

Nijut Moina 2.0 Scheme

Nijut Moina benefits extended to 1,452 Girls in Digboi

Digboi, Oct 28: Digboi MLA Suren Phukan gave financial aid to 1,452 female students under the Mukhya Mantrir Nijut Moina (MMNM) 2.0 scheme on Monday at the Digboi College Playground, marking a historic occasion honoring women's empowerment and academic progress.

The event was a further turning point in Assam's efforts to produce a generation of women who are knowledgeable and independent. Launched under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, the Mukhya Mantrir Nijut Moina 2.0 project is a revolutionary effort aimed at preventing child marriage and promoting higher education among girls. The program makes sure that a girl's financial situation never gets in the way of her education. This program provides up to ten months of monthly stipends of Rs 1,000 for Higher Secondary, Rs 1,250 for Undergraduate, and Rs 2,500 for Post-graduate studies to eligible unmarried



girls enrolled in government and government-aided institutions. With a few exceptions, the program is inclusive and offers assistance to all qualified students,

regardless of their financial situation.

The students and their families experienced a proud and touching moment as deserving beneficiaries from eight

educational institutions—including

two colleges—received their checks ceremoniously during the occasion. Rajnikanta Barua Higher Secondary

On Sunday, Bongaigaon celebrated Chhath Puja, a four-day festival honoring the sun deity, with significant fervor.

School, Vivekananda Senior Secondary School, Soumar Vidyapeeth Higher Secondary School, Rastriya Vidyalaya Higher Secondary School, Digboi College, and Digboi Women's College were among the beneficiaries chosen to get the rewards. Speaking to the audience, MLA Suren Phukan called the program a "revolutionary transformation in women's education" and a significant investment in the future of Assam. "This initiative is an investment in the aspirations and potential of our female students; it is not just a financial support program," he stated. "Assam keeps making bold progress toward a future where every girl is educated, empowered, and inspired to dream big under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma," Phukan continued.

Assam Opens new Women and Child Development Hub

Guwahati, Oct 28: Assam has authorized the creation of a new Institute for Women and Child Development with the goal of advancing training, research, and capacity building in the field—a major step towards gender equality and social advancement.

The institute aims to empower women, improve their leadership and career prospects, and fortify initiatives that promote children's overall development and well-being.

As a center of excellence, it will foster creativity, talent, and evidence-based policy research for long-term social progress.

According to officials, the program demonstrates the government's steadfast dedication to fostering an atmosphere that is inclusive and supportive of women and children throughout the state.

To promote significant change at the local level, the new hub will also work with specialists, NGOs, and educational institutions.

A new phase in Assam's quest for opportunity, equity, and empowerment that guarantees every woman and child the chance to reach their greatest potential.

CM Sangma Urges Boost in Meghalaya's Digital Network

Shillong, Oct 28: Conrad K. Sangma, the chief minister, evaluated the Local Managed Connectivity (LMC) project's progress and its integration with the State Wide Area Network (SWAN) on Monday, calling it an important step in creating Meghalaya's digital backbone. By improving communication between administrative divisions and departments, the integration seeks to lay the groundwork for a smooth master network. The Local Managed Connectivity (LMC) project's development and alignment with our State Wide Area Network (SWAN) were reviewed. The Chief Minister stated that this integration will serve as the foundation of our state's master network, enhancing digital communication across departments and administrative divisions. To guarantee convergence and avoid duplication, Sangma gave the IT Department instructions to create a thorough connectivity plan at the district and block levels. He also emphasized how crucial prompt deployment and precise data mapping are to efficient digital government.

Bongaigaon observes Subdued Chhath Puja in tribute to Zubeen Garg

● On Sunday, Bongaigaon celebrated Chhath Puja, a four-day festival honoring the sun deity, with significant fervor.

Bongaigaon, Oct 28: Across Bongaigaon, people celebrated Chhath Puja, a four-day holiday devoted to worshiping the sun deity and Chhathi Maiya, with fervor on Sunday. Important customs like Nahay Khay (holy bath and solitary meal), Kharna (fast broken with kheer and fruits), Sandhya Arghya (offering to the setting sun), and Usha Arghya (offering to the rising sun) are all part of the festival, which is characterized by rigorous fasting and offerings to the setting and rising suns. In addition to praying for their families' well-being and wealth, devotees kept a strict 36-hour fast. Over 5,000 devotees gathered to execute the festival's rites at the Bongaigaon Walking Zone, which was the site of the main celebration hosted by the Purbottar Bihari Parishad. With its diya illumination and



devotional music, the ghats' environment embodied faith and intercultural peace. However, the celebration this year was muted due to the sud-

den death of Zubeen Garg, a popular vocalist in Assam. "We have canceled all cultural programs this year to pay tribute to the legend," stated

Ray Ranjit Singh, Rajesh Ray, Dilip Kumar, and Rakesh Shah, members of the organizing committee. They are only following the religious rites.

Zubeen Garg death case

Five accused sent to 14-day judicial custody after virtual court hearing

Guwahati, Oct 28: In a major development in the ongoing investigation into the death of popular singer and composer Zubeen Garg, five of the main accused were remanded to 14 days of judicial custody following a virtual appearance before the Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) Court on October 27. The five accused include North East India Festival chief organizer Shyamkanu Mahanta, Garg's manager Siddhartha Sharma, his cousin and police officer Sandipan Garg, and his personal security officers Nandeswar Bora and Paresh Baishya.

They were produced virtually after the expiry of their earlier custody period. The virtual hearing was conducted as a special arrangement since October 28 marks Chhath Puja, a public holiday, making physical court proceedings impossible. Sources said the CJM court ordered the extension of judicial custody for an-



other 14 days after reviewing the investigation report submitted by the Special Investigation Team (SIT). Earlier, on October 15, the court had sent the accused to judicial custody, and they were lodged in Baksa Jail under heavy security. Their transfer to the facility had taken place amidst violent protests that broke out near the court premises and along the route of the convoy carrying the accused. According to officials, the protests turned chaotic, with agitators throwing stones at police vehicles and setting several cars on fire, leading

to injuries to police personnel and members of the media. Baksa Superintendent of Police Ujjal Pratim Baruah later confirmed that nine people were arrested in connection with the violence, while several more suspects have been identified through CCTV footage and video evidence. In a related development, two other accused in the same case — Shekharjyoti Goswami and Amritprava Mahanta, both members of Garg's music band — were produced before the court a day later and subsequently sent to Haflong Jail in Dima Hasao district.

Accident

Guwahati, Oct 28: Three people were killed in a horrifying traffic accident on National Highway 27 at Silchang in Jagiroad, Assam, on Tuesday morning. The incident happened when a speeding Hyundai Creta allegedly struck a central divider and overturned.

Manas Mahanta, Ashfiq Hussain, and Dr. Kantheswar Bordoloi have been identified as the deceased. On the scene, all three perished. Two further travelers were taken to Nagaon for emergency care after suffering serious injuries. The car with the registration number AS-01EW-6546 was transporting five people when it collided, according to police sources. In September, gynecologist Dr.



which took place from 3:40 p.m. on September 5 to 1:50 a.m. on September 6, led the Additional District Commissioner (Health) to request thorough records for every procedure. Dr. Bordoloi justified his behavior at the time by claiming that he was capable of carrying out several emergency surgeries in a short amount of time.

Investigators have begun looking into the crash's circumstances, including if speeding was the main contributing factor.

In Brief

CM Launches Mission to Empower 39 Lakh Baideos

Guwahati: The Assam Chief Minister announced the government's commitment to empower women by creating over 39 lakh 'Lakhpati Baideos' through the Mukhyamantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan (MMUA). He emphasized that this initiative is a social revolution aimed at enhancing women's leadership and entrepreneurship, vital for societal progress. The MMUA will provide financial support, training, and mentorship to foster women-led ventures in agriculture, handloom, food processing, and local crafts. The CM shared inspiring success stories from beneficiaries, highlighting their potential to build sustainable businesses. This initiative, launched from Kaliabor, aims for a self-reliant Assam where every 'Baideo' symbolizes hope and prosperity.

Darpan Satyagraha

Tezpur: The university organized a protest against administrative corruption, targeting Prof. Shambhu Nath Singh, the vice-chancellor, through a movement known as "Darpan Satyagraha." This demonstration, held in front of the university's administration building, involved students, the Tezpur University Teachers Association (TUTA), and the Tezpur University Non-Teaching Employees' Staff (TUNTEA) over a continuous span of 36 days. Participants wielded mirrors to symbolically reflect on the moral decline, corruption, and environmental damage that have plagued the university during the VC's tenure. The protest emphasizes the academic community's collective awareness and resilience, asserting their commitment to not be intimidated by threats and ongoing dishonesty.

Assam Rifles recover weapons cache

Champai: The Assam Rifles recovered a cache of arms and ammunition in Saikumpai, Champai District, Mizoram, on October 24. The haul included six 60mm mortar tubes, two Myanmar-made assault rifles, three shotguns, two.

Ex-NSCN, ULFA-I Cadre Surrenders in Tinsukia

Tinsukia, Oct 28: SS Corporal Samiran Chetia, also called Prabin Asom, was arrested by the Tinsukia police on October 28. He was an active member of the banned terrorist organization United Liberation Front of Asom (Independent). According to sources, the operation was carried out in concert by Tinsukia Police and Security officials. The police were quick to take action after obtaining specific intelligence about the cadre's presence in the region. After the operation, Chetia willingly turned himself in without exchanging gunfire. Chetia lived in the Tinsukia area of Jagun. A preliminary examination revealed that he had joined the ULFA (I) in 2022. Prior to joining the outlawed organization, he reportedly belonged to the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN). The security sources claim that the surrender is another win in the continuing battle against terrorism in Upper Assam. Due to the enhanced operations, a number of militants have lately surrendered their firearms.

On Infantry Day, CM Pema Khandu pays heartfelt tribute to bravehearts

Itanagar, Oct 28: Chief Minister Pema Khandu of Arunachal Pradesh paid a heartfelt homage to the country's infantrymen, praising their outstanding bravery and unrivaled dedication to defending India's borders. In an X post, Khandu praised the Infantry for being the nation's first line of defense and for exemplifying patriotism in its purest form. According to Khandu, "We pay solemn tribute to the indomitable spirit, courage, and sacrifice of our Infantry personnel, the sentinels of our nation's sovereignty, on the occasion of Infantry Day," in recognition of their long-standing contribution to India's security and territorial integrity. In addition, Khandu recognized the difficulties that border guards en-

counter in some of the most hostile environments. "The highest principles of responsibility and patriotism are demonstrated by their selfless work in protecting our borders and maintaining peace. We will always be grateful to our courageous warriors for their everlasting dedication to the country. "Jai Hind!" he said. In keeping with the nation's sentiment of appreciation for the armed forces, Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein also used X to offer the Infantry heartfelt congratulations on the milestone. "We honor the unwavering spirit, bravery, and sacrifice of our courageous infantry soldiers—the real sentinels of our nation—on this Infantry Day," he wrote in the post.



Nagaland University study warns
Land-use changes threatening water
quality of rivers feeding Loktak Lake



Kohima, Oct 28: A new scientific study by Nagaland University has raised alarm over the deteriorating health of rivers that feed Manipur’s Loktak Lake, one of India’s most important freshwater ecosystems and a designated Ramsar Site. The study concludes that changes in land use — particularly agriculture expansion, settlement growth, and shifting (jhum) cultivation — are seriously degrading river water quality, posing a long-term threat to the lake’s delicate ecology and the livelihoods of thousands who depend on it. Loktak Lake, often called the “lifeline of Manipur,” supports an array of ecological and economic functions — from hydropower generation and inland fisheries to transport, irrigation, and tourism. It is home to 132 plant species and 428 animal species, including the endangered Sangai deer, which inhabits the floating biomass of phumdis within the Keibul Lamjao National Park, India’s only floating national park.

However, the lake’s condition has worsened over the past few decades, prompting its inclusion in the Montreux Record, a global list highlighting wetlands under severe ecological stress. Environmental experts have repeatedly warned of declining fish populations, rising organic pollution, and excessive siltation due to unchecked land-use practices upstream. The new research, published in the International Journal of Environment and Pollution, links these problems to human-induced activities in the river catchments surrounding Loktak. “The study confirms that agricultural runoff, settlements and shifting cultivation in the Loktak catchment are directly degrading river water quality,” said Prof. Jagadish K. Patnaik, Vice Chancellor of Nagaland University. “Among the rivers studied, the Nambul and Khuga rivers showed the highest levels of pollution due to high land-use disturbances,” he added.

Murlen Park Yields
new Plant species

Aizawl, Oct 28: A team of Indian botanists has discovered a new plant species, *Ophiorrhiza mizoramensis*, from Murlen National Park in Champhai District, Mizoram — a discovery that further cements the state’s reputation as a biodiversity hotspot in Northeast India. The species, belonging to the Rubiaceae family, was described by Renthlei Lalnunfeli of the Department of Botany, Madras Christian College (Chennai), and Lucy Lalawmpui of the Department of Life Sciences, Pachhunga University College (Aizawl), along with co-researchers Pochamoni Bharath Simha Yadav, Subbiah Karuppusamy, and Paulraj Selva Singh Richard.



Distinguished by its unique floral structure, leaf arrangement, and seed morphology, *Ophiorrhiza mizoramensis* differs markedly from its closely related species such as *O. gajureliana*, *O. ripicola*, and *O. ochroleuca*. The plant bears dark purplish-pink tubular flowers and grows in the dense, shaded understory of Murlen’s montane forest ecosystem.

Through extensive fieldwork and comparison with global herbarium specimens, the team confirmed it as a species new to science. Their findings, published in *Feddes Repertorium*, also classify *Ophiorrhiza mizoramensis* as “Critically Endangered (CR-D)” under IUCN Red List criteria, owing to its very limited distribution and habitat vulnerability.

Researchers from Pachhunga University College played a vital role in the discovery, combining field expertise and local ecological knowledge to document and study the species. The discovery underscores the growing contributions of Mizoram-based scientists to international botanical research and the urgent need to preserve the region’s fragile forest ecosystems.

Morigaon doctor among three dead
in Silchang highway crash

Morigaon, Oct 28: A fatal road accident claimed three lives on National Highway 27 at Silchang in Jagiroad, Assam, on the morning of October 28, when a speeding Creta vehicle struck a road divider and overturned. The deceased have been identified as Dr Kantheswar Bordoloi, Ashfiq Hussain, and Manas Mahanta. All three died at the scene. Two other passengers sustained critical injuries and were transferred to Nagaon for medical treatment. The vehicle, bearing registration number AS-01EW-6546, was carrying five people at the time of the collision. Dr Bordoloi, who worked as a gynaecologist at Morigaon Civil Hospital, had previously made headlines in September when he performed 21 caesarean section deliveries within 10 hours. The district health authority issued Dr. Bordoloi a show-cause notice for allegedly violating sterilisation and patient-safety norms during a marathon surgical session held from September 5 evening to September 6 early morning.

Assam Rifles
recover weapons
cache in Champhai

Champai, Oct 28: The Assam Rifles recovered a cache of arms and ammunition in Saikumphei, Champhai District, Mizoram, on October 24. The haul included six 60mm mortar tubes, two Myanmar-made assault rifles, three shotguns, two .22 rifles, a hand grenade, forty 7.62mm rounds, fifteen mortar rounds, two anti-personnel mines, and two radio sets. All items have been handed over to the Police Department, Dungtlang, for further investigation.



Pradyot Kishore confident Amit
Shah will resolve Tiprasa issue

Agartala, Oct 28: Tipra Motha Party (TMP) chief Pradyot Kishore Manikya Debbarma has expressed strong confidence that Union Home Minister Amit Shah will soon bring a lasting solution to the long-standing Tiprasa issue. Speaking at a party event held at Rabindra Bhavan on Sunday, Debbarma said he holds “immense respect” for Shah and trusts that the Centre remains committed to addressing the concerns of the indigenous Tiprasa community through dialogue and cooperation. He reminded that a tripartite agreement between the TMP, the Centre, and the Tripura government was signed in March 2024 in New Delhi in Shah’s presence to ensure the development of Tiprasa people. Clarifying political speculation, Debbarma said the TMP-BJP alliance was finalised in New Delhi and not at the state level, cautioning against “baseless rumours.” Taking a swipe at the BJP, he mocked its claim that thousands of indigenous voters were joining the party, saying, “At this rate, the Tiprasa population will reach 1.5 crore in four months.” Debbarma also criticised the delay in TTAADC village committee elections, stating that tribal areas have been deprived of democratic polls for nearly a decade. He further expressed disappointment over Rajmata Bhibu Kumari Devi not being invited to the Maa Tripureswari Temple inauguration by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 22.



CM Launches Mission to
Empower 39 Lakh Baideos

Guwahati, Oct 28: The Assam Chief Minister launched the Mukhyamantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan (MMUA) from Kalibor, aiming to empower women by creating over 39 lakh ‘Lakhpati Baideos’. Describing it as a social revolution, he said the scheme will offer financial aid, training, and mentorship to promote women-led ventures in sectors like agriculture, handloom, food processing, and local crafts.

17th Jorhat Dimasa Students’ Union Freshers’ Meet 2025
honors academic excellence, culture, and youth

Jorhat, Oct 28: The 17th Jorhat Dimasa Students’ Union Freshers’ Meet 2025 brought together students, faculty, and community people from all around Assam with remarkable fervor and cultural vibrancy. The occasion served as a venue for welcoming new Dimasa students and encouraging them to succeed academically while maintaining their cultural and personal identity.

Insightful speeches, inspirational discussions, and vibrant cultural performances highlighted the unity of the group and the depth of Dimasa tradition. The freshmen received well wishes from the dignitaries in attendance, who urged them to embrace diligence, modesty, and tenacity as they begin their academic careers.

Waisoring Maibangsa, Deputy Manager, ICICI Bank, Jorhat; Thaihamdao Longmailai, Assistant Professor, Department of Civil Engineering, Jorhat Engineering College; David Haflongbar, Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Mariani; Provid Langthasa, Assistant Professor, Department of Mathematics, Golaghat; and Dr. Phirose Kemprai, Assistant Profes-

Five suspected Bangladeshi
nationals detained in Shillong



Shillong, Oct 28: Meghalaya Police on Sunday detained five persons suspected to be Bangladeshi nationals during a routine check at the ISBT junction in Mawlai Mawiong, Shillong. The operation was carried out by Mawlai Police in coordination with the Special Operations Team (SOT). The detainees have been identified as Md. Fajid Bilul (47), Lelepa Begum (40), Musamat Jahana Khatoun (35), Md. Alamgir Mia (25), and Md. Imamul Hassan (18). The group, which included two women, was reportedly travelling from Srinagar and is believed to have been attempting to cross into Bangladesh through Meghalaya. Acting on a tip-off, the police intercepted a tourist taxi bearing registration number ML05 S 1358 at the junction. Upon questioning, the passengers failed to produce valid passports or travel documents. East Khasi Hills Superintendent of Police Vivek Syiem confirmed that all five suspects were taken into custody and a case has been registered at the Mawlai Police Station. “We are verifying their identities and investigating their route and possible local connections,” Syiem said.



sor, Department of Botany, Debraj Roy College, were among the notable guests who graced the occasion. The freshmen received well wishes from the dignitaries in attendance, who urged them to embrace diligence, modesty, and tenacity as they begin their academic careers.

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Department of Civil Engineering, Jorhat Engineering College; David Haflongbar, Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Mariani; Provid Langthasa, Assistant Professor, Department of Mathematics, Golaghat; and Dr. Phirose Kemprai, Assistant Professor, Department of Botany, Debraj Roy College, were among the notable guests who graced the occasion.

Logistics bottlenecks stall Loktak hydroelectric project
NHPC briefs Manipur Governor

Imphal, Oct 28: The Loktak Hydroelectric Project, a vital power source for Manipur and the wider northeastern region, is facing serious logistical hurdles that are delaying ongoing renovation and modernization work, officials from NHPC Ltd. informed Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla during a high-level meeting at the Raj Bhavan on Monday. Gursharan Singh, Head of Project at NHPC and newly appointed General Manager (Electrical), met the Governor to brief him on the persistent transportation challenges hampering the timely delivery of large mechanical and electrical equipment essential for overhauling the decades-old power facility. According to Singh, difficulties in moving heavy machinery through the state’s hilly terrain and narrow



transport routes have slowed down maintenance operations and affected the schedule for critical upgrades. He added that NHPC engineers are working to strengthen maintenance protocols and improve the operational reliability of the hydroelectric plant,

which remains Manipur’s key source of hydro-based power generation. Governor Bhalla, who reviewed the project’s status in detail, emphasized the urgency of completing renovation works on time to ensure continuous electricity supply across the region.

He acknowledged the infrastructural and logistical constraints but urged NHPC to adopt innovative transport and project management solutions to overcome the delays.

“Loktak is not just a power project but the backbone of Manipur’s energy security,” the Governor remarked, assuring NHPC of his support in facilitating coordination with state agencies where necessary. In a separate meeting later in the day, the Governor also interacted with a delegation from the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), led by H. Radhakrishna Sharma, State-in-Charge of IATO Manipur. The delegation highlighted the difficulties tour operators face in securing Protected Area Permits (PAPs) for foreign visitors — a process that often discourages international tourism in the state.

Mizoram to roll out crop insurance
scheme to protect farmers from losses

Aizawl, Oct 28: The Mizoram government is preparing to launch a crop insurance scheme aimed at protecting farmers from financial losses caused by natural disasters, pest attacks, and crop failures, Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister P.C. Vanlalruata announced on Monday. Speaking to reporters, the minister said that a state-level coordination committee on crop insurance has already been formed, and a general insurance company has been selected to implement the scheme. The initiative, he said, is a part of the state’s broader plan to ensure income stability for farmers who are frequently affected by unpredictable weather and market fluctuations. “One of our key promises was to buy agricultural produce directly from farm-

■ The Mizoram government is set to launch a crop insurance scheme to protect farmers from losses due to natural disasters, pests, and crop failures, as announced by Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister P.C. Vanlalruata.

ers and introduce crop insurance to safeguard them from losses. Our Chief Minister has placed high priority on the welfare of farmers, and now, with this scheme, we can finally deliver on that commitment,” Vanlalruata stated. The minister further highlighted that the government has already started procurement of agricultural products, fulfilling one of the major pre-poll pledges made by the Zoram People’s Movement (ZPM) during the 2023 Assembly elec-



tions. Despite recent dips in ginger prices, the state continued to support farmers through the “Bana Kaih” (Handholding) scheme, launched in September last year. Under this initiative, the government has

procured raw ginger directly from cultivators, spending or releasing nearly ₹140 crore so far. For the fiscal year 2025–26, another ₹50 crore has been earmarked to sustain and expand the scheme.

Darpan Satyagraha

Tezpur, Oct 28: The university protested against administrative corruption as a potent and symbolic act of opposition against Prof. Shambhu Nath Singh, the vice-chancellor. In front of the university’s administration building, the students, Tezpur University Teachers Association (TUTA), and Tezpur University Non-Teaching Employees’ Staff (TUNTEA) organized a “Darpan Satyagraha.” The continuous protest against the Vice-Chancellor continued for 36 days in a row with this unusual demonstration.

There are severe accusations of financial and administrative wrongdoing against the VC. Participants held mirrors as they stood in the direction of the administrative block, exposing the moral decline, corruption, and environmental damage that have afflicted the university throughout the absconding VC’s term by using reflection as a creative metaphor.

The demonstration highlights the collective awareness of the academic community. It declares that despite threats and dishonesty, the fraternity will not be intimidated and will continue to be vigilant.

BUSINESS

Renault brings back the iconic duster, set for Republic Day 2026 launch

Guwahati: Renault India has officially announced the return of its legendary SUV, the Duster, marking a major milestone in the company’s India-centric transformation strategy, Renault. Rethink. The all-new Duster will be unveiled on Republic Day, January 26, 2026, rekindling the passion of SUV lovers across the country.

First launched in 2012, the Duster revolutionized India’s SUV segment and remains one of Renault’s most successful models, with over 200,000 owners in India and 1.8 million customers globally. The upcoming model will be the first launch under Renault’s International Game Plan 2027, signifying the brand’s renewed commitment to the Indian market.



“Renault Duster is more than just a name – it’s a true legend,” said Stephane Deb-laise, CEO, Renault Group India, adding that the new model would blend the SUV’s iconic heritage with modern design, advanced technology, and enhanced performance.

In Guwahati, automobile dealers and consumers are already showing excitement over the Duster’s comeback. With the growing demand for mid-size SUVs in Assam’s urban centres, Renault’s renewed focus on India is expected to energize the Northeastern auto market, where adventure-ready vehicles have a loyal following.

Customers can now join the waiting program starting today.

BEML inks MoU for cargo system with DMRC

Mumbai: BEML shares slipped 2.12% to close at ₹4,326.15 despite the firm announcing the signing of a quadripartite memorandum of understanding involving Deendayal Port Authority, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), and Umeandus Technologies India Private Ltd.

The MoU establishes collaboration on the Real Time Automatic Cargo Evacuation System (e-FTS and Enhance Freight Transport System), with Deendayal Port Authority acting as the client and DMRC as the lead member. BEML and Umeandus Technologies will serve as execution partners for the pilot project, focusing on enhanced freight handling solutions.

Meanwhile, the company reported a net loss of ₹64 crore in Q1 against previous year’s net loss of ₹70.5 crore for the same quarter.

Revenue for the period held steady at ₹634 crore, reflecting a the ₹50.1 crore loss recorded in the same quarter last year BEML’s recent developments, including the alliance for the cargo evacuation system and recent export orders to the CIS region and Uzbekistan, reflect its continuing efforts to expand business avenues despite near-term financial pressures.

Mahindra expands network with 10 new truck & bus dealerships to accelerate growth this festive season

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. has announced the inauguration of 10 new state-of-the-art 3S dealerships across key cities this festive season.



The new facilities, located in Durgapur, Guwahati, Haldwani, Hissar, Bhopal, Hubli, Raipur, Muzaffarpur, Jalandhar, and Kanpur, collectively add 60 vehicle service bays, enhancing Mahindra’s capacity to service over 100 vehicles daily. The outlets are equipped with driver lodging, 24-hour breakdown assistance, and AdBlue availability, ensuring complete after-sales support.

Vinod Sahay, President – Trucks, Buses & Construction Equipment, and Member of Group Executive Board, said the expansion reflects Mahindra’s “serious commitment” to the segment. With over 600 sales and service touchpoints, the company now holds a 7% market share in trucks and buses and aims to grow to 10–12% by FY31 and 20% by FY36.

In Guwahati, the new dealership is expected to energize the commercial vehicle market by offering faster service, better spare parts availability, and reduced downtime for fleet operators.

The move positions Guwahati as a strategic hub for Mahindra’s Northeast operations, supporting rising logistics and infrastructure growth in the region.

Dr. Venkat Srinivas, Business Head – Mahindra Trucks, Buses & Construction Equipment, added that innovations like iMAXX telematics continue to drive customer satisfaction and operational efficiency.

Dulcoflex® launches a unique campaign termed as “kNOw Constipation”

Kolkata: 1 in every 5 Indian today suffers from constipation. Dulcoflex®, India’s trusted name and one of the most accessible for laxative solution in digestive wellness, has launched a unique campaign termed as “kNOw Constipation”. The campaign aims at normalizing conversations around one of the country’s most prevalent yet under-discussed health conditions, ‘constipation’.

This novel concept will be leveraging light-hearted humor around the problem with the purpose to normalize conversations around constipation, especially among women without making fun of the sufferer. While constipation is something that can affect men and women, women end up suffering more as they are more reluctant to discuss and hence treat it right. Also, women are biologically more prone to constipation due to anatomical, physiological, and hormonal factors.

To blend humor with relatability and create a lasting impact, popular stand-up comedians - Aanchal Aggarwal, Srishti Dixit, and Soumya Venugopal soon to be followed by Gurleen Pannu, Jamie Lever, Shreya Roy, have come together to disrupt the deafening silence on the topic of ‘Constipation’. Talking about the newly launched campaign, Nupur Gurbaxani, Head of Brand & Innovation Opella CHC India, said, “In line with our mission to make healthcare as simple and accessible it should be, our ‘kNOw constipation’ campaign aims to break the barrier, and we want women to lead the conversations & be the change agent that normalizes constipation in society.”

The campaign aims to extend beyond digital channels with a holistic approach that will manifest with on-ground grassroots level activations and community engagement, radio channels initiations across India.



Constipation impacts 276 million Indians daily (Nielsen U&A 2024 Functional + Perpetual).

Dulcoflex® unveils ‘kNOw Constipation’ campaign to redefine digestive wellness conversations in India

Kolkata: Dulcoflex®, one of India’s most trusted laxative brands in digestive wellness, has launched its latest awareness initiative — ‘kNOw Constipation’, aimed at breaking the silence around one of the country’s most common yet under-discussed health issues. With one in every five Indians reportedly suffering from constipation, the campaign uses humor and relatability to encourage open discussions, particularly among women who are both biologically more prone and socially more reluctant to talk about it.

The campaign brings together well-known comedians Aanchal Aggarwal, Srishti Dixit, and Soumya Venugopal, soon to be joined by Gurleen Pannu, Jamie Lever, and Shreya Roy, to spread awareness through engaging storytelling. Nupur Gurbaxani, Head of Brand & Innovation, Opella CHC India, said, “Campaigns around constipation often trivialize the issue. With ‘kNOw Constipation’, we aim to empower women to lead the change and normalize the conversation.”

In Kolkata, Dulcoflex®’s initiative has been well-received by local pharmacies and wellness stores, reflecting a strong consumer shift toward preventive and science-backed digestive health products. Industry experts note that Kolkata’s growing focus on holistic well-being positions it as a key market for healthcare innovations.

The campaign will expand beyond digital platforms through grassroots activations, community engagement, and radio outreach across India.

Dr. Reddy’s eyes new growth levers as gRevlimid wanes, Semaglutide approval holds key

New Delhi: With its biggest revenue driver gRevlimid nearing the end of its high margin run, Dr. Reddy’s Laboratories is banking on new launches, pipeline expansion, and cost optimisation to sustain growth across global markets. The company expects upcoming products such as Semaglutide and Abatacept, along with the recently acquired Stugeron® portfolio, to support its next phase of expansion, even as analysts caution about near-term margin pressure.

gRevlimid, the generic version of Bristol Myers Squibb’s blockbuster cancer drug Revlimid (lenalidomide), has been one of Dr. Reddy’s largest contributors in the US market since its launch. The drug, used in the treatment of multiple myeloma, has generated strong profits for Indian generics players since 2022, but its exclusivity window is closing, leading to price erosion and revenue moderation. With this tailwind fading, the company’s next growth drivers



are expected to come from complex generics and differentiated products such as GLP-1 therapies.

M.V. Ramana, CEO – Branded Markets (India and Emerging Markets), said the company’s focus areas include strengthening its core portfolio, scaling new therapies, and maintaining profitability despite pricing pressure in the US.

“We are focusing on sustaining double-digit growth through a combination of new launches, operational efficiency, and disciplined capital allocation,” he told Business Today.

The company reported consolidated revenues of ₹8,805 crore in Q2FY26, up 9.8 per cent year-on-year, while profit after tax rose 14 per cent to ₹1,437 crore.

EBITDA stood at ₹2,351 crore, translating into a margin of 26.7 per cent. Gross margins, however, moderated to 54.7 per cent due to lower gRevlimid sales and price erosion in the US base portfolio. According to Equirus Research, Dr. Reddy’s US revenue declined by US\$25 million sequentially to US\$373 million in the quarter, mainly due to a drop in gRevlimid contribution and price erosion in key products. The brokerage noted that while gRevlimid will continue contributing through Q3, earnings could dip sharply from Q4 onwards.

Specialized investment funds

Is it possible for new mutual fund proxies guarantee retailers alpha

New Delhi: Specialized investment funds (SIFs) are emerging as a new category in India’s mutual fund landscape, positioned as a next-generation solution for investors seeking better returns, who want a flavour and exposure of different investors strategies within the equity markets. SIFs act as a bridge between mutual funds and high-ticket investment vehicles such as portfolio management services (PMS) and alternative investment funds (AIFs) which demand minimum commitments of Rs 50 lakh to Rs 1 crore. Similar avenues were previously inaccessible for the retailers due to high entry barriers and limited transparency space. By lowering the minimum investment threshold and introducing a well-regulated, transparent structure, SIFs enable informed retail investors to explore diversified and high-potential strategies within a secure framework, said Swapnil Aggarwal, Director at VSRK Capital. “They could offer better risk-adjusted returns, while providing exposure to differentiated alpha-generating opportunities.”

Trivish, COO at Tradejini, who recently launched SIFs at his platform, said that SIFs not only open access to complex, hedge fund-style strategies such as long-short equity, tactical as-

Specialized investment funds (SIFs) are emerging as a new category in India’s mutual fund landscape, positioned as a next-generation solution for investors seeking better returns.

set allocation, and sector rotation, but also have an ability to generate alpha in uncertain markets, alike AIFs and PMS, thanks sophisticated active management. By combining mutual funds’ accessibility and regulatory protections, SIFs fill this gap. Their strategy will be strategic and free of core holdings. Also, they may take upto 25% of their assets as exposure in derivatives, which will give them more freedom and flexibility in managing their funds. In simple terms, they will make complex investing accessible to the retail public without sacrificing on the crucial aspects of protection or transparency. SIFs deploy a variety of strategies, such as quant-driven models, long-short equity and sector rotations, tactical asset allocation, diversified multi-asset approaches, and high frequency analytics, to enable faster and more efficient risk management.

With the use of these tools, fund managers can quickly adjust positions, reduce risks, and seize opportunities. “While tactical allocation can



take advantage of changes in sectors or macro trends to produce more consistent alpha, long-short and quantitative strategies continue to yield returns even in sideways or volatile markets,” said Trivish D. These approaches can help investors achieve portfolio resilience, smoother return profiles, and enhanced risk-adjusted performance, said Aggarwal. “By introducing such advanced strategies under a regulated retail-accessible framework, SIFs could elevate India’s investment landscape toward more sophisticated, outcome-oriented investing.”

On the other hand, to safeguard the interest of investors, market regulator SEBI has ensured that only asset management firms with more than three years of ex-

perience and at least Rs 10,000 crore in assets can launch SIFs, which adds credibility. Experts suggest that retailers with short investment horizons, lower risk appetite or aim for steady returns shall stay away from this avenue. “With regulations similar to that of mutual funds, capped expense ratios of around 2.25 per cent, and no performance-linked fees, SIFs will give its investors flexibility along with the familiar protection and transparency,” said Tradejini’s Trivish D. A new category of serious investors, while encouraging innovation in fund management. But this new investment avenue may not dent mutual fund inflows, considering the rising investment culture in India.

Trading systems resume normal functioning MCX technical glitch

New Delhi: Commodity exchange MCX on Tuesday informed stock exchanges BSE and NSE that all trading systems had resumed normal functioning at 1:25 pm. An investigation into the cause of the technical glitch earlier in the day has been initiated on priority. MCX said it remains committed to identifying the root cause and implementing necessary corrective measures.

“Updates on our findings and actions taken will be shared in due course. We sincerely regret the inconvenience caused to market participants and appreciate their patience and understanding,” MCX told stock exchanges. Due to a technical issue at the exchange, the commencement of trading on Tuesday was delayed. Operations were shifted to the Disaster Recovery (DR) site, and trading eventually started at 1.25 pm. Earlier in the morning, MCX had issued at least three separate updates: first postponing the opening to 9:30 am, then



to 10 am and later to 10.30 am, before extending it further. The commodity exchange stays open from Monday to Friday from 9 am to 11:30 pm, and up to 11:55 pm on account of day light savings typically between every November and March of the following year. The disruption came a day after MCX announced the launch of monthly options contracts on the MCX iCOMDEX Bullion Index (MCX BULDEX®). The index, which represents the precious metals segment, comprises highly trad-

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ed gold and silver futures contracts on the exchange. MCX said the new options contracts would provide market participants with a versatile risk management tool, combining diversified exposure to bullion with the flexibility of options trading.

Why chewing betel leaf is the best solution for winter related issues

Chewing paan (betel leaf) as a mouth freshener after meals has been a quintessential part of Indian culinary culture. But do you know what was the reason behind ending the meal with paan? Well, here’s all you need to know about paan and can it really help in treating winter-related issues. Read on to find out...In the colder months of winter, paan can work as a natural remedy to heal seasonal health issues due to its unique medicinal properties. Chewing betel leaf can help address several winter-related ailments, including respiratory concerns, digestive problems, and more. Let’s find out...Respiratory HealthWinter brings with it several infections and ailments such as cold, cough, and congestion due to the dry, cold air. Betel leaf is known for its antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties, which can help in relieving symptoms of respiratory distress. Chewing betel leaves or inhaling their steam can help clear nasal passages, reduce inflammation in the respiratory system, and fight off infections that are more common in winter. The antioxidants present in betel leaf help in reducing mucus production and congestion, making breathing easier. Winter often brings about an increased susceptibility to infections such as the flu and common colds due to weakened immune systems. Betel leaf is rich in vitamins like vitamin C and minerals such as calcium and iron, which are known to boost the body’s immune response. Regularly chewing betel leaves or drinking its extract can provide your body with the necessary nutrients to fend off viral infections and keep your immune system strong during the colder months. Cold weather often slows down digestion, leading to bloating, indigestion, or constipation. Paan contains compounds like fiber and essential oils that



have been shown to aid in the digestive process. They stimulate the secretion of digestive enzymes, improving digestion and alleviating discomfort caused by digestive issues. Chewing betel leaves after meals in winter can help speed up digestion, reduce bloating, and promote better gut health. Winter often worsens joint pain, especially in individuals with arthritis or other musculoskeletal conditions, due to the drop in temperature. Betel leaves contain analgesic properties that can help reduce pain and inflammation in the joints. The anti-inflammatory compounds in betel leaf can be beneficial when applied as a topical remedy in the form of a paste or when consumed regularly. This can help reduce swelling, ease stiffness, and provide relief from aches commonly experienced in colder weather. Cold winter air can cause dry, flaky skin, especially for those with sensitive skin. Betel leaf contains natural antioxidants and hydrating compounds that can help keep the skin moisturized and healthy. The anti-inflammatory properties of betel leaf can also soothe irritated skin and reduce conditions like eczema

or dryness. Applying a paste made from



betel leaves on the skin or consuming betel leaf extracts can help maintain skin hydration and promote a glowing complexion throughout the winter months. Winter can sometimes bring on a sense of lethargy and fatigue, as the body adjusts to the shorter days and lack of sunlight. Betel leaves contain compounds that have a calming and rejuvenating effect on the body. They can help reduce stress, anxiety, and mental fatigue, promoting better overall energy levels.

The leaves have adaptogenic properties, meaning they help the body cope with stress and restore balance, making them an excellent natural remedy to fight the winter blues. Winter is a time when oral health issues can worsen due to dry air and the consumption of warming foods and drinks that may cause tooth sensitivity. Betel leaves have antimicrobial properties that can help maintain oral hygiene and prevent the buildup of bacteria in the mouth. Chewing betel leaves can also help with bad breath, as it has a natural deodorizing effect. Regular use of betel leaves can promote healthier gums and teeth, preventing common oral problems during the winter months. The winter season often leads to over-

eating and weight gain due to comfort foods and reduced physical activity. Betel leaves, when chewed regularly, can help curb appetite and improve metabolism. They have mild diuretic properties that help flush out toxins from the body and prevent water retention, which can contribute to bloating and weight gain. Betel leaf extracts or chewing the leaves can support weight management by promoting healthy digestion and reducing cravings.

Why is Spinach known as the heart’s best friend in winters?

Spinach, often called “the heart’s best friend,” is a highly nutritious leafy green vegetable that is particularly beneficial for heart health during the winter months. Known for its rich profile of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and dietary fiber, spinach plays a significant role in reducing the risk of cardiovascular diseases and improving overall heart function. Its heart-healthy properties make it an essential part of a winter diet, especially when the body requires additional nutrients to stay healthy in colder weather. Let’s explore how spinach helps in enhancing heart health. Spinach, often called “the heart’s best friend,” is a highly nutritious leafy green vegetable that is particularly beneficial for heart health during the winter months. Known for its rich profile of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and dietary fiber, spinach plays a significant role in reducing the risk of cardiovascular diseases and improving overall heart function. Its heart-healthy properties make it an essential part of a winter diet, especially when the body requires additional nutrients to stay healthy in colder weather. Let’s explore how spinach helps in enhancing heart health. Spinach is a powerhouse of essential nutrients that support cardiovascular function. It is an excellent source of vitamins A, C, E, K, and several B vitamins, all of which contribute to a healthy heart. These vitamins work together to protect the heart by reducing oxidative stress, which can lead to inflammation and damage to blood vessels. In particular, vitamin C is a potent antioxidant that helps neutralize harmful free radicals in the body, thereby reducing the risk of plaque buildup in the arteries. Additionally, spinach is rich in folate, a B vitamin that plays an important role in lowering homocysteine levels. High levels of homocysteine are associated with an increased risk of heart disease, as it can damage the lining of blood vessels and promote the development of blood clots. By lowering homocysteine levels, spinach helps prevent cardiovascular attacks and strokes. One of the key benefits of spinach for heart health is its potassium content. Potassium is crucial for maintaining proper heart function and blood pressure. It helps counterbalance the effects of sodium in the body, reducing the risk of hypertension (high blood pressure), which is a major risk factor for heart disease. By consuming spinach regularly, especially in the winter when many people are prone to consuming more salty, processed foods, you can help maintain optimal blood pressure levels. Magnesium, another important mineral found in spinach, is also vital for heart health. Magnesium supports muscle function, including the heart muscle, and helps maintain a regular heart rhythm. It also plays a role in controlling blood pressure by relaxing blood vessels, ensuring smooth and uninterrupted blood flow.



Why are older women predisposed to osteoarthritis?



Osteoarthritis is a condition that can affect joint mobility and cause joint pain. Experts are interested in understanding the relationship between experiencing menopause and the risk for osteoarthritis. A study recently published in Nature Aging Trusted Source used mouse models and human cells to explore this relationship. Researchers found that loss of 17beta-estradiol and progesterone in mice with chemically induced menopause affected cartilage degeneration. Similarly, treatment with 17beta-estradiol and progesterone protected against cartilage degeneration in mice and appeared to improve human cartilage cells, too. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Trusted Source, women over 50 are at a higher risk for osteoarthritis. This age is around the time that menopause happens Trusted Source. The current study’s authors wanted to explore how menopause affects joint function. They note that knee osteoarthritis is twice as common in postmenopausal females than in males, but research remains lacking. This research used female mice. Researchers chemically induced menopause in the mice and looked at blood samples to examine sex hormone levels. They found that 17beta-estradiol and progesterone levels dropped post-menopause while follicle-stimulated hormone (FSH) increased. Researchers also observed that the menopausal mice gained weight. Researchers then looked at how these hormonal changes affected joint tissue. In the knee joints, they observed an increased cartilage degeneration in the menopausal group. The group also had worse synovitis Trusted Source, which is inflammation of the synovium, a critical component of joints. Since the researchers observed synovial changes in both groups, they believe that menopause may make these changes worse. When looking at the mice’s bones, they found that the menopausal mice had components like lower bone mineral density in a certain area of the tibia called the metaphysis. However, outcomes were similar when looking at the end of the mice’s tibias in both groups.

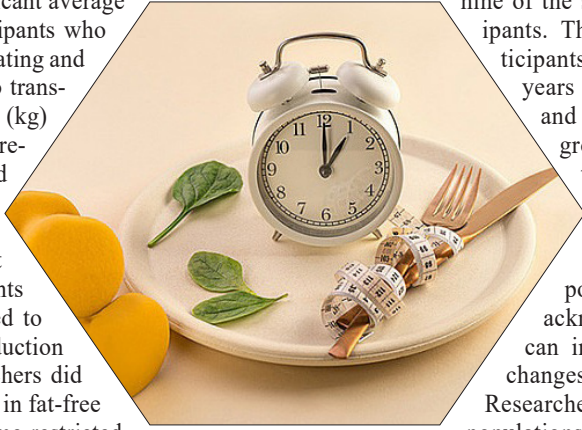
Researchers think this may mean that only certain regions of subchondral bone may be more affected by menopause. The study authors were able to examine cartilage samples at various points in the menopause transition. They identified various increased and decreased proteins in the samples and found that cellular signaling changes happened before changes to the extracellular matrix of the cartilage. They also observed decreases in certain types of collagen and an increase in another type common in diseased cartilage. These and other findings suggested that menopause increases the likelihood of collagen degrading. Researchers then wanted to see the effect of giving mice 17beta-estradiol and progesterone after induction of menopause. Some mice received 17beta-estradiol, others received progesterone, and others received both. These results were compared to results in mice that received the medication dasatinib and no intervention. Mice received these interventions at the halfway point of irregular cycles, mid-perimenopause, through to the start of menopause. They found that mice that received either 17beta-estradiol alone or 17beta-estradiol and progesterone experienced improved cartilage integrity and return of gait to pre-menopausal parameters. However, no treatments impacted the subchondral bone or synovium. Researchers also gathered data from human chondrocyte cells Trusted Source, which are cartilage cells. The samples were from women over 60 who underwent a total knee replacement. They looked at how various levels of sex hormones impacted the chondrocytes. Their observations suggest that progesterone blunts the aging of the menopausal chondrocytes, and combined 17beta-estradiol and progesterone best improves chondrocyte health. Samples treated with 17beta-estradiol and progesterone saw an increase in cartilage formation markers. Since this study was conducted primarily in mice, this raises the question to what extent its findings actually apply in people. Moreover, since menopause was chemically induced in the mice, there may have been other systemic

changes at play, and researchers did not examine these. Researchers also did not examine pain behaviors, a major component of osteoarthritis. Kecia Gaither, MD, MPH, MS, MBA, FACOG, double board-certified in obstetrics and gynecology and maternal fetal medicine, who was not involved in this study, told MNT that: “Murine models of research, while enlightening, don’t fully replicate the human body. [The findings] thought-provoking as to potential therapeutics, but certainly more research need be done.” The study authors also acknowledge that there could have been an interaction between the mice’s weight and menopausal status. This could be helpful to examine with future research. Furthermore, here may have been confounding regarding the results for quantified bone loss. This is because the type of mice the researchers used all experience bone loss starting at around 6 to 8 months old. Also, when looking at the intervention of taking 17beta-estradiol and progesterone, researchers only gave these until the start of menopause, which could have impacted the results. The authors note that future research can explore how hormonal interventions affect the synovium and subchondral bone, as this research did not observe a change in these structures following the hormonal intervention. Additionally, some mice in the groups that received only 17beta-estradiol or only progesterone experienced neoplasms and hyperplasia in the intestines. Thus, it may also be important to look into the adverse effects of hormones moving forward. Aside from gait changes, the observed activity of the mice was similar across groups. The gait changes were different from previous research in mice with post-traumatic osteoarthritis. Researchers also assumed that the women they collected tissue samples from were postmenopausal, as all women were over 60. Finally, the research focused on knee osteoarthritis, and examining additional joints may be helpful in future research. Future research can confirm the mechanisms at play and whether it matches the data found in this study.

Intermittent fasting paired with exercise may be best for weight loss

Maintaining a healthy weight and body fat levels are essential components of health. Experts are continuing to research the best fitness plans and eating habits that promote optimal weight and body fat proportions. One systematic review and meta-analysis published in the International Journal of Obesity Trusted Source explored how combining exercise with a specific type of intermittent fasting called time-restricted eating affected body composition. The results suggest that time-restricted eating could help lower fat mass and body fat percentage better than exercising without restricting eating times. However, more research is required to explore and confirm the findings. Time-restricted eating is a specific type of intermittent fasting. Intermittent fasting involves not eating or limiting calories at specific times while following regular dietary intake at other times. It may help achieve weight loss and fight insulin resistance. The form of time-restricted eating assessed in this research was fasting for 12 to 20 hours a day, with 4 to 12 hours available for eating. The review and meta-analysis included data from 15 studies looking at 338 participants. Researchers found studies via five different databases and the use of reference lists. All the included studies were either randomized crossover studies or randomized controlled trials lasting at least 4 weeks. The studies included healthy adults and examined how time-restricted eating along with exercise affected body composition. They compared time-restricted eating groups to exercise-matched control groups without time-restricted eating. Researchers conducted subgroup analyses to examine moderator variables like body mass index (BMI), exercise type, and energy intake. They also considered the risk for bias in each of the examined studies. Of the studies analyzed, the average BMI of participants ranged from normal to overweight. The allowed eating window was primarily mid-day, with eating between noon and 9 p.m., but varied across some of the studies. Exercise was performed during eating windows and the types of exercise included aerobic, resistance, or a combination of the two. In some studies, there was also a calorie restriction for both groups. Overall, the meta-analysis found that, compared to control groups, participants in time-restricted eating groups appeared to reap more health benefits. While small, there was a significant average decrease in fat mass for participants who participated in time-restricted eating and exercise. This was estimated to translate to a possible 1.3 kilogram (kg) reduction in fat mass. Time-restricted eating also appeared to lower body fat percentage better than exercise alone, as there was a small but significant average reduction for participants in this area. This was estimated to translate to a possible 1.3% reduction in body fat percentage. Researchers did not observe significant changes in fat-free mass between engaging in time-restricted eating compared to controls. The results indicate that the findings may not be impacted by BMI, exercise type, age, energy intake, or study duration. However, there were high levels of heterogeneity amongst the studies for fat mass, body fat percentage, and fat-free mass findings. Overall, the results paint time-restricted eating in a positive light. This research does have limitations. First, the researchers were limited in their data collection methods and their inclusion and exclusion criteria. For example, they only included studies written in English and focused on healthy

adult participants, excluding those with problems like cardiometabolic conditions. Second, the studies were not all of the same kind, which could affect the overall results. There was variety regarding components like diet, the specific exercise regimens, and body composition measuring. Researchers acknowledge that the body composition measurement tools “do not always reflect similar changes in body composition.” Thirteen of the studies included participants who had BMIs of 25 or less. A BMI of 18.5 to under 25 is considered a healthy weight Trusted Source. Thus, the data did not consider many individuals with obesity, and most participants were metabolically healthy. This limits how much the results can be generalized. Kalyan True, RDN, LD, an outpatient dietitian with Memorial Hermann in Houston, who was not involved in the review, commented that, being published in an academic journal focused on obesity, “you’d think that the average BMI [of the participants] would be in the overweight to obese category.” However, she noted that the paper states that the average BMI was in the normal to overweight BMI ranges. Thirdly, participants’ adherence to time-restricted eating and dietary intake were self-reported, which may lead to inaccuracies and underreporting of energy intake. The studies had short durations, so the results cannot examine the long-term effects of time-restricted eating. Six of the studies lasted for 4 weeks, seven lasted for 8 weeks, and only one exceeded 12 weeks. True also noted that “typically, it will take at least 12 weeks to see proper body composition changes regardless of time-restricted eating.” In the risk for bias assessment, there was some identified risk for bias. For example, most of the studies “were rated as unclear risk of bias for blinding of outcome assessment.” It was also noted that this sort of study cannot involve participant blinding because of the intervention type. The authors also identified possible publication bias when it came to fat mass and body fat percentage findings. Researchers also only considered pre-post intervention values when it came to study outcomes, so this limits the data they considered. For example, this means the analysis did not look at any follow-up that happened after the studies’ main intervention periods. About half of the studies were run in the United States. Additionally, nine of the studies had all-male participants. The average age of all participants was around twenty-nine years old. Thus, more diversity and examination of additional groups may be helpful in future research. This analysis did not look at how dietary energy and protein intake affected body composition changes. The authors acknowledge that these factors can influence body composition changes in people who exercise. Researchers acknowledge that some populations may not experience changes to fat mass or body fat percentages and that there may be variations in fat loss or gain. There may also be unaccounted-for variables that explain variations in the effect sizes of this analysis. This research suggests a potential benefit for time-restricted eating. The authors note that more research is required. For example, more research is needed to understand why time-restricted eating has certain effects. Future research can include more long-term studies and ones with more objective ways to measure food intake.



Why now is the time to explore outer East London

East London. Two words that, if you know anything about the UK’s capital, often conjure up opposing opinions. There are those who mourn its supposedly waning hip factor – regaling stories of 1980s warehouse art shows or squat parties – while deploring the rampant commercialism of its super-charged epicentre, Shoreditch. Others, meanwhile, will rave about new independent galleries or small-plate restaurants in nearby Dalston, Bethnal Green or Hackney. Yet, the general consensus is that East London’s long-buzzing arts and food scenes are continuing to move ever further out, driven – as in other world cities – by the relentless search for affordability. But a few miles east of these oversubscribed neighbourhoods are two boroughs that are lesser known to visitors and have been quietly emerging as London’s next artsy enclave: Waltham Forest and Newham. Stretching north from Stratford up to Leyton and Walthamstow, this once-unfashionable outer area hasn’t always matched East London’s brand of cool. And yet in spring 2025, it’s witnessing a cultural explosion, with new museums, theatres and bars and some of the city’s biggest arts openings that are putting this under-the-radar corner of London on the map. The catalyst for these boroughs’ rise was the 2012 London Olympics, which transformed the area’s scrapyards and brownfield land into the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park – an oasis of rivers, canals and water meadows bordered by Stratford, Leyton and Hackney. “The Olympics brought a huge amount of investment in infrastructure, transport links and housing,” said Britannia Morton, co-chief executive of Sadler’s Wells, the world-famous Islington-based dance theatre founded in the 18th Century. “The Olympic Park, where our new Sadler’s Wells East is based, was created converting marshland into this beautiful environment.” Sadler’s Wells East, which opened in February 2025, is located in East Bank, a £1.1bn new waterside cultural quarter in the Olympic Park. “[It was] formerly known as Fridge Mountain – a dumping ground for old electronic appliances,” said Morton. The first landmark to open here was the University of the Arts’ London College of Fashion in October 2023, which has galleries and a

cafe open to the public. Sadler’s Wells East was built in Italian red brick and houses a 550-seat state-of-the-art auditorium and six dance studios. “Whether you’re interested in ballet, hip-hop, kathak or contemporary, our eclectic programme brings the most innovative work created locally, nationally and internationally to Stratford,” said Morton. Visitors can enjoy free events in its public spaces, including lunchtime dance classes on the community dance floor, as well as a bar and restaurant. There are panoramic views from its rooftop over the London Aquatics Centre, Sir Anish Kapoor’s 114.5m ArcelorMittal Orbit (the UK’s largest sculpture) and the London Stadium. Across the park at the Here East innovation and tech campus (formerly the London Olympics Media Centre) is the glass-fronted V&A East Storehouse, opening 31 May 2025. It’s the first half of the new V&A East, whose South Kensington-based original is the world’s largest museum of applied arts, decorative arts and design, with more than 2.8 million objects in its permanent collection. This first instalment is essentially a new home for the V&A East’s reserve collection (hence the name “Storehouse”), and “a magical new behind-the-scenes museum experience”, according to its deputy director and COO Tim Reeve. With 100 curated mini displays, its half a million works range from the Glastonbury Festival Archive to Dior haute couture and mid-century furniture. Its world-first Order an Object experience allows anyone to book an appointment to view anything from Roman frescoes to Elton John’s costumes. It will also be home to the new David Bowie Centre, opening 13 September 2025, displaying the singer’s outfits, lyrics and archive. “It’s a new standard for access to national collections,” said Reeve. “We’re encouraging visitors to feel empowered to make their own journeys through the V&A’s global collections.” The second half, the five-storey V&A East Museum, is opening in East Bank in spring 2026. Its main exhibition hall will celebrate leading artists, designers and performers in major shows, and its galleries will narrate stories of East London’s creative and manufacturing heritage. Elsewhere in East Bank, BBC Music Studios, which will house the BBC Symphony

Orchestra and host recording sessions and live performances, is slated to open in late 2025 or early 2026. And that’s not all. A couple of miles north in Walthamstow, another major cultural opening is happening. While this diverse north-east London suburb has long been thriving – its pretty village centre, some of which dates to the 15th Century, is indeed a gentrification hotspot – the imposing new Soho Theatre Walthamstow will further raise the neighbourhood’s profile when it opens on 2 May 2025. A former cinema designed in 1930 by architect Cecil Masey, the distinctive building was inspired by the Moorish architecture of the 13th-Century Alhambra palace in Granada, Spain. In its mid-20th-Century heyday, it also hosted gigs by The Beatles, Buddy Holly, Roy Orbison, Dusty Springfield, Chuck Berry and the Rolling Stones – before closing in 2003. When it finally reopens, with its original Art Deco stylings revived, the Soho Theatre Walthamstow will have a 960-seat Grade II-listed auditorium, studio spaces, four bars and a restaurant. (In comparison, its current West End location has a capacity of just 240.) “This is the first time we’ve had a professional theatre in the area,” said executive assistant Annie Jones, who worked on the restoration project for more than five years. “The programme will list up to nine shows a night – a mix of comedy, cabaret and theatre all rooted in its community. Waltham Forest has always been welcoming, with its vibrancy, multiculturalism and openness, and its spirit has only grown.” Connecting Stratford, the Olympic Park and Walthamstow is Leyton. This once-maligned area is now home to one of the most up-and-coming strips in East London. Previously more synonymous with fly-tipping, Tilbury Road railway arches (a narrow alleyway opposite Leyton Midland Road station) has been transformed by new arrivals in the last year alone, including three bars, a bakery, a Caribbean restaurant and two soon-to-open artisan cafes. The opening of two popular microbreweries in the last few years on the same stretch sparked this sudden transformation: Gravity Well, nestled in the station arch itself, and the edgier Libertalia taproom, named after a mythical anarchist colony in the 17th Centu-

ry. For Leyton-raised Danny Saunders, owner of tropical cocktail bar Leyton Calling (which opened in summer 2024) and cosy candlelit pub Chop Shop Tavern (which opened in February 2025), it’s a personal coup, having known the area since the 1980s. “I’ve come full circle,” he said, with a smile. “My latest bar is in the actual arch where I set up my first car repair business back in the day.” Leyton’s rise as a whole has, however, been something of a slow-burn. Back in the mid-2010s, nearby Francis Road began to be taken over by independent creative businesses. “I opened here in 2017,” said Aimée Madill, who owns Phlox, a bookstore, cafe and wine bar. “It was risky as it was still a ‘less-developed’ part of London, but local indie bookshops are more than a business, they’re a sign of confidence in a community.” Pedestrianised in 2017, the tree-lined street has since blossomed with chic cafes and bars: two of the latest openings are vinyl store-cum-craft beer bar Dreamhouse Records and Loop Dining, a pop-up space launched in summer 2024 to host weekly residencies from buzzy up-and-coming chefs. “Unlike Stratford,” Madill said, “Leyton is characterised by small makers and creatives existing side by side with businesses who’ve been here decades. Most of us live here, so we’ve been able to revitalise, rather than reinvent, parts of the area – which adds to the sense of community.” So what’s next for outer East London? “Young people and families are now priced out of Hackney,” said Michaela Zelenanska, who runs natural wine bar Swirl, which opened in December 2024 on Tilbury Road. “Leyton and neighbouring Leytonstone seem a logical next big thing. It’s small businesses that make the place what it is.” Will London continue to move ever further east? “We’re already engaging with artists, audiences and community groups in Barking and Dagenham,” said Morton, referencing two outer London suburbs several miles from Leyton and Stratford. “East London has always been a creative crucible.” Stephen Emms is an East London resident who writes a weekly newsletter called Leytonstoner about the arts, food and drink scenes primarily in Leyton, Leytonstone, Stratford and Walthamstow.



The great conclave secret: What do would-be popes eat?

This past week, travellers in Rome may have spotted cardinals frequenting their favourite restaurants. Just before the last papal election in 2013, Italian media reported that many of these men were making the time to visit a particular neighbourhood favourite, Al Passetto di Borgo, a family-run eatery located 200m from Saint Peter’s Basilica, where Cardinal Donald William Wuerl is known to order the lasagna and Francesco Coccopalmerio (allegedly the most-voted Italian cardinal in 2013) likes the grilled squid. Cardinals may feel some urgency to get in a good meal or two because, during the conclave beginning on 7 May, in which 135 cardinals will hold a secret election for a new pope in the Vatican’s Sistine Chapel, they’ll be entirely secluded from the rest of the world for an indefinite period of time. Voting, sleeping and eating all take place in tightly controlled sequestration. Papal conclaves are notoriously secretive affairs. The cardinals are secured in a single shared space with no messages allowed in or out, except for the smoke signalling whether a vote has been successful. White smoke signals a new pope and black

means another vote is required to reach the two-thirds-plus-one consensus required to crown a new pontiff. What precisely occurs in these conclaves is unknown, but one thing is certain: the cardinals must eat over the days or weeks it takes to elect the new leader of the world’s 1.4 billion Catholics. But with provisions going in and out, how is the secrecy of the conclave maintained? How can the cardinals ensure the integrity of the vote, unaffected by outside opinion? Historically, food has presented a potential risk: a cardinal’s ravioli might be stuffed with an illicit message from the kitchen staff; or a cardinal could sneak a vote update to the outside world with a dirty napkin. However, communal eating is also one of the contexts in which furtive negotiations can take place. Recent pop culture representations have made the most of this, using conclave food culture to create a heightened sense of suspicion, intrigue and control. Take the 2024 film

Conclave, where almost all the plot points occur not in the voting chambers, but in the cafeteria. The noisy meals contrast with the almost entirely silent conclave proper, which proceeds without formal debates. The otherwise silent voting is only

sparingly punctuated by moments of ritual speech, like the audible oath a cardinal takes as he drops his voting card into the ballot urn. Still, around the ceremonial silence is a great deal of communication, much of which happens with and via food. And while we can’t assume that the film faithfully depicts what happens behind closed doors, it is no doubt true that in papal food culture – as in culture more broadly – what you eat, how you eat and with whom you eat speaks volumes. The code of conclave secrecy goes back to 1274, when Pope Gregory X established the regulations that still partly dictate how papal elections are run today. As with the coronation of many popes, his was controversial. It also had the distinction of being by far the longest, taking almost three years (1268-1271) to reach the majority consensus required to appoint a new pope. According to Italian canonist Henricus de Segusio, who served in that conclave, local residents threatened to restrict the cardinals’ food to hasten a resolution. Pope Gregory X’s new rules included isolation of the conclave – a rule that is still in effect today – and rationing of the cardinals’ food. After three days without consensus, the cardinals received only one daily meal; after eight days, only bread and water. In the mid-1300s, these rules were relaxed by Clement VI, who permitted three-course meals consisting of soup; a main dish of fish,



meat or eggs; and dessert, which could include cheese or fruit. While the rationing didn’t stick, tight control over conclaves remains. The most detailed historical account of the food culture of papal conclaves comes from Bartolomeo Scappi, who was the Renaissance’s most famous chef (and arguably the world’s first celebrity chef) and served both Popes Pius IV and Pius V. His 1570 book, Opera Dell’Arte del Cucinare (The Art of Cooking) – the first cookbook published by a practicing chef – catapulted him to fame. In it, he reveals the secrets of feeding the conclave that

elected Pope Julius III, and the extreme practice of surveillance that remains to this day. According to Scappi, the cardinals’ daily meals were prepared in a communal kitchen by cooks and sommeliers, just two of the many domestic positions that kept a conclave functioning. He identifies that the kitchen was a space where illicit messages could be shared, and notes that guards were stationed there specifically to prevent this. Therefore, twice a day in an order determined by lottery, stewards would ceremoniously bring the food to the ruota.

