

Singapore sends key forensic reports in Zubeen Garg case; Assam SIT targets December 17 chargesheet



Guwahati, Nov 01: In a major breakthrough in the investigation into the death of Assam’s beloved singer and cultural icon Zubeen Garg, authorities in Singapore have officially shared his post-mortem and toxicology reports with the Assam Police. The development marks a significant step forward in the ongoing probe, which has been under intense public and political attention since the artist’s sudden passing in September.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday confirmed that the documents, along with procedural guidelines under the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT), were received by the Special Investigation Team (SIT). The SIT was constituted to conduct a detailed inquiry following widespread demand for clarity and justice surrounding the circumstances of the popular musician’s death. Speaking to reporters, Sarma said

the investigation team had been assured full cooperation during its earlier visit to Singapore, and the handover of forensic findings reflects that commitment. “The SIT has made substantial progress. Singapore authorities have formally sent the post-mortem report, the toxicology examination results, and other MLAT-related papers. This is an important step,” the chief minister stated. Zubeen Garg, aged 52, passed away on September 19 while swimming in the sea in Singapore. His death deeply shook fans across Assam and the Northeast, triggering mourning, candlelight marches, and public demonstrations demanding a transparent and credible investigation. The renowned singer, known for his contribution to Assamese music and cinema, had millions of admirers who continue to remember him as a cultural force. The 10-member SIT has been actively pursuing leads and has already taken seven individuals into custody in connection with the case. All arrested persons are currently lodged in judicial custody. The authorities have not yet disclosed further details regarding the charges being considered, but officials say those arrest-

In a significant development regarding the death investigation of Assam’s cultural icon Zubeen Garg, Singapore authorities have shared his post-mortem and toxicology reports with the Assam Police, as confirmed by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

ed played roles that raised serious legal and investigative concerns. Sarma, who also handles the Home portfolio, expressed confidence that the probe is moving in the right direction. He assured the public that the investigation team is working with full diligence and transparency. “The SIT is absolutely confident about ensuring justice for Zubeen.

The chargesheet will be filed within the 90-day legal time frame, by December 17. People will appreciate the work being done when the details come out,” he said. While reaffirming the government’s commitment to a thorough examination of the events leading to Garg’s passing, the chief minister also underlined that other pressing issues of governance would continue alongside the investigation. “We are committed to justice. But the government cannot halt its functioning on other state matters,” he remarked. Shifting focus to political developments, Sarma launched a sharp attack

on the Congress party, accusing it of undermining Assam’s identity and interests.

He referred to a recent incident in which members of the Congress Seva Dal were alleged to have sung the national anthem of Bangladesh at a programme in Sribhumi. “The Congress wants to make Assam a part of Bangladesh.

This cannot be allowed. We have ordered an inquiry into the incident,” Sarma asserted. The chief minister also highlighted broader socio-political concerns, including what the government terms cases of “love jihad” and issues related to land encroachment. According to him, these remain significant threats to social harmony and territorial integrity in the state. “Along with ensuring justice for Zubeen, we will continue prioritising issues like infiltration, religious conversions through deceit, and encroachment.

These are matters that affect Assam’s future,” he added.

In Brief

Assault on students

Imphal: Manipur Police arrested five men following an assault on four students near Bijoypur on October 30. The identified suspects, aged 18 to 22, were apprehended on October 31 after an immediate investigation. The police seized two vehicles believed to have been used in the attack and are examining them for evidence. There are ongoing efforts to determine if more individuals were involved and whether the assault was premeditated. Authorities emphasized a commitment to legal action against those responsible, citing the importance of maintaining safety for students and locals. The incident has raised concerns among residents and student groups regarding regional security, with hopes that the arrests will deter similar violence in the future.

Mizoram politics heats up

Aizawl: Political tensions in Mizoram are escalating as Lalruatkima, a senior leader of the Mizo National Front (MNF), criticizes the ruling Zoram People’s Movement (ZPM) for losing public trust and failing to meet expectations since taking office. During a speech on October 31, he claimed that the ZPM has increased taxes without delivering visible improvements, leading to growing citizen disappointment. Lalruatkima stated that the MNF is the only credible alternative for the state’s governance. He also mentioned the weakening influence of the Congress party and expressed confidence in winning the upcoming Dampa Assembly by-election, against competition from ZPM’s candidate Vanlalsailova and Congress’s John Rotluangliana. The by-election will take place on November 11, with 20,790 voters eligible to participate.

Major illegal drugs trade held in Tripura

Agartala: Tripura Police Crime Branch arrested Rajib Dasgupta, linked to a drug trafficking scheme, after seizing 1,07,800 bottles of banned Eskuf cough syrup worth Rs 5.4 crore from a goods train at Jirania railway station. The operation, based on intelligence, aims to further investigate and dismantle the trafficking network. The cough syrup is prohibited in India due to its narcotic content, and this seizure contributes to over Rs 136 crore of narcotics confiscated in Tripura recently, highlighting ongoing efforts by Assam Rifles and others to combat drug trafficking in the area.

Arunachal child rights body orders criminal action against media for revealing identities of abuse victims

Itanagar, Nov 01: The Arunachal Pradesh State Commission for Protection of Child Rights has ordered strict legal action against media organisations and individuals who revealed the identities of minor sexual abuse victims from Sanggo Residential School in Mebo, East Siang district. The directive comes after videos, photos and social media posts exposing the children’s identities circulated widely on Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp. Acting on its own, the Commission said it was deeply concerned that certain media platforms and individual creators ignored legal safeguards and ethical norms while reporting the sensitive case involving schoolchildren. Among the platforms named in the order is the digital channel “Satik Samachar,” which reportedly

aired visuals identifying the victims. The Commission stated that revealing the identities of children affected by sexual offences is a serious crime under Section 23 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, Section 74 of the Juvenile Justice Act and Section 72 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The directive emphasises landmark Supreme Court rulings that protect child victims’ privacy and dignity, requiring media outlets to refrain from disclosing their identities. The East Siang Superintendent of Police is tasked with identifying responsible parties and filing FIRs, with offenders facing potential prison time and fines. Media must remove related content within 24 hours, while so-



cial media platforms are instructed to block it. The directive also mandates a child-sensitive approach in investigations, including psychological support for victims, with police required to submit compliance reports. Failure to comply may result in contempt proceedings, penalties, and disciplinary action, reflecting the state’s commitment to safeguarding children’s rights in abuse cases.

Safari Tariffs up in all National Parks and Sanctuaries

Guwahati, Nov 01: The revised prices for elephant safaris in all Assamese national parks and sanctuaries where the activity is offered will go into effect from November 1, 2025, according to the Assam administration. The state Environment, Forest and Climate Change Department announced the increase in elephant safari costs in a notification on October 30, 2025. The decision was made in partial revocation of a notification that was sent out on October 31, 2015, ten years prior. According to the updated prices, Indian travelers will now pay Rs 1,200 per seat per trip, up from Rs 750 previously, and foreign travelers will pay

Rs 2,000, up from Rs 1,250. According to the notification, all national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in the state that offer elephant safari services will be subject to the updated prices. The raise, according to officials, was implemented in response to long-standing requests from elephant owners who wanted pricing modifications to cover growing operating and maintenance expenses. The government’s memo also instructed the Chief Wildlife Warden, the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, and other high-ranking authorities to take the required steps to put the updated charge schedule into effect.

Meghalaya’s Cherry Blossom Festival lineup announced by CM

Shillong, Nov 01: Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma on Thursday unveiled the much-awaited lineup for the Cherry Blossom Festival 2025, promising “a grand celebration of music, art, and culture that showcases the rich diversity of our state.” The festival will see some of the world’s biggest names perform in Shillong. Day One of the Cherry Blossom Festival will showcase artists including The Script, Jason Derulo, and Nora Fatehi, capped off with performances by Aqua and Tyga. Day Two will feature a finale by DJ Diplo, alongside a tribute to Zubeen Garg. Local artists like Meba Oflia and Girish and The Chronicles will join international acts. Chief Minister Sangma emphasized the festival’s focus on celebrating Meghalaya’s culture and spirit, with various activities including a Mr. & Miss Cherry Blossom competition, cosplay, and arm wrestling at multiple venues. He invited everyone to participate in making the festival memorable.

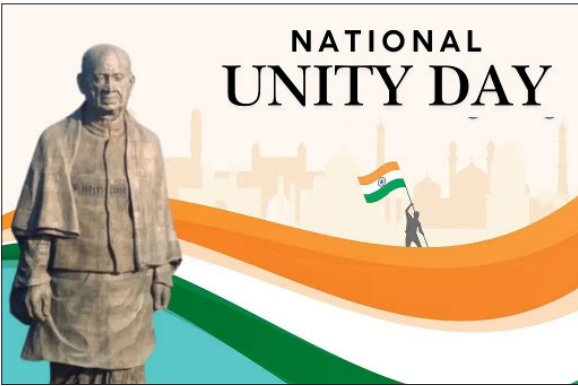
Former GMCH Superintendent Dr. Abhijit Sarma honoured with GLF Jeevandaan Award 2025

Guwahati, Nov 01: The Guwahati Literature Festival 2025 has begun celebrating Assam’s art, culture and public service. But the most special moment of the day came when Dr. Abhijit Sarma, former Superintendent of Guwahati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH), was honoured with the GLF Jeevandaan Award 2025. The award was given during the inaugural ceremony held at S.B. Deorah College Auditorium at Ulubari in Guwahati. Students, writers, artists, academicians and members of the public stood to applaud Dr. Sarma in the college auditorium. Many recalled his tireless leadership during the pandemic and other crises, guiding GMCH with calm and compassion. Dr. Abhijit Sarma has long been known as one of the most dedicated healthcare leaders in Assam. As GMCH Superintendent, he enhanced hospital services, strengthened emergency systems, and ensured timely care for critical patients. Even after stepping down from his official post, Dr. Sarma continued to work for the welfare of the community, supporting families in medical need, guiding young medical students,

and taking part in various health-awareness programmes across Assam. At the ceremony, organisers praised Dr. Sarma for giving “life and hope to many” through his work. Thanking them, he said serving the public is his duty and honour.

This year’s Guwahati Literature Festival honors Zubeen Garg’s life and legacy with Borgeet performances and heartfelt tributes to the beloved icon. Writers and scholars like Dr. Dhruvajyoti Borah, Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi, Dr. Kuladhar Saikia and Dr. Surjya Hazarika addressed the gathering. The Guwahati Literature Festival serves as a convergence of various fields, including literature, music, healthcare, and social service. This year’s event honored diverse individuals, including Dr. Sarma and Major Hariman Deka, who jointly received the Jeevandaan Award. The 2025 festival emphasizes themes of love, memory, and cultural continuity, and included a touching session dedicated to Bhupen Hazarika and Zubeen Garg, reflecting on their impact through song and poetry.

Sivasagar observes National Unity Day with Enthusiasm



Sivasagar, Nov 01: National Unity Day was celebrated in Dolmukh Chariali, Sivasagar, honoring the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The event, organized by various local groups, began with lamp lighting by Jyotiprasad Dutta and Bokul Borthakur. A tribute ceremony for artistes Zubeen Garg and Syed Sadullah included floral offerings and a moment of silence. Eminent writer Samsul Barik highlighted Patel’s role in national unity and urged citizens to combat corruption and injustice. Jyotiprasad Dutta expressed concern over societal moral decline and the erosion of integrity among leaders. The celebration featured musical performances by AIR Dibrugarh vocalists, enhancing the cultural atmosphere.

Nagaland Civil Service bodies question state’s stand on IAS induction, demand transparency

Kohima, Nov 01: A group of civil service associations in Nagaland has strongly challenged the state government’s defence over the induction of non-State Civil Service officers into the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), saying the move raises serious constitutional and ethical concerns. The Joint Coordination Committee (JCC), a platform representing five major government service organisations — CANSSEA, FONSESA, NIDA, NSSA and NF&ASA — issued a detailed statement on October 31 questioning the basis on which certain officers were considered for IAS elevation. According to the committee, the state’s justification does not stand up to legal scrutiny and undermines the principle of fair recruitment. At the core of the dispute is

the inclusion of officers whom the JCC described as “irregularly appointed”, alleging that these individuals entered government service without going through proper and constitutionally mandated recruitment procedures. The committee argued that allowing such officers to rise to the IAS cadre would compromise both merit and integrity in public administration. The state government spokesperson had earlier defended the selections, saying they were done “within the constitutional framework” and that those regularised in service had shown seniority, experience and honesty deserving of consideration. The government further stated that deserving officers should not be denied advancement simply because they did not enter service through competitive exams.

Rejecting this explanation, the JCC questioned how appointments made in violation of Articles 14 and 16 of the Constitution could later be considered valid for IAS induction. “Induction into the IAS is not akin to attaining sainthood where one’s past irregularities are washed away. The rule of law applies to all,” the committee asserted. The JCC also cited the Supreme Court’s landmark 2006 judgment in the Uma Devi case, which held that regularisation cannot cure the initial illegality of an appointment made without due process. According to the associations, the state government’s stance contradicts this established legal principle. The Nagaland government had also pointed to a Supreme Court ruling involving Rajasthan, where a non-SCS officer was al-



lowed induction to the IAS. The JCC countered that the circumstances were completely different, noting that the Rajasthan case involved reserved quota for non-SCS officers, whereas the current issue in Nagaland concerns the eligibility of officers whose entry into service itself is disputed. Calling the explanation mis-

leading, the committee said the government must not attempt to “whitewash backdoor appointees and glorify them.”

It added that fairness in recruitment is critical for public confidence in the administration and urged the state to ensure transparency and adherence to established procedures.

Trump reiterates the India-Pakistan ceasefire assertion while praising PM Modi

New Delhi, Nov 02: Even as he once again claimed credit for mediating peace between India and Pakistan earlier this year, US President Donald Trump lavished praise on Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday, referring to him as the “nicest looking guy.” Trump gave his account of what happened in May at a luncheon for business leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in South Korea. He claimed to have “used trade pressure” to avert what he called a possible conflict between the two nuclear-armed neighbors. “Two nuclear-armed countries were engaged in combat. “No, no, no,” they said, “let us fight.” They are resilient individuals. The most attractive man is Prime Minister Modi. He is a murderer. He is quite tough. However, they called and said we would stop fighting in a short while,” Trump stated. He also alluded to the imminent completion of a trade agreement with India. According to Trump, “I am going to do a trade deal with India,” The President continued by speaking of his “great relationship” with Islamabad and New Delhi. “I am



● Speaking at a luncheon in South Korea, US President Donald Trump praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi and again claimed he personally helped end fighting between India and Pakistan earlier this year.

doing a trade deal with India and I have love and great respect for Prime Minister Modi. Likewise, the Prime Minister of Pakistan is a great guy and his Field Marshal is a great fighter,” he added. Further in his address, Trump said he had told both leaders that the United States would not pursue trade deals with them while the two countries were in conflict. “I called Prime Minister Modi and said we can’t make

a trade deal with you as you are fighting with Pakistan. Then I called Pakistan and said the same thing,” he said. Trump has made similar claims in the past of mediating between India and Pakistan following a brief military conflict in May this year, a claim that New Delhi has unequivocally denied, reiterating that the ceasefire between the two countries was reached bilaterally with no third-party involvement.

India and China resume border talks

New Delhi, Nov 02: On October 25, 2025, at the Chushul-Moldo meeting site, India and China began high-level border talks after a nearly year-long break. This was the 23rd session of Corps Commander-level negotiations, which attempted to resolve the remaining points of contention along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The talks took place in a “friendly and cordial atmosphere,” according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Both parties agreed to use the current diplomatic and military channels to preserve peace and stability along the border, acknowledging the progress made since the 22nd round of negotiations in October 2024. The most recent round of negotiations takes place against the backdrop of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping’s enhanced diplomatic engagement during the September 2025 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) meeting in Tianjin. Both leaders emphasized that border peace is essential to the steady growth of bilateral relations during their hour-long discussion, agreeing that “differences must not become disputes.”

SEC requests that local governments find duplicate voters on the electoral rolls

Mumbai, Nov 02: Following the opposition’s accusations of irregularities in the electoral rolls, which primarily contain names that have been registered in multiple wards, the State Election Commission (SEC) has written to the local authorities requesting that they launch a special effort to find these voters and make sure they cast their ballots at a single booth. Voters who have registered more than once will therefore be required to select a single booth and pledge not to cast their ballot at any other. Many voters, particularly in metropolitan areas, have registered in more than one ward, according to the SEC’s primary assessment. Since there hasn’t been a Special Summary Revision this year, the names are still in use. Opposition parties, in a meeting with the SEC and state’s chief electoral officer two weeks ago, demanded a postponement of the local body polls until the electoral rolls were cleaned up. “There are voters who have registered themselves



in various constituencies without deleting their name from the areas where they no longer reside,” said an official from the SEC.

“Our software can identify them. The booth-level officers (BLOs) will visit such voters and ask them where they intend to vote. As per the choice, the authorities in the remaining wards will be intimidated about the duplicate entries of the voter in order to avoid bogus voting.” Such voters will be notified in the ‘marked copy of an electoral roll’, which is referred to by the presiding officer of every booth. “When such voters approach the polling booth, they will be asked to give an undertaking that they

will not vote at other booths,” said the officer. “If the undertaking has already been given to the block-level officers (BLOs), there will be no need for one at the polling booth. The local bodies have also been asked to take action against the voters and even officers if the rules are violated.” Another officer from the urban development department said that the local bodies would have to begin the drive immediately so that it was completed before the actual voting was conducted. “The issue of duplicate voters is largely in big cities like Mumbai, Thane and Navi Mumbai,” he said. “The machinery will get ample time to rectify matters, as the corporation elections are expected to be held in January.” The officer said that the problem of multiple entries existed as no Special Summary Revision had been held in the state this year. He said that the SSR ensured the deletion of duplicate voters from the electoral rolls, as BLOs verified the existence of the voters at the given address.

Former BJP lawmaker incites indignation by urging Hindu teenagers to “pick up” Muslim ladies

Lucknow, Nov 02: According to reports, a former Uttar Pradesh BJP politician offered Hindu youngsters jobs in exchange for “picking up” Muslim girls, adding further poison to the politics of sectarian polarization. At a public gathering in Dhankharpur hamlet in Siddharthnagar district on October 16, Raghavendra Pratap Singh, the former BJP MLA of Domariyaganj and the head of the Hindu Yuva Vahini (HYV), is heard saying, “Pick up Muslim girls and get a job.” A video clip allegedly showing Singh giving the speech went viral on social media on Tuesday, giving the remark a larger audience and leading the opposition to call for harsh punishment against him. When Yogi Adityanath was the MP for Gorakhpur in the late 1990s, he created the Hindutva organization known as the HYV. The gang is still active in various regions of the state, despite Adi-

tyanath’s claims that it had been disbanded after he took over as chief minister in 2017. In an apparent attempt to reverse “love jihad,” Singh ordered Hindu youngsters, “If our two girls go there, you bring a minimum of 10 Muslim girls.” The term “love jihad” describes a purported plot by Muslim men to court and convert young Hindu women. How many young people are prepared? At the event, Singh urged everyone to raise their hands. A few of the guests chanted “Jai Sri Ram” while raising their palms. “I’ll plan your wedding. And I declare that if someone brings them, I’ll set them up with a job that pays well,” Singh continued. It was not apparent if Singh was exhorting Hindu youngsters to lure or abduct Muslim girls. Singh promised retaliation against those responsible, claiming that two local Hindu females had eloped with Muslim men and converted to Islam



within the last month. “The two who departed within the past month... This is too much for me to process. Muslims! Pay attention to me. Something seriously vengeful will take occur. “I advise you Muslims to inform the Mulla-Maulavis that there could be a serious incident in the next few days,” Singh said.

The BSF arrests a smuggler and seizes gold valued at Rs 2.45 crore at the Bangladeshi border

New Delhi, Nov 02: The Indian Border Security Force (BSF) detained one Indian smuggler and confiscated gold valued at Rs 2.45 crore at the India-Bangladesh International Check Post (ICP) Petrapole in West Bengal as part of a broad operation against cross-border smuggling. A BSF vehicle-checking party prevented an incoming truck from entering Bangladesh’s Benapole on Monday, causing the incident.

Following several thorough inspections, the BSF found that the truck was transporting two hidden green packets containing eight pieces of gold (two gold biscuits



and six gold bars). The gold packets were weighed at around two kilograms and had an estimated worth of Rs 2.45 crores. The BSF handed over the gold and the truck to the concerned authorities. After the initial round of questioning,

the apprehended individual was also handed over to the concerned authority. During the initial investigation, the man confessed that he agreed to transport the truck to the other side of the border in exchange for money. The opera-

The incident occurred on Monday when a BSF vehicle-checking party stopped an inbound truck from entering Bangladesh’s Benapole. After a few detailed rounds of checking, the BSF discovered that the truck was carrying two concealed green packets of eight pieces of gold (six gold bars and two gold biscuits).

tion has added another feather to the BSF’s cap, which has been relentless in preventing cross-border smuggling. Earlier this month, a 59-year-old BSF personnel died while preventing cross-border cattle smuggling in West Bengal’s Malda.

DK Suresh on rumors that DK Shivakumar will become chief minister

Bengaluru, Nov 02: Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar’s brother, DK Suresh, a former Congress MP, dismissed rumors about his brother and his prospects of becoming the next chief minister on Wednesday. “If it’s written in his destiny, he will become Chief Minister,” Suresh told reporters. Otherwise, he won’t. Why should we argue about it so much? Suresh clarified his previous statements in which he stated that he hoped Shivakumar would become Chief Minister, stating that it was merely a “personal wish.” “No lobbying or attempt being made” to advocate for Shivakumar’s elevation, he continued. “He is the State Congress President and Deputy Chief Minister. It’s his duty to work hard and ensure there is no black mark on the party. He is doing that job well, and I believe he will continue to do so,” Suresh said. The remarks

Ex-Congress MP DK Suresh dismissed speculation about his brother DK Shivakumar becoming Chief Minister, saying it depends on fate and that there is no lobbying or effort to push for his elevation.

come amid ongoing buzz within Congress circles over leadership equations in Karnataka, with Shivakumar and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah seen as the party’s two power centres in the state. Meanwhile, days after Chief Minister Siddaramaiah stated in Mangaluru that he would continue as Chief Minister for five years if the Congress High Command decides so, AHINDA organisations have come out in his support. AHINDA groups have launched a letter campaign urging the Congress High Command to allow Siddaramaiah to complete his full five-year term.



ED claims that MK Stalin turned over bribes for government positions

Chennai, Nov 02: The Tamil Nadu Police have been notified by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) of a suspected widespread cash-for-jobs fraud in the Municipal Administration and Water Supply (MAWS) Department of the state. According to the agency, the scam was discovered during a raid connected to a bank fraud case involving a DMK Minister KN Nehru’s cousin and real estate company TVH.

The ED said in a letter to the chief of police in Tamil Nadu that candidates paid bribes between Rs 25 and Rs 35 lakh to get positions like town planning officers, assistant engineers, and junior engineers. The organization claims that on August 6 of this year, Chief Minister MK Stalin handed over the appointments. The 2024–2025 and 2025–2026 recruiting processes were allegedly rigged, according to the ED, with some people having early access to exam details. Additionally, the CIA claimed that the bribe money was obtained in cash and



transferred via hawala methods. Evidence suggests that approximately 150 candidates who paid bribes were appointed, the ED said. In its letter to the police, the agency has also implicated a number of lawmakers and officials who are allegedly involved in the scheme. The ED has requested Tamil Nadu Police to submit a case and start looking into the alleged scam because the agency can only start an inquiry after the state police have filed a formal complaint.

AAP attacks BJP for creating ‘fake Yamuna’

New Delhi, Nov 02: The opposition AAP used Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s decision to skip the Chhath prayers on the Yamuna banks as leverage against the BJP government in the capital. Ahead of the state’s elections, there were rumors that the prime minister will give Usha Arghya by taking the sacred bath in Vasudev Ghat in North Delhi on Tuesday morning, capping the four-day celebration observed by Biharis. “The BJP and its government have been doing everything they can to fabricate a Yamuna to demonstrate to the world that they have cleaned the river and that its water is filtered like mineral water,” AAP Delhi President Saurabh Bharadwaj told reporters. In order for the PM to offer prayers to the Sun God during Chhath, one week prior to the Bihar elections, a phony Yamuna was set up for a picture shot. This, he said, was to generate social media reels claiming that the BJP had cleaned up the Yamuna. Delhi has around 1,300 Chhath Ghats — ponds filled with clean water — for performing rituals. Of these, 17 are on the banks of the Yamuna, including Vasudev Ghat.

Vijayan criticizes the Election Commission’s amendment of the special voter list

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov 02: The special intensive revision (SIR) of the electoral records was described as “a direct challenge to the democratic process” by Kerala chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Tuesday. According to Vijayan, it was impractical for the Election Commission to hold the SIR while the state was getting ready for local body elections. Kerala is scheduled to hold assembly elections the following year. Form printing and booth-level officer (BLO) training are two of the preliminary tasks for the SIR that the state’s top electoral office began on Tuesday. It will go on till November 3. Door-to-door

surveys will be conducted by the enumerators from November 4 to December 12.

The state government is worried that the house visits will make it more difficult to get ready for the elections for local bodies. Vijayan said the EC’s move to carry out the SIR in Kerala and other states “poses a serious challenge to the democratic process”. He said it raised doubts about the poll panel’s intentions and could erode public trust in the country’s electoral system.

“Even while the constitutional validity of the Bihar SIR is under the consideration of the Supreme Court, the move to extend



the same process to other states cannot be viewed as innocent or impartial. Conducting such a special intensive revision — which requires long-term preparation and extensive consultation — in

haste clearly indicates an attempt to undermine the people’s mandate,” Vijayan said. He said the Kerala Assembly had unanimously passed a resolution against the SIR.

Rahul Gandhi addresses the family of a doctor from Maharashtra who committed suicide

New Delhi, Nov 02: Rahul Gandhi, the leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha, informed the relatives of the woman doctor from Satara, Maharashtra, who allegedly committed suicide, that he would back them in their pursuit of justice during a conversation with them on Wednesday. Sources said that the doctor’s family begged Rahul to encourage the government to send a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to look into her death because they were worried that, because it had just been a week since her passing, the evidence would be lost. Rahul promised to put pressure on the government to form a Special Investigation



Team (SIT) to conduct the investigation. Rahul, who is campaigning in Bihar on Wednesday, spoke to the deceased’s parents and siblings over the phone of Maharashtra Congress president Harshwardhan Sapkal who visited them at Kadgaon village in Beed district. On Sunday, in a social media post, Rahul had asserted that the doctor’s death exposed the “inhumane and insensitive” face of the Devendra Fadnavis administration. “A promising doctor daughter, who aspired to alleviate the pain of others, became a victim of the persecution by criminals entrenched in a corrupt system and power structure,” he wrote on X.

Five held in Manipur for assault on students near Kakching, probe underway

Assault on students

Imphal, Nov 01: Manipur Police have arrested five young men in connection with the assault on four students near Bijoypur along the Kakching Lamkhai-Pallel Road on Thursday night, an incident that has raised concern among residents in the area. The attack, which took place on October 30, involved several unidentified individuals who allegedly stopped the students on the road and physically assaulted them without any clear provocation. Officials said the arrests were made on October 31 after police launched an immediate investigation into the case. Those taken into custody have been identified as Elangbam Arun Singh (19), Mayengbam Manglem Singh (22), Nepram Jitan Singh (18), Moirangthem Chinglei Meitei (19) and Moirangthem Linthou Meitei — all hailing from Pallel and adjoining localities. Their arrest marks the first major



breakthrough in the case. Police have also seized two vehicles believed to have been used by the accused during the assault. The vehicles are currently being examined to gather more evidence, officials said. Investigators are now working to verify whether more people were involved in the incident and whether the attack was pre-planned or triggered by a confrontation. Authorities have assured that strict action will be taken against anyone found guilty. “We are pursuing the case seriously and ensuring all legal steps are followed to

bring the culprits to justice,” a police official said, adding that maintaining safety for students and civilians remains a top priority for law-enforcement agencies in the district. Local residents and student groups have expressed concern over the incident, saying such acts threaten peace and security in the region. Many hope the arrests will send a strong message and help prevent similar attacks in the future. The four assaulted students were reportedly returning from an event when the attack occurred, though officials have not disclosed their identities for safety reasons.

Mizoram politics heats up

MNF leader says ZPM ‘in ICU’, predicts defeat in 2028 elections

Aizawl, Nov 01: Political temperatures in Mizoram are rising as senior Mizo National Front (MNF) leader Lalruatkima launched a strong attack on the ruling Zoram People’s Movement (ZPM), declaring that the government is losing public confidence and will struggle to return to power in the 2028 Assembly polls. Addressing party workers at Serlui South in Kolasib district on October 31, the former minister claimed that the ZPM government has failed to fulfil expectations since taking office two years ago. He alleged that the ruling party has increased taxes and collected cess for road works without delivering visible development on the ground. According to him, disappointment among citizens is growing rapidly. “ZPM is in the ICU,” Lalruatkima said during his speech, suggesting



that the government is in a politically fragile condition. He emphasised that people are looking for a dependable alternative and argued that the MNF remains the only credible option for the state. The MNF leader added that public dissatisfaction would ultimately reflect in the next Assembly election. Lalruatkima also criticised the Congress, saying the party’s in-

fluence has been steadily weakening both in Mizoram and at the national level. He asserted that the MNF is set for victory in the upcoming Dampa Assembly by-election, saying the ruling ZPM has not chosen a strong candidate and that Congress is struggling to regain its footing in the state. “We are confident of winning the bypoll. People trust the MNF,

and there is no other serious contender,” he told party workers. The Dampa by-election, scheduled for November 11, will see 20,790 voters — including 10,185 women — exercise their franchise. Counting of votes will take place on November 14. Political competition in Dampa is intense, with the ZPM fielding singer-turned-preacher Vanlalsailova, while the MNF has nominated senior vice-president and former health minister R. Lalthangliana. The Congress candidate is former transport minister and party vice-president John Rotluangliana. The BJP has put forward Lalhmingthanga, a recent entrant to the party. The People’s Conference, led by former chief minister Brig. T. Sailo, has chosen party vice-president K. Zahmingthanga as its nominee.

Emotional Assam Embraces ‘Roi Roi Binale’



Pathsalala, Nov 01: On the day of Zubeen Garg’s final film ‘Roi Roi Binale’ release in Assam, the atmosphere was charged with emotion as rain fell across the state, transforming the celebration into a poignant tribute. Audiences emerged from theaters in tears, moved by Garg’s music and voice. In Pathsala, where the connection to Garg is particularly strong, people gathered outside cinemas in the rain, reflecting on the shared grief, with one youth stating, “Zubeen lives in every drop of rain. Nature cried with us today.” The event symbolized a collective mourning for the legendary artist.

Daniel Langthasa slams cement plants on disputed land

Haflong, Nov 01: The year-long dharna against the purported transfer of almost 9,000 bighas of land to the Adani Group in a number of villages in Chhota Lakhindong and the surrounding districts of Umrangshu is coming to an end. According to reports, the corporation and the impacted villagers have negotiated a compensation arrangement, so putting an end to the unrest. The construction of several cement factories, including the proposed Ambuja Cement project, is now anticipated to proceed in the area as the disagreements appear to have been settled. Evidence of this was made clear at the Pollution Control Board’s public hearing on Wednesday. The hearing and following approval processes appeared to be more of a formality than a true environmental



examination, according to observers, once compensation payments were made. Daniel Langthasa, the Chief Convener of the Sixth Schedule Protection Committee and a former council member, expressed his deep displeasure, saying the entire process was opaque. Langthasa declared, “We are not opposed to development, but why were the legal processes of land purchase not properly finished? Wednesday’s entire drill in Umrangshu was a

performance. How can compensation be made prior to approval from the Pollution Control Board? He also cautioned that Umrangshu will become a very polluted area due to the careless construction of cement and mining facilities on thousands of bighas of land. “When such large-scale industrial units come up, even the air we breathe will become heavy, and there’s no assurance that the drinking water will remain safe,” warned Langthasa. Lanthasa also conveyed his dissatisfaction with claims that his group was ‘inciting’ the locals during the public hearing. “Such statements are deeply unfortunate,” he remarked, restating his committee’s support for legitimate and ecologically conscious development in the hill district.

Superstition Turns Violent

Sohra, Nov 01: A family in Meghalaya’s East Khasi Hills escaped an attack by a mob of about 200 people, who accused them of witchcraft. The incident occurred on the evening of October 30 in Khliehshong, where the mob threatened to burn down Ham Shangpliang’s home. This violence was allegedly triggered by a boy’s claim of having visions of Shangpliang. Despite police efforts to manage the situation, including the use of tear gas and stun grenades, the mob proved resistant. Eventually, police evacuated 22 individuals, including minors, while eight officers were injured. Nine key instigators were arrested, with more arrests anticipated. Police condemned the violence, urging the public to reject superstition and mob justice.

Major illegal drugs trade held in Tripura



Agartala, Nov 01: Tripura Police Crime Branch arrested Rajib Dasgupta, a key figure in a drug trafficking racket, in connection with the seizure of 1,07,800 bottles of banned ESkuf cough syrup valued at Rs 5.4 crore from a goods train. The arrest follows intelligence-led operations at Jirania railway station. Authorities continue to pursue another absconding suspect and further investigations are ongoing to dismantle the trafficking network. The ESkuf cough syrup is banned in India due to its narcotic content. This seizure contributes to over Rs 136 crore worth of narcotics confiscated in Tripura in recent weeks, with ongoing efforts by Assam Rifles and other agencies to combat drug trafficking in the region.

‘Gaurav Gogoi is 100 per cent Pakistani agent, planted by foreign power’: Assam CM

Guwahati, Nov 01: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on October 31 accused state Congress president and MP Gaurav Gogoi of being a “Pakistani agent” allegedly “planted by foreign power”. The remark marks an escalation in the ongoing war of words between the ruling BJP and the Congress in Assam. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a govern-

ment event, Sarma claimed, “Gaurav Gogoi is a Pakistani agent, he is purely that. He has been planted by foreign power in our country.” The Chief Minister and the BJP have repeatedly alleged that Gogoi has links to Pakistan through his British wife — a claim the Congress leader has dismissed as baseless. Gogoi earlier hit back at the accusations, saying they resembled

a “C-grade Bollywood film” that would “flop” because “the people of Assam understand everything”. Sarma said he would release what he called “evidence” against Gogoi, but only after the investigation into singer Zubeen Garg’s death concludes. “I am not convening a press conference now to share the evidence, as some will say the Zubeen Garg issue is being divert-

ed,” he told reporters. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma accused Congress president Gaurav Gogoi of being a “Pakistani agent” supposedly “planted by foreign power,” escalating tensions between the BJP and Congress in Assam.

Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia to lay Foundation Stone for Sohra Tourism Circuit in Meghalaya under PM-DevINE

Shillong, Nov 01: In a significant step towards enhancing tourism infrastructure in Meghalaya, Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, Union Minister for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) and Minister of Communications, along with Shri Conrad

K. Sangma, Chief Minister of Meghalaya, tomorrow will lay the foundation stone for the Integrated Development of Sohra Tourism Circuit in Sohra. The event is being organised by the Department of Tourism, Government of Meghalaya, in collaboration with the

Ministry of DoNER. It signifies the Union Government’s continued commitment to unlocking the tourism and livelihood potential of the North Eastern Region. Shri Timothy D. Shira, Minister of Tourism, Government of Meghalaya, will also be present on the

occasion. The project, funded under the PM-DevINE scheme with an investment exceeding Rs 200 crore, aims to strengthen tourism infrastructure, enhance sustainable livelihood opportunities, and preserve Sohra’s cultural and natural heritage. It will improve visitor

facilities, promote eco-friendly tourism, and generate employment for local communities. Dignitaries will showcase local crafts and engage with entrepreneurs at the foundation ceremony, emphasising community-led tourism development. Additionally, a public pro-

In Meghalaya, Union Minister Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia and Chief Minister Shri Conrad K. Sangma will lay the foundation stone for the Integrated Development of Sohra Tourism Circuit.

gram will highlight the project’s impact on Meghalaya’s tourism landscape. On November 2, 2025, Minister Shri Scindia is set to visit

the Mawmluh Cave and inaugurate DoNER projects in Guwahati, Assam, including a visit to IIT Guwahati.

Tripura BJP team inspects Santirbazar after bandh violence, report to CM soon

Agartala, Nov 01: A high-level delegation of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Tripura on Thursday visited Santirbazar in Dhalai district to take stock of the situation following violent clashes that erupted on October 23 during a statewide bandh called by the Tripura Civil Society. The five-member team assessed the damage on the ground and interacted with affected residents before returning to prepare a report for Chief Minister Manik Saha. The delegation included SC Welfare Minister Sudhangshu Das, Tribal Welfare Minister Bikas Debbarma, MLA Swapna Pal, and BJP state general secretary Bipin Debbarma. Their visit was aimed at reviewing the aftermath of the unrest, during which several shops were set ablaze and looted, and numerous

people — including a Block Development Officer and an engineer — suffered injuries. According to authorities, both officials were “brutally attacked” during the chaos. Speaking to reporters, Minister Sudhangshu Das described the incident as deeply disturbing and unexpected. “We came here to understand firsthand what actually happened. The destruction of property and the injuries caused are shocking. There is no place for violence in our society. We always advocate peace, and those responsible must face strict action,” he said. Das noted that the violence impacted both tribal and non-tribal residents, warning against attempts to sow discord between communities. “People here — tribal and non-tribal — live together peacefully. Attempts have



been made to create tension, which is condemnable. A section of politicians is trying to take advantage of the situation. I warn them not to disrupt communal harmony,” he remarked. The minister further informed that the state government has already extended interim relief to affected families. A primary assessment of the

damage has been completed, and compensation measures are underway. He added that the delegation will shortly submit a detailed report to Chief Minister Manik Saha, recommending necessary administrative and security steps to prevent future incidents. The October 23 bandh witnessed sporadic violence across pockets of Tripura,

with Santirbazar emerging as the worst-affected area. While the bandh had been called to protest various governance-related issues, authorities say miscreants used the occasion to incite unrest. Police presence in the region has since been strengthened, and the administration has assured strict action against those involved in the attacks and arson.

200 Attack Meghalaya home on Witchcraft suspicion; family rescued

Shillong, Nov 01: A family in Meghalaya’s East Khasi Hills district narrowly escaped a violent assault after a large mob attacked their home on Thursday night, accusing them of practising witchcraft. The incident took place in Khliehshong locality of Sohra around 9.30 pm, when nearly 200 people gathered outside the house of local resident Ham Shangpliang, threatening to burn the home and harm the occupants. Police officials said tension escalated quickly after rumours spread that a boy had claimed to experience “visions” involving Shangpliang and believed he had been placed under some form of spell. The unverified allegation ignited panic in the neighbourhood, prompting a crowd to assemble and surround the house, despite the absence of any evidence to support the claim. Authorities described the situation as “extremely volatile,” with the mob refusing multiple warnings to disperse. Sohra police teams arrived at the spot along with local magistrates, but faced stiff resistance due to the size and aggression of the crowd. East Khasi Hills Superintendent of Police Vivek Syiem said officers were left with no option but to fire tear gas and stun grenades to create a safe path for evacuation. “This was necessary to protect the residents



A family in Meghalaya’s East Khasi Hills district faced a mob attack on Thursday night, accused of witchcraft after a boy claimed to have visions involving them.

and safely extract them from danger,” he said. Twenty-two people, including minors and members of two other families who were visiting the house for a memorial service, were safely rescued in a coordinated operation. They were taken to Shillong Civil Hospital for examination and counselling. Additional personnel from the Special Operations Team were deployed to stabilize the situation and disperse the mob. Eight police officers were injured while trying to defend the family and maintain order. A case has been registered at Sohra police station, leading to the arrest of nine primary instigators, with further suspects identified for likely additional arrests as the investigation continues.

BUSINESS

The goal of Pine Labs’ November 7 IPO is to raise ₹2,080 cr through a new offering

New Delhi: Pine Labs, a fintech company, is preparing to go public on November 7 with the goal of raising Rs 2,080 crore through a new share offering. On November 11, the company’s first public offering will come to an end. The red herring prospectus (RHP) states that the anchor investor auction will begin for one day on November 6. In addition to the new offering, up to 82.3 million equity shares will be offered for sale (OFS). According to the OFS, the fintech company’s shares will be sold by Peak XV Partners, London-based Actis, PayPal, Mastercard Asia/Pacific,



Temasek through Macritchie Investments, Invesco, Madison India Capital, MW XO Digital Finance Fund Holdco, Lone Cascade LP, Sofina Ventures S.A., and Lokvir Kapoor, a co-founder of Pine Labs. Proceeds from the fresh issue will be used by the company to repay debt,

investment in IT assets, expenditure towards cloud infrastructure, technology development initiatives and procurement of digital checkout points. The company will use funds for investment in its subsidiaries such as Qwiksilver Singapore, Pine Payment Solutions, Malaysia, and Pine

Labs UAE for expanding the presence outside the country. According to the draft documents submitted in June, the company had previously sought to raise Rs 2,600 crore through a new issuance, with an extra OFS component of up to 14.78 crore shares by current owners.

Based in Noida, Pine Labs is a technology company that specializes in digital payments and solutions for financial institutions, consumer brands, businesses, and merchants. Its technology infrastructure supports digital transactions and payment processing in India as well as in a few international mar-

kets such as Malaysia, the UAE, Singapore, Australia, the US, and parts of Africa. By transaction value in FY2025, the company was India’s biggest issuer of closed and semi-closed loop gift cards, according to the Redseer Report.

During the same year, it was also recognized as one of the top five in-store digital platforms, the top digital affordability enabler at digital checkout points, and a crucial processor for Bharat Connect transactions. The company handled 5.68 billion transactions in FY25, processing payments of Rs 11.42 lakh crore in gross transaction value (GTV).

Tata Motors commercial vehicle sales climb 10% in October; strong demand seen across segments

Kolkata: Tata Motors Limited reported robust performance in October 2025, registering total commercial vehicle sales of 37,530 units, marking a 10% year-on-year growth compared to 34,259 units in October 2024. The company witnessed broad-based demand across categories reflecting improved

economic and logistics activity. In key segments, HCV trucks rose 7% to 10,737 units, ILMCV trucks grew 6% to 6,169 units, and passenger carriers surged 12% to 3,184 units. The SCV cargo and pickup segment registered a 7% increase at 15,018 units, highlighting continued traction in last-

mile transportation. Domestic commercial vehicle sales stood at 35,108 units, up 7%, while international business recorded a significant 56% jump to 2,422 units. Domestic MH&ICV sales reached 16,624 units, up from 15,574 units last year, while combined domestic and international MH&ICV sales rose

to 17,827 units from 16,274 units. Fleet operators and logistics firms in Kolkata reported steady demand for light and medium commercial vehicles driven by festival-season deliveries, retail stocking, and infrastructure works. Regional transporters noted rising interest in fuel-efficient and fleet-man-

agement-enabled models, suggesting continued market momentum going into the winter trading cycle. Tata Motors’ strong showing indicates positive sentiment in the commercial mobility sector, supported by e-commerce, infrastructure expansion, and inter-city transport recovery.

Medanta’s Rs 500-crore Guwahati hospital signals major healthcare investment wave in Northeast

Guwahati: Medanta has laid the foundation for its 400+ bed super-specialty hospital in Guwahati, marking a strategic healthcare investment aimed at strengthening medical infrastructure across the Northeast. The Bhoomi Poojan ceremony, attended by Assam Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, Medanta Chairman & MD

Dr. Naresh Trehan, and Group CEO Pankaj Sahni, marks the start of a project positioned to alter healthcare access patterns in the region. Estimated at ₹500 crore, the Sarusajai Industrial Estate-based facility on NH-27 will offer advanced tertiary and quaternary services including organ and robotic transplants, cardiac and neuro sciences,



oncology, trauma care, diagnostics and preventive

health. The development is projected to generate 5,000–7,000 jobs, boosting both healthcare capacity and regional employment. Dr. Trehan described the project as a significant step in bridging the healthcare gap in the Northeast, while Sahni highlighted Guwahati’s connectivity and its role in accessing a 50-million strong population.

Revenue from GST increases 4.6% to Rs 1.96 lakh crore

New Delhi: According to government data issued on November 1, GST collections increased by 4.6 percent from the same period last year to a five-month high of Rs 1.96 lakh crore in October, the slowest pace in 52 months. Growth in collections nearly halved to 4.6 percent from a four month high of 9.1 percent in the previous month, even as total collections rose to Rs 1.96 lakh crore from Rs 1.89 lakh crore in the previous month. October also extended the run of high inflows, making it the tenth consecutive month that revenues remained above the Rs 1.8 lakh crore mark. Collections had last crossed the Rs 2 lakh crore mark in May.

The slow pace of collections corresponds with the changes to the GST regime. In August, the prime minister announced rejig of the GST regime. On September 22, in a major reform, the government rationalised GST rates further by removing the 12 percent and 28 percent slab and moving 90 percent of the items to lower tax. While net customs revenue increased 2.5 percent to Rs 37,210 crore, net collections increased 0.6 percent to Rs 1.69 lakh crore, while domestic revenues remained unchanged from the prior year. In October, domestic refunds increased by 26.5 percent, while customs refunds increased by 55.3 percent. In October 2024, gross domestic revenues were Rs 1.42 lakh crore, up merely 2% to Rs 1.45 lakh crore.

TCI reports 8% revenue growth in Q2 FY26, driven by Auto & FMCG demand

Guwahati: Transport Corporation of India Ltd. (TCI), one of India’s largest integrated multimodal logistics and supply chain companies, has reported strong financial results for the second quarter of FY2026, supported by robust demand across the auto, FMCG and consumer durables sectors. The company posted a consolidated revenue of ₹12,174 million in Q2 FY26, an increase of 8% from ₹11,314 million in the same period last year. EBITDA rose 7% to ₹1,624 million from ₹1,519 million, while profit after tax (PAT) increased 6% to ₹1,135 million. For the first six months of FY26, TCI recorded 8.3% growth in revenue and 11% rise in PAT. On a standalone basis,



the company’s revenue stood at ₹10,652 million, up 5.3% year-on-year. Standalone PAT grew 6.4% to ₹878 million. TCI Managing Director Vineet Agarwal said the performance reflects strong demand trends and operational efficiency, further boosted by GST 2.0 implementation and festive season demand. “We expanded warehousing, invested in automation, and scaled our rail and coastal logistics offerings,” he stated. Agarwal also highlighted TCI’s sustainability ef-

forts, including alternative fuel pilots and a carbon emissions tool now adopted by DPIIT. In Guwahati, logistics operators and traders expect demand to strengthen further as FMCG and consumer durables movement rises ahead of the festive and winter season. With Assam emerging as a logistics hub for the Northeast, TCI’s expansion in multimodal and warehousing solutions is seen by market stakeholders as a catalyst for faster goods movement to key regional markets.

TCI Group, with over ₹7,000 crore in revenues, continues to expand its multimodal network, coastal shipping fleet, cold chain operations and supply chain solutions across India.

Nissan India reports 45% MoM sales surge in October, crosses 1.2 million export milestone



Guwahati: Nissan Motor India Pvt. Ltd. (NMIPL) has reported a strong festive-season performance, recording consolidated sales of 9,675 units in October 2025, marking a 45% month-on-month jump. The company sold 2,402 units domestically while exports touched 7,273 units, driven primarily by demand for the New Nissan Magnite. Nissan also celebrated crossing 1.2 million cumulative vehicle exports, reinforcing India’s status as a key global manufacturing and export hub. The company credited the festive rush during Navratri, Dussehra and Diwali, along with the GST rate reduction, as major demand boosters. Managing Director Saurabh Vatsa said the industry witnessed positive festive momentum, adding that the Magnite, with GNCAP 5-star safety rating and 40 standard safety features, continues to win strong customer trust. The brand has expanded its CNG retrofitment program and is preparing for three upcoming launches, including the Nissan Tekton (7-seater B-MPV) and a 7-seater C-SUV. In Assam and the wider Northeast market, Nissan dealers reported higher showroom footfall and bookings during the festive period. Guwahati dealers highlighted strong interest in the Magnite — particularly the KURO Special Edition and new Metallic Grey variant — as customers took advantage of price cuts of up to ₹1 lakh following GST benefits. Nissan reaffirmed its focus on network expansion, improved dealer inventory cycles, and enhancing customer experience under its “One Car, One World” strategy.

IREDA vows bigger push for renewable energy growth in Northeast, eyes green power hub future

Guwahati: The Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd. (IREDA) has renewed its commitment to accelerating renewable energy expansion in the North-Eastern region. Speaking at an event titled “Financing Renewable Energy in the North Eastern Region” in Guwahati, Chairman and Managing Director Pradip Kumar Das highlighted the region’s crucial role in India’s clean energy roadmap. Shri Das informed that India’s renewable energy capacity has tripled since FY14 and is projected to double again by FY2030, requiring investment of around ₹28 lakh crore. The Northeast, he noted, holds tremendous green energy potential, particularly in hydropower and solar, with approximately 5 GW of renewable capacity already installed — nearly 60% of the region’s total power capacity. So far, IREDA has sanctioned over ₹3,500 crore in the Northeast, offering

Škoda Auto India hits all-time high annual sales within October 2025



Siliguri/Guwahati: The year 2025 is a landmark year for Škoda Auto India, as it marks 25 years in the country. In October 2025, the brand crossed yet another milestone by achieving its highest-ever sales in the country. Between January and October 2025, Škoda Auto India sold 61,607 cars. Adding to this strong performance, which already included its best-ever quarterly and half-yearly sales, the brand has now recorded its highest-ever monthly sales as well, with 8,252 cars sold in October 2025. The growth is driven by Škoda Auto India’s first-ever sub-4m SUV, the Kylaq, with steady demand for the Kodiaq, Škoda’s flagship luxury 4x4, sustained contributions from the Kushaq and Slavia, and the high-performance Škoda Octavia RS getting sold out within 20 minutes. Commenting on the landmark sales, Ashish Gupta, Brand Director, Škoda Auto India, said, “We began the year 2025 with the intent to significantly strengthen the brand and surge ahead in India. This milestone of our “biggest sales ever” is a testament to the strength of purpose, clarity of vision and agility of execution, all of which are pivotal to our surge in India.”

Škoda Auto India’s biggest year has been anchored by its product offensive and network expansion strategy. Kylaq sales have reached close to 40,000 units since its launch this year. Limited editions of the Kushaq and Slavia further enhanced the value proposition, while the flagship 4x4 Kodiaq upped the luxury quotient. Enthusiasts had their appetite for performance whetted with the iconic Octavia RS. Škoda has now achieved a milestone of selling over 200,000 locally produced cars - Slavia, Kushaq, and Kylaq, with a reach of 318 Customer Touchpoints across 180 cities. The popular ‘I love my Doda’ campaign highlighted the brand’s ‘Fans, not Owners’ ethos by putting Škoda customers at the heart of the story. Škoda Auto India continues to strengthen confidence through its focus on customers and service excellence. Škoda Auto India website - www.skoda-auto.co.in.

CAIT launches ‘ARISE’ mission to skill 2.5 million retail traders across India

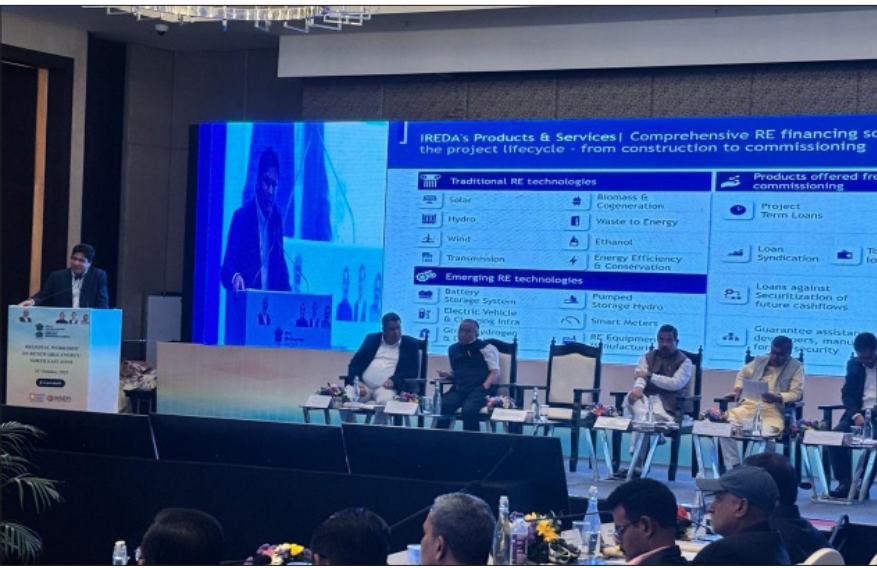


Kolkata: In a major push to strengthen India’s retail sector, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) on Thursday launched its National Skilling Mission “ARISE” in partnership with Coca-Cola India and with support from the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). The initiative aims to train and digitally empower 2.5 million small traders and kirana owners across the country. The programme was inaugurated by Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta. MP and CAIT Secretary General Praveen Khandelwal presided over the launch, attended by senior government officials and industry representatives. Gupta called the initiative a “historic step” to empower small shopkeepers who she termed the backbone of the nation’s economy. “This mission will

provide new strength to traders and help build a Viksit Bharat,” she said.

Kolkata also welcomed the initiative, stating that digital tools and skill training will help local shopkeepers compete with organised retail chains. Retailers in the Burrabazar and Gariahat markets said modern training and AI-enabled systems could improve business planning and boost customer reach in the city’s fast-evolving retail landscape.

Khandelwal noted that the programme will begin in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh before expanding nationwide. The ARISE programme will include skilling in digital technology, financial literacy, consumer behaviour and use of Coca-Cola’s AI-powered “Coke Buddy” platform for efficient inventory and demand planning.



concessional financing, including a 50 basis points rebate for projects in the region and an additional 50 basis points concession for women-led initiatives. The agency has also backed key schemes such as PM-KUSUM and Rooftop Solar, supporting thousands of installations, including 3,800 solar pumps in Tripura and rooftop projects

across Assam. In Guwahati, industry stakeholders welcomed IREDA’s push, noting rising investor interest in solar rooftops, decentralized energy models, and green business parks. Experts believe enhanced grid connectivity and policy incentives will attract more clean energy entrepreneurs and MSMEs in Guwahati, strengthening

Assam’s position as a renewable energy growth hub. Shri Das added that with better infrastructure and innovative financing mechanisms, the Northeast could emerge as a clean energy hub for India and neighboring regions, supported by strong local leadership, including many IREDA business heads hailing from the region.

Salman Khan was labeled a “terrorist” by Pakistan following his statement about Balochistan

New Delhi: Salman Khan’s recent comments regarding Balochistan in Abu Dhabi caused a stir on social media and led to controversy. He was placed under the 4th Schedule of the Anti-Terrorism Act (1997) after the incident reportedly caused uproar in Pakistan. Those who are suspected of having ties to terrorism are usually included on the 4th Schedule of the Anti-Terrorism Act (1997). According to a Money Control report, the Government of Balochistan Home Department verified the development with a notification on October 16, 2025. The reason behind declaring the actor ‘terrorist’ was mentioned in the document. It reportedly read that Khan is an ‘Azad Balochistan Facilitator’. Meanwhile, inclusion in the 4th Schedule comes with serious consequences, such as increased surveillance,



limitations on mobility, and the possibility of legal proceedings against the individual. The step comes days after Salman Khan mentioned Pakistan and Balochistan separately at the Joy Forum 2025 in Riyadh, Abu Dhabi. He was talking about people working in the Middle East. Salman Khan attended the event alongside Shah Rukh Khan and Aamir Khan, where the three Khans

of Bollywood made their rare appearance together to discuss the growing popularity of Indian cinema in the Middle East. Talking about the influence of Indian cinema among the South Asian communities who live in the Middle East, Salman Khan said, “Right now, if you make a Hindi film and release it here (in Saudi Arabia), it will be a super-hit. If you make a Tamil, Telu-

gu, or Malayali film, it will do hundreds of crores in business because so many people from other countries have come here. There are people from Balochistan, there are people from Afghanistan, there are people from Pakistan... everyone is working here.” Khan’s statement gained mixed reactions from the internet. While many praised him for his stand, many from the neighbouring country reportedly were unhappy with it. Additionally, Khan’s remark was praised by Baloch separatist leaders. Interpreting as an acknowledgement of their struggles, Mir Yar Baloch was quoted as saying by multiple reports, “By recognising Balochistan as distinct, Salman Khan has done what many nations hesitate to do. It’s a powerful act of soft diplomacy that strengthens the global awareness of our identity.”

Suriya and Raveena Tandon will co-star in the next Venky Atluri film



New Delhi: Bollywood actress Raveena Tandon is all set to star alongside Tamil actor Suriya in filmmaker Venky Atluri’s upcoming project, production banner Sithara Entertainments announced Monday, a day after the actress’s 53rd birthday. “Happy birthday to the ever-disgraceful @TandonRaveena!–#Suriya46 team I’m so happy you’re here. anticipating a wonderful trip in the future,” the creators stated on X. Suriya 46 is a provisional title for the movie. Its 2026 theatrical debut was originally announced by the film’s creators. The Naga Vamsi-produced movie will also include actress Mamitha Baiju. The forthcoming film will have Nimish Ravi as its cinematographer and G. V. Prakash Kumar as its composer. Suriya was last seen in the Karthik Subbaraj-directed action thriller Retro. The 50-year-old actor also has the film Karuppu in the pipeline. Tandon recently starred in the film Inn Galiyon Mein. She is set to appear in Welcome to the Jungle, the third installment of the Welcome franchise.

Jackie Chan meets Hrithik Roshan



New Delhi: Actor and martial artist Jackie Chan recently met Bollywood star Hrithik Roshan while on vacation in the United States. On Monday, the “War 2” star posted pictures of herself with the legendary martial arts practitioner on Instagram. Jackie Chan and Hrithik stood outside a hotel in Beverly Hills, California. Jackie Chan chose an all-black costume, while Hrithik wore an all-white one. Both wore similar white caps to finish off their ensembles. I’m glad to have met you here, sir @jackiechan. Your fractured bones are an inspiration to my own. In the caption, the 51-year-old actor wrote, “Forever and always.” Heart emotions were used by choreographer Bosco Martis in response to the article. Khushboo Patani, Disha Patani’s sister, posted a heart-shaped comment that read, “Jackie.” “Whatt,” wrote Tiger Shroff, co-star of Hrithik’s War. Hrithik is currently vacationing in the US with his girlfriend, Saba Azad. He recently shared a photo of the couple strolling through the streets. On the work front, Hrithik is set to make his OTT debut as a producer in the streaming space with Prime Video series Storm. Backed by Hrithik’s home banner HRX Films, the upcoming project stars Parvathy Thiruvothu, Alaya F, Srishti Shrivastava, Rrama Sharma and Saba Azad in key roles.

Bhuvan Bam announces his Dharma Productions Bollywood debut

New Delhi: Actor and content producer Bhuvan Bam revealed that he would be joining Karan Johar’s Dharma Productions in Bollywood. When Bam shared a picture of his inked contract with Dharma on Instagram, a major turning point in his career, the confirmation was made public. With the words, “Sapne dekho doston, poore ho jaate hain” (Dream big, friends), Bam thanked his followers and emphasized how dreams may come true. Dreams truly do come true,” and continued, “Without your help, it wouldn’t have been possible. I always need your blessings. ‘Kuku Ki



Kundali’ is the tentative title of a romantic comedy produced by Dharma Productions, in which Bhuvan Bam will co-star with Wamiqa Gabbi, according to many reports. Bam’s move

from creating digital material to mainstream filmmaking is marked by the film, which is directed by Sharan Sharma. Because of Bam’s fame and his partnerships with well-known industry people, the initiative is expected to spark attention. Prior to Bam’s official announcement, Karan Johar inadvertently disclosed details about Bam’s Bollywood venture.

Dark fascination The increasing fascination in serial killers in movies and online shows

New Delhi: Whether in the form of dramatized depictions of true crimes, real-life documentaries, or fictitious thrillers, stories about serial killers have become the focus of movies and web series in recent years. From the Italian true-crime drama ‘The Monster of Florence’ to the recently released OTT film ‘Bhagwat: Chapter One’, which starred Jitendra Kumar and Arshad Warsi, there are stories about heartless murderers and intricate investigations everywhere. This increasing interest raises questions about why viewers are drawn to these gloomy and unsettling stories and what this interest tells us about society and human nature. The fascination with serial killers is not just

about fear, maybe it’s also about curiosity. Watching such stories lets viewers face their fears safely, without any real danger. True-crime shows often highlight failures in the system and cases where justice was delayed, which strikes a chord with audiences. Seeing how criminals are eventually caught gives viewers a sense of satisfaction, as they follow the story of justice being served.

The term “voyeuristic” aptly describes the appeal of these narratives. They offer a glimpse into the forbidden, the taboo, and the grotesque, all from the safety of one’s home. This form of entertainment taps into a primal curiosity about death, violence, and the human psyche. It’s



not merely about the thrill of horror but about understanding the complexities of human behaviour and the societal constructs that allow such individuals to operate undetected for extended periods. Across the world, this trend has only grown stronger. Internationally, titles like ‘Gone Girls: The Long Island Serial Killer’ explore unsolved mysteries and the science behind

tracking violent offenders. Similarly, Hulu’s ‘Mastermind: To Think Like a Killer’ (2024) explores the career of Ann Burgess, highlighting her work at the FBI in developing methods to track serial killers and other violent criminals, while providing insights into the behavioural patterns of offenders and the investigative techniques used to apprehend them.

R Madhavan’s portrayal of “Edison of India” GD Naidu in the new biography is unrecognizable

New Delhi: The first look teaser for the upcoming movie GDN has been released by actor R Madhavan. Madhavan posted a video of himself playing ‘Edison of India’ GD Naidu on Instagram on Monday. This actor appeared completely different in the movie about the “self-taught engineer and industrial pioneer.” The 43-second video shows Madhavan in the role of Naidu at work. “The spirit of G.D.NAIDU is now officially unveiled,” the actor wrote as the caption for the photo. A tale of unparalleled foresight, lofty aspirations, and unflinching determination. We are pleased to share the GDN First Look Teaser. The video was shared on Varghese Moolan Pictures’ YouTube channel with the caption, “Unveiling the legacy! R Madhavan transforms into G.D. Naidu, the self-taught engineer and industrial pioneer often called the ‘Edison of India’. Presenting the first look of GDN - a story that needs to be told.” Reacting to the teaser, a fan said, “Omg you surpass each set standard, each time Madhavan! Waiting for another extraordinary one.” A comment read, “Some people chase awards. For R Madhavan, they’re just patiently waiting. #NationalAward.” A person wrote, “I can’t believe my eyes. It’s such a stunning and wonderful shock



for me.” “What greatness is this. What a look. What creativity,” wrote an Instagram user. A social media user commented, “At first glance, I swear it’s a masterpiece. Maddy’s gaze tells a whole story. Maddy always outdoes himself. What magic.” The film is written and directed by Krishnakumar Ramakumar and produced by Varghese Moolan and Vijay Moolan of Varghese Moolan Pictures, and R Madhavan and Sarita Madhavan of Tricolour Films. The film also stars Sathyaraj, Jayaram, Priyamani, Dushara Vijayan, Thambi Ramaiah, and Vinay Rai, among others. The filming is currently in progress. The film is slated for a worldwide theatrical release in Summer 2026.

Sonal Chauhan confirms his part in the movie Mirzapur

New Delhi: ‘Mirzapur: The Film’ now features actor Sonal Chauhan. The actor thanked director Gurmeet Singh, producers Farhan Akhtar and Ritesh Sidhwani, and confirmed the same on social media. Sonal sent the following message on her Instagram account: “Dear Sonal, Having you on the ‘Mirzapur’ team excites us. I’m eager to witness the enchantment you bring to the screen! Warm regards, Excel Entertainment...(sic) Ritesh + Farhan. “Om Namah Shivayaay (Salutations to Lord Shiva),” she captioned the photo. I’m still getting it. I’m happy to be a part of this amazing and revolutionary adventure. I’m ecstatic to be a part of Mirzapur: The Film, and I’m looking forward to seeing what we have to offer on screen. I am grateful that @ritesh_sid @faroutakhtar @gurmeet Singh @excelmovies introduced me to Mirzapur. Being a part of this legendary project makes me very happy. Apart from Ali Fazal, Pankaj Tripathi, and Divyendu returning in their iconic roles



in ‘Mirzapur: The Film’, reports suggest that Jitendra Kumar and Ravi Kishan have also joined the cast, though the makers are yet to make an official announcement. A source close to the project told HT City, “Jitendra and Ravi Kishan have joined the cast of the film. The mahurat puja took place on Thursday, and both were present at the celebrations.

“The insider further shared that preparations are in full swing. “The look tests and reading sessions of the cast have already started and will continue for the next

few days. Jitendra and Ravi have also joined the pre-production work. The film will go on floors next month,” the source added. Actor Shweta Tripathi will also be resuming the character of Golu Gupta in the under-production crime-thriller. She shot a sequence of the film in Benaras. Speaking about the experience, the ‘Mirzapur’ actor said, “Golu is not just a character for me, she has been a companion, a part of my life for so many years. To see her journey unfold on the big screen is overwhelming and surreal.”

Kartik Aaryan, Ranveer Singh, and Ranbir Kapoor are vying for Anees Bazmee’s next movie Bollywood face-off

New Delhi: Brace yourselves, brave fans. Three of the biggest names in the business could soon be competing if the rumors are to be believed. Kartik Aaryan, Ranveer Singh, and Ranbir Kapoor are reportedly in talks to act in Anees Bazmee’s next movie, which is tentatively titled Ram Aur Shyam. Sources close to the project maintain that this will not be a remake, despite the title immediately conjuring up images of Dilip Kumar’s 1967 masterpiece. Anees Sir has been experimenting with this idea for some time. A trade insider told Mid-Day that the goal is to reimagine the twin concept for a new generation rather than recreate the classic. All eyes had previously been on No Entry Mein Entry, the long-awaited sequel to Bazmee’s 2005 cult comedy No Entry. But with this new announcement, chatter suggests the filmmaker is now switching gears and fast-tracking another

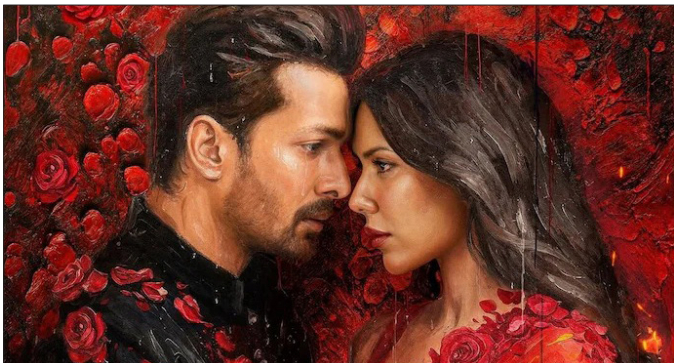


project before diving back into his comic universe. According to the report, Ram Aur Shyam is in the advanced stages of development and is expected to go on floors early next year. The film’s premise is said to feature a double role, and the trio — Ranbir, Ranveer, and Kartik — have emerged as top contenders for the part. Among the actors being discussed, Kartik is reportedly a strong favourite. However, juggling dates might prove to be the biggest challenge. “All three actors have a packed schedule. Ranveer starts Don 3 in Janu-

ary, and Kartik has Naagzilla. After Ranbir wraps up Love & War, he will dive into Dhoom 4 prep. The other actor on Anees sir’s mind is Shahid Kapoor. If the dates work out, the film could start by February-end,” the source added. Known for delivering laugh-out-loud entertainers, Anees backs a plethora of hits, including No Entry (2005), Welcome (2007), Singh Is Kinning (2008), Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2 (2022), and Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3 (2024). With Ram Aur Shyam, Anees seems ready to merge nostalgia with fresh star power.

Thamma tsunami hits Harshvardhan’s film Ek Deewane Ki Deewaniyat

Mumbai: With the Diwali premiere of the love drama “Ek Deewane Ki Deewaniyat,” which costarred Sonam Bajwa, Harshvardhan Rane made a noteworthy comeback to the big screen. Even though it was released at the same time as “Thamma,” starring Ayushmann Khurrana and Rashmika Mandanna, the movie nonetheless managed to draw crowds and do well financially. The movie made an estimated Rs 34 crore in five days after its premiere, which was more than the industry had anticipated considering its smaller budget and relatively small number of screens. Though “Thamma” had almost three times as many screens, “Ek Deewane Ki Deewaniyat” premiered on Tuesday with collections of almost Rs 9 crore, which was comparable to “Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Ku-



mari.” Industry watchers claim that the movie’s early receipts show that it can compete in a competitive box office setting. Following an early boost from the Diwali holidays, the film continued to gain momentum. With revenue of Rs 7.5 crore on Wednesday, Rs 6 crore on Thursday, Rs 5.5 crore on Friday, and Rs 5.75 crore on Saturday, the five-day total came

to approximately Rs 34 crore. This steady performance demonstrated strong viewer interest, especially in areas where love dramas of this kind are often less popular, such as East Punjab and West Bengal. Releasing alongside “Thamma,” which is part of a popular horror comedy universe and crossed Rs 50 crore within three days, ‘Ek Deewane Ki Deewan-

iyat’ had to compete for both attention and screen space. Despite the competition, the film’s strong start and sustained earnings have set it apart. Significantly, the film has performed well in East Punjab and West Bengal, regions where romantic dramas often underperform. This trend suggests that the storyline and performances are resonating beyond traditional markets. The consistent box office numbers may lead to an increase in the number of shows allotted in these areas over the coming weeks. Harshvardhan Rane is best known for his role in ‘Sanam Teri Kasam’, but the success of ‘Ek Deewane Ki Deewaniyat’ may soon surpass his previous work. The film’s strong showing in its opening week is being closely watched to see if it becomes Rane’s highest solo hit.



Micro dramas are the new binge culture, according to Karanvir Bohra

New Delhi: Known for his roles in television series such as “Shararat,” “Dil Se Di Dua... Saubhagyavati Bhava?” and “Naagin,” actor Karanvir Bohra is currently appearing in microdramas. ‘Ek Tha Deewana’ on Pocket TV is his most recent vertical program. The actor discussed his experience with the vertical format, the development of short-form storytelling, and why he finds this new medium both gratifying and challenging in an exclusive interview. With their brief, captivating episodes, microdramas are revolutionizing mobile entertainment in India. In India, these little video series are gradually taking over as the most popular form of entertainment. “I’ve been very active and interested in vertical content for the past five months,” Karanvir remarked while discussing his decision to enter the vertical narrative space. “I do one or two verticals every month, whether it’s directing, producing, or acting. The procedure is ongoing. Having previously worked with Pocket FM, Karanvir was excited when Pocket TV approached him for ‘Ek Tha Deewana’, where he plays a rich businessman.

Pasta Recipes With Tons of Glowing

When you're craving carbs, nothing is quite as satisfying as a plate (or bowl!) of pasta. Whether you break out your best pasta pot for a stovetop recipe like spaghetti or tortellini or fill up your favorite casserole dish to make a baked pasta like lasagna, noodles paired with the perfect sauce and topped with a mountain of cheese are the ultimate comfort food. And, while we would gladly gobble up any dish of pasta you put in front of us, there are a few that are undeniable masterpieces—recipes that have amassed hundreds of 5-star ratings and positive reviews from fans. These are those recipes.

So, prepare to want to make them all—starting with the super popular baked feta pasta you've seen all over TikTok. It's easy to see why the recipe has achieved such fame: Cherry tomatoes and a whole block of feta are baked until soft and melty, then tossed with garlic, basil and cooked noodles for a beautifully cheesy dish. Better make a double batch!

Extra-Creamy Cacio e Uova with Grated Egg
Cacio e uova – translating to “cheese and eggs” in Italian – is a Neapolitan dish traditionally made with short, tubular pasta and a rich, creamy sauce. Like in carbonara, the sauce combines finely grated cheese, eggs and starchy pasta water, but eliminates the meaty guanciale or pancetta. While lard may commonly be used in cacio e uova, we opted instead for butter, resulting in a pantry-friendly vegetarian dish that comes together in minutes. Perfectly toasted breadcrumbs, Parmesan and finely chopped parsley add extra texture and flavor to the In this amped-up version, we also add lemon zest for a hit of brightness then top it all off with finely grated hard-boiled eggs to emphasize the beautiful



egg flavor and give the dish an unexpected fluffy texture. **The Best Baked Mostaccioli**

The best baked mostaccioli has everything you love about lasagna — a savory meat sauce, creamy ricotta and melty mozzarella bubbling at the edges. But instead of flat lasagna noodles, the pasta is mostaccioli, a type of penne with a smooth exterior. The short, tubular shape encourages plenty of sauce and cheese to get trapped inside so every bite is satisfying. We upped the ante with a combination of ground beef and sweet Italian sausage, providing the classic meatiness in the tomato sauce. While mostaccioli originates from the Campania region in southern Italy, this specific dish has ties to Chicago and St. Louis as a hearty casserole to serve at large family gatherings.

Pasta, Pancetta and Peas
Use the fat that renders from the cooked pancetta to sautee the onions, which will give more flavor to the overall pasta dish. A squeeze of lemon for a bit of acid before serving brightens up the meal. **Grilled Seafood Pasta Fra Diavolo**

Giada tops her pasta fra diavolo with tender shrimp, clams and lobster meat. The seafood's subtle sweetness helps to offset the heat of the tomato sauce.

One-Pot Spaghetti with Fresh Tomato Sauce

Perfect for the beginner cook, Food Network Kitchen's one-pot pasta meal requires little time and almost no cleanup. The pasta will continue to soak up the flavor after cooking, so get excited for leftovers. **Mediterranean Summer Pasta with Salsa Cruda**

Melissa D'Arabian serves this pasta with a no-cook “salsa cruda” of tomatoes, olives, garlic and capers. All you have to do is boil the pasta and toss it all together.

Bacon-Tomato Linguine

Twenty-five minutes is all you need to make this savory pasta dish. To make the creamy sauce, you'll combine grated parmesan with eggs and lemon zest.

Orecchiette with Mixed Greens and Goat Cheese

Cooking for one? Giada's quick and simple pasta is tossed with salad greens while still warm so the greens wilt and become an integral part of the overall dish.

Single Salma Huma Qureshi's film is taxing on screen



New Delhi: The core of Huma Qureshi's most recent film, “Single Salma,” is a delightful irony. Even though the movie is about discovering who you are, you nearly lose interest before our protagonist does. Please understand that the intention is admirable and kind. The narrative aims to represent all women in their mid-30s who are self-reliant, accountable, and yet always reminded that their “biological clock is ticking.” But ‘Single Salma’ ends up saying all the right things, but not in the right way, due to its sloppy screenplay, lack of character chemistry, and a tempo slower than a Shaadi guest line for dinner. The film,

which was directed by Nachiket Samant, centers on Salma (Huma Qureshi), a lady in her 30s from a traditional Muslim household in Lucknow. She is single and balancing her responsibilities to her family, her controlling father, her egocentric siblings, and the never-ending “Shaadi kab?” inquiry. She also has to cope with roadside Romeos who want to “satisfy” her and her misogynistic coworkers. Furthermore, things don't go as planned when she eventually meets one or two men who seem ideal—charming, affectionate, and encouraging. At its core, the film is about a woman in her 30s daring to live life on her own terms.

Enrique Iglesias wins hearts at Mumbai concert

New Delhi: X users shared footage of Latino singer-songwriter Enrique Iglesias performing his hit songs, such as Bailando and Hero, on the first day of his concert in Mumbai, winning hearts. Nearly 25,000 people attended the event, which was held at MMRDA Grounds and featured Bollywood stars Rakul Preet Singh, Malaika Arora, and Vidya Balan.

The 50-year-old artist said Namaste to the audience before his performance. He performed a 90-minute show that featured Bailamos, Freak, Be With You, and Chasing The Sun before saying, “Namaste, Mumbai, raise your hands.” Rakul Preet Singh, who



attended the concert with her husband, actor-producer Jacky Bhagnani, appeared to be vibing and singing along with the song lyrics.

Sadhguru queries why the attractive Yash is portraying Ravana in the Ramayana, starring Ranbir Kapoor

New Delhi: In a recent conversation with “Ramayana” producer Namit Malhotra, spiritual leader Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev voiced his amazement at the choice of actor Yash to play Ravan. Namit emphasized the necessity to cast a “superstar-level person,” while Sadhguru said he should have a “blunt” rather than a “sharp nose.” On Sadhguru and World of Ramayana's YouTube channel, Sadhguru and Namit talked about Ravana, the Vedic master. The producer of ‘Ramayana’ revealed, “It felt like a very essential aspect in terms of casting when we were starting to construct this entire universe. To be precise, I was searching for the perfect Ravana. The spiritual leader responded, “I don't know how Yash became Ravana. I know him very well. A villain al-



ways means he has a blunt nose and a huge stature. Yash is a handsome man.” Namit, while defending his stance, emphasised, “It is because we were almost looking at a superstar level person to come in and play that role. He is very handsome and a very talented star in the country, and incredibly loved. So, the whole idea was how do we try him? The idea was there had to be a lot of

shades of Ravana in terms of why he was who he was.”

Sadhguru, however, told him that all villains somehow always have a blunt nose. “Somehow, have you noticed that villains always have a blunt nose and not a sharp nose?” he added. Namit quipped, “There's a new learning for me. I shall go and look at that.”

During the same interaction, the duo also discussed Ranbir Kapoor's casting as Lord Rama. While reflecting on the same, Sadhguru said, “It is not a fair judgement because he acted in some way (in the past). Tomorrow, in another movie, he may act as Ravana. That is a professional actor. But at the same time, your movie runs because of people, not because of actors or directors.

Yash's Toxic team dismisses delay rumours

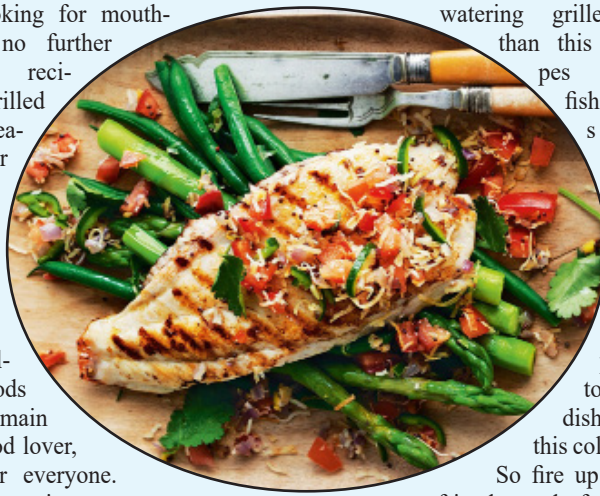


New Delhi: The producers of Yash's ‘Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups’ have vehemently denied recent reports of a postponed release, confirming that the movie will make its global debut on March 19, 2026, as originally stated. Following rumors that the movie's release date would be delayed, this clarification was made. Rumors circulated a few days ago that Yash was not pleased with some parts of the movie and was pressuring filmmaker Geetu Mohandas to reshoot them. However, one of the producers, KVN Productions, denied rumors of a postponement by posting a countdown on social media. One of the film's production banners, KVN Productions, posted a countdown on social media with the words, “140 days to go,” to further emphasize the planned release. On March 19, 2026, #ToxicTheMovie will be released worldwide. His Untamed Presence Is Your Existential Crisis.

‘Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups’ is anticipated to start promoting in earnest in January 2026, the production team has stated. The schedule outlined in the first release announcement is in accordance with this. Post-production and visual effects work reportedly commenced in April, coinciding with lead actor Yash's involvement in the shooting of the film ‘Ramayana’ in Mumbai. The current phase of principal photography is taking place in Bengaluru, with the final leg of filming underway. The planned release date falls during a period of multiple major festivals, including Gudi Padwa, Ugadi, and various regional New Year celebrations, with Eid following shortly after. The timing is anticipated to provide the film with a notable four-day window at the box office. Directed by Geetu Mohandas, the film stars Yash and has been shot simultaneously in English and Kannada, with dubbed versions to be released in Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, and Malayalam. This multilingual approach aims to maximise the film's reach across different regions. ‘Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups’ is jointly produced by Venkat K Narayana and Yash under the banners of KVN Productions and Monster Mind Creations, and is positioned as Yash's much-awaited return to cinemas after his role in ‘KGF’.

Grilled Fish Recipes For Every Occasion

If you're looking for mouth-watering grilled dinner ideas, look no further than this collection of delicious recipes featuring succulent grilled fish. Whether you're a sea-grilling pro or a beginner, we've got you covered with step-by-step instructions on how to grill for results everyone will love. From foil-grilled fish to recipes for any seafood lover, something for everyone.



So fire up your grill and get ready to impress your friends and family with fantastic grilled fish dishes, like these tuna steaks. When the quality of fish is top-tier, a simple cooking method is often the best route to go. This recipe lets the flavor of the fish shine through and offers the perfect base recipe for building a meal that suits your mood.

Herby Miso Grilled Salmon Skewers

Cooking salmon on skewers can make things easy when preparing for a crowd, and slices of lemon tucked between each piece ensure little to no dryness. Don't skip the sauce, which combines umami-rich miso paste with fresh herbs and fresh garlic.

The Best Grilled Salmon

This easy grilled salmon recipe really is the best—you get a perfectly cooked, moist and flaky fish with a delicious crispy skin. The flavor profile is salty from the capers, tangy from the lemon, herbaceous from the tarragon, a touch sweet from the brown sugar and packs a bit of spice from freshly ground black pepper.

Filipino Whole Grilled Fish with Tomato-Onion Salsa

This recipe for whole grilled sea fish draws on Filipino flavors by combining it with a fresh tomato and onion salsa. Don't skip the fish sauce, which adds a subtle boost of umami.

Honey Soy Grilled Salmon with Edamame

Salmon cooks beautifully on the grill due to the high level of healthy fats in the fish. This recipe will please even well-done salmon lovers. The juicy honey-soy glaze and tangy ginger and herb stuffing keep the fish from getting too dry.

Grilled Fish on Pineapple Planks with Spicy Pineapple Salsa

By using a thick slice of pineapple instead of wood, fish fillets are protected from the direct heat of the grill, so they remain perfectly tender and moist. Use the rest of the pineapple to make a colorful sweet-and-spicy salsa.

Grilled Branzino with Basil, Lime and Ginger

Grilling a whole fish might seem intimidating, but this recipe makes it easy with a simple method. By stuffing the interior with lime, basil and ginger, the fish stays flavorful without getting dried out by the hot grill.

Grilled Fish Sandwiches with Cilantro Chutney

Halibut makes a killer fish sandwich, especially when paired with a spicy and herbaceous cilantro chutney that is perfectly spreadable with the help of shredded coconut. Top the fish with shredded carrots dressed in tangy lime juice for a much-needed crunch.

Grilled Tilapia with Lemon Butter, Capers and Orzo

Just because tilapia is cheap doesn't mean it has to be boring. Simple grilled tilapia gets an upgrade from an elegant beurre blanc. An easy side of caper and parsley orzo pasta completes the meal that's quick enough to make any night of the week.

The passion for Korean food is still very strong

Whether it's a fad for a food item, a holiday destination, or even an artist, most trends and viral hits eventually fade into the background. We cannot, however, say the same about Indians' passion for all things Korean. The global success of PSY's “Gangnam Style” in 2012 (about) is where the craze originated, and it opened the door for other Korean artists like BTS, Blackpink, Exo, and Seventeen. And rest is history, as they say. Additionally, the passion for Korean food is essentially the same. Watching characters share sizzling hotpots, grill meat at the table, or slurp bowls of ramen was how we first encountered food in K-dramas and variety shows. That on-screen indulgence sparked our curiosity, and soon, instant ramen packets and ready-to-eat teokbokki found their way into our kitchens. Now, Korean restaurants, once a niche find, are commonplace and packed with diners eager to try everything from bibimbap to kimchi fried rice. It's more than just a persistent trend or phenomena. Are you not convinced? According to Swiggy's most recent data, the nation's orders for Korean food have increased by 50% annually. Even if major cities like Hyderabad, Mumbai, and Bengaluru continue to lead the way, non-metropolitan areas are drawing attention. Over the past year, Korean food orders have increased by 59% in emerging markets like Surat, Thiruvananthapuram, Vadodara, Mysuru, and Mangaluru. As expected, Gen Z is driving this gastronomic trend, accounting for 27% of all Korean food orders placed on the app. Among the most common keywords are Korean bun, Korean cheese bun, Korean ramen, and Korean chicken. The survey also reveals that the Korean McAlloo Tikki Burger has surprisingly emerged as the most-ordered item, and other favourites include Korean Corn & Jalapeno Garlic Bread, Korean Tangy Chicken Roll, and Korean Spicy Chicken Burger. Korean-inspired drinks are also making waves. The tangy-sweet Korean Yuzu-Pop Sprite is one of the beverages riding this trend. So, you see, the rise of Korean cuisine in India is a sign of how open Indian consum-



ers are becoming to experimenting with international flavours. Restaurants and brands are taking note, and many are localising these global tastes into familiar, snackable formats that appeal to a wider audience.



Why everyone seeks for rural tourism as an escape



Travel bucket lists are being rewritten by rural getaways. And it's easy to understand why. Travelers of today are looking for experiences that feel important, immersive, and yes, a little slower than a list of sights. Greetings from the world of rural travel. Although the phrase has been used for some time, it is only now becoming widely recognized. As an example, the travel website Agoda recently named Munnar one of the best rural getaways in Asia for 2025, ranking among Malaysia, Vietnam, Japan, Thailand, and Indonesia. Following countless discussions about burnout and hustling culture, travelers are choosing deliberate, slower itineraries over quick getaways. In addition to fresh air, these getaways offer sweeping vistas, regional flavors, cultural richness, and a sense of community that is unlike anything you'll discover on a city break. To put it briefly, rural vacation is becoming the ideal remedy for the hectic pace of city life. "Travelers looking to experience the local way of life and the natural beauty of the area are increasingly choosing rural locations, especially those tucked away in mountains and hillsides. "Away from the bustle of crowded urban

hubs, these charming high-land locales offer a slower pace of life, allowing visitors to unwind and connect with the environment," according to a study conducted by the travel booking site. It's interesting to note that market research projects that by 2035, the worldwide rural tourism market would be worth USD 67.8 billion. India has many rural treasures, from ancient villages to foggy mountains. If you're thinking about visiting one, this list may be useful: Munnar, tucked away in Kerala's Western Ghats, is well-known for its verdant tea plantations, cascading waterfalls, and striking hillsides covered in the Neelakurinji blossoms. Visitors are welcome to enjoy

the cold mountain air and meandering roads at this hill station. Explore misty gardens, observe tea-picking customs, or just stop by a cascading waterfall to enjoy Munnar's unique blend of environment,



tradition, and the pleasure of surely living. Spiti Valley is famed for its sprawling landscapes, ancient Buddhist monasteries, and serene villages. Here, adventure meets tranquility - trek to the turquoise Chandra Taal, spot

elusive wildlife, or drop a postcard at the world's highest post office in Hikkim. Rugged, raw, and breathtaking, Spiti is where nature boasts its unique style. Set amid boulder-strewn hills, Hampi offers an evocative blend of history, culture, and slow living. Once the seat of the Vijayanagara Empire, it now feels like an open-air museum where coracle rides, rock climbs, and temple trails replace rushed itineraries. The rhythm of rural life here is woven with heritage and adventure, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in age-old traditions and stories etched in stone. Tucked away near Nainital in Uttarakhand, Pangot is a tranquil hill station and a haven for nature enthusiasts, especially bird-watchers. With dense forests and cool mountain breezes, it makes for an idyllic Himalayan retreat. Tourists can indulge in nature treks, soak in panoramic sunset views, and spot a remarkable variety of bird species in their natural habitat. In the hills of Meghalaya, Mawlynnong proudly holds the title of Asia's cleanest village - a testament to the Khasi community's strong traditions of environmental care. The village's bamboo dustbins and lush gardens are instantly striking and encourage sustainable living. Its signature living root bridges, woven from ancient fig trees, symbolise both ingenuity and harmony with nature. Trends may come and go, but the need to unplug, breathe, and go rural is timeless.

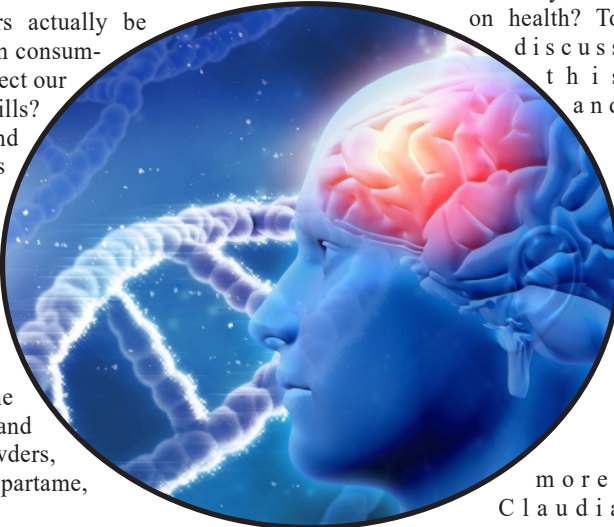
Artificial sweeteners and brain aging



Can artificial sweeteners actually be harmful to health? And can consuming them on the regular affect our memory and thinking skills? Although a new link found between sugar alternatives and brain aging requires more study, it may warrant some concern. MNT speaks to a physician and researcher to dive deeper into the matter and discuss In Conversation. Artificial sweeteners come in many different names and forms - as liquids or powders, as sucralose, erythritol, aspartame, and more.

They are consumed by millions of people around the world, and especially by people with diabetes. The main reason behind the recommendation for people with diabetes to swap sugar for sugar alternatives is that the latter are believed to cause fewer blood sugar spikes. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has also approved several artificial sweetenersTrusted Source, including saccharin, sucralose, and aspartame, as well as sugar alcohols like xylitol and erythritol, and plant-based sugar substitutes like stevia and monk fruit, as safe for consumption. However, in recent years, more and more research has emerged about the possible long-term health effects of consuming sugar alternatives. The most recent one was a study published in Neurology, the medical journal

of the American Academy of Neurology, which found that the sweeteners - aspartame, saccharin, acesulfame-K, erythritol, xylitol, and sorbitolTrusted Source - were linked to declines in memory and overall thinking skills that were equivalent to about 1.6 years of brain aging. Such research has stirred controversy and concern among the public, but does this mean people should stop consuming artificial sweeteners altogether? And what other possible effects could they have on health? To discuss this and more,

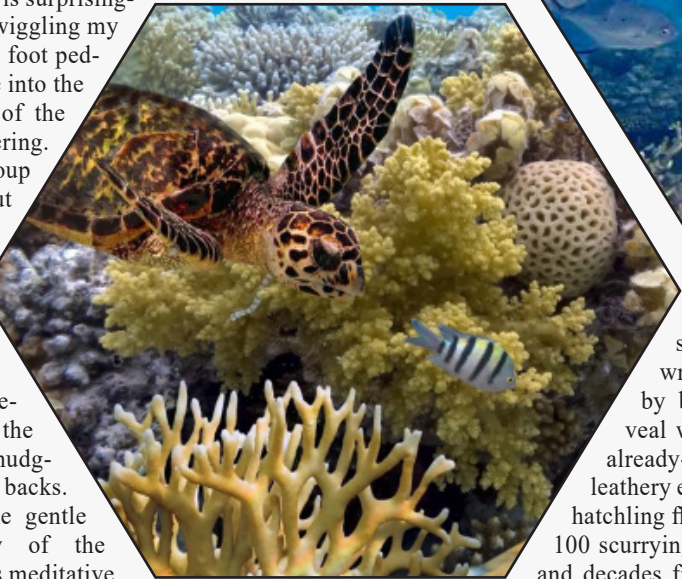


PhD, senior author of the Neurology study, joined Medical News Today editors Yase-min Nicola Sakay and Maria Cohut on this episode of In Conversation, looking at artificial sweeteners' effects on health, particularly the brain. Suemoto is a physician and assistant professor of geriatrics at the University of São Paulo Medical School, where she is also an epidemiologist focused on dementia research and brain aging. She is also currently one of the coordinators of the Brain Bank of the Brazilian Aging Brain Study Group - the largest brain bank in Latin America. In 2016, she was awarded the L'Oreal UNESCO For Women in Science in Brazil. You can listen to our current podcast episode in full below or on your preferred streaming platform.

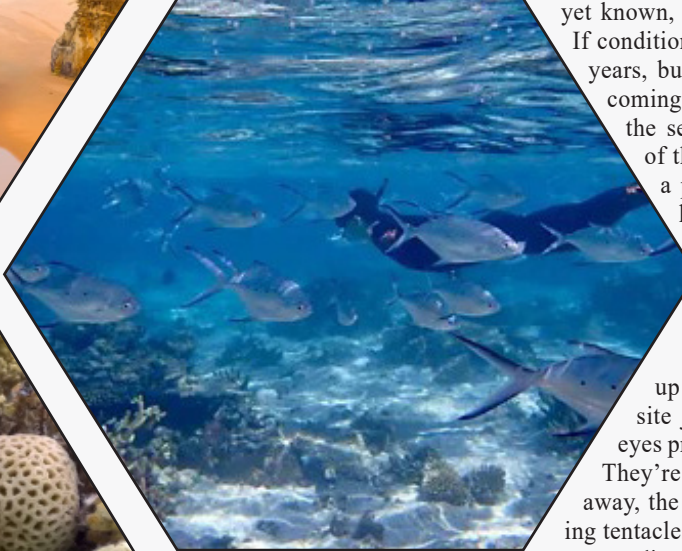
A desert-to-sea adventure on Australia's 'other' reef

Hovering on the surface, peering through my mask, I lock eyes with an ancient reptile. The green sea turtle lifts her head and we're breathing together, staring; a fleeting moment of curiosity across species. Next, I ogle the stingrays. There's a carpet of them on the sea-floor, buried in the sand with only their bulging eyeballs protruding. My introductory snorkelling session is dazzling - and because this is Ningaloo Reef, it all exists just metres from the beach. Unlike the Great Barrier Reef, which is many kilometres offshore, Ningaloo Reef, Australia's other coral masterpiece, sticks to the coast like glue. It's called a fringing reef, and stretches for 260km along Western Australia's windswept desert edge, where the coral begins just steps from the sand. Like its larger cousin, Ningaloo is Unesco World Heritage-listed, and like reefs worldwide, it now also faces man-made threats. Many visitors come to Ningaloo, a distant 1,200km north of Perth, to swim with whale sharks, humpback whales and manta rays. They jump in with the megafauna from specialised tour boats in the deeper waters beyond Ningaloo's sheltered lagoon, a continuous strip of aqua that extends 500m to 2km off the beach. But I'm choosing something slower and more immersive: to explore the lagoon itself on a multi-day sea kayaking and camping expedition, stopping to snorkel and explore channels that most tourists never see. The reef's unusual proximity to land makes this trip possible, and the reef itself is made possible by perfect conditions. "There's very little fresh water runoff," explains Dr Damian Thomson, an experimental scientist at Ningaloo for CSIRO, the Australian government research organisation. "You don't see high sediment or nutrient loads coming into the lagoon areas, and that's one of the contributors to that spectacularly clear water just straight off the shore." Also spectacular is the Cape Range, part of the homelands of the Indigenous Baiyungu, Thalanyji and Yinikurtura people for millennia. Running parallel to the reef, Cape Range is an ancient coral reef, thrust upwards and eroded into canyons and subterranean caverns holding aquatic creatures like the blind gudgeon fish and the Cape Range remipedes that live nowhere else on Earth. Both the reef and Cape Range are Unesco listed, and a third connected ecosystem, Exmouth Gulf, is soon to be declared a marine park. According to Neri Grieves, senior guide and manager at local tour company Exmouth Adventure Co, expedition kayaking is the ultimate way to experience the reef. "Being right at water level, wildlife interactions are on a more personal

scale," she says. "There are moments when a turtle might pop up beside your kayak for a lazy breath or a ray glides underneath your kayak. You're really slowing down; you're taking notice of things. You're becoming one with the environment around you, rather than zooming through it." After the impressive introductory snorkel, we pack our kayaks full of food, water, snorkels and camping gear and slide out into the blue. The kayak is surprisingly stable; wiggling my feet on the foot pedals, I settle into the technique of the rudder steering. Our group spreads out to a comfortable distance and we cruise at a leisurely pace, the wind nudging our backs. Mostly, the gentle physicality of the paddling is meditative. But the Mandu Mandu channel is a different story. Here, a gap in the protective outer reef, means the swell rollercoasters into the lagoon and refracts back off the beach rock. But following our



guide, we successfully let our hips roll with the kayak over the lumps and continue back into sheltered waters. Kilometre by kilometre, I take in the empty coastline; sandy white beaches or low ridges of water-carved limestone, with no visible evidence of humans. There's a lack of human noise, too, although the reef is far from silent. An oystercatcher calls its "peep-pa-peep", an airborne fish splashes down and wave-tumbled stones rattle on a shoreline. As we float, we watch Ningaloo's life play out around us. Dark, hovering shapes morph into cowtail rays, and we lose count of the sea turtles. A perching osprey, talons wrangling a writhing fish, is harassed by bolshie seagulls. Beach landings reveal wonders, too, like the remnants of an already-hatched turtle nest. With the torn, leathery egg case in my palm, I imagine the tiny hatchling flippering across this beach, flanked by 100 scurrying siblings. Perhaps this one survived, and decades from now, it will return to this beach to breed. While I'm on this shore, I witness a passing marine safari. Out beyond the reef edge, humpback whales are breaching, while in closer, dolphins are cavorting. Right before me, a rare juvenile shovel-nosed



ray hunts for snacks. Later, we drift snorkel, strolling up the beach before launching into the ripping currents, startling a harmless leopard shark and almost flying over a real-life aquarium of outlandish parrotfish, angel fish and neon-blue demoiselles. But it's the corals that interest me most. Historically, Ningaloo has escaped the worst of the worldwide coral bleaching that has devastated many reefs. But 2025 brought an unprecedented marine heat-wave. "Temperatures sat between three and four degrees above the long-term average for many, many months," Thomson said. "The heatwave between late 2024 and May 2025 caused coral bleaching in 60 to 90% of Ningaloo's hard corals."The final coral mortality rate is not yet known, but Thomson says it could be around 60%. If conditions normalise, reefs can recover in five to 10 years, but alarmingly, underwater heatwaves are becoming more frequent, hampering recovery. Despite the setback, Thomson says Ningaloo is still one of the healthiest reefs in the world. Today, I see a patchwork reef. Sections of staghorn corals have died and are engulfed by furry algae. For now, these skeletons are still providing structural habitat for many species. But the huge boulder corals at this site are thriving. There are so many fish that we trudge back up the beach to repeat the fly-over. At another site just steps from the shore, a bizarre pair of eyes protrude from the reef, as if on a rubbery stalk. They're connected to a large octopus, and as I back away, the curious cephalopod edges forwards, unfurling tentacles and shifting texture and colour to match its surroundings. After each wonder-filled day of paddling, we set up camp in dunes behind entirely empty beaches. We witness the sun setting behind the wind-rippled lagoon, while behind us, the Cape Range fades to purple. With no light pollution and a clear desert atmosphere, we bask in the dazzling celestial exhibition that's only possible in remote pockets of the planet. The vast belt of the Milky Way stretches from horizon to horizon. We finish our adventure at Turquoise Bay, a famous snorkelling spot. It's busy with awe-filled turtle-spectators, squealing through snorkels and finning through a kaleidoscope of fishy wonder. Weirdly, I'm slightly affronted by their presence. I've slipped into the privilege of living simply and having this Ningaloo wonderland almost entirely to myself.

Messi, in spite of age and fitness issues, is eyeing the FIFA World Cup in 2026



Mumbai: Although he acknowledges that his age and level of fitness will determine his involvement in defending Argentina’s 2022 title, Lionel Messi, who is still vying for international glory almost twenty years into his career, says he hopes to play in the 2026 World Cup in North America. Despite turning 39 in June, the Argentine legend recently extended his contract with Major League Soccer team Inter Miami through 2028, indicating he is not yet thinking about retiring. The eight-time Ballon d’Or winner told NBC News that he will evaluate his physical condition next year before determining whether to compete in the competition, which will take place in the US, Mexico, and Canada.

“It’s something extraordinary to be able to be in a World Cup, and I would love to,” the Argentine captain said in the interview released on Monday. Messi, still chasing international glory nearly two decades into his career, says he

hopes to play at the 2026 World Cup in North America, acknowledging his age and fitness will dictate his role in defending Argentina’s 2022 title.

The Argentine great recently extended his contract with Major League Soccer side Inter Miami through 2028, signaling he is not yet considering retirement despite turning 39 next June. Speaking to NBC News, the eight-time Ballon d’Or winner said he will take time next year to assess his physical condition before deciding whether to play in the tournament across the United States, Mexico, and Canada. “It’s something extraordinary to be able to be in a World Cup, and I would love to,” the Argentine captain said in the interview released on Monday. “I would like to be there, to be well and be an important part of helping my team, if I am there.

I’m going to assess that on a day-to-day basis when I start preseason next year with Inter and see if I can really be 100%, if I can be useful

While Messi had already ended his international drought with the 2021 Copa America title, the 2022 World Cup triumph, sealed after Argentina’s 4-2 shootout win over France, marked the crowning moment of his career.

and then make a decision. “I’m really eager because it’s a World Cup. We’re coming off winning the last one, and being able to defend it on the field again is spectacular because it’s always a dream to play with the national team.”.

Messi has enjoyed a professional career spanning more than 20 years, debuting for Barcelona at just 17 in 2004 before playing for Paris St Germain and joining Inter Miami in 2023. He sparked fresh interest in the American league in a critical moment for the sport in North America ahead of hosting next year’s World Cup. While Messi has amassed countless club and individual accolades, international success had eluded him until claiming the 2021 Copa America before beating France 4-2 on penalties to win the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. “It was also true that it was the only thing missing at a professional level because I had been lucky enough to have achieved everything at an individual level, at a team level with Barcelona, and I think that’s every player’s dream. When you ask a player what their dream is, it’s to be world champion.” Messi has played in 195 matches and scored a record 114 goals for his country. A return for the 2026 World Cup would mark his sixth appearance in the tournament.

Juventus fires Igor Tudor and names Brambilla as their interim coach

Turin: Igor Tudor was fired as head coach of Juventus following a losing streak that saw the team go eight games without a victory, including three straight losses. A day after Juventus lost to Lazio 1-0, their fourth straight game without a goal, the decision was made on Monday. The Turin team is now in eighth

place in Serie A, three points behind Inter Milan in fourth place, and six points behind joint leaders Napoli and Roma as a result of the downturn. With just two points from their first three Champions League group games, their European performance has also been lacking. Juventus confirmed Tudor’s ter-

mination in an official statement, along with those of his employees Riccardo Ragnacci, Tomislav Rogic, and Ivan Javorcic. Igor Tudor and his staff were relieved of their responsibilities as head coach of the men’s first squad by Juventus today. The statement said, “The club wishes Tudor and his entire team the best



of luck in the future and thanks them for their professionalism and dedication over the past few months.”

Turkey takes action to discipline 371 referees involved in a betting scam



New Delhi: Reminiscent of Jos Mourinho’s previous criticism of the “toxic” state of Turkish football, the Turkish Football Federation (TFF) has taken disciplinary action against hundreds of referees who were discovered to have placed sports wagers. According to a thorough internal inquiry based on official data, 371 out of 571 active referees in Turkey’s professional leagues had betting accounts, with 152 of them actively gambling. TFF President Ibrahim Haciosmanoglu disclosed. At a press conference in Istanbul, Haciosmanoglu stated, “As a federation, we started by cleaning up our own backyard.” Seven top-level referees, fifteen top-level assistants, thirty-six classified referees, and ninety-four classified assistants were among those who were discovered to have betting accounts. The probe unearthed shocking details — one referee had placed more than 18,000 bets, while 42 others had wagered on over 1,000 football matches each. The findings, covering the past five years, violate Turkey’s sports law and TFF regulations, which strictly prohibit officials from betting on football. Those found guilty face bans ranging from three months to a year from all football-related activities. The revelations come months after Mourinho, who was sacked by Fenerbahce earlier this year, had lambasted what he called a “toxic system” in Turkish football. During his time at the club, the Portuguese coach had openly questioned the integrity of refereeing, particularly after several controversial decisions in key matches. “In 25 years as a coach, I’ve never seen anything like this,” Mourinho had said then. “It’s toxic, and no single club can destroy a system this strong.” Now, with hundreds of referees under scrutiny for betting violations, Mourinho’s earlier words seem eerily prescient. The scandal has not only cast a shadow over Turkish football but also sparked fresh debate over accountability and transparency within its governing bodies — a reckoning the sport can no longer ignore.

D Gukesh returns to Goa to captain India in the 2025 FIDE World Cup

New Delhi: The prodigy will have a memorable homecoming when world champion D Gukesh leads India at the FIDE World Cup 2025 in Goa, a place that holds special meaning for him since his early chess days. As he gets ready to lead the Indian team at the coveted FIDE World Cup 2025, world chess champion D Gukesh is excited to visit Goa, a place that has special meaning for him since his early playing days. “I can’t wait for the World Cup.”

I have some wonderful recollections of Goa, and it’s amazing to play anywhere in India. I’ve participated in a



few junior competitions there. Gukesh, who will be the competition’s top seed, expressed his excitement about attending. The last time Gukesh played in Goa was back in 2019 and had finished 10th

in the Category ‘A’ Goa International Open Grandmasters Chess Tournament despite being seeded way below at the start of the tournament. Returning to Goa now as the reigning world champion,

Gukesh is keen to make it yet another memorable trip to the coastal state, which is described as one of the best tourist destinations in the country.

The FIDE World Cup, one of the most prominent tournaments in the global chess calendar, is being held in India after a gap of 23 years and will be played in a North Goa resort from October 31 to November 27, 2025. A total of 206 players from 82 countries will be vying for honours in this \$20,00,000 prize money event that will be played in a knock-out format with the top three finishers qualifying for the Candidates event in 2026.

Karthika of Kannagi Nagar wins a gold medal in Kabaddi at the U18 Asian Games

New Delhi: After winning gold for the country in the Under-18 Asian Games in Bahrain, a 17-year-old from Chennai’s Kannagi Nagar has emerged as the state’s pride. As the Kabaddi team’s vice captain, Karthika is being praised for the team’s victory over Iran in Bahrain. Known affectionately as “Karthika Express,” they prevailed 75–21. She never hesitated to declare that she is from Kannagi Nagar, a residential neighborhood established by the State Government as part of a slum clearance initiative around the capital city, which is one of the primary reasons Tamil Nadu celebrates Karthika. The only person who has helped the young star succeed is Karthika’s mother, who operates an autorickshaw.

The term Kannagi Nagar itself has become a social stigma as a result of the relocation of residents from other slums, which created a bad image due

to the high rate of criminal activity in the area. However, Karthika’s performance and tenacity have changed the perception of Kannagi Nagar. Receiving the gold medal for the country made Karthika delighted. “I’m thrilled to have won a medal from Kannagi Nagar and to be visiting Bahrain for the first time today. After winning the gold, Karthika remarked, “I’m so happy that I got the medal for India, which was my dream.” Udhayanidhi Stalin, Tamil Nadu’s deputy chief minister, praised Karthika and Abinash Mohandhas, who was part of the men’s team which won gold in Bahrain. “We are delighted to know that the Indian Kabaddi teams — both Boys and Girls — have won gold medals at the 3rd Asian Youth Games held in Bahrain. It is a matter of great pride for all of us that Ms. Karthika from Kannagi Nagar, Chennai, was part of the Girls’ team, and Mr. Abinash Mohandhas represented the



Boys’ team.” “It is even more special to note that Abinash trained at our SDAT hostel in Theni, and Karthika, coming from a humble background, has risen to such great heights through her dedication and hard work. We wholeheartedly congratulate Karthika and Abinash for bringing glory to Tamil Nadu and to India on the international stage, and we wish them many more achievements and laurels in the years ahead!”, said Stalin.

PV Sindhu withdraws from all upcoming 2025 BWF competitions

Focus on injury recovery

Mumbai: In order to fully recuperate from a foot ailment she suffered prior to the European leg, two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu has chosen to skip all of the 2025 BWF Tour events. According to the 30-year-old Hyderabad shuttler, the choice was made following extensive discussion with her support network and medical professionals, including famed sports orthopaedist Dr. Dinshaw Pardiwala.

“After consulting closely with my team and with the guidance of the incredible Dr Pardiwala, we felt it was best for me to withdraw from all remaining BWF Tour events in 2025,” Sindhu said in a statement issued on

Monday. “Although it is never easy to accept, injuries are an unavoidable part of every athlete’s career, and my foot ailment from before the European leg has not totally healed. They put your patience and forbearance to the test, but they also give you the motivation to bounce back stronger.” The 2019 world champion Sindhu stated that her training and recuperation were already under way, overseen by Dr. Wayne Lombard, with assistance from Chetna, Nisha Rawat, and her coach Irwansyah Adi Pratama. I am surrounded by a team that gives me strength every single day, thanks to the unwavering care of Dr. Wayne Lombard, the encouragement of Nisha Rawat



and Chetna, and the direction of my coach Irwansyah. After early exit at Paris Games, this year too has been far from ideal for Sindhu, who has endured multiple first and second round ousters, with quarterfinals finishes at India Open super 750, World

Championships and China Masters Super 750 being the highlight of the season. She had come close to winning a top tier title at Malaysia Masters last year, finishing runner-up. She, however, claimed the Syed Modi International super 300 last December.

Super Cup 2025-26

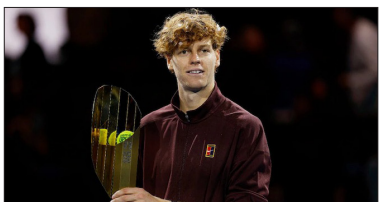
Mumbai City defeats SC Delhi, while Punjab FC easily defeats Gokulam, Kerala



Mumbai: Punjab FC defeated Gokulam Kerala FC 3-0 in their Super Cup Group C opener in Goa on Monday thanks to three goals in the first half. In a decisive manner, the Shers won all three points thanks to goals from Princeton Rebello, Nikhil Prabhu, and Muhammad Suhail. Punjab started off strong, and in the first minute Samir Zeljkovic put Gokulam goalkeeper Shibinraj Kunniyal to the test with a long-range attempt. Suhail’s attempted left-wing cross received a strong deflection from Gursimrat Singh and looped into the net, wrong-footing the goalie and causing the breakthrough a few moments later. The Shers kept up the pressure. Kipgen drew a diving save from Shibinraj, and from the ensuing corner, Rebello’s delivery was met by an unmarked Prabhu, who made it 2-0 with a neat fin-

ish. Gokulam, shaken by the early double blow, gradually found its rhythm. Eduardo Martinez came closest to pulling one back, striking the crossbar twice — once from a direct free kick. Punjab sealed the contest two minutes before halftime. Suhail teed up local favourite Rebello, who drilled a low right-footed shot into the bottom corner to make it 3-0 at the break. Gokulam earned four corners in quick succession midway through the second half, but the Punjab defence dealt with them comfortably. Goalkeeper Muheet pulled off a smart save to parry away Alfred Moya’s powerful free kick and preserve the clean sheet. The contest was effectively sealed five minutes from time when Gokulam substitute Trijoy Dias was shown a straight red card for a high boot on Ricky Shabong. With a three-goal cushion, the Shers sat deep in a compact shape and looked to hit on the counter, seeing out the game without further drama. Punjab FC will face Mohammedan SC in its next Group C fixture on November 2. Mumbai City FC eased past Sporting Club Delhi 4-1 in its Group D encounter of the Super Cup on Monday. Jorge Pereyra Diaz opened the scoring in the seventh minute before Vikram Partap Singh netted a brace and Jorge Ortiz added another for the Islanders.

Jannik Sinner wins Vienna Open title



Mumbai: In the Vienna Open final on Sunday, Italian top seed Jannik Sinner defeated Germany’s Alexander Zverev 3-6, 6-3, 7-5, claiming his fourth ATP Tour championship of the year and his second victory in the Austrian city. Sinner has now won 21 straight games on indoor hardcourts after defeating Zverev in straight sets at the Australian Open this year. In addition, the 24-year-old has won 51 career matches against other top-10 players and 22 tour-level trophies. The world number two banged down 11 aces and unleashed 44 winners in a thrilling contest that lasted two hours and 28 minutes. “It feels amazing,” Sinner said. “It was such a difficult start in the final for me. Down a break ... I had some chances in the first set, couldn’t use them. He was serving very well. The win also allowed the four-times Grand Slam champion to level his head-to-head record against Zverev at four wins apiece. Sinner fought back in the second set, outwitting Zverev with a crosscourt dropshot to get his first break, going 2-0 up.

Mohammed Shami wins five runs against Gujarat in the Ranji Trophy



Mumbai: In their Ranji Trophy match at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Tuesday, Bengal edged closer to a significant victory over Gujarat thanks to a five-wicket haul from Mohammed Shami. In the first innings, the 35-year-old bowler produced figures of three for forty-four.

In recent months, Shami has lost favor with the national selectors. His exclusion from India A’s multi-day matches against Australia A in September and the forthcoming

matches against South Africa A severely damaged his Test aspirations. Before playing for East Zone in the Duleep Trophy, Shami participated in an entire IPL season after a successful Champions Trophy performance. However, the knock-out format meant he could play only one game, with his team bowing out in the quarterfinals. He carried that form into Bengal’s recent eight-wicket win over Uttarakhand, where he was named Player of the Match for figures of 3/37 and 4/38.

Shreyas Iyer suffers spleen injury during Sydney ODI

Mumbai: After suffering an impact injury to his left lower rib cage during the third One-Day International (ODI) against Australia at the Sydney Cricket Ground on October 25, Indian middle-order batsman Shreyas Iyer has been declared out of play for the time being. Iyer is still receiving treatment and is in good health, according to an official statement from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), which also confirmed that scans showed a laceration injury to his spleen. The incident occurred when Iyer pulled off a spectacular diving catch while running from backward point to dismiss Alex Carey off Harshit Rana’s bowling. However, the 30-year-old cricketer landed heavily on his left side, injuring his ribs and elbows. He was seen clutching his side in visible pain before being escorted off the field by medical personnel.

