

Arunachal Governor Calls For Clear Vision In Higher Education At Itanagar Conference



Itanagar, Mar 14: K. T. Parnaik, Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, on Friday said higher education in the state should move forward with a clear vision to address local challenges. Local News Coverage Speaking at the inaugural session of the 23rd Conference of Higher and Technical Education in Itanagar, the Governor called on universities to promote innovation, research,

and creativity. He urged students and faculty members to work on practical solutions in areas such as sustainable agriculture, biodiversity conservation, disaster management, and development in border regions. Parnaik also stressed the need for focused research on Himalayan ecology, renewable energy, and indigenous knowledge systems to support regional development.

Manipur CM Yumnam Khemchand Felicitates NCC Cadets For Outstanding Achievements

Imphal, Mar 14: Yumnam Khemchand today attended a felicitation ceremony for NCC cadets of Manipur held at the NCC Group Headquarters Imphal. Local News Coverage The event was organised in the presence of the Group Commander and other officials. Speaking at the programme, the Minister praised the cadets for their remarkable achievements, stating that their recognition reflects the strength of the nation's youth and the immense potential of Yuva Shakti. He highlighted that the discipline, dedication and spirit of national service displayed by the ca-



dets serve as an inspiration to society. Khemchand also expressed confidence that these young achievers will play a vital role in strengthening the nation and contributing meaningfully as

responsible citizens in an increasingly interconnected global world. He congratulated all the cadets for their accomplishments and for bringing pride to Manipur.

Kuki CSO decries killing, announces shutdown

Imphal, Mar 14: The Kuki CSO Working Committee, Ukhrul, has condemned the killing of two Kuki men whose bodies were recovered on March 12, describing the incident as a "barbaric and inhumane act". The victims, identified as Thenk-hogin Baite and Thangboimang Lunkim, were reportedly found blindfolded with their hands tied behind their backs. According to the committee, the bodies bore signs of severe assault with sharp objects before the victims were shot dead. A joint search team comprising villagers from Shangkhai and Thowai villages, along with personnel of the Border Security Force (BSF), recovered the bodies around 8:30 am on March 12, the committee said. The bodies were later taken to Imphal under police escort on the evening of March 12 for post-mortem examination. Expressing concern over the handling of the case, the committee alleged that

authorities and security forces "failed to make serious efforts" to locate the two men when they were reported missing. It also criticised the explanation that the victims could not be traced due to the absence of mobile phones, calling it an "unacceptable lapse at a time when lives were at risk". Describing the killings as a "horrific crime", the committee said the agitation would continue until justice is delivered. It further stated that the bodies of the victims would not be claimed until the perpetrators are identified, arrested and awarded "capital punishment". The committee demanded that the case be registered and investigated by either Saikul or Kangpokpi Police, stating that the Kuki community has "lost faith in the Ukhrul Police". Calling for a transparent and impartial probe, the organisation also urged that the case be handed over to the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

The committee appealed to the Central government to take swift action to deliver justice and urged authorities to demonstrate the same urgency shown during the extraction of 21 Tangkhul travellers by the administration led by Manipur Chief Yumnam Khemchand Singh. Raising concerns over the safety of Kuki residents in Ukhrul district, the committee said the community now feels "deeply threatened" despite earlier coexisting peacefully with the Tangkhul community. It demanded the relocation of Kuki villages in Ukhrul to Kangpokpi district to ensure the "safety and protection" of the community. As part of the protest, the committee announced a shutdown along the Imphal-Ukhrul Road and warned that the agitation would continue until its demands are addressed, stating that "the agitation will continue until justice is delivered."

Social activist Malem's peace cycle rally reaches Pallel

Imphal, Mar 14: A cycle rally undertaken by social activist Malem Thongam to spread the message of peace and harmony in Manipur and encourage a better and safer future has reached Pallel on Friday. The rally, which is being aimed to carry out across all 16 districts of Manipur, arrived at Kakching market on Friday. On the occasion, members of Kakching Apunba Nupi Lup and Kakching Keithel Apunba Ima Lup warmly received and felicitated him at Kakching market before the rally proceeded further on its journey. Malem Thongam (27), a resident of Maiba Khul Mayai Leikai under Koirengei in Imphal East district, is the son of Thongam Amuba Meitei and Thongam Ongbi Bino Leima. His initiative comes at a time when tensions and conflicts between two communities have continued in Manipur for more than two years. Through this journey, he aims to urge both the Manipur and Government of India to work sincerely towards bringing a permanent solution to the crisis. At the same time, he appealed to the people and communities to promote peace, mutual understanding and unity between the Meitei and Kuki communities. As part of the campaign, the rally will cover all 16 districts of Manipur. He had earlier begun a similar journey from Delhi and travelled through several places before reaching Manipur and completing that phase successfully. He also mentioned that another phase of the rally is planned



to start from Kashmir in the future. The present phase of the rally was flagged off from Lamangdong market in Bishnupur district, beginning from yesterday, in the presence of local people and supporters. Malem Thongam stated that the primary objective of the rally is to appeal to both the Government of India and the Manipur Government to take sincere initiatives to bring about a meaningful dialogue and a permanent resolution to the ongoing conflict between the communities. He further expressed that the rally is his humble effort to convey a message of peace and harmony to the people of Manipur and urged all communities across the state to support the initiative and extend cooperation for the success of the mission.

AHPI Manipur Chapter to organise 2nd AHPICON NE II

The 2nd AHPICON NE II 2026, organized by the Manipur State Chapter of the Association of Healthcare Providers India (AHPI), will take place on March 15 at IMA Auditorium, Imphal West.

Imphal, Mar 14: The Manipur State Chapter of the Association of Healthcare Providers India (AHPI) will organise 2nd AHPICON NE II 2026 on the theme "Community Engaging Healthcare Leadership" on Sunday, March 15 at the IMA, Auditorium, Lamphelpat, Imphal West. AHPICON NE II 2026 is a one-day interactive conference that will bring together hospital lead-

ership and healthcare management stakeholders from across the state. The programme will include panel discussions on patient experience and community engagement, patient safety and preparedness, healthcare leadership, nursing services and clinical support systems, human resources and workforce development, and crisis preparedness and resilience. The conference aims to facilitate the exchange of best practices, identify operational and quality gaps, and encourage collaborative strategies to strengthen patient-centred and community responsive healthcare systems in Manipur. Healthcare administrators, depart-

ment heads, nursing officers, and professionals involved in healthcare management have been encouraged to attend the conference. The AHPI Manipur State Chapter was established on August 20, 2019 under the aegis of AHPI headquarters in New Delhi to strengthen healthcare delivery in the state. Since its inception, the chapter has worked to promote progressive healthcare practices, strengthen collaboration among healthcare institutions, and address systemic challenges related to infrastructure, quality patient care, workforce capability, community health awareness, and equitable access to healthcare.

No dearth of LPG, fuel in Manipur: CAF&PD

Imphal, Mar 14: The Directorate of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution Manipur on Friday, dismissed rumours circulating on social media about a shortage of LPG and petroleum products in the state, stating that sufficient stock is available. According to a press release of the directorate, some social media users and propagandists were spreading misleading information about an alleged shortage of LPG and other petroleum products, which could create unnecessary panic among consumers. According to the department, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) in Imphal has confirmed that there is no shortage of LPG or other petroleum

products in the state and that adequate stock is available. The oil company clarified that the temporary disruption in LPG distribution in recent days was caused by a technical issue in the Delivery Authentication Code (DAC) system at the all-India level. The issue has now been resolved and was not related to the availability of LPG stock in the state. IOCL has also reaffirmed that adequate stock of LPG and petroleum products (POL) is available across Manipur, the release said. The department has urged consumers not to panic or engage in unnecessary hoarding of LPG cylinders or petroleum products, warning that



such actions could lead to safety risks and accidents.

Development First CM Sarma's ₹337 Cr Investment in Barak Valley



Silchar, Mar 14: Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday dedicated multiple development projects worth more than ₹337 crore across the Barak Valley districts of Cachar district, Hailakandi district and Karimganj district. Local News Coverage Among the projects inaugurated was the Barak Valley Secretariat in Silchar, along with several bridges, cultural centres and other infrastructure facilities in the

three districts. According to officials, the projects are aimed at strengthening administrative infrastructure, improving connectivity and expanding public facilities in the Barak Valley region. The initiatives are expected to enhance access to government services and support infrastructure development in the area. The programme was attended by local representatives and officials from the concerned departments.

Narendra Modi launches development projects in Silchar, targets Indian National Congress

Silchar, Mar 14: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 14 launched multiple development projects in Silchar in Assam and sharply criticised the Indian National Congress, claiming that the party is steadily losing public support across the country and may soon "hit a century of electoral defeats." Addressing a public gathering in the Barak Valley, Modi said that people in Assam had already rejected Congress and voters across the country were continuing to do the same. "You have ousted the Congress from Assam. Today every state in the country is teaching the Congress a lesson. The Congress is losing election after election. In the near future, Congress is poised to hit a century of defeats," the Prime Minister said. He further accused Congress leaders of attempting to malign the country out of frustration over repeated electoral losses. Referring to a protest linked to an artificial intelligence summit, Modi alleged that Congress leaders staged an unusual demonstration. "In a bid to discredit the AI summit, Congress staged a bizarre protest by tearing their own clothes in public. It appears the Congress has nothing left to do now but tear its own clothes in desperation," he said.

Highlighting the development agenda of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Modi said the government's priority is to uplift communities that have long remained behind in the development process. "The BJP's mantra is to prioritise those who are lagging behind in the race of development," he said, adding that earlier governments considered border regions as the "last villages" of the country. "We consider these border villages as the country's first villages," he said, noting that the next phase of the Vibrant Villages Programme aimed at developing border areas was launched from Cachar district in Assam. The Prime Minister also highlighted welfare measures for tea garden communities, stating that the Government of Assam had taken a "historic step" by granting land rights to thousands of tea garden families. Speaking about global developments, Modi said several parts of the world were witnessing war-like conditions and emphasised that the government is working to minimise the impact of global crises on Indian citizens. "Nowadays conditions similar to war prevail in several parts of the world. Our government is making every effort to ensure that the citizens of our country face the few-



est hardships possible," he said.

He also accused Congress of attempting to create panic in the country during such challenging times and alleged that the party was failing to act responsibly in matters of national interest. "The forces across the globe that are unable to digest India's rapid development — the Congress is increasingly becoming a mere puppet in their hands," Modi added.

Earlier in the day, the Prime Minister performed the Bhoomi Pujan for the Shillong-Silchar High-Speed Corridor, the first access-controlled Greenfield four-lane corridor in Northeast India.

The 166-kilometre corridor, to be built at an estimated cost of about ₹22,860 crore, will significantly improve connectivity between Meghalaya and Assam and reduce travel time between Guwahati and Silchar

from around 8.5 hours to about five hours.

Modi alleged that Congress had neglected the development of the Barak Valley for decades after independence.

"The Congress had left the Northeast to its fate. When the country attained independence, the boundary was drawn in such a way that the Barak Valley's vital link to the sea was completely severed," he said.

Taking a swipe at Congress leaders, the Prime Minister remarked, "Just ask Congress leaders about this project. Give them a pen and paper and ask them to write ₹24,000 crore—they won't even be able to do it."

Meanwhile, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the corridor project reflects India's commitment to becoming a developed nation and expressed confidence that Assam would grow alongside the country's progress.

"India is moving forward with the resolve to become a developed nation. As India progresses, our effort is that Assam also emerges as a strong and robust state," Sarma said.

The project is expected to significantly strengthen regional connectivity, promote economic growth and improve trade links across the Northeast.

NE/EAST

CBI arrests SBI Assistant Manager, Loan Officer for Rs 16,000 bribe



Guwahati, Mar 14: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) arrested an Assistant Manager and Loan Officer of the State Bank of India (SBI) posted at the Gumi Branch in Assam's Kamrup (Rural) district on Friday for allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 16,000 from a complainant for processing loan applications related to rooftop

solar electrification. According to an official statement issued by the CBI, the case was registered on March 12, 2026, following a complaint alleging that the accused bank official had demanded an undue advantage of Rs 16,000 to facilitate the processing of loan applications of customers seeking financial assistance for installing rooftop solar systems. Acting on the complaint, the agency conducted a carefully planned trap operation. Investigators caught the accused red-handed while allegedly demanding and accepting the bribe from the complainant. Sources within the investigating agency said that searches were also conducted at premises linked to the accused following the arrest. The CBI

arrested an Assistant Manager/Loan Officer at the SBI Gumi Branch in Assam's Kamrup (Rural) district. The operation is part of the CBI's ongoing efforts to curb corruption in public sector institutions and ensure transparency in financial services linked to government-supported schemes. The arrested official has been produced before the Court of the Special Judge, CBI, in Guwahati for further legal proceedings. Investigators are currently examining documents and other evidence related to the case to determine whether additional individuals may have been involved in the alleged bribery network. Officials added that the investigation remains ongoing, and further developments are expected as the probe progresses. Officials confirmed that the trap was executed successfully, leading to the immediate arrest of the bank officer.

BJP blames illegal migration for Garo Hills unrest, seeks GHADC rule changes

Lok Sabha MP Ravi Shankar Prasad

Imphal, Mar 14: illegal migration from Bangladesh for the recent unrest in Meghalaya's Garo Hills. At a press briefing in New Delhi, Prasad said the BJP stands with the tribal communities and is committed to protecting their constitutional rights. He claimed tensions rose after alleged attempts by outsiders to integrate into local tribal society and contest elections to the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council (GHADC), a body reserved for tribal members. Prasad warned that the growing presence of outsiders is affecting land rights, political representation, and the social balance of indigenous tribes. He also referred to a controversy involving former Phulbari MLA S.G. Esmatur Momin, saying a nomination was filed despite opposition from local tribal groups. Some outsiders, he alleged, reportedly marry tribal women and obtain fraudulent certificates to contest autonomous council elections. He said the BJP opposes any effort to undermine tribal rights and noted that similar measures to curb illegal migration are being enforced in other NDA-ruled states, including Meghalaya. The BJP in Meghalaya has



recommended changes to the Assam and Meghalaya Autonomous District Council Rules, 1951, requiring candidates to hold a Scheduled Tribe certificate and belong to an indigenous community to vote or contest GHADC elections. A party delegation led by Meghalaya BJP president Rikman G. Momin met Governor C.H. Vijayashankar to submit a memorandum suggesting rule changes to protect tribal rights. The Governor assured that the proposals would be

reviewed by experts before action under constitutional procedures. BJP vice president and Tura MDC Bernard N. Marak said the party plans to remove illegal migrants from the plains, warning that their presence threatens tribal identity. He alleged outsiders are seeking influence in tribal institutions and living on leased tribal land, calling on authorities to act impartially to safeguard the rights and culture of indigenous communities.

PM Modi to visit Kolkata today to inaugurate and lay foundation stone for multiple development projects

Kolkata, Mar 14: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Kolkata today, and he will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for multiple development projects worth around 18,680 crore rupees. In a major boost to road infrastructure in the region, the Prime Minister will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for several National Highway projects with a combined length of more than 420 kilometres, worth around 16,990 crore rupees. The projects being inaugurated include sections of NH-19 in West Bengal and Jharkhand and NH-114 in West Bengal. These projects are expected to enhance road safety, reduce travel time, ease congestion and pollution, improve regional connectivity, promote tourism and boost economic growth in the region. The Prime Minister will also lay the foundation stone for several new National Highway projects. These include five packages of the 231-kilometre-long four-lane Kharagpur-Moregram economic corridor section of NH-116A. The project forms part of the economic corridor between Kharagpur and Siliguri and will pass through Paschim Medinipur, Bankura, Hooghly, Purba Bardhaman, Birbhum and Murshidabad districts of West Bengal. Direct Kharagpur-Moregram connectivity will reduce travel distance by around 120 kilometres and save nearly 7 to 8 hours of travel time. Mr Modi will also lay the foundation stone for the construction of a 5.6-kilometre-long four-



lane Dubrajpur Bypass on NH-14, which will help decongest the densely built-up areas of Dubrajpur town and reduce travel time by nearly 1 hour. He will also lay the foundation stone for the construction of additional four-lane major bridges over the Kangshabati and Shilabati rivers on NH-14.

During the visit, the Prime Minister will also inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for several shipping and port-related projects. He will inaugurate the mechanisation project of Berth No. 2 at Haldia Dock Complex, which will enable efficient, faster and environment-friendly cargo handling. He will also inaugurate the

rejuvenation project at Khidderpore Docks (Dock 1 – West). In the Railways sector, Prime Minister will flag off the Purulia-Anand Vihar Terminal (Delhi) Express, strengthening rail connectivity between West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and the national capital region. Prime Minister will also inaugurate six redeveloped railway stations under the Amrit Station Scheme. He will also dedicate to the nation two railway projects — the 16 km long third rail line between Belda and Dantan and the Automatic Block Signalling system between Kalaikunda and Kanimohuli. These projects will improve train safety and punctuality, reduce congestion and enhance the overall ease of travel for passengers in the region. These initiatives reflect the Government's continued commitment to strengthening infrastructure, enhancing connectivity and accelerating economic growth in West Bengal and eastern India. Prime Minister Modi will also address a political rally organised by the BJP. A large number of people have started coming to Kolkata from all the districts of West Bengal. This marks the beginning of the political campaign of the BJP ahead of the Assembly election in West Bengal. The Election Commission had already held election preparedness meetings in West Bengal a couple of days back in Kolkata.

Lightning strike kills over 30 livestock in Lakhimpur's



North Lakhimpur, Mar 14: A lightning strike killed more than three dozen livestock at a farm in Lakhimpur's Dhakuakhana sub-district. The incident occurred around 1.30 am today when a thunderstorm accompanied by lightning hit Mazgaon village in Abhaypur under the Dhakuakhana sub-district. The lightning struck the goat farm of Tapan Mili, killing 30 goats and other animals. Three cows, several poultry birds and his pet dog were also killed in the incident. In the early hours today, villagers discovered the charred remains of the farm animals in the owner's backyard. The entire shed of the goat farm was reduced to ashes in the incident. The increasing occurrence of thunderstorms and lightning has been attributed to the formation of convective or thunderstorm clouds due to rising temperatures and climate change. Lakhimpur district, like most parts of Assam, has witnessed a rainfall deficit since September 2025 and has been experiencing dry weather during this period. Climate change is intensifying lightning activity worldwide, with studies indicating a roughly 12% increase in lightning strikes for every 1°C rise in global temperature.

Bengal transfers Darjeeling DM after President's protocol breach row

Kolkata, Mar 14: The West Bengal government on Thursday transferred out Darjeeling district magistrate Manish Mishra, replacing him with Sunil Agarwala, who was posted as the special secretary in the north Bengal development department. The government's decision to move out Mishra just months after his appointment as district magistrate comes against the backdrop of a controversy over an alleged protocol breach during President Droupadi Murmu's visit to north Bengal on March 7. On Saturday, Murmu expressed disappointment over the change of venue for the 9th International Santhal Conference from Bidhannagar in Darjeeling district's Phansidewa block, to Gosainpur near Siliguri 25km away. Murmu said the change in venue limited participation. People aware of the matter told HT on Saturday that the change was made due to security protocol. Samik Bhattacharya, state BJP president and the party's Rajya Sabha MP, declined to comment on the decision. "This is purely an administrative matter between the Centre and the State, and the BJP has no political comments on this. Also, the President's chair is above all politics. I would just like to say that had the Centre called more officers from West Bengal on deputation in the past, the law-and-order situation in the state would have been different". A state government official also said the central government has requisitioned the services of Manish Mishra and the Siliguri police commissioner C Sudhakar and asked the two officers to report in Delhi within three days. There has been no official word about the move by the ministry of home affairs and the department of personnel and training (DoPT), the cadre controlling authorities for Indian Police

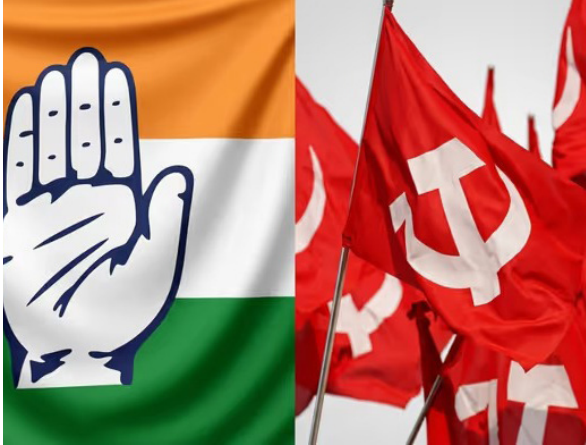


Service (IPS) officers and Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers. After President Murmu criticised the state government over the alleged protocol breach, PM Modi accused the Trinamool Congress (TMC) of "crossing all limits" and insulting the President. Chief minister Mamata Banerjee had hit back, claiming the BJP was using the country's highest office to malign the state and also questioned the President's "silence" on alleged atrocities against tribals in BJP-ruled states. Referring to reports that the central government had requisitioned the services of the two civil servants, Trinamool Congress spokesperson and state vice president Jay Prakash Majumdar said this was a Centre-State matter guided by the established protocol. "The consent of the state is necessary. The recent case

of calling two IAS and IPS officers on central deputation is nothing but a political vendetta by the BJP-led Centre. It also reflects how the BJP is demeaning the post of the President while involving her to fulfil their political agenda," Majumdar said. According to a state government order seen by HT, Mishra, a 2015 batch IAS officer, has been posted as special secretary in the Home & Hill Affairs Department. Sunil Agarwala, who replaces him in Darjeeling, is a 1994-batch officer in the West Bengal Civil Service (Executive). The changes come ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the state on Saturday. He is scheduled to address an administrative event and a massive rally organised by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at Kolkata's Brigade Parade Grounds.

Opposition rift surfaces in Tripura over Dharmanagar bypoll candidate

Agartala, Mar 14: Political differences between the CPI(M) and the Congress, the two principal opposition parties in Tripura, have surfaced ahead of the by-election to the Dharmanagar Assembly constituency after the Left party announced its candidate for the seat. Congress leader and MLA Sudip Roy Barman on Friday said the CPI(M) should have consulted the Congress before declaring Amitabha Datta as its nominee for the Dharmanagar bypoll. Addressing reporters, Roy Barman said the Congress had expected the CPI(M) to hold discussions with its opposition partner before announcing a candidate, considering the understanding between the two parties in the state. He noted that the Congress had refrained from fielding candidates in the recent by-elections to the Dhanpur, Boxanagar, and Ramnagar Assembly constituencies, where the CPI(M) had contested the polls. According to Roy Barman, the Congress had extended



support to the Left parties during those bypolls as part of efforts to strengthen the opposition space in the state. Referring to the Dharmanagar bypoll, he said the CPI(M) should reconsider its decision and show respect to the Congress by withdrawing its candidate. Roy Barman added that the Congress had already fulfilled its responsibility in maintaining opposition unity in previous elections, and that it was now up to the CPI(M) to take a call. He also alleged that the CPI(M)'s decision to field a candidate in Dharmanagar

could indirectly benefit the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The Dharmanagar Assembly constituency in North Tripura district fell vacant following the death of former Speaker and BJP MLA Bishwabandhu Sen in December last year. While the Election Commission is yet to announce the schedule for the by-election, political activities in the constituency have intensified, with parties beginning preparations for the contest. Leaders of the CPI(M) are yet to respond to Roy Barman's remarks.

Salam Rohendro bags IARI Innovative Farmer Award

Imphal, Mar 14: A progressive fish farmer from Manipur has brought pride to the state through remarkable achievements in fisheries and aquaculture, receiving several prestigious awards and recognitions at the state and national levels. Salam Rohendro Singh of Laphupat Tera Mayai Leika has been actively involved in promoting scientific fish farming and sustainable aquaculture practices. To strengthen his technical knowledge, he participated in several training programmes organised by the Manipur Fisheries Department and National Research Institutions. In June 2014, he successfully completed a five-day Short-Term Course on Fish Farming Technology organized by the District Fishery Office, Imphal West. The programme provided practical training on pond preparation, fish seed management, feeding practices, and modern aquaculture techniques. Later, from June 28-30, 2017, he attended a three-day Skill Development Training on Wetland Management, organised by the Department



of Fisheries in collaboration with the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB). The training focused on sustainable management of wetlands and improving fish production. Experts and scientists from ICAR and Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Imphal West delivered technical sessions during the programme. The farmer currently manages a fish farming unit covering approximately 0.5 hectares, where modern fish culture techniques are practiced. The farm has become an example for other farmers interested in adopting scientific aquaculture methods. Rohendro dedication and

innovation in fish farming have earned him several prestigious awards. On November 5, 2021, he secured First Prize in the Fish Fair-cum-Fish Crop Competition, organised by the Department of Fisheries, Manipur. On July 11, 2022, he received the Best Progressive Fish Farmer Award during the 22nd National Fish Farmers' Day, organised by the ICAR Directorate of Coldwater Fisheries Research, Bhimtal, Nainital. In December 2022, he was honoured with the Haricharan Das Memorial Best Progressive Farmer Award by the North-East Society for Fisheries and Aquacul-

ture during the International Conference on Responsible Aquaculture and Sustainable Fisheries Interact 2022. He also received the Innovative Farmer Award during the Krishi Kumbha Mela held from January 4 to 6, 2023 at the ICAR Research Complex for NEH Region, Umiam, Meghalaya. Further recognizing his contribution to agriculture and aquaculture, he was awarded the IARI Innovative Farmer Award 2026 at ICAR, New Delhi, during the programme held from February 25 to 27, 2026. Apart from these recognitions, he has also been invited several times as an interaction guest speaker to share his experience with fellow farmers and agricultural stakeholders.

These interaction sessions were held on March 7, 2023, December 23, 2023, October 25, 2024, and November 18, 2025. His continuous efforts and achievements have made him a role model for aspiring fish farmers and have significantly contributed to the promotion of sustainable fisheries development in Manipur.

CAU Imphal gears up for Agri-Youth Parliament

Imphal, Mar 14: Central Agricultural University, Imphal, one of the premier agricultural universities serving the North Eastern Region of India, will organise the Agri-Youth Parliament 2026 – North East Bharat from March 21 to 23 at its Imphal campus. The programme is being organised under the guidance of the Chief Patron, Dr. Anupam Mishra, Vice Chancellor, Central Agricultural University, Imphal, along with the Patrons and Co-Patron of the event. The Agri-Youth Parliament aims to create a dynamic platform bringing together agricultural youth with innovative ideas, aspiring agri-entrepreneurs, start-ups, successful innovators and role-model entrepreneurs, along with scientists, extension professionals, researchers, academicians and progressive farmers who are contributing to the conservation of traditional agricultural practices and biodiversity in the region. The programme will encourage dialogue, exchange of ideas, policy perspectives and capacity building among stakeholders to help shape a sustainable and prosperous agricultural future for North East Bharat. The initiative also aligns with broader national developmental goals by contributing to the process of preparing a roadmap for achieving a strong agricultural and econom-



ic ecosystem in the North Eastern Region by the Amrit Kaal (2047). Key highlights of the three-day event will include entrepreneurship-oriented interactive sessions focusing on themes such as Agri-start-ups and entrepreneurial ecosystems in North East Bharat, advancing agricultural innovation and technology acceleration, strengthening commercialization ecosystems, and promoting farm-to-market value chains and market-led agriculture. The programme will also feature business interactions with investors and entrepreneurs,

exhibitions and stalls by youth entrepreneurs and start-ups, and talks by academicians, professionals and successful entrepreneurs sharing their experiences and insights. Applications are currently open for youth entrepreneurs, start-ups, innovative farmers, extension professionals, academicians and other stakeholders interested in participating in the Agri-Youth Parliament 2026. The event is expected to serve as an important platform to inspire the next generation of agricultural leaders and innovators in the North Eastern Region.

Supreme Court Dismisses Plea by Mizo Chiefs Seeking Compensation for Acquired Lands

Aizawl, Mar 14: The Supreme Court has dismissed a writ petition filed by the Mizo Chief Council seeking compensation for lands acquired by the government in the erstwhile Lushai Hills district, now the state of Mizoram.

The petition, filed under Article 32 of the Constitution, alleged that the lands of traditional Mizo chiefs were taken over by the government without adequate compensation, thereby violating their fundamental right to property. The council had approached the court on behalf of the tribal chieftains and their legal heirs.

Historically, Mizo society was organised around the institution of chiefs who administered territories known as “Ram”. The chiefs exercised executive and judicial authority over these areas and allocated farmland to villagers in return for customary tribute called “Fathang”, usually a share of agricultural produce.

Following the enactment of the Assam Mizo District (Acquisition of Chief’s Rights) Act, 1954, the government assumed control over these territories, transferring the chiefs’ rights and interests in their lands to the state. Compensation amounting to ₹14.78 lakh was paid under the Act, although the petitioners claimed it covered only certain entitlements and not the value of the land itself.

The petitioners argued that the acquisition deprived the chiefs of their property without adequate compensation, violating constitutional protections that existed at the time. However, the Supreme Court held that the petitioners failed to establish any violation of fundamental rights.

The court also observed that privileges granted to princely rulers and traditional authorities under historical political arrangements could not be treated as legally enforceable rights or fundamental rights.

After examining the case from all perspectives, the bench concluded that the petitioners were not entitled to the relief sought and dismissed the writ petition. All pending applications related to the matter were also dismissed.

The judgment was delivered by a bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and R. Mahadevan on March 13, 2026.

Assam Rifles facilitates youth employment

Imphal, Mar 14: A Certificate and Appointment Distribution Ceremony for the Security Guard Training Programme was organised at the Assam Rifles Skill Development Centre, Sanjeeveeni Complex, Imphal. The programme was conducted by the Homeland Institute of Security Management with support from Headquarters Inspector General Assam Rifles (South). The ceremony was graced by Senior Officials of Assam Rifles and representatives of the Homeland Institute of Security Management and other dignitaries. A total of 50 trainees successfully completed the fully residential programme. Of these, 47 trainees received certificates and appointment letters during the ceremony, while three trainees from the Kuki community secured placements in Pune, informed a press release of IGAR(S). The training was designed to equip unemployed youth of Manipur with professional skills required in the security sector. The curriculum included physical training, security operations, fire safety, first aid and



CPR, emergency response, surveillance awareness, discipline and professional conduct. These modules prepared the trainees to meet the expectations of the industry and take up national-level assignments. Since January 2026, the institute has trained and placed 63 security personnel across India, reflecting the

growing impact of such initiatives in creating sustainable livelihood opportunities. The ceremony highlighted the importance of discipline, professionalism and integrity in the security profession, while underlining the role of skill development in empowering youth and fostering employment generation in Manipur, it said.

MSCW conducts women's public hearing in Chandel

Imphal, Mar 14: The Manipur State Commission for Women (MSCW), in coordination with the District Administration Chandel, District Legal Services Authority, Centre for Women and Girls, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, and One Stop Centre, under the initiative of the National Commission for Women (NCW), organised a “Mahila Jansunwai (Women’s Public Hearing)” on Friday at the Multipurpose Hall, DC Office Complex, Chandel, commemorating International Women’s Day 2026.



Law Is a Profession Where Learning Never Ends: Justice Ujjal Bhuyan at NLU Tripura

Agartala, Mar 14: Justice of the Supreme Court of India, Ujjal Bhuyan, on Saturday stressed that continuous learning and unwavering integrity are the cornerstones of the legal profession while addressing students at the “2nd Apanshu Mohan Lodh Memorial Public Lecture” organised by National Law University Tripura. Local News Coverage

Speaking to the gathering, Justice Bhuyan said he always feels comfortable interacting with young students, noting that despite differences in age and experience, both judges

and students remain lifelong learners of law. Emphasising the dynamic nature of the profession, he remarked that the idea of completing legal education upon graduation is a myth. According to him, law is a field where rules constantly evolve, making continuous learning essential throughout a lawyer’s career. He also highlighted that legal education nurtures imagination and critical thinking. A lawyer, he said, should not remain confined to law books alone but must understand history, science and social realities to serve society effectively.

Referring to the transformation of legal education in India since the establishment of the first national law university in 1985, Justice Bhuyan noted that today students have diverse career opportunities ranging from litigation and judiciary to academia and policy-making. Encouraging students to pursue advocacy, he described litigation as a deeply satisfying profession. He also cautioned young lawyers against blindly relying on artificial intelligence, stressing the need to verify information carefully. India Travel Packages Vice-Chancellor of



the National Law University Tripura, Prof. Yogesh Pratap Singh, on Saturday welcomed distinguished guests, academicians and students to the Second Apanshu Mohan Lodh Memorial Public Lecture organised to commemorate the life and legacy of former judge Apanshu

Mohan Lodh. MD of Tripura Times newspaper Avishikta Lodh spoke about the legacy of late Shri Apanshu Mohan Lodh, Justice Arindam Lodh, Chairperson of the Tripura Human Rights Commission and former Judge of the High Court of Tripura gave the vote of thanks.

UPSC qualifier Wahengbam Renudhar felicitated



Imphal, Mar 14: A felicitation programme was held on Friday in honour of Wahengbam Renudhar, who secured All India Rank 652 in the Union Public Service Commission Civil Services Examination 2025. The programme was organised by Kachathol Hiyaanglam-Wabagai at the organisation’s ground to congratulate Renudhar for his success in one of the country’s most competitive examinations. The event was attended by Dr. Elangbam Amit Kumar, Proprietor of Lamyamba Enterprises, as the chief guest. Other dignitaries present included local elder W. Chaobi Singh and Retd. A.I. Kakching E. Surendrajit, who attended as special invitees. During the programme, members of Kachathol Hiyaanglam-Wabagai, local Meira Paibi members and residents warmly felicitated Wahengbam Renudhar by presenting him with traditional garlands, shawls and other gifts in recognition of his achievement. Speaking at the occasion, Renudhar shared his experience of preparing for the UPSC examination.

He stated that success in the UPSC exam is possible if candidates follow the right strategy and work with consistent dedication. He mentioned that earlier attempts did not bring success, but with strong moral support from his family and by improving his preparation strategy, he was finally able to achieve success. He also said that the warm reception and encouragement from the people of the region after his success had helped him overcome

the struggles he faced during his preparation. In his speech, chief guest Dr. Elangbam Amit Kumar said that every parent feels proud when their children achieve something meaningful. He noted that although the region may be considered relatively underdeveloped, students from the area have been achieving remarkable results, including position holders in Class 10 and Class 12 examinations. He added that Renudhar securing the 652nd rank in the Civil Services Examination proves that many talented students live in the locality. He expressed confidence that if young people continue to work hard with dedication, many more successful individuals will emerge from the region in the future. He also stressed that building a good society requires good governance and responsible citizens. He pointed out that many parents are unable to provide proper education to their children due to financial difficulties, which highlights the need for better governance and improved educational facilities. He further stated that creating a better society requires quality schools, better healthcare facilities and the right guidance for the younger generation. He also urged people to elect capable and responsible representatives during elections rather than voting for candidates who offer temporary benefits such as food, money or other incentives. The programme concluded with the participants extending their best wishes and encouragement to Wahengbam Renudhar for his future endeavours.

MMTU flags illegal immigration ahead of census

Imphal, Mar 14: The Meitei (Meitei) Tribe Union (MMTU) has raised concern over the issue of illegal immigration in the State ahead of the upcoming national census, urging civil society organisations and the public to remain alert. Addressing media persons at Manipur Press Club, MMTU Secretary (Organisation) Takhellambam Parijat Meitei alleged that a steady influx of illegal immigrants into the state has been taking place over the past several years. According to him, many of these migrants have reportedly settled in different parts of the state, which he described as a serious concern for the indigenous population. He further claimed that some political leaders have allegedly allowed such migration to continue in order to strengthen their vote banks during elections. Referring to the census pro-

posed by the Government of India, which is expected to begin in April, Parijat said the exercise could provide an opportunity to identify and detect illegal immigrants residing in the state. He also stressed the need for the implementation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC), referring to the base year of the 1951 National Register of Citizens, as a possible mechanism to verify the status of residents. The MMTU leader warned that conducting census and delimitation exercises based on inaccurate population data could have long-term political implications for the indigenous communities. He observed that if the Meitei people are not included in the Scheduled Tribe list, they may face increasing political marginalisation in the future. Parijat also alleged that between 1971 and 2011, a num-



ber of illegal immigrants from neighbouring countries such as Myanmar and Bangladesh have entered India and gradually settled in different regions, including the hill areas of Manipur. He further claimed that some migrants have reportedly been included under the administrative category of “Any Kuki Tribe,” and through traditional chieftainship

systems, new villages have been established in certain hill areas. Stressing the urgency of the matter, the MMTU urged civil society organisations, community leaders and the public to recognise the seriousness of the issue and work collectively to safeguard the political, social and economic future of the indigenous communities of Manipur.

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The Role of Integrity in Leadership

Leadership plays a crucial role in guiding institutions, organisations, and communities. Among the many qualities associated with effective leadership, integrity stands out as one of the most essential. Integrity refers to honesty, ethical behaviour, and consistency between words and actions. Leaders who demonstrate integrity earn the trust and respect of those they represent. This trust forms the foundation of effective governance and cooperation. When leaders act with transparency and fairness, they create environments where individuals feel confident in institutional decisions. Such leadership encourages accountability and strengthens organisational stability. Conversely, the absence of integrity can lead to serious consequences. When leaders prioritise personal interests over public responsibility, trust in institutions declines. This erosion of trust often creates instability and public dissatisfaction. Integrity in leadership requires courage and commitment. Ethical decisions may sometimes involve difficult choices or personal sacrifice. However, maintaining moral principles ensures long-term credibility and respect. Educational institutions and professional organisations should emphasise the importance of ethical leadership. Training programs that focus on responsibility, accountability, and moral reasoning help prepare future leaders. Ultimately, leadership is not defined merely by authority but by character. Leaders who act with integrity inspire confidence and guide communities toward constructive progress.

The unfulfilled pledge to women in Bangladesh

The 13th parliament, in its inaugural session on Thursday, saw the slim presence of seven female members in a cohort of 300. The 50 reserved seats for women, once inducted based on proportional representation, may reduce the gender gap.

The presence, or rather absence, of female MPs in a country where more than half of the population are women speaks volumes of the existing structural barriers that hinder women’s political participation. A democratically elected government must own up to this reality and create opportunities for women, especially educated women, so that they remain engaged in the development calculus.

The current government, in particular, must recognise that they owe it to the women voters who changed the course of the election last month with their decisive voting weight. The heavy turnout and unmistakable preferences of women voters were a reaction to a controversial remark by the chief of the now opposition party. Comments on women’s ineligibility for top leadership positions or the need to cut short the working hours to increase home stay triggered a backlash. For many voters, it was more than an insensitive comment in a country where we have had successive female premiers for more than three decades, and where women are the driving force behind the economic growth. The comment made the long-standing struggle over women’s place in the public sphere obvious. Given the election results, one could assume that the female voters have registered a clear electoral message. They do not want to retreat into the margins of civic life. And why should they? Bangladesh has made extraordinary progress in educating girls and women. However, a recent study shows that the transition from classroom to career remains overwhelmingly frustrating.

Women constitute 47 percent of public university graduates in Bangladesh (as of 2023). This is a remarkable feat attained through strategic interventions by different governments over the last three decades, including initiatives to promote female education, scholarship programmes, and awareness campaigns aimed at reducing gender disparities in higher education. Every year, we get to see how girls consistently outperform their male peers in many public examinations. There is no question over their competence and conviction.

However, the employment situation presents a contrasting narrative. Female graduate unemployment (20.39 percent) is almost double that of male graduates (11.31 percent). Women’s unemployment figure is 34 percent in the age group of 15-29 years, compared to men’s 26 percent. The survey also claims that among the employed women, the majority are absorbed into the informal sector, where job security, career progression, and social protection are minimal, leading to questions about the effectiveness of education in providing sustainable employment opportunities for women.

This scenario presents us with a development paradox. What benefit does educating women provide if we fail to employ them and transform them into economic agents? The labour of love, often associated with homemaking, frequently withdraws women from the workforce. But the main problem lies in the mismatch between education and employment. Universities continue to produce graduates in disciplines that do not necessarily align with the demands of the job market. Women remain under-represented in sectors such as technology, finance, engineering, and digital services. Female students are often advised to pursue humanities and social sciences, based on the assumption that they would be engaged in less challenging professions. Policymakers must decide what they expect from this country’s women.

The configuration of academic seats, often decided based on the available seats in the dormitory, must be rethought. Then again, the issue is far from academic allocation. Most tertiary institutions lack clear career placement services. The speed and trajectory of career progression, otherwise known as “career velocity,” must also be considered. It denotes the rate at which individuals move from entry-level to decision-making positions. This velocity remains painfully slow as women are mostly concentrated in mid- or lower-level positions. They do not know what glass ceiling or wall is holding them back from moving upwards.

In Bangladesh, the stereotype against women joining the economic force was shattered by millions of women who joined the RMG sector and became the mainstay of our export success. But with the growth in automation, there have been skill shifts. There is fear of labour being redundant unless there are serious upskilling projects. At the same time, there must be systemic policies to upgrade women from the factory floor to managerial roles. Given the compliance regulations, these female workers receive somewhat due attention. But the situation remains dire in the informal sector. For instance, in domestic work, small-scale services, and home-based production, wages are low with little or no opportunities for advancement. Their contribution to economic statistics remains invisible, even though it sustains families and communities.

There has to be some social awareness campaign as women’s choices are in many cases restricted by societal and cultural expectations. Women are expected to prioritise domestic responsibilities over professional ambitions to demonstrate that they are “good” daughters, wives, and mothers. Even those who escape this identity trap face workplace safety and harassment, as well as housing and transportation issues. The M-shaped curve corresponding to marriage and maternity is another challenge that women face. This curve shows how female labour participation is high in early adulthood but declines during the child-rearing years and is only partially recovered later. Then there are enough moral police out there to stigmatise female participation in the labour market, which further reinforces the societal belief that women’s primary role should be confined to the home rather than in professional settings.

The reality is, Bangladesh’s development story cannot be separated from female participation. The demographic dividend window that has opened up for the country will remain unattainable if women aren’t engaged in a strategic manner. They have already proven their capacity in almost all economic sectors and professional fields. Their academic achievements indicate the intellectual foundations they have attained. The new government must not only expand education but also ensure that educational investment is translated into economic output.

This requires a more coordinated policy approach where universities align curricula with emerging sectors of the economy, and where public and private sectors work together to place women in high-growth industries such as technology, renewable energy, and financial services. Additionally, there has to be a support structure in childcare, transportation, and workplace protections to enable women to pursue their careers.

The Iran war and international law: it’s worse than a mistake; it’s a crime

When Russia launched its full scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the international condemnation from Europe and elsewhere was loud and clear. Leaders did not expect legal threats to shift Vladimir Putin or end war crimes by his troops. But they understood the importance of naming what had happened as an illegal act of aggression, and of seeking to hold those responsible accountable.

The same countries have been strikingly muted since the US and Israel launched their war on Iran. This too was an act of aggression. Spain’s Pedro Sánchez has been lonely in his forthright condemnation, though Norway and others also pointed to the breach of international law. Meanwhile, Australia’s prime minister, Anthony Albanese, offered unreserved support and Germany’s chancellor, Friedrich Merz, declared that it was “not the moment to lecture our partners and allies”.

As in Ukraine, the original sin has quickly been compounded, with the deaths of over a thousand civilians reported in Iran alone – including in the strike on a girls’ school which killed at least 175 people, mostly children: evidence points to US responsibility. Serious violations of the laws of war, reckless as well as deliberate, constitute war crimes. The US defence secretary, Pete Hegseth, declared on Friday that “no quarter will be given” to the enemy – a violation of international humanitarian law. Israel’s attacks on Lebanon, in retaliation for Hezbollah attacks defending Iran, are at a minimum disproportionate – as Katja Kallas, the EU foreign affairs chief, has implied – with vast civilian displacement and damage to infrastructure. That Iran is also committing war crimes does not lessen US or Israeli culpability.

The contrast between the west’s rhetoric about universal standards and its selective outrage is glaringly and increasingly evident to people around the world. They noted the bleak contrast between the passionate defence of Ukraine and the apparent indifference to genocide in Gaza. Some lives appear more important than others. When the Trump administration hit alleged drug trafficking boats in the Caribbean and kidnapped Venezuela’s leader, Nicolás Maduro, allies said little. Each time, the belief in international law as an essential framework for conduct was further undermined. Each time, implicit licence was given for further breaches.

Double standards reflect disquiet about the Venezuelan and Iranian regimes, fear of angering the US president and the prioritisation of Ukraine’s needs. But some are also adopting US arguments. When Donald Trump declared that his “own morality” was the only limit on his global powers, the problem was not merely his character. Yet as the war on Iran began, Chancellor Merz asked “what should we do when international law clearly reaches its limits”.

As Dr Tamer Morris of the University of Sydney notes: “The purpose of international law is not to determine who is morally good; it is to maintain order in a world where every state believes it is waging the ‘good’ fight.” Mr Merz and others are growing more critical as this war’s impact becomes clearer. But it should not be challenged solely on pragmatic or even ethical grounds. The difficulty of upholding international law, and the limits of its scope, are no reason to jettison it. If those who lament the decline of the rules-based order remain complicit with the erosion of law, we will all be in greater danger.

I had a ringside seat for the Iranian revolution. Foreign meddling didn’t work then either

Watching Iran in flames, I can’t help wondering whether history is coming a grotesque full circle 47 years after the fall of the US-backed Pahlavi dynasty, or whether western powers are simply repeating past errors by attempting violent regime change from outside. As a young reporter, I had a ringside seat for part of the 1979 revolution that overthrew Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and installed an austere Islamic republic headed by a Shia Muslim cleric with the titles of “leader of the revolution” and “guardian jurist” (vali-e faqih). Barely two years out of university, with a history degree specialised in the French Revolution, I was catapulted into covering a live revolution as epochal – and bloody – as the French and Russian convulsions. As a trainee correspondent for Reuters in Paris, I befriended exiled Iranian revolutionaries hanging out in the Latin Quarter in the months before Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was expelled from Iraq in 1978 and granted temporary asylum in France. Through those contacts, I was the first foreign journalist to interview Khomeini, a few days after he arrived in France and was installed in a modest suburban bungalow in Neauphle-le-Château, near Versailles. It took some haggling to see the “imam”. Aides tried to fob me off with written answers to my questions. Eventually, I was granted a 10-minute audience that I managed to stretch to 20. Abolhassan Banisadr, a Paris-based academic who went on to be elected Iran’s first president before being ousted and escaping back into exile in 1981, acted as an interpreter.

As I sat cross-legged on the floor opposite him, Khomeini barely acknowledged my presence, staring at the wall behind me as he spoke in a husky monotone. There would be no compromise with the shah, he said. Iran would become an Islamic republic. The US could do nothing to stop that. Bearing in mind Reuters’ business clients, I asked how foreign oil companies would be treated if the revolution triumphed. His answer was translated as: “We will cut off the hand of the foreigner.” I felt my own hand instinctively withdraw up my sleeve. After we left the room, Khomeini’s western-based spin doctors rushed to explain that, of course, the ayatollah didn’t mean they would chop off hands, but was using a metaphor. In hindsight, we young leftist reporters who covered Camp Khomeini were too influenced by the urbane exiles around him who spoke our languages and sought to convince us that “the old man” was a father figure for a socially progressive movement fighting to topple a torturing tyrant, whose troops had opened fire on the masses. The real balance of power in revolutionary Iran became apparent over the following year, after a liberal interlude during which the first free elections took place and western-trained technocrats tried to run a government amid a strange jumble of republican and revolutionary institutions. In revolutionary Russia, this phase of what Lenin called “dual power”, until Communist rule was entrenched, lasted a few months. In Iran, it has now lasted for 47 years. I was in Tehran from November 1979, days after the seizure of the US embassy by Islamist militant students – a turning point that radicalised the revolution and forced the liberals out of government – until July 1980, weeks before Iraq invaded Iran with western backing. I covered the first presidential election – won by my erstwhile interpreter, Banisadr – and witnessed the failed US raid to free more than 50 diplomats held hostage in the occupied embassy, the election of the first parliament and the suppression of student protests.

Khomeini’s masterstroke was to create parallel security forces that prevented a military coup by giving most power to the newly created Revolutionary Guards – while keeping regular armed forces – and to the feared Basij militia, alongside the regular police. Revolutionary tribunals headed by mullahs coexisted with ordinary courts. An elected president and parliament coexisted with the supreme leader’s office and a guardian council of hardline clerics that held the real power. Iran’s equivalent of the Jacobins or Bolsheviks – the organised core of revolutionaries – turned out to be neither the communist Tudeh party nor the Islamic leftist People’s Mujahedin, but the Shia clerics, who had a national network of mosques and seminaries, a charismatic leader in Khomeini and a patronage system lubricated by oil revenues. In due course, they created a political force – the Islamic Republican party – although it did not long survive a Mujahedin bombing that killed 72 of its leaders in 1981. Khomeini did not need a party that might have become an alternative power centre. As with the French and Russian revolutions, foreign powers desperate to prevent contagion launched a war against the revolutionary state, convinced it would rapidly collapse amid the internal turmoil. As in France and Russia, foreign aggression served to rally the country behind the revolution in a patriotic reflex, leading to a bloody but ultimately successful defence that halted Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, despite support for Baghdad from the US and France. At home, it hastened a reign of revolutionary terror. The “imposed war” provided grounds for mass arrests, kangaroo-court trials and summary executions. As in the French and Russian cases, entire categories of people became suspects, not for anything they had done, but merely for who they were – the “taghoutis” (devils) were treated with the same vindictive class hatred as former French nobles and priests. Should we journalists have known better from the outset? Was this revolution qualitatively different because it was prosecuted in the name of a religion, Shia Islam, with its gloomy cult of martyrdom? Should we not have denounced sooner the imposition of compulsory

hijab, the erosion of women’s rights and the enforcement of a strict morality code? It wasn’t that simple. Many Iranian women had more opportunities, including access to higher education, than in all surrounding Middle Eastern countries except Turkey. I knew communist intellectuals who donned chadors or headscarves voluntarily in those heady early months. “I dress like the people to march with the people,” Homa, a university lecturer, told me at a demonstration outside the occupied US embassy in November 1979. Six months later, she was fired from her teaching post after Islamist thugs attacked student dorms and fought pitched battles with leftists, giving authorities the pretext to close the universities, purge their staff and impose new Islamic curricula.

It did not seem inevitable in February 1979 that the forces of repressive fundamentalism would triumph in this sophisticated, educated society. Khomeini also bore a promise of social justice. I returned to Iran several times on reporting trips, notably during the period between 1997 and 2005 when the reformist president, Mohammad Khatami, tried to ease repression and launched talks with the Europeans on curbing Iran’s nuclear programme. He was outfoxed by Khomeini’s successor, Ali Khamenei, an anti-American hardliner who used the clerical levers of power to block liberal reforms. I cannot rejoice nor summon optimism at the assassination of Khamenei by US-Israeli bombing. The rapid choice of his hardline son Mojtaba as the new supreme leader offers little hope of reform. Neither Donald Trump nor Benjamin Netanyahu wants a genuinely free, prosperous Iran. They want its destruction as a threat and its perhaps ethnic dismemberment. Their war may even serve to perpetuate a regime that unflinchingly slaughtered thousands and possibly tens of thousands of demonstrators in January. I fear we are not witnessing the liberation of Iran or Iranians, but a repetition of the cycle of foreign interference that has blighted Iranian history since the British were granted trade monopolies in the 19th century. The last shah was reinstalled on his peacock throne in 1953 by a US-UK inspired coup that ousted the elected prime minister, Mohammad Mossadegh, who had the temerity to nationalise the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company – today’s BP. Khomeini, for his part, made his name by leading 1963 protests against US dominance in Iran. Once again, foreigners are seeking to shape the destiny of a nation that deserves better, but is likely to get worse.



SBI, JSW Steel, and Groww: ‘Buy’ list with up to 44% upside potential

Mumbai: Global brokerage Jefferies has refreshed its stock ideas for March, adding 7 companies to its list of preferred ‘Buy’ calls while maintaining a cautious stance on several others. The latest review includes 23 ‘Buy’ recommendations and eight stocks are marked ‘Underperform’ across Jefferies’ coverage universe of 247 companies, according to a strategy note released on March 12. State Bank of India, Star Health and Allied Insurance Company, Billionbrains Garage Ventures which runs the Groww platform, Bharat Forge, JSW Steel, Eternal and Max Healthcare have been newly added to the ‘Buy’ list in the March update. The brokerage also upgraded select stocks, made changes to earlier views. Delivery moved out of the earlier ‘Underperform’ bucket with an upgrade to ‘Buy’, while Laurus Labs moved to ‘Hold’. Jefferies added State Bank of India to its preferred ‘Buy’ list with a revised price target of Rs1,300 implying about 22.4% upside. The brokerage expects the country’s largest lender to sustain steady earnings expansion over the next two years. Jefferies expects loan growth of around 13% between FY26 and FY28 and sees credit costs stabilising near 45 basis points during FY27 and FY28. These trends are expected to support core earnings growth and returns on equity close to 15%.

“We believe SBI is well placed to grow loans as it leverages on lower LDR and stable asset quality,” Jefferies said in the report.

“Groww is the largest broker with respect to active clients with about



28% market share,” Jefferies said. The brokerage expects the company to broaden its revenue streams as it expands beyond mutual fund distribution. “The company has recently launched margin trading facility and expanded into commodities, wealth management and loans against securities which allows Groww to cross sell to MF only clients,” the analysts said. Bharat Forge Jefferies maintained a ‘Buy’ recommendation on Bharat Forge with a target price of Rs2,150 implying about 26.4% upside, citing improving prospects in commercial vehicle demand and defence orders. The brokerage said several headwinds that affected earnings in recent quarters appear to be easing. “BHFC’s operational outlook is improving with signs of US truck cycle bottoming, better truck

demand in India, easing of India US tariff and continued traction in defence,” Jefferies wrote. The brokerage also pointed to a large defence order book and potential earnings acceleration. The brokerage added that improving deposit momentum remains an important operational priority for the bank’s management. “The key deliverable for the management will be to improve deposit growth from 9% now towards 11 to 12% over next 12 to 18 months to aid sustainable credit growth,” the analysts wrote. Jefferies initiated a ‘Buy’ stance on Star Health with a price target of Rs 660 implying about 44.4% upside, pointing to improving profitability and sustained growth in health insurance premiums. The brokerage expects gross premiums to expand at roughly 16% annually

between FY26 and FY28 as distribution investments and product additions help expand the business. “Star Health is the leading private health insurer in India with dominance in the retail health segment supported by its proprietary distribution,” Jefferies wrote. The brokerage also expects profitability metrics to improve as claims stabilise and operating efficiency improves. “Expense ratio will improve over FY26 to FY28 driven by lower renewal commissions in senior citizen plans, scale benefits and introduction of straight through processing,” the report said. Billionbrains Garage Ventures which operates Groww Jefferies also added Billionbrains Garage Ventures, the company behind Groww, to its ‘Buy’ list with a price target of Rs195 implying about 26.5% upside.

Eight tax havens where employed personnel are not subject to income tax

Mumbai: Some countries do not tax the incomes of their citizens and foreigners who work there. In a world where income taxes seem unavoidable, at least eight countries do not impose any personal tax on the income of individuals. United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait are some of those nations with zero personal income tax. The Bahamas, Monaco, Saint Kitts and Nevis are the other three countries that do not tax their individual’s personal income. “The only things certain in life are death and taxes,” is a well-known quote from Benjamin Franklin, one of the United States’ founding fathers. Personal income tax is what the governments collect on the earnings made by individuals. But some countries do not tax the incomes of their citizens and foreigners who work there

No income tax on your salary? Yes, you read it correctly. You can keep 100% of your money without using rebates, deductions, or evading taxes. Qatar is one of the least tax-friendly countries in the world; there is no tax on personal income in Qatar. Businesses receive an annual fixed tax rate of 10 per cent of the company’s total income. Capital gains arising from the sale of real estate and securities derived by an individual are exempt from tax, provided the asset is not part of a taxable activity i.e. trade. Tax exemptions apply to dividends and other income from shares, and income tax on foreign capital for a period not exceeding 10 years from the date of operation of an investment project.

For individuals wishing to work overseas, these wage havens stand out for one simple reason: taxes are not deducted from your paycheck. Only a few countries in the world allow individuals to work and earn a completely tax-free salary since they have no income tax. The UAE does not levy in-

come tax on individuals. However, it levies 5 per cent value-added tax on the purchase of goods and services, levied at each stage of the supply chain and ultimately borne by the end consumer. The UAE also levies excise tax on specific goods that are harmful to health, and corporate tax on the net income or profit of corporations and other entities from their business. The UAE does not impose income tax on individuals, investors, or corporates, with the exception of oil companies and branches of foreign banks. As a country with a free economy model since its inception, it allows individuals and investors to freely repatriate their profits in their entirety.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) comprises seven emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm Al Quwain, Ras Al Khaimah, and Fujairah. Abu Dhabi is the capital and largest emirate, while Dubai is recognized as a global business hub. Saudi Arabia does not impose individual income tax on earnings derived solely from employment. Non-employment income is taxed at the entity level, and non-resident individuals without a permanent establishment in the country face taxation according to withholding tax regulations, according to PwC. Kuwait The income earned by individuals is currently not subject to income tax, provided that the individual is not a nominee of a foreign company as a shareholder in a local company. Therefore, income earned by employees is not taxable in Kuwait, according to KMPG. Oman Oman, currently does not levy any personal income tax. However, in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region, Oman will soon become the first country to levy a personal income tax. Oman’s Personal Income Tax Law will come into effect on January 1, 2028.

Motilal Oswal believes VA Tech Wabag will increase



Mumbai: The extension of the Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 has put the focus on many stocks from the water management segment. The share price of VA Tech Wabag, a water technology company, is down nearly 3% intra-day today, but the stock has gained 5% in 5 days. Domestic brokerage house Motilal Oswal sees scope for further upside. It has reiterated a ‘Buy’ rating on the stock with a target price of Rs 1,900. This implies nearly 48% upside from the current share price. Though there are concerns about its Middle East exposure, the stock is also in focus after it secured a contract worth more than Rs 1,000 crore from the Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (CMWSSB) to refurbish a 45 million litres per day (MLD) Tertiary Treatment Reverse Osmosis (TTRO) plant in Chennai. Motilal Oswal bullish on VA Tech Wabag.

Here are three reasons why Motilal Oswal remains bullish on the VA Tech Wabag and is optimistic about the company’s growth outlook. With the latest contract win, VA Tech Wabag continues to maintain a strong order pipeline. The company’s order book currently stands at over Rs 16,300 crore, which is around five times its FY25 revenue. In addition, the company has preferred bidder status in projects worth about Rs 3,000 crore. It is also actively bidding for projects worth Rs 15,000–20,000 crore, with an estimated win rate of around 30%. The brokerage believes the strong order pipeline provides visibility for revenue growth of 15–20% over the next three to four years for the company. “A robust order book of over Rs 16,300, preferred bidder in orders worth Rs 3,000 crore, and a strong bid pipeline of Rs 15,000-20,000 crore provide strong

15-20% revenue growth visibility over the next 3-4 years,” Motilal Oswal noted in its report. #2. Projects remain on track despite Middle East: Motilal Oswal

Motilal Oswal noted that project execution for VA Tech Wabag, which has significant exposure to overseas markets, has remained normal so far despite the heightened conflict in the Middle East. International projects contributed around 50% of VA Tech Wabag’s revenue in the first nine months of FY26 and account for nearly 60–70% of the company’s order book, with the Middle East forming a major share. #3. Focus on high-margin segments may boost Wabag’s margins: Motilal Oswal The brokerage house noted that the company’s increasing focus on executing large-scale projects in high-margin segments such as engineering procurement (EP), industrial projects, and operations and maintenance (O&M) will help improve margins while supporting steady growth. “Its greater focus on executing large-scale projects in high-margin segments such as EP, Industrial, and O&M augurs well for margins,” said Motilal Oswal. Motilal Oswal believes that VA Tech Wabag’s growth will accelerate further after it delivered a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4% in revenue, 18% in EBITDA, and 28% in profit after tax between FY21 -FY25. The brokerage house pointed out that the strong balance sheet and healthy free cash flow generation support the positive recommendation. Disclaimer: This article provides factual analysis only and is not, and should not be construed as, an offer, solicitation, or recommendation to buy or sell securities. Investors must conduct their own independent due diligence and seek advice from a SEBI-registered financial advisor.

Three reasons Motilal Oswal is optimistic about Not Tata Motors

Mumbai: The auto stocks have been under pressure for the second day running. Motilal Oswal, however, maintains a ‘Buy’ rating on key passenger vehicle maker Maruti Suzuki. The stock is down 20% in the past three months but the leading domestic brokerage house expects the stock to rally 29% from current levels. They have set a 12-month target price of Rs 17,406 per share. Motilal Oswal one of the key concerns for Maruti Suzuki India has been the relatively weak wholesale numbers and a softer-than-expected performance in Q3FY26. However, it says that the concerns around the automaker seem exaggerated given retail demand for Maruti Suzuki remains healthy across both passenger cars and utility vehicles.

Coforge to TCS: Why Nuvama has a ‘Buy’ on all Top-10 tech stocks

The strong retail performance following the GST rate cut, where Maruti Suzuki outperformed peers in terms of sales to customers, is a key fact that the brokerage is banking upon. #2. New capacity from April 2026 may boost wholesale volumes

Motilal Oswal highlighted that another reason of underperformance was the company’s near-term wholesale numbers have been capped by capacity constraints. Analysts expect this issue to ease from April 2026 as new manufacturing capacity begins operations, which should help the automaker ramp up dispatches to dealers. Looking ahead, Motilal Oswal expects Maruti Suzuki to outperform industry growth in FY27, supported by a strong pipeline of new product launches. These include a new variant of the Brezza, the recently launched Victoris and the upcoming e-Vitar, along with at least one more new model expected to be introduced in FY27. From Infosys to Coforge: Why Nomura bets AI won’t make IT Services obsolete

Exports are also likely to remain a key growth driver for the company. Maruti Suzuki is working towards its medium-term target of exporting 750,000–800,000 vehicles annually by FY31. The company has already



surpassed its FY26 export target in February 2026, reflecting strong overseas demand. Analysts also expect the company to manage rising input cost pressures through lower discounts, a better product mix and normalisation in pricing for passenger cars. Conclusion Motilal Oswal expects healthy retail demand and a strong pipeline of new launches to help Maruti Suzuki’s share price movement. They believe robust export momentum to support growth going forward.

Energy is preferred over airwaves Jefferies forecasts a 26% gain

Mumbai: The recent surge in crude prices has put the focus on oil and gas stocks. The share price of Reliance Industries is under pressure today, but Jefferies expects the stock to be relatively resilient despite market volatility. The brokerage maintained a ‘Buy’ rating on the stock with a price target of Rs 1,750, implying around 26% upside from the current levels.

Jefferies said the company’s oil-to-chemicals (O2C) business is currently benefiting from supply disruptions in the Middle East, which have pushed up refining and petrochemical spreads. However, the brokerage has also trimmed some estimates for the telecom business due to a delay in expected tariff hikes. Conclusion Motilal Oswal expects healthy retail demand and a strong pipeline of new launches to help Maruti Suzuki’s share price movement. They believe robust export momentum to support growth going forward. Jefferies said supply disruptions triggered by the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz have tightened global supplies of crude and refined products, particularly in Europe and Asia. With no strategic reserves of refined products globally, restoring supplies quickly may be difficult. As a result, refining and petrochemical spreads have surged sharply.



The brokerage estimates that refining margins and petrochemical spreads have risen significantly since the conflict began and expects elevated spreads to persist for the duration of the disruption. Petrochemical feedstock shipments from the Middle East have also been hit, forcing several Asian producers to cut production or shut facilities. As per the report, this

has further tightened supply and supported product spreads. Despite higher freight costs linked to the disruption, Jefferies believes Reliance is relatively well-positioned. The brokerage noted that the company can continue operating at high utilisation levels because it has access to Russian crude and can source oil through routes outside the Middle East.

INTERNATIONAL

Rent suspension for flooded Aboriginal communities: ‘We’re talking about the most disadvantaged individuals in the Territory’

Australia: The Northern Territory government will halt rental payments for public housing renters affected by record flooding in the Big Rivers region. Over the last two weeks, monsoonal rains have overwhelmed the region’s isolated Aboriginal settlements. The Daly River region was hammered the hardest on Wednesday, with Dorisvale Crossing hitting 23.93 metres at 1.30pm, the highest level ever recorded. Last Saturday, the neighboring Katherine River reached at 19.2 meters, the highest level since floods in 1998. On Friday, the Northern Territory Department of Housing announced the emergency rent halt, stating that flood-affected public housing renters did not need to apply for the respite. “The rent pause will be applied automatically for eligible public housing tenants,” a government official stated. “While the response is under way, we continue to survey and assess conditions for entry to communities, followed by scoping of properties for safety.” The spokeswoman stated that the department “remains focused on supporting displaced residents, assessing damage as soon as possible, and assisting affected public housing tenants”. Leeanne Caton, chief executive of Aboriginal Housing NT, stated that suspending rent payments was a “show of goodwill” until families could return to their houses, clean them out, and make them habitable. “We’re talking about the most disadvantaged people in the territory - or probably in this country - who are now technically homeless, because they have been evacuated from their communities,” she told me.

“These people are in poverty already, and they’re just living and camping where they can in the regional centres. Caton added: “The real point here is that these people are human beings and they should be treated as such. With respect and government should be doing whatever they can to help them in whatever way they can. Just be-

cause they live in a remote community, doesn’t mean they don’t deserve respect.” The announcement came three days after the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) wrote a letter to federal and NT governments criticising the “patchwork response” to support communities outside Katherine. As of Wednesday, people living outside the Katherine local government area were unable to access emergency flood-relief payments, which drew criticism from multiple Aboriginal peak bodies.

CEO of NAAJA, Ben Grimes, said remote Aboriginal communities housed some of the “most vulnerable people” in the region, many of whom were now displaced. “Many of our clients are living in social housing and low-lying areas hardest hit by flood waters. Some households have lost everything. The system isn’t built to quickly support them in a crisis – it’s making recovery slower and more painful than it needs to be,” he said. Grimes asked for a rent freeze for social housing renters in flood-affected districts, with reimbursements for rent paid since March 6. He also expressed worry that individuals in the Emu Point, Woodycupidiya, and Uminyinuluk homelands were facing food shortages. According to an NT government official, food security issues are “being appropriately addressed”. They also stated that owing to various disaster occurrences occurring “simultaneously,” flood-relief funds were being sent out with “different timelines,” affecting when particular relief measures might be implemented. Food assistance payments for impacted regions, including the Roper Gulf, West Daly, Victoria Daly, Coomalie, Belyuen, Wagait, West Arnhem, Litchfield, Darwin, Palmerston, and greater Darwin, were added to joint state-territory emergency financing arrangements on Thursday.



The dispute between Kyiv and Hungary over a pipeline delivering Russian oil grows



Russia: A dispute between Ukraine and Hungary over a pipeline transporting Russian oil looked to worsen on Wednesday, when Budapest stated it had despatched a team for negotiations, only for Kyiv to deny the group had any official standing. Hungary and Slovakia accuse Kyiv of purposefully delaying the reopening of the Druzhba pipeline, which transports Russian oil to the two landlocked republics. Ukraine claims Russian attacks destroyed the pipeline in January. Hungary’s Energy Minister, Gabor Czepek, stated that the group, which includes members from Slovakia, intends to hold negotiations on restarting Druzhba. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Wednesday that Ukrainian anti-drone experts have begun working in three Gulf counties affected by Ira-

nian strikes. Kyiv has attempted to use its experience in shooting down Russian drones to assist Gulf states, who are being targeted by the same Iranian-designed Shahed drones that Russia uses against Ukraine. As the Middle East conflict wreaks havoc on global oil markets, G7 nations opposed lifting sanctions against Russia for its invasion of Ukraine on Wednesday, according to France’s President Emmanuel Macron.

Russian military attacked an oil pumping facility in Ukraine’s southern Odesa area with drones for the second day in a row, according to the CEO of Ukrainian national oil and gas corporation Naftogaz on Wednesday. Serhiy Koretskyi stated in a statement that the assaults are intended to block an alternative supply of non-Russian oil to Europe, and

that Russia has targeted Naftogaz infrastructure more than 30 times this year. Russia’s foreign ministry denounced a fatal Ukrainian strike on the western Russian city of Bryansk on Wednesday, calling it a “terrorist attack” and accusing Britain of violating international legal rules.

According to the ministry, the strike was designed to undermine attempts toward a peace process and promote further escalation of the conflict. Bryansk regional governor Alexander Bogomaz confirmed on Wednesday that one more person had perished in the attack, bringing the total to seven. Bogomaz initially stated that Tuesday’s attack harmed 42 persons without specifying what was damaged. Russian President Vladimir Putin’s envoy met US negotiators in Florida on Wednesday, the United States said, in their first talks since the start of the US-Israeli war on Iran.

The talks come after the US earlier this week lifted some sanctions on Russian oil – imposed because of Moscow’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine – to ease prices amid the Iran war. Team Ukraine have launched a stinging attack on the International Paralympic Committee and Winter Paralympics organisers, claiming they have been under “systemic pressure” to reduce their presence at the Milano Cortina Games. The Ukraine National Paralympic Committee has made four specific allegations against the IPC and the Milano Cortina organisers, alleging mistreatment of its athletes and a “systematic” attempt to remove flags from the team base and spectators.

NASA is ‘on schedule’ to launch the Artemis II lunar mission as soon as April 1

Washington: NASA has announced that the long-delayed launch of Artemis II, the first crewed flyby mission to the moon in more than 50 years, might take place as early as April 1. “We are on track for a launch as early as April 1, and we are working toward that date,” Lori Glaze, a senior NASA official, stated during a news briefing on Thursday. A launch that was initially scheduled for February was postponed due to technical issues. “It’s a test flight, and it is not without risk, but our team and our hardware are ready,” she informed me. “Just keep in mind we still have work [to do].” In February, the US space agency announced a dramatic overhaul of the Artemis program, including the addition of a test trip before a possible lunar landing. The first launch window would be Wednesday 1 April at 6.24pm (22.24 GMT), with several others available in the following days. “We would anticipate on the order of about four opportunities within that six-day period,” Glaze told me. The rocket will be piloted by three



American astronauts (the mission commander, Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover, and Christina Koch) and one Canadian astronaut, Jeremy Hansen. According to NASA diagrams, Artemis II will circumnavigate Earth before leaving orbit to travel to the moon without landing, then return to Earth and splash down in the ocean. Nasa stated that the crew’s closeness to the moon would vary depending on when they launched

since the moon will “be in a different spot for each of the possible launch dates”. The distance above the lunar surface will be between 4,000 and 6,000 miles (6,450 and 9,650 kilometers). The original Artemis traveled far closer to the moon, 80 miles above the surface, but Nasa claimed Artemis II will still go “tens of thousands of miles closer than any human has been in more than 50 years”. “At this distance

the moon will appear to the crew to be about the size of a basketball held at arm’s length.” The mission will be followed by Artemis III, with the objective of “rendezvous in low-Earth orbit” with at least one lunar lander. The next phase, Artemis III, aims for a lunar landing in early 2028, after US President Donald Trump’s announcement during his first term that he wants Americans to return to the moon.

Two people died after giving plasma at Canadian facilities under government scrutiny

Canada: Two people have died in Canada after giving plasma at a chain of clinics that have been criticized by government inspectors for failing to keep correct records, screen donors, and maintain their machines. While experts believe the deaths are extremely rare, critics claim Canada’s use of private corporations to handle blood products indicates a “slow collapse of a system that has been the envy of the world”. Health Canada, the federal department that governs plasma clinics, stated that it had received information from the clinics of “fatal adverse reactions” following plasma donations between October 2025 and January 2026. The deaths happened in facilities run by the Spanish healthcare business Grifols. People acquainted with the instances told the Guardian that both donors experienced “distress” while giving. Health Canada stated its investigations were ongoing. Grifols stated in a statement that there is “no reason to believe that there is a correlation between the donors’ passing and plasma donation”. CBC News was the first to report on the deadly adverse reactions among plasma donors. Plasma, a pale yellow liquid component of blood, is utilized to make treatments for a variety of illnesses, including haemophilia, as well as to assist treat burn patients. However, in recent years, Canada has received strong criticism for the extent to which Grifols, which has 17 facilities in the nation, has been involved in the world of blood plasma collection. The identity of the two donors who died were not disclosed by Canada’s health ministry, but acquaintances claim one of them was Rodiyat Alabede, 22, an international student who gave plasma in Winnipeg on

October 25. “Rody aspired to become a social worker, dedicating her life to helping others, a dream she was so close to achieving,” friends wrote on a GoFundMe page to raise money to help her family. “Rody was known for her kindness, compassion, and unwavering faith. She was deeply devoted to her dream and always carried herself with grace, warmth, and sincerity.” Three months later, another person died while donating plasma at a different location in Winnipeg. Health Canada said there were immediate visits to the plasma collection centres after each reported fatality and records indicated standard operating procedures were being followed. The Canadian Blood Service said it was “deeply saddened” by the deaths and that it monitored donor health and followed “the highest safety standards to safeguard both those who donate in our centres and the patients who receive blood products”. Provincial health agencies were notified only recently about the fatalities, even though the first occurred nearly six months ago. Grifols said:

“Every donor undergoes an extensive health history evaluation and physical examination before being deemed eligible to donate. We strive to operate under strict operational procedures at the highest standard.” According to federal inspection reports, one facility in the neighboring province of Saskatchewan was inspected in January and failed to “accurately assess the donor’s suitability” - one of 11 deficiencies that caused inspectors to rate the site as non-compliant with Canada’s Food and Drugs Act and blood regulations. Additional breakdowns include “validation, calibration,

cleaning, or maintenance of critical equipment [that] were not always sufficient” as well as files that “were not always accurate, complete, legible, indelible and/or readily retrievable”. Another Alberta location was found to have twelve shortcomings, including record keeping, donor screening, and equipment upkeep. Grifols said: “A ‘non-compliant’ rating means that the identified operational processes require improvement and we are working hard to address those swiftly.” It added that after two recent inspections, it had “submitted detailed action plans to Health Canada and began implementation immediately with a focus on preventing recurrence and strengthening overall compliance”. It said its facilities in Calgary and Regina were previously compliant and “continue normal operations while we implement corrective actions to address the cited concerns”. Of the eight documented instances of non-compliance for blood inspections, which date back to 2016, facilities operated by Grifols made up half of all cases. One inspector with Health Canada, who asked not to be named, told the Guardian he felt the non-compliance reports were “very troubling” and believed they reflected a “deeper set of concerns” about the facilities and how they were run. Curtis Brandell, a blood safety activist who is president of the independent British Columbia chapter of the Canadian Hemophilia Society, said: “When I heard about the first death, I thought it must be a mistake. The donation procedure is safe. But when I learned of a second death – in the same city – alarm bells started going off.”

China’s rubber-stamp parliament likely to pass the ‘ethnic unification’ bill



China: China’s National People’s Congress (NPC), the state legislature, will vote on Thursday on a package of new laws agreed upon during this year’s annual two-session meeting, including measures that would reduce the importance of minority ethnic languages in the school system. NPC delegates are anticipated to ratify a new ethnic unification legislation, a new environmental code, and the 15th five-year plan, which is the economic planning framework for 2026-2030. Delegates have spent the last week studying Beijing’s proposed laws, which they are almost expected to adopt. The NPC, which is commonly referred to as a rubber-stamp parliament, has

never rejected an item on its agenda. The votes will take place at this year’s two sessions, concurrent meetings of the NPC and a separate Communist party advisory body, draws to a close. The main headline from this year’s gathering was the historically low 2026 GDP growth target, which China’s premier, Li Qiang, announced on 5 March. At 4.5%, it is the lowest growth target in decades, and reflects Beijing’s shifting priorities and challenging domestic economic situation. Aside from economic goals, the NPC is the platform where Beijing’s objectives are become law. One fundamental aim of China’s president, Xi Jinping, is the “sinicisation” of China’s eth-

nic minorities, which means integrating their traditions as much as possible into those of the Han ethnic majority. Xi has stated that China’s ethnic groups should be like “pomegranate seeds that stick together”. To that purpose, China’s new ethnic unification law would oblige schools to adopt Mandarin by default, prioritizing it above minority ethnic languages like Tibetan, Uyghur, and Mongolian. The regulation also mandates Mandarin to be shown more prominently than minority ethnic scripts on public signs. According to recent reports from Inner Mongolia, where there were protests in 2020 against the decline of the Mongolian language, several public signs have already been refurbished to include Mandarin characters rather than Mongolian script. According to Yalkun Uluyol, a China researcher at Human Rights Watch, “Many of the policy directives proposed in the new law already exist in practice in Xinjiang, Tibet, and Inner Mongolia.” He said that the regulation “is a blatant move by Beijing to legalise forced assimilation and political control”. According to NPC Observer, a website that tracks Chinese politics, the ethnic unity law has been treated with particular importance by the Chinese Communist party.

In 2025, the CCP’s full politburo, led by Xi, discussed a draft of the law, something that has not been reported in four decades. The NPC is also expected to approve a new ecological and environmental code, a unified framework that will repeal and replace various laws on pollution and environmental protection as China moves towards its “dual carbon” goals of peaking carbon emissions by 2030 and reaching net neutrality on emissions by 2060. The long text has chapters on waste management, pollution avoidance, and climate change adaptation. According to Li Shuo, director of the Asia Society Policy Institute’s China Climate Hub, the law “represents a step forward in the development of China’s environmental legal system”. “For decades, China’s environmental management has been fragmented and inconsistent, with new environmental challenges such as climate change emerging. According to Li, raising environmental protection to a codified legal framework implies that environmental governance is more than just a policy objective, but a long-term legal commitment. The NPC will also vote on the annual budget, the government’s work report, and the 15th five-year plan.

Routine mammograms may help predict heart disease, study suggests

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women in the United States, and can affect people at any age. Typically, females are at a higher risk due to a combination of biological, hormonal, and anatomical factors, along with the potential difficulty of recognizing certain symptoms. Despite roughly 90% of women in the U.S. having at least one cardiovascular risk factor, appropriate management of heart disease risk in females remains a major opportunity gap. Many health experts support strategies to improve screening and awareness of cardiovascular disease in women. Mammograms are crucial for detecting breast cancer and often serve as a first-line method for routine breast cancer screening. Guidelines for screening usually vary depending on an individual's risk.

However, recommendations may advise receiving a mammogram every year or every other year. Most people may think that mammograms only identify breast cancer. However, new research published in the European Heart Journal, suggests an AI tool may be able to detect the risk of developing serious heart disease by analyzing routine mammograms. Researchers say the approach could turn a widely used breast cancer screening tool into a way to also identify those at risk of cardiovascular disease. In the new study, researchers developed an AI tool capable of measuring the amount of calcium in breast arteries from standard mammogram images. This condition is known as breast arterial calcification (BAC). It describes calcium buildup in the breast artery walls, which is associated with a higher risk of heart disease, such as heart attack, stroke, and heart failure. The researchers analyzed data from 123,762 women who underwent breast cancer screening and had no known cardiovascular disease at the start of the study. Using the AI tool, the team categorized the amount of arterial calcification visible in the mammograms as absent, mild, moderate, or severe. They then compared these findings with later records of cardiovascular events such as heart attack, stroke, heart failure, or death from heart disease. The results showed a clear relationship between the amount of calcification and the likelihood of developing serious cardiovascular disease. The association remained even after accounting for other known risk factors, such as diabetes and smoking. Lori Daniels, MD, FACC, a board-certified cardiologist and professor of medicine at UC San Diego

School of Medicine was not surprised by the strength of the association between BAC and future cardiovascular events. Her group previously published similar findings, highlighting an association between higher BAC levels and heart disease risk. "The present study is in that ballpark – their age-adjusted model is almost identical in magnitude," Daniels said.

"Our 2024 UC San Diego study also showed that BAC was particularly informative in younger women. This is important because younger women are the ones least likely to already know that they are at increased cardiovascular risk." Importantly, the findings of the study observe that the relationship between breast arterial calcification and cardiovascular risk is also present in females under the age of 50, a group often considered to be at lower risk of heart disease. The results indicate that the more calcium visible in breast arteries on a mammogram, the greater the risk of a future cardiovascular event. As many females already undergo routine mammography, the technique could reveal cardiovascular risk earlier than traditional screening methods and provide heart health insights without requiring additional tests or procedures. Implementing the approach would involve integrating the AI tool into imaging systems and developing guidelines for notifying clinicians and patients about cardiovascular risk findings. If integrated into clinical practice, AI-based analysis of mammograms could prompt earlier discussions between individuals and doctors about preventive strategies, such as cholesterol testing, lifestyle changes, or medication. "Excellent question, and the subject of an upcoming publication of mine – we are evaluating women with and without traditional cardiovascular risk factors.

The short answer is that I suspect BAC will be useful in both groups to further refine risk, though absolute risk is always higher in groups with higher baseline risk. One might argue that if a woman is already at increased risk, how can this be helpful? Although I think the biggest public impact will be in identifying risk in those women who do not already know they are at risk (bringing it to their attention, for instance, and perhaps then identifying other risk factors). I still see value in women who do know they are at risk. Simply seeing a visual image of the calcium buildup in the breast arteries could potentially sway younger women to take their cardiovascular health more seriously, and make positive changes."

In the pursuit of glowing skin, most beauty routines focus on products – serums layered carefully, overnight masks applied generously, and creams promising visible transformation by morning. Yet one of the most powerful skin-repair rituals happens far from the vanity table. Every night, while the body rests, the skin enters its most active phase of renewal, repairing daily damage caused by pollution, sun exposure, and environmental stress. But quality sleep is not defined by hours alone. The environment you sleep in can quietly shape how effectively your skin recovers overnight. Experts say this connection between sleep and skin health is often overlooked. Dr Emma Craythorne, one of the UK's leading dermatologists, notes that uninterrupted rest plays a crucial role in skin recovery. She says, "Sleep plays an important role in our overall health, and definitely our skin health. When these are filtered out, you're more likely to sleep through the night, and that restorative sleep reflects in your skin the next day."

Sleep: Your Skin's Natural Reset

During the deeper stages of sleep, the body carries out vital repair processes that directly affect skin health. Collagen production increases, skin cells regen-

The Sleep–Skin Connection: How Your Bedroom Environment Affects Your Glow



erate, and the skin barrier works to restore itself after exposure to pollution, UV rays and stress throughout the day. According to Dr Geetika Mittal Gupta, aesthetic dermatologist and founder of ISAAC Luxe, sleep disruption can significantly slow these processes. "Sleep is when the body initiates key repair processes, including skin cell regeneration and collagen production. When

sleep is consistently disrupted, the skin may struggle to recover from environmental stressors such as pollution and UV exposure," she explains. Over time, this can contribute to dullness, dehydration and visible signs of premature ageing. Poor sleep is also associated with concerns such as reduced skin elasticity, dark circles and weakened barrier function, making the complexion appear tired and uneven.

The Invisible Factors Affecting Your Skin While skincare routines focus on what is applied to the skin, the environment surrounding it during

sleep can be just as influential. Bedrooms may appear clean, but microscopic particles such as dust, allergens and pollutants can accumulate over time – particularly in bedding, mattresses and upholstery. These particles can remain in close contact with the skin for hours during sleep, potentially affecting both comfort and skin health. Indoor air quality also plays a significant role, especially in urban environments where pollutants can circulate in enclosed spaces. This is where environmental design and technology can help create healthier sleep conditions.

Creating A True Sleep Sanctuary

Ninad Shitoot, Lead Design Engineer, Dyson, shares a few habits that may help support a healthier sleep environment:

Wash and Change Bedding Weekly: Launder sheets and pillowcases at a minimum of 60°C (140°F) to kill mites and remove skin flakes and allergens.

Vacuum Mattresses And Upholstery Regularly:

Use a vacuum with powerful suction and whole-machine filtration. Don't forget pillows and soft toys.

Maintain Indoor Air Quality:

Urban pollutants and dry air can affect both sleep comfort and skin health, often leaving skin dull and dehydrated. The Dyson Purifier Hot+Cool HP2 De-NOx is designed to capture indoor pollutants using K-Carbon filtration technology that improves nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) capture. Reducing exposure to airborne pollutants helps create a cleaner environment that supports both better sleep and healthier-looking skin.

Prioritise Ventilation:

Air out the bedroom when possible or rely on air purifiers to ensure a constant supply of fresh air.

Shower Before Bed:

Washing away sweat and pollutants limits what's left behind on bedding – and on your skin overnight.

Meet the man trying to democratise fashion week – by turning it into a party

It was the latest Paris fashion week, moments before the Tom Ford show was due to start, when fashion commentator Lyas slipped through the backstage entrance of the Théâtre du Châtelet and went upstairs to get mic'd up. Having failed to get a ticket to the actual show, 27-year-old Lyas – whose real name is Elias Medini and who has almost 500,000 followers on Instagram – was preparing to livestream it on a big screen to 2,000 of his fellow rejects currently sitting in the auditorium. The night before he had shown Saint Laurent. In a few days he would do the same for Chanel. His aim, he says, is to democratise a famously closed-off industry, and open up the spectacle of fashion week to people who have no chance of ever going themselves.

"Fashion is always about who is in and who is out," he says. "The dichotomy between wanting to be in and out is also real: when you're in you want to be out, and then the opposite. But I just love the energy that people on the outside bring to [these events]." Tall and whipper-thin, with tight black curls and a cartoonish grin, Medini was dressed in a tight teal leather jumpsuit and sunglasses even though it was almost nighttime. Medini is not trying to dismantle the entire fashion establishment, he says, rather he wants to "bridge the gap between inside and outside" – be the David to its Goliath. "The people at the shows, they don't really care that they're there on the front row. But there are people, sitting downstairs, who would kill [to be there]!"

Medini's watch parties, of which there were 12 in Paris this season, have grown from hastily assembled drinks to large-scale organised fun. The initial idea came after he tried and failed to get a seat at Jonathan Anderson's much-anticipated menswear Dior debut last June. "I was so mad and hurt," he says. "But then I thought, let's just



go to the bar I always go to and watch it there." Installing his own TV in Le Saint Denis, a cafe in the city's 10th arrondissement, he posted the event on social media, arranged the chairs to fit 20 people, and ordered a round of beers. In the end, 300 people turned up to watch and the whole thing spilled out on to the street. In less than a year, his parties have become major events, with their own schedule, a guest list and PRs at the door. He chose the theatre venue because shows run notoriously late and people wanted somewhere to sit (indeed, it's a full half-hour before Tom Ford starts at Place Vendôme). "We also wanted somewhere to fit enough people within budget, and be central."

In the end they paid very little to borrow the theatre, which overlooks the Seine and is otherwise known for hosting the Ballon d'Or football awards. "I think the theatre agreed because they want to preserve fashion culture. And this is a part of culture, it goes beyond just clothes," he says.

Medini's watch parties in Paris and in New York have since been met with ever-increasing chaos and crowds, including Matthieu Blazy's Chanel debut last October – which he opened up to 2,000 fans to watch at La Caserne, an outdoor venue – becoming something of an inflection point. According to the New York Times, people tried to jump the barriers. He used to organise and

even fund them out of his own pocket. Then the fashion houses caught on, either to his influence or his Little Engine That Could spirit, and chipped in. The only brand to request he didn't livestream their show was Margiela, says Medini, in a mock-authoritative voice. "Every other fashion house says yes, of course."

As one of the first people to call out Dolce & Gabbana for their all-white casting in January, he still has a critical eye. His backstage footage attests to him being, if not liked, then respected by the industry. Recently, he posted a video on Instagram to his followers accusing Vogue of stealing the concept of a watch party at their Vogue

Café pop-up for the Balmain show. Of course, Medini is not the first person to stream a catwalk show. "Last year the Central Saint Martins library began to show screenings from our archive collection of recordings, which goes back to 1979," says Vivienne Eades-Miller, academic support librarian at CSM. These screenings usually result in "commentary, conversation, gasps, glances, side-eyes, laughter and applause," she says. Medini claims he had already approached Vogue about the idea, "but not heard from Anna [Wintour]. It's a shame. I texted everyone I know at Vogue. But nothing." In response, Vogue told the Guardian: "Like many other media brands, Vogue has had watch parties for many years, including community-focused ones via Vogue Club".

Fashion week is a strange business. Like Medini, I wasn't invited to Tom Ford either. On the one hand, I was grateful to eat my noodles in peace (the show started at 7pm). But the pull of the hierarchy, grounded in a status awareness so visceral that people will truly break down if their seats are not on the front row, can be real. I've had my seat stolen, my name-place card moved, you name it. For all the talk of fashion opening up to the masses, outside London – which has a history of opening up shows to students, as well as blind and low-vision fans – it can be an exclusionary place. Luis, a 28-year-old who works in marketing, was in the watch party audience for Tom Ford – the closest he has been to a real show. "I love fashion, so it's crazy that this is a new idea for people like me who have never been to a show," he says. "It's unfortunate that [fashion is so closed off]. It's important, now more than ever, with what's going on in the world, that we have happy spaces like this."

Medini grew up in Rouen, Normandy, to French and Algerian parents. He came to Paris as a teenager and worked at various fashion magazines, cover-

ing shows and posting snappy reaction videos about magazine covers. It was during the pandemic, when the entire fashion industry moved online and everyone became armchair critics, that fashion commentators such as Lyas, @stylenotcom and @ideservecouture were able to build an online community based on hot takes, ironic memes and – in the case of @stylenotcom – straightforwardly earnest observations. But, as sometimes happens to people on the fringes of a world built on hierarchy and insider references, the industry commentator Lyas became an industry success. The watch parties began receiving sponsorship from brands such as Casio, L'Oréal and MAC. They even began hosting their own shows. Then, rather awkwardly, the show invites arrived. The day we meet, Medini comes from the front row at Acne. The day before that, he was at Saint Laurent – while also technically hosting a watch party. "With those big brands, it's complicated to say no because they help fund the event," says Medini. He attended the show, got the show notes signed by Anthony Vaccarello, and then dashed back to the theatre to go on stage. "Look, I am kind of invited to everything. I try to turn down tickets," he says. He declined the Acne ticket until they said he could bring two guests. "So we had a competition, on the stage, and I got to take two people. They were so happy to go somewhere they would never go to." Where possible, Medini says, he tries to bring people who would not ordinarily get a shot. Sometimes, he says, he gives his seat away. His next plan? "A fashion festival for everyone."

Lyas's rapid success is testament to the fine line between inside and outside; and Medini is not the first to try to navigate the two. The next evening, I spot him front row at the tiny Alaïa show. Some people, it seems, are simply too influential for fashion to ignore.

Amit Jadhav, an actor and singer, says Saiyaara is a replica of his short film



Mumbai: Yash Raj Films’ 2025 love romance Saiyaara stunned moviegoers with its poignant narrative and catchy soundtrack. The film, directed by Mohit Suri and starring Ahaan Panday and Aneet Padda, tells the tale of a young writer and musician who gradually find solace in one another while attempting to get over their previous tragedies. The movie is currently embroiled in controversy,

though. Actor and musician Amit Jadhav has stated that his short film Khwabon and the story of Saiyaara are really similar. Amir claimed in a recent interview that despite his repeated attempts to get in touch with the producers, they never acknowledged his contribution. Amit Jadhav claims that when he initially learned about the incident from acquaintances, he was taken aback. “I had tried

speaking up last year too,” he remarked. In 2022, YRF Talent sent me a direct message on Instagram expressing their want to contact me. They didn’t respond when I asked what project they were contacting me about. I didn’t know anyone there, and I hadn’t given them an audition so they could get in touch. The musician went on to say that he didn’t notice the parallels until the movie came out and

people began pointing them out to him. “My friends called me a week after Saiyaara’s release and said, ‘Tera toh story same tha.’ I was shocked.” Amir Jadhav continued, “I tried contacting them, even going to their office, but my friends said they won’t entertain me or reply.” The actor claimed that he was personally impacted by the entire episode. Even though he kept up his singing career,

he found the situation to be extremely taxing. “I continued to get work because I am a singer.” That made me feel a little more at ease. However, I came dangerously close to killing myself one day. My parents witnessed me getting sloshed, and that’s how I was saved.

I had the impression that nobody wanted me to be successful. “I didn’t receive any calls for auditions,” Amit said. Amit Jadhav added that he had intended to expand the narrative into a more comprehensive script.

However, such intentions were derailed when Saiyaara came out. He also acknowledged that the script was never officially registered. He stated, “I am a member of the Screenwriter’s Association, but no, I did not register the story in 2019 because it was a short film and out on a public platform as proof.” He continued by saying that he even sent letters to the production company for clarity, but he never heard back.

Ameesha Patel Explains How Dharmendra Treated Her Like Family



Mumbai: Ameesha Patel has frequently discussed her strong relationship with the Deol family. She recently talked about how the late superstar Dharmendra always treated her like family. On November 24, 2025, Dharmendra passed away. He was eighty-nine. Ameesha Patel stated, “It felt like a personal loss for me when Dharam ji left us,” in an interview with Zoom. I really did feel it. I didn’t talk to him much, yet he treated me like family. However, he saw me as “Ameesha Deol” and a member of the family. Gadar, starring Sunny Deol and Ameesha Patel, was a huge hit in 2001. The two have always had a strong relationship. They returned with the 2023 movie Gadar 2, which also became a huge hit. Ameesha Patel discussed their friendship, saying, “Sunny and I have supported each other through our most difficult moments.” “Sunny, it doesn’t matter if anyone wants to collaborate with you or not,” I tell him every time. As I’ve said before,

Sunny is the only actor I would play a tree in a film without any lines. I think he is aware of that. Our friendship will last, both personally and professionally, regardless of the situation.” The actress also disclosed how Sunny Deol was instrumental in helping her sign Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai. “Vijayta Films had me on board for a film before Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai even came to be,” she stated. I went up to Sunny when KNPH arrived and asked, “Sunny, please let me out of this contract.” For several months, your movie has been on hold. Permit me to pursue KNPH, please. I didn’t need his approval, he assured me. At that moment, he snatched the contract and tore it up. “Go!” he said. He would still say “go” even if he had the contract. He’s really amazing.” “I think there is a great deal of love and respect between us. We have an unparalleled bond.

As Tara and Sakina, we conduct ourselves with respect,” Ameesha Patel said in closing. The actress from Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai also posted a heartfelt message for Dharmendra on social media. She said that some losses are irreversible and that Dharmendra was the first “He-Man,” capable of competing with anyone in Hollywood due to his attractiveness. “Dharam ji, I will miss your warm hugs and you shouting ‘ARREY MERI SAKINA’ when you saw me from a distance and I used to run to hug you,” Ameesha wrote. Dharam ji was an amazing man, and it’s difficult to say goodbye! Certain losses are irreplaceable and will always leave a void! A man with the appearance of the original He-Man who could compete with anyone in Hollywood!

Hansika Motwani’s ex-sister-in-law posts a mysterious message

Mumbai: After finalizing her divorce from businessman Sohael Khatriya, almost three years after their marriage, actor Hansika Motwani has been in the news for a rough period in her personal life. Actor Muskan Nancy James, Hansika’s former sister-in-law, seems to have responded to the news in an indirect manner by saying that she does not want to be linked with “someone’s absolutely fake world,” perhaps taking a jab. Muskan used her Instagram Stories on Friday to plead with people not to involve her in the drama of other people’s lives. She shared a photo of herself on social media and cautioned others not to associate her with “someone’s absolutely fake world.” Time, she claimed, would tell the truth. “Requesting a few social media platforms to please keep me away from someone else’s life,” she wrote. “I sincerely appreciate your



unwavering understanding and support. Please don’t link me to someone’s completely false reality. I don’t have paid public relations; let time tell the truth. “It’s all a matter of time” (Sab Samay ka khel Hai). Karma, love, and peace,” Muskan continued. Social media users were eager to make the connection even though she did not name anyone in her message; many questioned whether Hansika was the target of the comment. It is noteworthy that there is no evidence of a friendly relationship

between Hansika and Muskan. More of Hansika’s legal problems were revealed in September of last year. According to reports, the Bombay High Court denied her request to have a formal complaint (FIR) made by her estranged sister-in-law, actor Muskan Nancy James, who was married to her brother Prashant Motwani. Hansika and her mother, Jyoti (also called Mona), were charged with cruelty and other offenses in the FIR. Nancy filed a formal complaint (FIR) against Hansika and her

mother in December 2024 under many sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, including 352 (criminal intimidation and deliberate insult with purpose to incite disturbance of the peace), 498A (dowry-related cruelty), and 323 (voluntarily causing injury). In her case, Nancy highlighted requests for costly presents and money from her in-laws and claimed that Bell’s palsy was caused by marital abuse. Nancy has also expressed dissatisfaction at Hansika and Jyoti’s excessive meddling in her marriage to Prashant. Nancy added that the Motwanis put pressure on her to sell her apartment. Hansika and Jyoti obtained anticipatory bail from the Mumbai Sessions Court in February of last year. They filed a request to have the FIR quashed with the Bombay High Court in April. Hansika had stated in her appeal that she was taken aback to see her name in the FIR.

The Haryana Women’s Commission urges, “Arrest Badshah,” about the controversial Tateeree song



Mumbai: Rapper Badshah failed to show up before the deadline, thus the Haryana State Commission for Women requested his arrest on Friday. This relates to the allegedly offensive lyrics and images in his most recent Haryanvi music video, “Tateeree.” Renu Bhatia, the chairperson, had previously threatened to take severe measures against him. After receiving a notification on March 6 asking him to appear in Panipat, Badshah was instructed to appear before the women’s commission by Friday at 3 PM. According to PTI, the chairman told reporters that she had ordered Badshah’s passport to be seized so he couldn’t leave the country and that he should be taken into custody. “I have ordered SP Panipat

to get Badshah arrested from anywhere, any place and issue search orders,” she declared to the media. Renu added that because of the song “in which Haryana daughters have been insulted with inappropriate words and language,” the rapper was directed to appear before them by March 13. The chairperson added that FIRs had been filed in Jind and Panchkula regarding this issue. Additionally, Renu informed the media that Badshah’s attorneys had requested a later date, but the Commission had refused. Additionally, she requested in a letter to the National Commission for Women (NCW) that there be no Badshah performances in the nation. Reporters in Panipat were informed by a lawyer for Badshah that

since the summons had not been received, they had produced an authority letter from the rapper and requested an extension. Everyone has the legal right to voice their opinions. However, it is not being provided here, the attorney asserted. Badshah received criticism for the song’s lyrics and artwork after Tateeree released it. He posted a video to Instagram in which he expressed regret for the damaged feelings and said that the song would be taken down. In an effort to stop Badshah from traveling abroad, Panchkula police recently started the process of issuing a look-out circular against him. The rapper was also given a formal notice to appear before them.

The Haryana Police said in a statement on Saturday that multiple police teams have been assembled to guarantee his capture and are undertaking ongoing raids at numerous potential locations.

According to the authorities, the video shows young ladies running away from their studies while wearing school uniforms and discarding their school bags. It has also been discovered that the song’s use of terms like “badshala” misrepresents and inappropriately portrays education and the school setting. Additionally, the lyrics have been found to contain offensive and disparaging remarks against women and girls, according to their statement.

Inside Alia Bhatt’s trip to Hong Kong with her daughter Raha and Ranbir Kapoor

Mumbai: Alia Bhatt has taken a break from her busy schedule to spend time with her family only days before turning 33. For a peaceful vacation, the actor, his husband Ranbir Kapoor, and their daughter Raha have taken off for Hong Kong. Now, a number of unposed photos of the three of them walking around the city and taking their child to a park have appeared on social media. On March 15, Alia will turn 33. A video of Alia and Ranbir having a laid-back time at a Hong Kong children’s park with their daughter Raha is currently making the rounds on fan pages. The couple can be seen speaking and visiting the park together while holding Raha’s hands in the video. At one shot, the family is shown ascending the stairs to a ride, and Alia is seen giving Raha a tender peck on the cheek. Ranbir wore a black T-shirt with a denim jacket and grey track trousers for the laid-back day out, while Alia looked stylish in a grey sweatshirt layered with a black jack-

et and jeans. Little Raha, on the other hand, won everybody over with her cute bright red tracksuit. The touching family moment with Ranbir, Alia, and young Raha quickly won over social media fans, who took to the comments section to express their joy and appreciation for the cute trio. “They are so cute,” one fan wrote, with another sharing, “Cutest family of Bollywood”. One mentioned, “So cute”, with one excited fan writing, “So cute mom daughter”. “Bro how on earth is she the perfect perfect mix of ranbir and alia both how- www,” one comment read. After a few years of dating, Ranbir married Alia in April 2022. In November of that year, Raha was born. On Christmas 2023, Ranbir and Alia made their first public appearance with Raha, shocking their admirers. Later on, though, Alia deleted all of Raha’s images from her social media accounts. Alia will soon appear in Love and War, directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali. In addition



to Alia, the movie features Vicky Kaushal and Ranbir Kapoor. After the 2022 film Gangubai Kathiawadi, for which Alia received a National Award for Best Actress, this is her second project with Bhansali. Jigra (2024) was Alia’s most recent appearance. She is also working on a spy thriller called Alpha. The movie is scheduled to be

released on July 10. The release date of Alpha was rescheduled from Christmas 2025 to April 17, 2026. The movie has reportedly been postponed once more to avoid conflicting with Salman Khan’s Battle of Galwan, which is scheduled for release on April 17. Ranbir will next be seen with Sai Pallavi and Yash in Nitesh Tiwari’s

Ramayana. Ranbir plays Lord Rama, Ravie Dubey plays Lakshman, Sunny Deol plays Lord Hanuman, Sai Pallavi plays Sita, and Yash plays Ravana in the Namit Malhotra-produced Ramayana.

The movie will be released in two installments, the first on Diwali 2026 and the second on Diwali 2027.

Anil Kapoor explains why he turned down a cameo in Dhurandhar 2

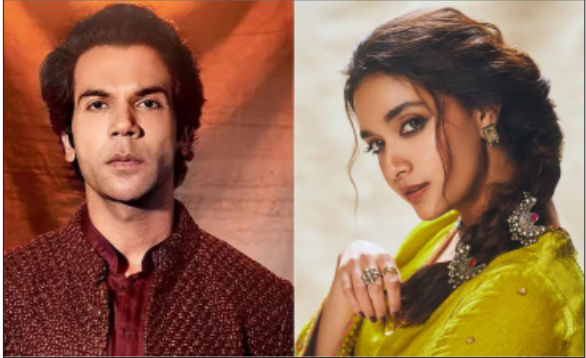
Mumbai: Actor Anil Kapoor has disclosed that he had to turn down a cameo role in the Dhurandhar sequel, Dhurandhar The Revenge, offered by director Aditya Dhar.

Anil stated in an interview with India Today that he was unable to participate in the “fantastic film” due to prior obligations. Anil described the events in full. Aditya did indeed approach me for Dhurandhar 2. He requested that I make a brief appearance in the movie. However, my dedication and professionalism are what have made me who I am today. It’s crucial to remember that talent alone cannot define who you are. I had already promised those dates to another director at the time. “I would have loved to do this cameo, but I’m already committed,” I said to Aditya. The movie, which he is currently releasing, is excellent. It’s okay, even though I’ve lost. The actor discussed potential collaborations with Aditya. “At least I know in the back of my mind that it might happen to him too—there might be another filmmaker who just had a huge hit and makes me an offer when I’m already committed to Aditya. It would be totally unethical if I went to make that movie and then cancelled his dates. He did, in fact, offer me the position, and perhaps we will collaborate in the future,” he continued.

Raftaar, starring Rajkummar Rao and Keerthy Suresh, will be released on July 24

Mumbai: On July 24, Raftaar, starring Rajkummar Rao and Keerthy Suresh, will open in theaters. “A gripping drama of ambition, love, and greed” is how the Amazon MGM Studios film is described. Aditya Nimbalkar is the director. Actor Patralekhaa, Rao’s wife, is producing it under the Kampa Film banner. On Saturday, the creators posted the news on Instagram.

The title of the movie was scribbled over the poster. “It was erected by ambition. It will be put to the test by greed. The caption said, “#Raftaar, releasing on July 24 at a theatre near you.” “Raftaar”



takes place in a high-stakes society where success has a cost and ambition creates empires. A fast-growing start-up and a passionate romance between a motivated man and

an equally ambitious lady are at its core. Additionally, it will be Rao and Suresh’s first time working together. Rajat Kapoor, Tanya Maniktala, Anurag Thakur, and Rohan Verma complete the movie’s cast.

The TN government offers restaurants converting to induction stoves a rs. 2 power subsidy per unit

Chennai, Mar 14: On Saturday, the Tamil Nadu government offered a ₹2 electricity subsidy per unit for eateries, lodging facilities, and tea shops that replace their commercial LPG cylinders with electric stoves. Since the war in West Asia started on February 28, Chief Minister M K Stalin has been convening review meetings, which has caused a shortage of commercial LPG cylinders for restaurants, according to the administration. It was resolved to offer a ₹2 per unit subsidy for the extra electricity used by hotels, tea shops, and cloud kitchens that use induction burners during a review meeting on Saturday. Additional Chief Secretary J Radhakrishnan stated, “This subsidy will remain in effect as long as the commercial LPG usage restrictions announced by the Center are in place.” He told reporters at the Secretariat here that hoteliers and restaurants are us-



ing more electricity, with demand rising by almost 50 MW over the usual in recent days. Radhakrishnan, the Chairman and Managing Director of Tamil Nadu Power Distribution Corporation Ltd., referred to 60,698 factories operating in the State after receiving approval from the State Pollution Control Board. He stated that

these factories no longer need additional certificates from the Pollution Control Board in order to operate their businesses using alternative fuels like kerosene. “All they have to do is let the Pollution Control Board know that they are using alternative fuels. Until the government’s restrictions are lifted, this exception will remain in place,” he stated. He stated that a state-level committee led by the Chief Secretary has been established to oversee the methodical distribution of LPG cylinders to commercial establishments, pointing out that the Center has given priority to the supply of commercial LPG cylinders to hospitals and educational institutions. “Similarly, district level committee led by District Collectors, including responsible officers from oil marketing companies will monitor the situation locally,” he stated. He said the government has authorized loans

for the purchase of electrical equipment, such as induction stoves and heaters, under the Unemployed Youth Employment Generation Programme, to assist MSMEs in addressing the scarcity of commercial LPG cylinders. The MSMEs will receive a 25% subsidy under this plan. He stated that loans up to ₹10 lakh would receive a 25% subsidy up to ₹2 lakh through the Tamil Nadu Women Entrepreneurs Development Scheme. According to Radhakrishnan, farmers would be allowed to sell their product at 194 “Uzhavar Sandhais” without any limitations in order to support the farming community and avoid interruption in vegetable sales owing to decreased demand from restaurants. Additionally, according to Radhakrishnan, directives have been issued to give family ration cards under the Public Distribution System an extra 3,228 kiloliters of kerosene this month.

The government chooses to release Sonam Wangchuk from custody

New Delhi, Mar 14: In relation to the protests in Leh that rocked the province in September of last year, the Center announced on Saturday that it has decided to remove the incarceration of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk. Under the National Security Act (NSA), Wangchuk was arrested and placed in the Jodhpur jail in Rajasthan.

After the violent protests, Wangchuk was jailed “to maintain public order,” according to the administration. In order to enable fruitful and significant communication with all parties involved, the government is still dedicated to creating an atmosphere of peace, stability, and mutual trust in Ladakh. In order to achieve this goal, the administration has made the decision to use its authority under the National Security Act to immediately remove Shri Sonam Wangchuk’s imprisonment, the government stated in a statement. In order to address the “aspirations and concerns of the people of the region,” the government added that it has been interacting with stakeholders and local leaders in Ladakh. It stated, “However, the prevailing atmosphere of bandhs and protests has been detrimental to the peace-loving character of the society and has adversely affected various sections of the community, including students, job aspirants, businesses, tour operators and tourists, and overall economy.” The Center has previously claimed that Wangchuk attempted to incite Gen Z to participate in protests akin to those in Bangladesh and Nepal.

On Delhi’s first “ring” metro, trains avoid Pink line stop

New Delhi, Mar 14: With ten additional stations operationalized, Delhi Metro’s Pink Line—dubbed the first entire “ring” metro line—opened to the public on Sunday. However, the Soorghat Station in north Delhi, close to Wazirabad, is currently simply a sight for passengers. Passengers are informed that the station will not stop when trains pass by. According to Metro officials, the station’s entrances and exits will be via an unfinished underground. According to them, the station won’t be operational until the end of the year.” Passengers have not yet been able to access the Soorghat Metro Station on the freshly opened Majlis Park-Maujpur Babarpur circuit. Anuj Dayal, principal executive director, corporate communications at Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), stated that the decision to open the station later was mainly made because of the planned integration of the station structure with a Public Works Department (PWD) subway in the same area, as the station’s entry and exit points have been designed through this subway. Dayal clarified that PWD would be integrated into the Metro viaduct on two levels: a flyover above ground for one-way traffic and a tunnel below ground for traffic coming from the opposite direction. “The PWD integrated elevated flyover has already been built, and the integration with the PWD subway has also been resolved.” DMRC is currently working on the subway’s construction. By the end of the year, the station should be finished and accessible to travelers, he contin-

ued. On Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi opened two new metro corridors in the capital: a 9.9-kilometer stretch from Deepali Chowk to Majlis Park (extension of Magenta Line) and a 12.3-kilometer stretch from Majlis Park to Maujpur-Babarpur corridor (extension of Pink Line). The two corridors extend the DMRC’s NCR metro network to more than 400 kilometers. The Pink Line completes a full “loop” or “ring” with the inauguration of the Majlis Park to Maujpur-Babarpur corridor, enabling commuters to virtually complete a full round of Delhi, similar to the city’s ring roads, but via Metro. When Sakshi Singh, a 24-year-old Kamla Nagar resident, went to see a friend in Wazirabad, she was shocked to discover that the station was closed.” I was informed that it is not operating when I arrived here. Since there aren’t many rickshaw drivers presently, the only options are to ride an e-rickshaw to Vishwavidyalaya on the Yellow Line or pay more to get to the next Pink Line station. They informed me that I will be charged ₹50. Another Wazirabad resident, Munawar Ali, 47, blamed inadequate preparation. “The entire line was prepared on schedule, however the station, which is only 200 meters from our house, has no elevators or stairs at all. Sometimes we wind up walking to the next station, but it is not practical every day. With 46 stops and a total length of almost 71.5 kilometers, the Pink Line is now the longest line in the DMRC network. There isn’t yet a bright spot for the people who live close to Soorghat, though.

Gautam Gambhir receives a clear warning from Sourav Ganguly

New Delhi: Gautam Gambhir has added the Champions Trophy 2025 and the T20 World Cup 2026 title to his cabinet, making him the first Indian coach to win two ICC titles. India overcome a few early setbacks to reach their peak at the ideal moment and win consecutive T20 World Cups. But veteran Indian captain Sourav Ganguly has cautioned Gambhir that his “real test”—the 50-over Cricket World Cup 2027, which will take place in South Africa—is still over a year away. “South Africa will host his actual white ball test in 2027. In an interview with Boria Majumdar for Money Control, Ganguly stated, “The conditions there will test him, but I am confident he will get it right with the team he has.” India were undefeated all the way to the final, when they were defeated by Australia, however they tragically lost out on the 2023 Cricket World Cup. Gambhir, who won the World Cup as a player in 2011, will be under pressure to win it as head coach. Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, two of India’s greatest players, will also have one last chance to win the trophy in 2027. Gambhir and Team India need to play better in Test cricket, according to Ganguly. He has to improve in Red Ball. And the strategy is to focus less on the wicket. He must let go of the wicket. Consider the England series. You can see the outcome because he was powerless to change the wicket. At home, he doesn’t have to play on turners. “Good wickets will yield good outcomes,” Ganguly continued. Ganguly did, however, state that he supported the Indian head coach. “Gautam is an excellent coach. You should give the man some time, as I mentioned on your platform prior to the Border Gavaskar Trophy. He is an excellent white ball coach, particularly in these circumstances.

Just before the wedding, the Bhopal “gangster” groom is arrested; the bride begs the police



Bhopal, Mar 14: Police invaded the venue and detained the groom from the mandap just as the marriage ceremony was about to start, guests had arrived, and the stage was ready. This is how drama played out at a Bhopal wedding location on Wednesday when the police detained the groom, an alleged gangster, just before the wedding ceremonies. It may sound like a scene from a movie. Due to the circumstances,

the bride had to travel to the Koh-e-Fiza police station and beg the officers to let her fiancé go so they could finish the wedding ceremonies. “Sahab, my life will be destroyed,” the woman said. Why am I at fault? I was unaware of the crimes he had committed. At home, guests are waiting. The bride was quoted as stating, “Haldi and other rituals have been done.” The suspected gang leader Akash Neelkanth was

identified as the groom who had been arrested. His associates Rajamji Thakur, Abhishek Upadhyay, Abhishek Meena, Neeraj Khange, and Amit Oswal were also taken into custody by the police. Neelkanth, also known as Bhura, is allegedly the leader of a gang in Bhopal known as the “Illegal Gang,” which consists of more than fifty young men. The word “illegal” is allegedly tattooed on the necks of gang members. Since 2018, the gang has been active. Neelkanth is facing serious charges, including murder, and has 31 cases filed against him. In relation to the March 18, 2024, murder of BJP Yuva Morcha Mandal vice-president Surendra Kushwah, he was imprisoned for eighteen months. Just four months

ago, the primary accused in the case, Neelkanth, was freed on bail. On the day of his wedding, however, he was taken into custody in an extortion case after the group allegedly abducted a 26-year-old priest and beat him at an apartment in the Eidgah Hills neighborhood while demanding ₹8 lakh. According to the complaint, the kidnapped man was threatened with a phony rape case if he didn’t pay. According to reports, the gang coerced the priest’s brother to send \$50,000 online and put pressure on his family to set up the remaining sum in installments. On March 11, the abducted priest made it out of the flat and went to the police. Neelkanth was set to get married when police moved swiftly to arrest him.

In the midst of the Iran War, India repatriates the non-essential crew of an Iranian ship from Kochi

New Delhi, Mar 14: According to persons familiar with the situation on Saturday, India has returned the non-essential crew members of an Iranian warship that arrived in Kochi on March 4 amid the intensifying military confrontation between Iran and the United States.

The ship, IRIS Lavan, is still at Kochi, and more than fifty of the 183 crew members have remained in India, they claimed. On a Turkish airline plane, the non-essential seamen departed India. The plane picked up the



bodies of more than 80 Iranian sailors from Colombo and landed in Kochi late last night. The sailors were from a different Iranian boat that was sunk on March 4 off the coast of Sri Lanka by a US submarine. Due to serious

technological problems, IRIS Lavan has been based in Kochi since March 4.

On March 1, the Iranian side requested emergency docking authorization for the ship. It has been reported that the Iranian sailors of

IRIS Lavan will drive from Yerevan, the Armenian capital, to Iran. The repatriation coincides with New Delhi’s efforts to guarantee the safety of more than two dozen Indian-flagged commerce ships that are presently positioned on both sides of the Strait of Hormuz.

On Thursday night, Iranian counterpart Seyed Abbas Aragchi had a conversation with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar. Since the start of the West Asia conflict, the two leaders have had four such conversations.

Due to illicit conversion, Maharashtra would declare marriages void

Mumbai, Mar 14: A measure that was presented to the Maharashtra parliament on Friday declares marriages that are thought to have been consummated due to “unlawful conversions” to be void. It further states that children born from such unions will be born into the mother’s pre-marriage faith and will remain under her custody. The Maharashtra Freedom of Religion Bill was introduced by Minister of State for Home Pankaj Bhoyar, and it is anticipated to be discussed on Monday. According to the bill, a kid born out of such a marriage will be entitled to inherit both parents’ property in line with the existing laws. According to the terms of section 144 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, the kid is entitled to maintenance. Unless the court rules otherwise, the mother will have custody of the kid. The bill is often perceived as an attempt to suppress religious conversions through marriage, especially when a Hindu lady marries a non-Hindu man and is required to convert to the other religion. Although the Union government and courts do not formally acknowledge it, right-wing organizations refer to such unions as “love jihad” to characterize a supposed Muslim plot to court Hindu women.

Salman Agha’s expulsion by Bangladesh captain infuriates Muhammad Kaif



New Delhi: At the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Dhaka on Friday, Pakistan’s batsman Salman Ali Agha was dismissed in a very unusual and uncommon way during the second ODI versus Bangladesh. The incident happened in the 39th over of Pakistan’s innings, just as the visitors were forming a solid partnership. Mehidy Hasan Miraz, the captain of Bangladesh, bowled the fourth delivery of the over, and Rizwan played a soft

media for the unsportsmanlike act, even though the rules of the game permitted the officials to rule in favor of the bowling team. Actually, Mehidy Hasan has been criticized on social media by former Indian batter Mohammad Kaif. At the time of the event, Agha and Muhammad Rizwan were on the crease. Mehidy Hasan Miraz, the captain of Bangladesh, bowled the fourth delivery of the over, and Rizwan played a soft

push down the ground. After backing up, Agha was standing outside his crease at the non-striker’s end when the ball rolled in his direction. Agha stooped to pick up the ball as it touched his pads, then returned it. Agha was still outside the crease when Miraz swiftly collected the ball and broke the stumps, requesting a run-out. The appeal was upheld by the on-field umpire, who then sent the ruling upstairs. Agha’s ejection was confirmed by the third umpire, who likewise decided in Bangladesh’s favor. Agha was clearly irritated by the choice as he made his way back to the pavilion. After being dismissed, the Pakistani batter was seen on camera voicing his displeasure. “This is not done,” Kaif said on X (previously Twitter). This run out cannot be justified by a desperate attempt to take wickets. And from a captain, too. Young people, please keep in mind

that you should never act in the same way as the Bangladeshi captain, even if the World Cup final is at stake. Without fair play, sports cannot exist. Players from both teams on the pitch had brief conversations as a result of the incident. While Litton Das supported Miraz’s appeal, Rizwan was observed having a conversation with the Bangladeshi players. The unexpected run-out soon became the match’s talking point, bringing the circumstances around the dismissal to light. While some users expressed support for Agha on X, others claimed that Pakistan’s T20I captain had neglected his fundamental responsibility to return to his crease. Following Agha’s removal, Pakistan’s side was dismissed for 274 runs in 47.3 overs, with Maaz Sadaqat leading the way with 75 runs. Pakistan needs to win this game in order to stay in the series after losing the first one.

A reality check for Vaibhav Sooryavanshi suggests that this IPL season would be more difficult

New Delhi: Compared to a year ago, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi is in a completely different position going into the 2018 IPL season. Back then, he was the bold youth who broke into the Rajasthan Royals setup and was able to surprise opponents. He now enters the game as a batter that every opponent has seen, researched, and begun preparing for.

The impact of Robin Uthappa’s most recent evaluation of the young batter comes from this change in environment. It was hard to overlook Vaibhav’s breakthrough season. 252 runs at a strike rate of 206.55 in seven IPL 2025 games, including a 35-ball century against the Gujarat Titans that moved him from a possibility into news. Speaking on Star Sports, Robin Uthappa was direct about the matter. “Over the past 12 months, I have been closely watching every game Vaibhav has played. He is outstanding. However, if you’re going to watch him bat, I think he’s a little lucky.

The novelty has faded. I believe he is somewhat riding that luck with that right bow, and that’s okay. I believe that this season will be instructive and beneficial to him in the long run. Uthappa stated, “I don’t think he will



be all that he was last year, but he will still score runs.”

The timing of what Uthappa has said is crucial. Alongside Yashasvi Jaiswal, Vaibhav is a strong contender to start for the Rajasthan Royals in the 2026 Indian Premier League. He doesn’t have any serious expectations going into this season as a batter. For this reason, the core of the assertion is Uthappa’s statement about novelty wearing off. He doesn’t doubt Vaibhav’s skill. He is wondering how elite cricket typically proceeds to the next stage. A young batter must

demonstrate his ability to develop once bowlers are aware of the zones to attack, analysts have developed patterns around a player, and surprise is no longer an option. Therefore, Robin Uthappa’s criticism of Vaibhav Sooryavanshi’s talent is more of a cautionary tale than a compliment.

This season, he might still score a lot. However, IPL 2026 might reveal more about him than his breakthrough year did—not how devastating he can be when nobody is prepared for him, but rather how powerful he is when everyone is.

Parma Concedes Two Shocking Own Goals Within Just Two Minutes In Defeat At Torino

TURIN: Parma scored two own goals in two minutes to undo an otherwise tight match and tumble towards a 4-1 defeat by Torino in Serie A on Friday. Giovanni Simeone scored his second goal in three games to put Torino 1-0 up in the third minute only for Mateo Pellegrino to equalize for Parma 17 minutes later. But Parma pressed the self-destruct button early in the second half. First, Enrico Delprato turned a Che Adams shot into his own net in the 55th minute and two minutes later Mandela Keita was unlucky when a Simeone shot came off the bar, hit him almost on the goalline and bounced into the net.

Duvan Zapata added an accomplished fourth in stoppage time to guarantee a



Comfortable win for Torino. It was only Torino's second win in six games and lifted it two places into 13th. The Defeat snapped a five-game unbeaten run for Parma which remained in 12th, a point above Torino. In a sport of

Ten decided by inches and moments of individual brilliance, Friday night's Serie A clash at the Stadio Olimpico

Grande Torino was decided by a chaotic, self-inflicted collapse. Parma, who entered the match on a high following a five-game unbeaten streak, saw their hard work unravel in a bizarre 120-second window, conceding two own goals on their way to a heavy 4-1 defeat against Torino. The result marks a significant shift in the mid-table standings, as Roberto D'Aversa's Torino side leapfrogged two places into 13th, sitting just one point behind Carlos Cuesta's Parma. The match began with high intensity as Torino sought to establish early dominance. They didn't have to wait long. In just the 3rd minute, Giovanni Simeone continued his clinical form, pouncing on a loose ball in the box to slot home his second goals.

Uruguay Dominates Austria as Indian Women Reach Hockey Qualifier Final

Hyderabad: Uruguay enjoyed a dominant 3-0 victory over Austria in their 5/8th place encounter at the FIH Hockey World Cup Qualifiers 2026 at the G. M. C. Balayogi Hockey Ground (Gachibowli Hockey Complex) in Hyderabad, Telangana, on Friday. Teresa Viana (21',44') and Captain Manuela Vilar (4') were the goal scorers for Uruguay, according to a press release from Hockey India.

In another 5/8th place encounter, Wales defeated Korea 2-1. Captain Elizabeth Bingham (49', 53') scored the goals for Wales while Yeongeun Park (46') was the goalscorer for Korea. After that, England defeated Scotland with a comfortable scoreline of 2-0 in their semi-final encounter of the FIH Hockey World



Cup Qualifiers 2026 at the same venue. Lottie Bingham (25') and Drcy Bourne (29') scored the two goals in the crucial match to book England's spot in the final. In the second semi-final match, the Indian Women's Hockey team earned their spot in the final of the FIH Hockey World Cup Qualifiers 2026 after beating Italy 1-0. Manisha Chauhan (40') scored the winning goal for India, and they will now face England in the final on Saturday.

It was an extremely tight contest in the first quarter as both sides constantly battled for possession in the mid-field.

BCCI To Honor Binny, Dravid, And Mithali Raj With Lifetime Achievement Awards



Mumbai: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) will celebrate excellence across the Indian cricketing spectrum at the prestigious Naman Awards 2026, scheduled to be held on Sunday, 15 March 2026, in New Delhi. The annual ceremony recognises exceptional performances and enduring con-

tributions across international, domestic and age group cricket while honouring individuals whose work has shaped the growth and stature of the game in the country.

At this year's ceremony, Roger Binny and Rahul Dravid will be bestowed with the Col. C. K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award, the BC-

CI's highest honour recognising outstanding service to Indian cricket, according to a release from BCCI. Mithali Raj will receive the BCCI Lifetime Achievement Award for Women, recognising her extraordinary contribution to the growth and global stature of women's cricket in India. A distinguished member of

India's historic 1983 World Cup winning team, Binny's Contribution to the game has spanned decades as a player, mentor and administrator. Renowned for his skilful seam bowling and invaluable ability to deliver breakthroughs at crucial moments, Binny finished as the highest wicket taker of the 1983 World Cup, playing a pivotal role in one of the most defining chapters in Indian cricket's history. A member of the Indian squad that lifted the iconic World Championship of Cricket in 1985, Binny is also the first Indian cricketer to open both the bowling and the batting in the same ODI. Following his playing career, Binny continued to serve Indian cricket with equal distinction. As Coach of the Indian Under 19 team, he guided the side to victory in the ICC Under 19 Cricket World Cup in 2000, nurturing young cricketers at the start of their professional journeys. He later served as a national selector from 2012 to 2016 and played an important role in shaping the composition team Indian cricket.

PCB Pursues Legal Action As Blessing Muzarabani Exits PSL Contract To Join Kolkata Knight Riders

New Delhi: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is preparing to take legal action against Zimbabwe fast bowler Blessing Muzarabani following his withdrawal from a binding contract with Islamabad United for the upcoming Pakistan Super League (PSL), according to a report from GeoSuper. Muzarabani had signed with United as a replacement for Shamar Joseph, committing to a reported sum of Rs11 million for the tournament scheduled from March 26 to May 3. However, he instead opted to join Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in the Indian Premier League (IPL) as a replacement for Mustafizur Rahman, who was released by the franchise earlier this year on the recommendation of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). Muzarabani's decision to break his PSL agreement has been met with a firm response from the PCB, which is moving forward with legal proceedings based on breach of contract. This episode marks the second year in succession that a player initially contracted to a PSL franchise has chosen to join an IPL team.

The previous season saw South African all-rounder Corbin Bosch, selected as a Diamond Pick by Peshawar Zalmi, subsequently join Mumbai Indians as an injury replacement. Following his withdrawal from PSL commitments, Bosch received a one-season ban from



Participating in the league, reinforcing the PCB's strict stance on such contract violations. Muzarabani's recent selection by KKR comes after a strong showing in the T20 World Cup. The Zimbabwean pacer played a key role in helping his national team top their group and reach the Super Eight stage of the competition. During the tournament, Muzarabani took 13 wickets in six matches, placing him just one wicket short of becoming the joint-highest wicket-taker. His figures included a standout performance of four wickets in Zimbabwe's group-stage victory over Australia, underlining his value on the international stage. The PCB's reaction reflects its effort to maintain the integrity of player contracts and ensure that franchises are not left at

a disadvantage. The board's move to pursue legal action signals a continued commitment to upholding contractual obligations in the face of competing global leagues. Such cases highlight the growing tension between international cricket boards and the proliferation of domestic T20 competitions, particularly where schedules overlap. The PCB and PSL franchises face increasing pressure to retain overseas talent amid lucrative offers from other leagues. Observers note that repeated contract breaches of this nature could prompt more stringent regulations and possible sanctions. The outcome of the PCB's legal action may set a precedent for future dealings between players, franchises, and cricket boards with overlapping commitments.

Sabalenka Defeats Noskova to Setup Indian Wells Final Rematch Against Elena Rybakina

Rybakina Targets Second Indian Wells Final Win

INDIAN WELLS: Aryna Sabalenka roared past Linda Noskova on Friday to book an Indian Wells title showdown with Australian Open champion Elena Rybakina. Sabalenka beat 14th-ranked Czech Noskova 6-3, 6-4 and Rybakina downed Ukraine's Elina Svitolina 7-5, 6-4 to set up a mouth-watering rematch of their Melbourne final. Rybakina also beat Sabalenka in the 2023 championship match in Indian Wells -- where the Belarusian star has come up empty in two prior trips to the final. But Sabalenka has been in imperious form in the California desert this year. She fired 37 winners, with 11 aces, applying relentless pressure from the baseline in a commanding win over Noskova.

She broke the big-serving Czech twice as she powered to a 5-1 lead in the opening set. There was a hiccup as she tried to serve out the set and Sabalenka, who had lost just one point in her first three service games, was broken. Noskova kept the set alive with a battling hold in a marathon eighth game, fending off a set point by a service winner and sealing the game with an ace. Serving for the set again, Sabalenka opened with a double fault and went down 0-30, but a pair of big Serves and a backhand win-



ner brought her to set point and she claimed it with an ace. Sabalenka broke Noskova to open the second and Was on her way. Noskova fended off a second break, but she was unable to convert a break opportunity in the eighth game as Sabalenka brought it home, capping the victory with a forehand winner on her third match point. "I think I really played great tennis," Sabalenka said. "I was serving well. I was playing well. I like the way I put her under pressure on her serve." Rybakina, who is Set to rise one spot to number two in the world on Monday, had too much firepower for ninth-ranked Svitolina, who was coming off a three-set win over two-time cham-

pion Iga Swiatek in the quarter-finals. Rybakina recouped an early break in a tight first set and seized control with a break for 6-5, her steady pressure on Svitolina's serve provoking too many mistakes from the Ukrainian. Elena Rybakina battled past Jessica Pegula into the Australian Open final on Thursday with the fifth seed setting up a repeat of her 2023 title match against Aryna Sabalenka.

Kazakhstan's Rybakina, who is targeting a second Grand Slam crown, downed the American sixth seed 6-3, 7-6 (9/7) in a 1hr 40min arm-wrestle on the Rod Laver Arena and is yet to drop a set all tournament. The 26-year-old's reward is an all-or-noth-

ing clash on Saturday against the Belarusian world number one, who shattered her dreams three years ago by rallying from a set down to lift the trophy. "It was such a battle. It was an epic second set. I'm really glad I managed to win it," she said. "I'm really proud that no matter the situation, I was leading, and then, of course, it was very tight, I still stayed there. I was fighting for each point and just happy. "Overall, it's a lot of positives to take." Moscow-born Rybakina, who defeated second seed Iga Swiatek in the quarter-finals, is trying to get back on the Grand Slam title board for the first time in three-and-a-half years after winning Wimbledon in 2022.

Soukouna's Late Goal Secures Rajasthan United's First Win



Jaipur: A late strike by Amadou Soukouna in injury time ensured Rajasthan United edge past Namdhari Sports Academy 3-2 in a thrilling encounter of the Indian Football League 2025-26 at the Vidhyadhar Nagar Stadium in Jaipur on Friday. Amadou Soukouna gave the home side the lead in the 13th minute before Pedro Astray doubled the advantage in the 57th. Namdhari mounted a late comeback in the final ten minutes, levelling the scores through Manvir Singh's (83') and Najib Ibrahim's (90') goals, according to a press release. However, Soukouna struck again in the sixth minute of stoppage time to ensure the first win of the season for Ra-

asthan United. The home side climbed to fourth in the table with as many points from three matches, while Namdhari remain ninth with two points from three games.

Rajasthan United FC head coach Vikrant Sharma made five changes for his first home match of the season, bringing in Gautam Virwani, Thomyo L. Shimray, Joseph Lalvenhina, Jonathan Reis, and Abdul Samed Ango in place of William Pauliankhum, Lalfelkina, Pangambam Naoba Meitei, Gerard Artigas and Cedric Gogoua. Meanwhile, Namdhari head coach Harpreet Singh made just one change to his starting XI, with forward

Abdoulaye Diallo replacing midfielder Adersh Mattummal. Namdhari struggled early on, and the home side capitalised to take the lead. Amadou Soukouna chased a long ball and applied pressure on centre-back Gurshan Singh. The defender's attempted clearance lacked conviction, and Soukouna reacted quickly to poke the ball past goalkeeper Niraj Kumar from close range. The French striker came close to doubling his tally in the very next attack. After a neat exchange of passes in the final third, Soukouna unleashed a right-footed effort that beat the goalkeeper, but centre-back Lamine Moro made a crucial clearance off the line to deny him.