, and "it's world class!" he says. "I've probably been six or eight times. If I have friends here from out of town for a week, it's always a recommendation." If visiting with children or people with access requirements, note that Vallea Lumina requires a kilometre of self-guided walking along snow-cleared but uneven winter terrain. The Japanese Hawaiian fusion menu at this local mainstay is full of delights: "way ahead of the whole poke craze," says Douglas. He recommends the Tangy Agedashi Tofu (deep-fried tofu on a bed of bean sprouts with a soy-based sauce) and the Ahi Poke. The atmosphere – always fun, sometimes raucous – is also key. Sushi Village is also a sentimental place for Douglas, given he worked there for four years shortly after moving to Whistler. "One of my local claims to fame is inventing the modern recipe for the Strawberry Sake Margarita on a hilarious drunken night with owner Miki Homma when I worked there in the early '90s," he reminisces. But the true magic of Sushi Village lies in its legendary role in Whistler's history. "It is the cultural heart of Whistler, in my opinion," Douglas says. And, when asked whether his friends would agree, he says he "can't think of a single one

that wouldn't. Sushi Village was Whistler's sixth-ever restaurant, opened in December 1985 by three Vancouver friends who simply wanted to ski every day. It soon became a storied hangout for the outdoor community. "It seems most of the celebs that roll through Whistler make a stop," says Douglas. "Check out the 'Wall of Fame' on the 'five-mile' walk to the restroom." The area today known as Whistler is located on the unceded territories of the Lil'wat and Squamish First Nations. European colonists – mostly prospectors and fur trappers – only started settling there in the late 19th Century as part of a long process of displacement and oppression of Indigenous communities. Engaging with and learning about this Indigenous heritage is essential for an authentic experience of Whistler – or anywhere in modern-day Canada. And the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre is the perfect place for it. "Especially for people that haven't been to Whistler, or haven't been exposed to our Indigenous culture, I think it's pretty well done and a really cool thing to check out," says Douglas. "There are thousands of years of human history in this region that were never properly acknowledged until this century. It's nice to see the record finally being set straight." The centre is a museum, art gallery and event space promoting and exploring First Nations culture and history through diverse and ever-changing exhibitions, activities and events. Visitors can connect with Cultural Ambassadors, join an interpretive forest walk, participate in Indigenous craft workshops and more. Scandinave is a sumptuous spa on the north edge of town, surrounded by old-growth forest. With dry saunas, hot pools, thermal waterfalls, cold plunges and massage therapies available, there is no more luxurious way to recuperate after hard days of skiing. "I'll go into an hour-and-a-half rotation of hot tub, cold plunge, sauna, relaxation room," says Douglas. "I prefer it in winter, and I prefer it when the weather isn't good... when the skiing is crappy." He recommends either booking ahead or going early in the day to ensure a spot and avoid the crowds.



SPORTS

AUS vs IND Alyssa Healy bemoans ‘junk’ bowling

Mumbai: Australia captain Alyssa Healy bemoaned some loose bowling from her team after the seven-time champion exited the Women’s World Cup in a shock semi-final loss to India on Thursday. Powered by an unbeaten 127 from Jemimah Rodrigues, India mounted a record chase of 339 runs for a stunning five-wicket victory to ensure a new nation will be crowned champions after Sunday’s final. “I think at the halfway mark, we thought we went okay,” Healy told reporters in Mumbai. “And ultimately, I just think we dished up a little bit too much junk to hit at times, and also probably just didn’t capitalise on the opportunities that we did create. So yeah, disappointing. It sort of feels a little bit un-Australian to be not as clinical as we normally are.”



Healy paid full credit to India’s performance but had no concerns over the future of the Australia team given the quality of cricket they played over the tournament. “I think we’re playing some unbelievable cricket, and that’s why it doesn’t quite feel right sitting here on the losing end, not sort of getting to Sunday’s fixture,” she added. “It wasn’t just one person making all the runs or taking all the wickets. I think the team contributed equally right throughout ... so I think there’s some huge positives out of it.” Thursday’s defeat leaves Australia without a global trophy in the cabinet for the first time in a long time after it was also ousted from the semifinals of the Twenty20 World Cup last year.

Wolvaardt, Kapp power South Africa to maiden Women’s ODI World Cup final

Mumbai: South Africa captain Laura Wolvaardt scored a hundred for the ages before the seasoned Marizanne Kapp made the ball talk in good batting conditions to script a 125-run victory over England and enter their maiden Women’s ODI Cup final here on Wednesday. Wolvaardt singlehandedly pushed South Africa to a formidable 319 for seven with an epic 169 off 143 balls, negating the impact of two mini collapses caused by left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone. Four-time champions England needed to pull off a record chase to reach another summit clash but Kapp, after doing her bit with the bat, broke the opposition back with a five-wicket haul, limiting them to 194 in 42.3 overs. “Still feels a bit unreal. You dream as a kid of scoring a hundred in a World Cup knockout game,” Wolvaardt said at the post-match presentation ceremony after receiving the ‘Player of The



Match’ award. On a surface with plenty of runs, Kapp got the ball to seam both ways. England were up against it from the first over of the chase when Kapp got rid of Amy Jones and the experienced former skipper Heather Knight. The first half of her innings was a lot about her regal drives through the off-side before she targeted the midwicket boundary against the England pacers and spinners to ensure South Africa regained the

momentum. Her innings comprised 17 fours and three maximums. Wolvaardt, who has 184 as her highest ODI score, took left-arm spinner Linsey Smith to the cleaners in the 47th over yielding 20 runs. Batting with a wishy stance, Wolvaardt was quick to dispatch balls on the leg-side. She brought up her 150 with a six over mid-wicket and also completed 5000 ODI during the course of her marathon knock. Chloe Tryon (33 not out off 26)

and Nadine de fired up. England Nat-Sciver Brunt (64 off 76) and Alice Capsey (50 off 71) tried to resurrect the innings with a 107 run stand when the latter was caught at mid on Sune Luus, it seemed all but over for them. It was Kapp who delivered the knockout punch by having the dangerous Sciver-Brunt caught behind. At 151 for eight, the game was only heading South Africa’s way. The second semifinal will be played between India and However, Ecclestone (4/44) stuck twice in the 22rd over to put the brakes on South Africa scoring rate. A 72-run stand between Wolvaardt and Marizanne Kapp (42 off 33) followed before Ecclestone broke a threatening partnership once gain. At 202 for six, South Africa seemed to be heading for a below par total but Wolvaardt took her sublime game to the next level to fire her team past the 300-run mark.

India vs Australia, 2nd T20I Weather prediction Will rain spoil MCG clash

New Delhi: After the Canberra T20I between India and Australia was washed out without a result, attention now shifts to Melbourne — but with little relief in sight. As both teams prepare for the second T20I at the iconic MCG, the threat of rain continues to hang overhead, leaving fans anxious that weather might once again steal the spotlight. The series opener at Canberra’s Manuka Oval had started on a thrilling note. India’s top order came out all guns blazing, with openers Abhishek Sharma and Shubman Gill setting the early tempo. Gill looked in sublime touch, racing to an unbeaten 37 off 20 balls, while captain

Suryakumar Yadav, desperate for a return to form, struck a fluent 39 not out off 24. Their partnership had India cruising toward a formidable total before dark clouds gathered and rain brought an abrupt, anticlimactic end to the contest. Back home, the buzz around Indian cricket remains strong, thanks to Jemimah Rodrigues’ record-breaking knock in the Women’s World Cup semi-final against Australia. Now, as the men’s side steps out in Melbourne, there’s a growing hope that they can channel some of that same resilience and energy to put on a statement performance ,weather permitting.

Suryakumar Yadav is India’s best option at number 3 vs Australia Robin Uthappa

New Delhi: Former India batter Robin Uthappa believes skipper Suryakumar Yadav is best suited to bat at No. 3 for India in T20Is, insisting that the team will get the best out of him only if he maintains a consistent batting position. While India’s T20I side has been enjoying a strong run of form, Suryakumar’s individual struggles with the bat remain a concern for the management. The right-hander has endured a lean patch in 2025, scoring just 139 runs in 12 innings across 13 matches at a strike rate of 116.80 - a far cry from his usual aggressive standards. Speaking on his YouTube channel, Uthappa stressed that the Indian captain must not compromise on his ideal batting slot. “It’s like you are stuck between a rock and a hard place because it’s a decision where you need to see your performances and manage your captaincy as well. So it’s a very difficult decision to make. However, I feel he should come in one position. In my opinion, there is no better position than No. 3 for Suryakumar in T20 cricket,” Uthappa said. “If the top three get set, you can bring flexibility after that. You can bring left-right combinations. In the Asia Cup, they probably decided that Tilak Varma would come at No.3 if a left-hander got out and Surya would come if a right-hander got out. That’s still alright, but Suryakumar Yadav shouldn’t come below No. 4. A top-order batter has to make a lot of adjust-



ments if he has to bat below No. 4,” he added. Suryakumar has often been flexible with his batting position, frequently dropping down the order to make room for in-form teammates. During the T20I series against South Africa, for instance, he promoted Tilak Varma to No. 3 after the youngster’s consistent performances. Since then, however, Suryakumar has tried to regain his usual role in the top order, including in the recent Canberra T20I against Australia. Although the Asia Cup wasn’t his finest campaign - scoring only 72 runs in six outings - the Indian skipper seemed to find some rhythm in the rain-marred

opening T20I against Australia. While the contest was abandoned midway, Suryakumar’s unbeaten 39 offered a welcome sign of improvement. Before the weather intervened, he and Shubman Gill had powered India to a blazing start, smashing 54 runs in just 4.4 overs - proof that when Surya finds his groove, India’s batting looks a class apart. With team combinations already sparking debate, all eyes will be on whether Suryakumar Yadav sticks to his No. 3 spot in the second T20I against Australia in Melbourne on Oct

Jemimah Rodrigues brings out guitar celebration after thrashing Australia

New Delhi: Star India batter Jemimah Rodrigues brought out her trademark guitar celebration following her match-winning innings against Australia in the second semi final of the ICC Women’s World Cup 2025. Jemimah played the innings of her life, scoring an unbeaten 127*(134) to help India chase down a record total of 339 in the history of women’s cricket. Following her knock, Jemimah was seen quite emotional in the post-match presentation as she was cheered on by her teammates. The 25-year-old also celebrated her knock in her trademark guitar celebration. Jemimah also shared a powerful pep talk from the dressing room saying that it’s their ground and no one can take away what-

ever they want from them. “We spoke about it in the dressing room. This is our ground, we can’t let anyone come and take whatever they want from here. It’s our home , we want to dominate here and we just want to play good cricket,” said Jemimah in a video shared by the BCCI. Jemimah stitched a massive 167-run partnership with captain Harmanpreet Kaur off 156 balls for the second wicket to bring India in the driver’s seat after they were left reeling at 59/2 in 9.2 overs. Following Harmanpreet’s (89 off 88) dismissal on 226, she added crucial stands with Deepti Sharma (24 off 17), Richa Ghosh (26 off 16) and Amanjot Kaur (15* off 8) to take India over the line.

Harmanpreet’s journey dusty field grandest world cricket

New Delhi: In a spectacular display of grit, skill and leadership, Harmanpreet Kaur, the trailblazing captain of the Indian Women’s Cricket Team and girl from Moga, has powered India into the final of the Women’s Cricket World Cup. This monumental achievement follows a thrilling semi-final triumph over Australia in Mumbai, securing India’s place in the summit clash and etching a golden chapter in the annals of Indian cricket. Born on March 8, 1989, in Moga, Punjab, Harmanpreet Kaur’s rise to stardom is a story of raw talent refined through relentless dedication. The daughter of Harminder Singh, a clerk in the local district courts, and Satwinder Kaur, Harmanpreet grew up in a modest household where her love for sports was nurtured early. She often accompanied her father — an avid sports enthusiast who played

basketball, handball and football — to local playgrounds, where her passion for games first took shape. Harmanpreet began her education at a government girls’ school in Moga before moving to a private institution to pursue cricket more seriously. Recognising her immense potential, Kamaldeep Singh Sodhi, the owner of a private cricket academy and school — Gyan Jyoti in Darapur village on the Moga-Ferozepur Road — younger siblings — a sister settled in Canada and a brother in Australia — while her proud parents are currently in Mumbai, cheering her on from the stands during her team’s historic campaign. A powerful right-handed batter and a handy off-spin bowler, Harmanpreet has consistently pushed the boundaries of Indian women’s cricket. While her recent semi-final heroics have captivated the nation, her un-

Harmanpreet began her education at a government girls’ school in Moga before moving to a private institution to pursue cricket more seriously.

beaten 171 off 115 balls against Australia in the 2017 World Cup semi-final remains one of the most iconic innings in the history of the sport — a moment that transformed the perception of women’s cricket in India. Harmanpreet was the first Indian woman to be signed by an overseas T20 franchise, making her debut in Australia’s Women’s Big Bash League (WBBL). She is also the first Indian woman to score a T20 International century and remains the only Indian woman cricketer with over 3,000 runs in T20Is. Across all formats, she has amassed more than 8,000 international runs, a testament to her consistency and class.



Ranji Trophy Kaverappa returns with a bang

With a fine five-wicket haul versus Goa (23-6-51-5), where he blew away the opposition’s lower-order

New Delhi: Pacer Vidwath Kaverappa’s triumphant return for Karnataka helped secure the first-innings lead and the resultant three points, in a drawn 2025-26 Ranji Trophy Elite on the ascendancy prior to the 2024-25 season, but multiple injury setbacks came as cruel blows as he played just two First Class matches in 12 months.

India, Australia players wear black armbands tribute to Austin during World Cup semifinal

New Delhi: India and Australia players on Thursday wore black armbands during their Women’s World Cup semifinal as a tribute to teen cricketer Ben Austin, who passed away after being hit by a ball during training. 17-year-old Austin was hit in the neck while batting at the Ferntree Gully Cricket Club in suburban Melbourne on Tuesday. He was wearing a helmet which had no neck guard while training for his club, and was hit by the ball which was thrown by a side-arm. Austin was batting against fast bowlers in the nets ahead of a T20 match when he suffered the fatal blow in front of his teammates. After the incident, Austin was put on ventilator but he succumbed to his injury, which revoked memories of Australian cricketer Phil Hughes’ tragic death in 2014 for many. Australia and India are wearing black armbands in their #CWC25 semi-final as a tribute to teenage cricketer Ben Austin, who passed away following an accident while batting in the nets in Melbourne earlier this week. The ICC - International Cricket Council’s thoughts are also with



Ben’s family and friends The Indian and Australian women’s teams wore black armbands during their high-octane ICC Women’s World Cup 2025 semifinal clash at the DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai on Thursday as a tribute to Ben Austin, the 17-year-old Australian cricket-

er who passed away on the cricket field on Thursday morning. Teenager Ben Austin succumbed to his injuries and died, which he sustained in the cricket nets earlier in the week. The aspiring cricketer hailing from Melbourne was hit by a ball thrown by the wanger (A device to throw

the ball before the game). Austin, although he was wearing a helmet but was not wearing a stem guard, head of Cricket Victoria Nick Cummins confirmed. “The ball hit him in the neck in a similar accident that Phil Hughes suffered 10 years ago,” Cummins said.

Lionel Messi Leads MLS Earners Ahead

Mumbai: Inter Miami’s eight-time Ballon d’Or winner Lionel Messi remains the highest-paid footballer in Major League Soccer with Los Angeles FC’s recent arrival Son Heung-min second, according to an updated salary list published on Wednesday. The \$20.4 million guaranteed annually that Messi receives from Inter Miami remains far ahead of other players. The figure does not include other types of income, such as his extensive portfolio of sponsorships, which the Argentinian star received as part of the contract he signed upon his arrival in Miami in mid-2023, which concludes in December. The Argentina captain will begin a three-season extension with Inter next year, the financial details of which are not yet known. Messi, 38, has just been crowned top scorer of the regular season -- with 29 goals in 28 matches -- and is favored to retain the Most Valuable Player award. His salary tops the list published by the MLS Players Association. South Korea’s Son, the star signing of the US summer, ranks second with the \$11.1 million annually established in his contract with LAFC. Goals in 10 matches as LAFC advanced to the MLS Cup playoffs. The third spot on the list is occupied by Spaniard Sergio Busquets (\$8.7 million), who will retire at the end of the season with Inter Miami. Paraguayan Miguel Almiron (\$7.8 million) is in fourth place, and Mexican Hirving “Chucky” Lozano (\$7.6 million) is in fifth, both notable signings for this season by Atlanta United and San Diego FC.

