

BJP RS List: Nabin From Bihar

New Delhi, Mar 03: BJP national president Nitin Nabin was on Tuesday nominated as the party's candidate from Bihar for the upcoming Rajya Sabha polls. The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has released a list of nine candidates for the Rajya Sabha polls, fielding its former West Bengal unit chief Rahul Sinha and Chhattisgarh unit vice-president Laxmi Verma from the respective states. Assam PWD Minister Jogen Mohan and MLA Terash Gowalla will be the saffron party's candidates for the elections to the Upper House of Parliament from the state.

The BJP has also nominated its Odisha unit president, Manmoham Samal, and leader Sujit Kumar, an incumbent Rajya Sabha MP, as candidates from the state for the upcoming polls. BJP leader Shivesh Kumar will join the fray from Bihar and Sanjay Bhatia, a former Lok Sabha MP of the party, will be its candidate from Haryana. Kumar is Bihar BJP's general secretary. The names of the candidates have been approved by the party's central election committee, BJP national general secretary Arun Singh said.

CM Inaugurates Kaziranga Orchid Garden In Golaghat

Guwahati, Mar 03: Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday inaugurated the Kaziranga Orchid Garden at Kohora, Golaghat, in a move aimed at boosting eco-tourism and promoting the region's cultural heritage. The garden, spread across 20 bighas, features over 900 indigenous and exotic orchid species housed in seven modern glasshouses. The facility also includes a children's park and a 500-seat cultural stage. On the same occasion, the Chief Minister inaugurated the Kaziranga Heritage Resort, which is expected to support local cuisine, cottage industries, and employment generation. Dr. Sarma also dedicated several public infrastructure projects to the people, reflecting the government's focus on comprehensive development across multiple sectors.

US-Iran Tensions Hit 30,000 Tribal Workers' Families



Jaipur, Mar 03: Rajasthan is facing a tough time during the Iran war, as migrant workers and religious groups from the state are experiencing difficulties, while exporters of handicraft industry are apprehensive about the fast-changing developments.

According to estimates, nearly 25,000 to 30,000 migrant workers from Dungarpur and Banswara districts are currently employed in Kuwait. In addition, over 300 people from Dungarpur district are reported to be present in Israel. With tensions escalating in West Asia and Iran attacking many countries in its vicinity, the families of migrant workers are seeking regular updates about the safety of their relatives.

A non-resident Indian based in Kuwait said that the country's new and old airports, along with an army base and an American base, were attacked amid the recent hostilities. However, he added that the situation was now largely under control. In view of

Iran's reported attack on Kuwait, residents have stocked up on essential commodities, and there is currently no shortage of rations or other essential items. Meanwhile, religious leaders and devotees from Jodhpur's famous Bada Ramdwara temple are reportedly stranded in Dubai. According to available information, Amritram Maharaj and Manohar Das Maharaj of Bada Ramdwara are in Dubai.

Rajasthan's handicraft export industry, which has already been grappling with instability following the high Trump tariffs, is now facing fresh challenges due to rising tensions in West Asia and the closure of airspaces. Exporters fear that any disruption to the Red Sea shipping route could lead to a sharp increase in freight rates and delays in consignments, directly impacting international trade fairs and buyer commitments.

Mahavir Bagrecha, an exporter, said, "The IMM Cologne Fair is scheduled to take place soon, and several sampling and other export consignments are lined up." He cautioned that any closure of the Red Sea route would further deepen the crisis for exporters already operating under tight margins and global uncertainty.

Rahul Gandhi Slams Modi's Iran Silence

Gandhi said both US-Israel's strikes on Iran and Iran's attacks must be condemned to prevent wider conflict

New Delhi, Mar 3: Amid the US-Israel-Iran conflict, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, on Tuesday, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi must speak up and answer as to whether he supports the assassination of a head of state as a way to define the world order. He said the unilateral attacks on Iran, as well as Iran's attacks on other Middle Eastern nations, must be condemned. "Silence now diminishes India's standing in the world," the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said in a social media post.

Gandhi said that escalating hostilities between the United States, Israel and Iran are pushing a fragile region toward wider conflict. Crores of people, including nearly a crore Indians, face uncertainty, he said. "While security concerns are real, attacks that violate sovereignty will only worsen the crisis. The unilateral attacks on Iran, as well as Iran's attacks on other Middle Eastern nations, must be condemned. Violence begets violence; dia-



logue and restraint remains the only path to peace," the former Congress chief said.

"India must be morally clear. We should have the courage to speak plainly in defence of international law and human lives. Our foreign policy is rooted in sovereignty and the peaceful resolution of disputes - and it must remain consistent," Gandhi said. He said PM Modi must speak up. Does he support the assassination of a head of state as a way to define the world order, Gandhi asked.

Gandhi's remarks come days after Iran confirmed that its Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, had been assassinated in targeted strikes carried out the previous day by the United States and Israel. The United States and Israel launched a major attack on Iran on February 28, with US President Donald Trump calling on the Iranian public to seize control of their destiny and rise against the Islamic leadership that has ruled their country since 1979.

Jharkhand Set for 100-Day Special Intensive Revision; April Deadline for SIR Finalization

EC Directs State to Launch Electoral Roll Revision Preparations

Ranchi, Mar 03: The special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls is set to start in Jharkhand in April, with a target of 100 days to completion of the exercise. The state's Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), K Ravi Kumar, said that a meeting of all district officials has been called on March 11 to make preparations for the process. "The special intensive revision of voter lists in Jharkhand will begin in April. Nearly 73% of the state's voters have already been verified prior to the launch of the SIR exercise; 19,430,429 of the 26,562,300 voters in Jharkhand have already been verified," the state's top poll official told reporters. "The SIR will be completed within 100 days of the issuance of the notification. Some states demand more time, but this will not be the case in Jharkhand. The entire SIR



process will be completed within 90 to 100 days in Jharkhand," the poll official said.

He added that Election Commission (EC) has directed the state to make preparations for the electoral rolls revision. CEO Kumar further informed

reporters that a state-level meeting regarding the SIR exercise has been scheduled for March 11. "The primary objective of this meeting is to complete pre-revision activities so that all remaining deficiencies can be rectified and all arrangements are put

in place before the SIR begins this month. Electoral officers from all districts will participate in the meeting," the CEO said. Following instructions of the Election Commission, the Jharkhand Chief Electoral Officer's office conducted voter verification based on the 2003 electoral list. This includes over 1.2 million voters who have moved out, died, or are registered in more than one place.

State-level meet of electoral officers on March 11 Jharkhand CEO K Ravi Kumar said that a state-level meeting of electoral officers regarding SIR has been scheduled for March 11. "The primary objective of this meeting is to complete pre-revision activities so that all remaining deficiencies can be rectified and all arrangements are put in place before the SIR begins this month," he said.



Tripura CM, Union Minister Meet Over Sports Infrastructure



Agartala, Mar 03: Prof Dr Manik Saha, Chief Minister of Tripura, today paid a courtesy call on Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Mansukh Mandaviya at his official residence in New Delhi. According to sources, the meeting centered on key issues concerning youth development and the expansion of sports infrastructure in Tripura. The Chief Minister is

understood to have highlighted the state government's ongoing initiatives to empower the youth through skill development, sports promotion, and capacity-building programmes.

During the discussion, emphasis was reportedly laid on strengthening grassroots-level sports facilities, upgrading existing stadiums, and creating modern infrastructure to

nurture emerging talents from the state. Tripura, known for producing promising athletes in disciplines such as football, athletics, and weightlifting, is keen to enhance institutional support to help sportspersons compete at national and international levels.

Sources said both leaders discussed the scope for greater coordination between the Centre and the state to accelerate sports-related projects and youth-centric schemes. The Chief Minister is believed to have sought continued support from the Union Ministry to further expand opportunities for young people in Tripura. The meeting is seen as significant in the context of the state government's broader push to engage youth in constructive activities and promote sports as a means of social and economic development.

Manipur Leaders Share Holi-Yaoshang Greetings

Imphal, Mar 03: Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand has extended warm greetings to the people of Manipur on the joyous occasion of Holi, locally known as Yaoshang, 2026. In a message shared on social media, the Chief Minister described Yaoshang as more than just a festival of colours, calling it a celebration of unity, harmony, and the State's shared cultural heritage. He expressed hope that the sacred festival would usher in a new dawn of peace, stability, and inclusive progress across Manipur. Invoking the blessings of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the Chief Minister prayed for good health, happiness, prosperity, and long life for every household. He also urged the people to reaffirm their collective responsibility to strengthen mutual trust, foster brotherhood, and work together towards building a peaceful and developed



Manipur. He added that the colours of Yaoshang should dissolve differences and deepen the bonds that unite the people as one.

Meanwhile, former Chief Minister N. Biren Singh also conveyed his greetings to the people of the State. He wished everyone happiness, harmony, and colourful celebrations during Yaoshang. In his message, Biren Singh expressed hope that the spirit of friendship, harmony, and traditional festivity would fill hearts with happiness and unity. He called upon the people to celebrate the festival with love, respect, and the true spirit of togetherness.

Manipur Arms Seizure: One Held

Imphal, Mar 03: Security forces recovered a cache of arms and ammunition during a search operation at Old Got-hol village under Churachandpur Police Station in Churachandpur district on March 2, 2026.

According to official sources, the items seized from the area included one country-made single barrel rifle, one bolt action rifle, one country-made grenade, one .22 rifle fitted with a telescopic sight, one pumpi ammunition, four single barrel ammunition rounds, one pumpi mortar and five country-made shells.

In a separate operation on the same day, Manipur Police arrested Waikhom Ratan Singh (46) from his residence at Moirangkhom Loklaobung under Imphal Police Station in Imphal West district. A 9 mm pistol was recovered from his possession. Further investigation is underway in both cases.

Himanta: Assam to Evict 5 Lakh Bighas Post-Polls



Guwahati, Mar 02: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma promised large-scale eviction drives on five lakh bighas (over 1.65 lakh acres) of encroached land if the BJP returns to power after the upcoming assembly elections. During the second day of the BJP's 'Jan Ashirwad Yatra' in Jagiroad, Sarma received a dramatic 'bulldozer salute' from party workers perched atop 10 bulldozers, showering flower petals on his convoy. Accompanied by Assam BJP president Dilip Saikia, the yatra passed through Morigaon, Raha, Nagaon, and ended at Barhampur. "Next time, five lakh bighas will be cleared of encroachments. This is the message we have given to the people. No Bangladeshi infiltrator will live in peace in Assam," Sarma declared from atop his open SUV, flanked by the bulldozers.

He targeted alleged encroachers in forests, tribal

belts, and blocks, vowing their removal if the BJP secures a third term. Sarma noted that the government has already freed 1.5 lakh bighas (over 49,500 acres) from encroachment in the past five years, as informed to the Assembly on February 19. Sarma highlighted public support during the yatra, with people thanking the BJP for jobs, land recovery, and action against illegal infiltrators. "I hadn't thought that people would come out in such large numbers. This time, it is completely different," he said, expressing confidence in a strong mandate. The Assam Assembly polls, the first after the 2023 delimitation, are slated for March-April. The BJP currently holds 64 seats in the 126-member house, with allies AGP (9), UPPL (7), and BPF (3). Opposition includes Congress (26), AI-UDF (15), CPI(M) (1), and one Independent.

Manipur CM Inaugurates Schools, Bridge in Imphal East

Manipur, Mar 02: Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh on Sunday inaugurated multiple development projects at Moirangpurrel in Imphal East district and flagged off a major road upgradation work at Napet Palli, marking a significant boost to infrastructure and education in the region. At Moirangpurrel, the Chief Minister inaugurated the Itham Moirangpurrel Bridge constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), a Model Residential School built under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK), and the newly constructed Science and Arts Block of Moirangpurrel Higher Secondary School developed under Samagra Shiksha, Manipur. He also flagged off the upgradation of the road stretch from NH-202 at Lamalai to Thoubal Dam (1 km to 18.50 km) at Napet Palli. The project is part of an important road network linking NH-202 (Imphal-Ukhrul Road) and NH-102(A) (Shangshak-Tengnoupal Road). The work is being executed under the supervision of the Public Works Department and is

expected to be completed within a year.

Addressing a gathering at Moirangpurrel Higher Secondary School, the Chief Minister acknowledged that the institution has been facing difficulties due to a shortage of teachers and assured that necessary steps would be taken to address the issue. During the programme, information regarding alleged unlawful activities along the Moirangpurrel road, reportedly involving certain security personnel, was brought to his notice. Taking serious note of the matter, the Chief Minister directed the Superintendent of Police to conduct a thorough investigation. He further instructed the Deputy Commissioner of Imphal East to submit a report on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from Laikhong village who have not yet received benefits for purchasing mattresses through Direct Benefit Transfer. The Deputy Commissioner assured that the matter would be resolved in coordination with the Home Department. The Moirangpurrel Higher Secondary School project was constructed at an estimated



cost of Rs 3.78 crore under Samagra Shiksha Manipur and implemented by the Education Engineering Wing (EEW). The infrastructure includes classrooms, laboratories, a library, separate toilets for boys and girls, and a rainwater harvesting system. The Model Residential School was built under PMJVK with funding from the Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India, at a project cost of approximately Rs 25.62 crore. The Itham Moirangpurrel Bridge over the Thoubal River at 2.10 km under Keirao Bitra Block was constructed at a sanctioned cost of around Rs 645.84 lakh by M/s NDS Construction under PMGSY-I. Speaking at the event, Andro MLA Th. Shyamkumar

lauded the Chief Minister for his guidance and support towards the development of the constituency. Lamalai MLA Khongbantabam Ibomcha stated that development activities in the state have gained momentum under the present government. Phungyar MLA Leishiyo Keishing suggested that upgrading the Napet Palli-Ashang Khullen road to National Highway status would further strengthen connectivity and economic prospects in the region.

The programme was attended by Commissioner to the Chief Minister N. Ashok Kumar, Chief Engineer PWD Chongtham Biswachandra Singh, officials of the Education Department, students, and local residents, among others.

Nissan India sales jump 23% in February; Gravite deliveries begin from March

Guwahati: Nissan Motor India Pvt. Ltd. has reported a 23 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated sales for February 2026, with total dispatches reaching 10,565 units, reflecting steady momentum in both domestic and export markets.

Domestic wholesales stood at 2,230 units during the month, while exports accounted for 8,335 units, underlining India's growing role in the company's global supply strategy. The company said February marked a significant milestone with the launch of the all-new Nissan GRAVITE. Customer deliveries of the model commenced nationwide from March 1



following strong booking momentum and positive market response.

Saurabh Vatsa, Managing Director, Nissan Motor India, said February had been an "important and forward-looking month" for the company.

He said the consolidated performance reflected stable demand and continued export strength, reaffirming India's strategic importance in Nissan's global operations. He added that the response to the new GRAVITE had been

encouraging and that the coming months were expected to reflect stronger portfolio momentum.

The company said continued traction for the Nissan Magnite and the launch of GRAVITE would support sustained growth and network expansion.

In Guwahati, dealers reported steady enquiries for compact SUVs, with rising interest in newly launched models. Industry observers said improved infrastructure and growing urban demand in Assam and neighbouring northeastern states were expected to support Nissan's retail performance in the coming quarters.

TATA AIG launches 'Accident Super Guard Plus' amid rising road fatalities in India

Guwahati: TATA AIG General Insurance Company Limited on Tuesday announced the launch of 'Accident Super Guard Plus', a flexible personal accident insurance policy aimed at strengthening financial protection against accidental risks in India.

The launch comes against the backdrop of rising road mishaps. According to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways' Road Accidents in India - 2023 report, the country recorded 4.8 lakh road accidents and 1.73 lakh fatalities in 2023, marking a 4.18% rise in accidents and a 2.61% increase in deaths year-on-year. Nearly 68% of fatalities involved pedestrians, cyclists and two-wheeler riders.

The new policy covers accidental death, permanent total disability and permanent partial disability, along with reimbursement of in-patient hospitalisation expenses due to accidents, including defined pre- and post-hospitalisation cover. Optional benefits such as Loan Shield, EMI

Protection and Pet Care are also available. The product includes future-focused benefits like child education support, academy sessions, surviving child benefits and marriage expense support, along with value-added services such as financial and legal counselling and disability management.

Available for individuals and families with tenure options up to five years, the policy offers premium discounts for salaried professionals.

Speaking on the launch, Pankaj Shrivastava, Head, Agency Health, TATA AIG, said the product is designed to offer a flexible and scalable solution aligned to customers' income profiles and evolving liabilities.

In Guwahati, where two-wheelers dominate urban mobility and road safety remains a concern, insurance distributors say demand for affordable accident cover is steadily rising among salaried employees and small business owners seeking protection against income disruption.

IndusInd Bank goes live with UPI 6.0, sets new benchmark in real-time digital payments

Guwahati: IndusInd Bank has announced that its digital banking channels have gone live on a next-generation UPI processing platform, marking what it called a transformative leap in India's real-time payments ecosystem. Christened UPI 6.0, the sixth-generation upgrade has been built by Mindgate Solutions on a hyper-scalable, cloud-ready and resilient architecture.

The bank said it is the first private sector lender to go live on the new processing platform for both issuer and

acquirer services on the cloud. The upgrade delivers 30 per cent faster recovery time (RTO) and offers up to 75 per cent higher scalability headroom on the current infrastructure. Designed to ensure sub-second response times, near-zero technical declines and seamless disaster recovery within minutes, the platform aims to provide uninterrupted, high-performance payment experiences for millions of customers and merchants nationwide, even during peak volumes.

Ravi Pangal, Chief Information Officer at IndusInd Bank, said the milestone aligns with the bank's Digital 2.0 strategy focused on building future-ready, intelligent banking ecosystems driven by speed, resilience and trust.

In Guwahati, the enhanced UPI stack is expected to strengthen transaction reliability for retailers, SMEs and service providers increasingly dependent on real-time digital payments, particularly during festive peaks and high-footfall business cycles.

SMFG India Credit's Pashu Vikas Day touches 1.55 lakh lives, sets Guinness Record milestone

Guwahati: SMFG India Credit Co. Ltd., one of India's leading NBFC-ICCs registered with the Reserve Bank of India and a wholly owned subsidiary of Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group (SMFG), has concluded the 8th edition of its flagship rural initiative, Pashu Vikas Day (PVD), reinforcing its rural financing and livelihood strategy. Held on February 14 under the theme 'Sarvottam Seva: Pashu, Parivarar Pragati', the programme impacted over 1.55 lakh lives across 16 states.

Launched in 2014, PVD provided free veterinary care and expert guidance to cattle owners through 510 SMFG Gramshakti branches. The initiative treated nearly 1.4 lakh cattle and extended health-

care support to over 14,000 individuals, benefitting more than 30,000 households. Managing Director & CEO Ravi Narayanan said the initiative

PVD has earned multiple recognitions, including listings in the Limca Book of Records (2015), Best of India Records (2018), World Book

of Records (2019) and World Record Union (2024). In 2025, it achieved a Guinness World Record for conducting the largest cattle welfare

lesson simultaneously across India. Operating since 2007, SMFG India Credit, along with subsidiary SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd. (SMFG Grihashakti), has a presence across 670+ towns and 70,000+ villages through 1,000+ branches and 22,000+ employees, offering SME loans, vehicle finance, home loans, loans against property and rural livelihood loans.

In Guwahati, the initiative strengthens SMFG's rural brand equity in Assam, where livestock-backed income models are significant. Market observers note that such community-led programmes enhance borrower confidence and could accelerate credit uptake in the Northeast's expanding rural finance segment.



reflects the company's focus on linking livestock health, family security and rural economic progress to drive inclusive growth.

of Records (2019) and World Record Union (2024). In 2025, it achieved a Guinness World Record for conducting the largest cattle welfare

Mahindra auto sales jump 18% in February; SUVs drive growth with 60,018 units

Guwahati: Mahindra & Mahindra Limited on March 1 reported total auto sales of 97,177 vehicles in February 2026, registering an 18% year-on-year growth, including exports.

The company said it sold 60,018 utility vehicles in the domestic market, up 19% from 50,420 units in February 2025. Overall utility vehicle sales, including exports, stood at 60,685 units. Domestic commercial vehicle sales reached 24,585 units, marking a 10% rise.

Nalinikanth Gollagunta, CEO, Automotive Division, said, "February saw SUV sales of 60,018 units, a growth of 19% reflecting robust customer demand across the portfolio. Total vehicle sales stood at 97,177 units, an 18% year-on-year growth."

In the commercial segment, light commercial vehicles (2T-3.5T) grew 12% to 21,416 units, while three-wheelers, including electric models, surged 44% to 9,190 units. Total exports increased 11% to 3,384 units.



Year-to-date exports rose 21% to 37,022 units.

In Guwahati, dealers reported steady demand for Mahindra's SUVs and small commercial vehicles, driven by infrastructure activity and rural consumption trends in Assam and the Northeast. Industry observers said strong festival bookings and preference for utility vehicles continue to support sales momentum in the region.

Founded in 1945, the Mahindra Group operates in over 100 countries and is the world's largest tractor manufacturer by volume.



Renault India sales surge 31% in February, Duster comeback fuels market sentiment



Guwahati: Renault India, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Renault Group, reported a robust 31% year-on-year jump in wholesale sales at 3,495 units in February 2026, compared to 2,676 units in the same month last year. The company sustained its upward trajectory in the first two months of 2026, registering a strong 32% cumulative growth over the corresponding period of 2025.

Building on January's performance, Renault once again outpaced overall industry growth.

The refreshed Kiger and Triber line-up continued to anchor volumes, with the new Triber leading the momentum by posting an impressive 57% YoY growth in February. The company said improved brand favourability since Q3 CY2025 has underpinned its turnaround, recording 9% YoY growth in Q3 CY25, 27% in Q4 CY25, and 32% in the first two months of 2026.

The announcement of the Renault Duster's return to India has further strengthened consumer sentiment, reflected in rising dealership footfalls across markets.

In Guwahati, Renault dealers indicated steady traction for the Triber and Kiger amid growing demand for affordable and practical SUVs. Market analysts believe the Duster's comeback could significantly enhance Renault's competitive edge in the Northeast, where SUV preference continues to expand steadily.

Functional tea boom: Tetley Green Tea Slim Care bets on purpose-driven wellness trend

Guwahati: As Indian consumers increasingly opt for purpose-led beverages, functional teas are carving out a stronger presence in the daily wellness segment. With evolving preferences, buyers are choosing drinks that support balanced lifestyles without demanding drastic changes, positioning green tea as a staple in modern routines.

Green tea, valued for its natural antioxidants and light, refreshing profile, has emerged as a preferred base in this shift. Its versatility allows consumption across the

day — during work hours or as part of an evening ritual — reinforcing consistency over intensity in health habits.

Capitalising on this growing trend, Tetley Green Tea Slim Care blends premium green tea with added L-Carnitine, designed to help reduce body fat when combined with a balanced diet and regular physical activity. The product is available in Lemon and Honey, and Ginger, Mint and Lemon variants, encouraging routine building through familiar flavours and convenient

consumption. The brand positions the offering as an everyday addition rather than a quick solution, aligning with the broader functional beverage movement.

In Guwahati, trade sources indicate rising traction for flavoured green tea variants, particularly among young professionals and urban households. Retailers report steady off-take in the wellness category, reflecting a growing appetite for accessible, routine-based health products in the city's expanding consumer base.

Sudipto Sen banks on faith-themed thriller 'Charak' after The Kerala Story success

Guwahati: Filmmaker Sudipto Sen has unveiled the official trailer of his upcoming folklore thriller Charak, backing the project as producer after the commercial success of The Kerala Story. The film is scheduled for a nationwide theatrical release on March 6, 2026.

Addressing media at the launch, Sen said controversy has never been a business strategy for him. "I do not set out to make controversial films; I choose subjects that genuinely move and disturb me," he said. He recalled that an incident he witnessed in Kochi in 2014 became the foundation for The Kerala Story, which eventually released in 2023. On Charak, Sen said his long-standing fascination with faith and rural rituals, particularly the traditional Charak festival, shaped the narrative exploring belief, devotion, and the thin line between faith and fear.

Directed by Shieladitya Moulik, the film stars Anjali Patil, Sahidur Rahaman, Subrat Dutta, Shashi Bhushan, Nalneesh Neel, Shankhadeep, and Shounak Shyamal. It is presented by PEN Studios and produced by Sipping Tea Cinemas in association with Sudipto Sen Productions. Rajesh Bhatt serves as asso-



ciate producer.

In Guwahati, trade analysts expect moderate-to-strong initial footfall driven by brand recall from The Kerala Story. Exhibitors indicate that the film's faith-centric theme and pre-release buzz could translate into steady weekend collections across multiplexes and key single-screen theatres in the city.

Ai+ expands AIoT Play with NovaPods, NovaWatch; Pulse 2 to debut on March 2

Guwahati: Ai+ Smartphone has forayed deeper into the AIoT segment with the launch of NovaPods and NovaWatch, while announcing that its next smartphone, Pulse 2, will be unveiled on March 2, followed by the Nova 2 Series. The expansion comes less than a year after the brand's debut in July 2025, during which it claims to have built nearly one million users.

Pulse 2 will feature a 50MP AI dual rear camera, 8MP front camera, the slimmest 6000mAh battery, and Android 16 on NxtQuantum OS. The company said the device is designed to deliver a simpler and smoother user experience at accessible price points.

The AIoT portfolio spans wireless audio, biometric earbuds, open-wear formats, fitness wearables and kids' 4G smartwatches, priced between ₹699 and ₹7,999. NovaPods Go (₹699) offers 10mm driv-



ers and Bluetooth 5.4; NovaPods Pro (₹1,999) features Active Noise Cancellation and six mics; NovaPod Clips (₹3,999) adopts an open-wear design. The NovaWatch lineup includes Active (₹2,499) with AMOLED display and IP68 rating, Kids 4G (₹2,999) with GPS and SOS, and Ai+ Wearbuds (₹7,999), combining a smartwatch with detachable earbuds. Devices go on sale on Flipkart from February 27, 12 PM.

"In under a year, nearly one million users chose Ai+," said MadhavSheth, CEO, Ai+ Smartphone and Founder,

NxtQuantum Shift Technologies, adding that the ecosystem aims to integrate music, health and family safety. Flipkart's Sujith Agashe said the partnership will help democratise connected technology.

In Guwahati, market observers expect strong traction in the budget audio and wearable segments, particularly among students and first-time buyers. Competitive pricing and features such as ANC, Bluetooth calling and kids' 4G connectivity are likely to intensify competition in the city's fast-growing smart gadget market.

NSDC expands Centre for Future Skills to integrate global certifications into degree courses



Guwahati: The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) has expanded its flagship Centre for Future Skills (CFS) initiative to embed global certifications and advanced technical training directly into mainstream higher education programmes. The campus-based, technology-integrated model aims to impact one million students over the next decade by aligning degree pathways with global industry standards and emerging technology demands.

The initiative is currently operational in 12 institutions, with over 43,000 candidates trained so far. Speaking on the expansion, NSDC CEO Shri Arunkumar Pillai said, "The Centre for Future Skills marks a structural shift in how India prepares its youth for the future economy. Over the next three years, we aim to add 22 more centres nationwide." The latest centre was inaugurated at the Federal Institute of Science and Technology (FISAT), Kochi. Under

the CFS model, students earn two to three academic credits per semester along with globally recognised certifications without extending their degree duration. More than 200 certification programmes are offered in partnership with global technology firms, delivered through 45-50 hour lab-based sessions each semester.

In the Software Engineering track, students progress from programming fundamentals to full-stack development and cloud deployment, earning four to six certifications by graduation.

In Guwahati, the initiative is expected to significantly benefit students across Assam and the Northeast. With rising demand for cloud computing, DevOps and application development skills in Guwahati's growing IT and startup ecosystem, access to subsidised global certifications could enhance employability and reduce industry training costs in the regional job market.

Oriflame India ropes in Karishma Tanna to lead premium NovAge+ Skincare and Supreme Tribute Ezzénza Fragrance push

Mumbai: Oriflame India has announced actor Karishma Tanna as the face of its premium NovAge+ advanced skincare range and Supreme Tribute Ezzénza fragrance, strengthening its focus on science-led beauty and sensorial luxury in the Indian market.

Developed at Oriflame's Skin Research Institute in

Sweden, NovAge+ is powered by patented technologies including Bio Aspartolift for collagen and elastin support, Oripeptide-3 to reduce fine lines, Bio Lumilock for pigmentation control, and Bio Re:Barrier to strengthen the skin's moisture barrier. Clinical tests indicate visible improvements in smoothness, radiance and firmness with-

in two weeks of consistent use. The four-step routine—cleanse, eye care, boosters and moisturisation—is priced at ₹13,500.

Supreme Tribute Ezzénza, an ambery-floral long-lasting parfum priced at ₹3,419, anchors the brand's premium fragrance portfolio.

Abhishek Chakraborty, Head of Brand Communi-

cation, Digital and PR, Oriflame India, said skincare and wellness remain a strategic priority in the premium segment. Tanna, winner of Bigg Boss 8, said the range aligns with her belief in consistent, research-backed skincare.

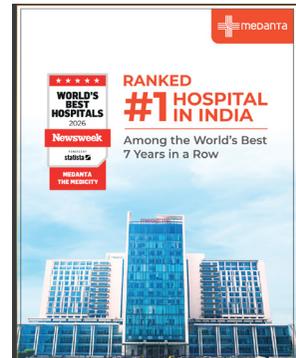
Both products are available on in.oriflame.com and through Oriflame's network of brand partners.

Medanta ranked India's No. 1 hospital in Newsweek's World's Best Hospitals 2026

Gurugram: Medanta – The Medicity, operated by Global Health Limited, has been ranked the No. 1 hospital in India in Newsweek's prestigious 'World's Best Hospitals 2026' rankings, conducted in partnership with StatistaInc.. The recognition marks the seventh consecutive year that Medanta has featured among the world's leading hospitals.

The 2026 rankings evaluated over 2,500 hospitals across 32 countries, including India, the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, Australia, Canada and Singapore. The assessment was based on recommendations from thousands of medical experts, patient experience data, hospital quality metrics and a Patient-Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) Implementation Survey, ensuring a comprehensive and patient-centric evaluation framework.

Dr. Naresh Trehan, Chairman and Managing Director, said the recognition reaffirms Medanta's commitment to clinical excellence, innovation and patient-centric care. He



emphasized the institution's focus on advanced therapies, cutting-edge technologies and improved outcomes aligned with its philosophy, "Har Ek Jaan Anmol".

Founded by Dr. Trehan, a recipient of the Padma Bhushan, Padma Shri and Dr. B.C. Roy Award, Global Health Limited operates six hospitals across Gurugram, Indore, Ranchi, Lucknow, Patna and Noida with 3,579 installed beds as of December 31, 2025. The company also has four upcoming hospitals in Mumbai, Pitampura (New Delhi), South Delhi and Guwahati, delivering care across more than 30 specialties with over 2,300 doctors.

In Umrangso, Ambuja Cements along with the Adani Foundation strengthens early education support



Umrangso: Empowering young minds: Ambuja Cements along with the Adani Foundation strengthens early education support in Umrangso

Ambuja Cements, the 9th largest building materials solutions provider globally and part of the diversified Adani Portfolio, along with the Adani Foundation, has strengthened access to early education support for children in Chotolokhindong village, Umrangso. The initiative addressed barriers faced by students from economically vulnerable families who lacked basic school essentials, impacting their attendance and confidence. Mirso Ronghangpi, a nursery student and daughter of Babu Ronghang and Samily Beypi, had been irregular in school, as her family found it difficult to afford a school bag, shoes, and basic learning materials.

Without these essentials, she often stayed at home, feeling discouraged and left behind in her early learning journey. Recognizing such needs, Ambuja Cements, along with the Adani Foundation, distributed 65 educational kits across four government schools. The kits included school bags, shoes, painting kits, and pencil boxes to ensure children had the necessary tools to attend school with dignity. With access to these essentials, Mirso is now regular in her classes, participates actively, and displays a positive attitude towards learning, reinforcing Ambuja Cements' commitment to promoting inclusive and equitable education in rural communities.

JSW Group partners Assam government to build landmark heritage museum in Guwahati

Guwahati: In a major cultural infrastructure initiative, JSW Group has partnered with the Government of Assam to develop a world-class heritage museum in Guwahati, with construction commencing after the foundation stone was laid on Saturday.

The foundation ceremony was led by Assam Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma and JSW Group Chairman Sajjan Jindal. The event was attended by Savitri Jindal, Sangita Jindal, Cultural Affairs Minister Bimal Borah, and Richard Blurton, former Head of South and Southeast Asia at the British Museum.

The museum is being developed at the Sericulture Farm in Khanapara on a 45,000-square-foot site allotted by the state government. The project is fully funded by JSW Group, reflecting its long-term commitment to cultural investment and heritage preservation.

Positioned as a landmark cultural institution for the Northeast, the museum will feature advanced climate control and security systems for conservation of rare artefacts. It will host national and international exhibitions to promote global cultural exchange.

A key highlight will be the inaugural exhibition of the 16th-century Vrindavani Vastra, woven under the spiritual guidance of Srimanta Sankardev, depicting scenes from the Bhagavata Purana and the life of Lord Krishna.

The initiative aims to elevate Assam's cultural identity on the global stage while strengthening public-private collaboration in heritage infrastructure.

Skill Ministry makes 150-hour OJT mandatory for ITI trainees under CTS reform



Guwahati: The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship has introduced a major reform in Industrial Training Institute (ITI) training by making 150 hours of On-the-Job Training (OJT) or a Group Project compulsory under the Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS). The guidelines were issued by the Directorate General of Training on March 3, 2026, and the provision has been effective since the 2022-23 academic session.

Under the revised structure aligned with the National Education Policy 2020, the annual CTS training duration has been reduced from 1,600 hours to 1,200 hours, with 150 hours reserved for structured OJT or project work. Trainees will be eligible after completing three months of ITI training. Performance will be assessed through mentor evaluation, logbook review and viva during practical exams, with grades reflected in marksheets and industry-approved certificates issued by ITIs.

Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development, Jayant Chaudhary, said the reform would enhance practical competence and deepen industry-institution linkages to make youth "job-ready and future-ready."

In Guwahati, the move could strengthen local manufacturing, service and small-scale industrial units by ensuring ITI graduates possess hands-on skills aligned with current technology demands. The reform is expected to improve employability in Assam's growing industrial clusters and reduce the gap between training and workplace requirements. The CTS, launched in 1950, continues to play a key role in building India's skilled workforce.

Cricket season sparks 46% surge in travel searches; Tier-2 cities see sharp rise in bookings

Guwahati: India's upcoming cricket season has triggered a sharp spike in domestic travel, with new data from Airbnb showing a 46% rise in searches across key match-hosting cities. The surge is being led by Gen Z travellers, nearly 60% of whom plan to travel to attend live cricket matches in 2026.

Searches between February 5 and June 2 recorded steep year-on-year growth in emerging cricket hubs. New Chandigarh topped the list with a 318% jump, followed by Raipur (232%), Ranchi (118%) and Thiruvananthapuram (114%). Jaipur and Lucknow also reported strong double-digit gains, signalling a shift beyond traditional metro centres. During the India-Pakistan weekend (February 14-17), Colombo searches surged over 325%, while Ahmedabad saw nearly 170% growth ahead of the T20 final window (March 7-10).

Airbnb's Experience-Led Travel Insights survey shows 53% of Gen Z extend trips beyond match days, with a median stay of 3-4 days. Entire home bookings rose sharply in Ahmedabad, Lucknow and Ranchi, reflecting a growing preference for group and family travel.

In Guwahati, the trend is significant as the city was part of the YouGov survey sample and continues to benefit from cricket-led travel in the Northeast corridor. Increased visitor movement during match windows is expected to support local hospitality businesses and short-term rental demand.

Amanpreet Singh Bajaj, Airbnb's Country Head for India and Southeast Asia, said cricket is increasingly shaping travel behaviour, with fans building longer, more immersive trips around marquee matches.



Consider Sampling These Rice Paper Dumplings



If you thought eating gluten-free foods was boring and bland, think again. You must try this scrumptious recipe of easy-to-make rice paper dumplings at home. Rice paper, particularly the dumplings crafted from it, is currently trending on social media. They are easy to prepare, as there is no requirement for you to spend time in the

kitchen rolling out individual wrappers that must be both delicate and robust enough to endure the steaming process. Although these rice paper dumplings do require you to shape them, the task of pinching them closed to prevent spillage and ensuring they are visually appealing is not necessary, as they adhere to one another. Try this rec-

ipe for a gluten-free rice paper dumpling
Ingredients: For the rice paper dumplings: -1/2 cup cabbage -1/2 cup carrots -3-4 spring onion whites -1 tsp oil -1 tsp garlic -1/2 tsp grated ginger -1/4 cup red bell pepper, finely chopped -1/4 cup yellow bell pepper, finely chopped -1/4 cup green bell pepper, finely chopped -1 stock cube -Salt & pepper to taste -1 pack tofu, grated -1 tsp chilli oil -1 tbsp spring onion greens -Rice paper sheets
For the sauce: -1/4 cup soy sauce -1 tbsp rice wine vinegar -1 tbsp spring onion greens -1 tbsp coriander, chopped -1/4 cup water -1 tsp jaggery -1.5 tsp red chilli sauce
Method: Chop all your vegetables for the dumpling filling, along with tofu. You can also grate the tofu. Sauté the filling in a pan and add salt, pepper, chilli oil and stock cube. Add in the tofu and give it a good mix. Once the filling is cooked and cooled down, start assembling your dumplings. You can cut your rice paper into 4 quarters and layer 3 of them in a star shape to make 1 dumpling. Or save yourself the hassle, and use the entire paper for each dumpling. Wet the rice paper for a few seconds in a shallow dish of water, or use a spray bottle and dampen each of them. Stuff the rice paper with the cooked and cooled filling. To cook the dumpling, layer some cabbage leaves in a dumpling steamer and gently place them in a single layer. Don't crowd the steamer. Steam the dumplings and serve them with a sauce. To make the sauce, mix all the ingredients in a bowl and pour it over the dumplings. Top with sesame seeds and chopped green onions.

This authentic 'chana saag' is the perfect winter dish



As winter sets in, each meal transforms into a source of comfort. From hot parathas and robust soups to seasonal vegetables, this is the time for flavor and warmth. Among the beloved winter dishes, chana saag (chickpea greens) is particularly notable, not just for its earthy flavor but also for its high nutritional content. Rich in iron, fiber, and protein, it aids in fortifying the body and keeps you warm during chilly days. If you find yourself tired of the usual potato, cabbage, or fenugreek meals, consider adding a delightful twist to your lunch with this classic chana saag. Its earthy aroma and taste are guaranteed to captivate. In this guide, you will discover how to prepare it effortlessly at home, the essential ingredients required, and some suggestions to enhance its flavor.

How To Prepare 'Chana Saag'?

Prepare the Greens: Clean and wash the chickpea leaves thoroughly. Chop them finely for easier cooking. Transfer them to a pressure cooker with a little salt and water, and cook for two whistles. Once done, allow them to cool slightly and mash lightly with a spoon or rolling pin. **Make the Masala:** Heat mustard oil in a pan until it starts smoking slightly. Add the green chillies and garlic, and sauté until golden and fragrant. Add onions and cook until golden brown. Then, mix in the tomatoes, salt, and turmeric powder. Cook until the tomatoes soften and the masala blends well. **Combine and Cook:** Add the boiled, mashed greens to the masala. Mix well and simmer on low heat for 10-12 minutes, stirring occasionally. When the saag turns a deep green and the oil begins to separate, it's perfectly cooked. **Serve Hot:** Serve the chana saag warm with rice, makkhi ki roti, or parathas. A drizzle of ghee on top adds an irresistible finishing touch. **Tips To Enhance The Flavour:** Add a little cornflour for a thicker, creamier texture. Stir in a spoonful of ghee or butter before serving for a richer taste. Garlic lovers can top it off with a garlic tadka. Store leftover saag in the refrigerator for up to two days; just add a splash of water when reheating.

This pizzeria is the first in India to receive the prestigious AVPN certification.

Si Nonna's, the pizzeria celebrated for infusing the essence of Naples into India's culinary landscape, has reached a significant milestone. It has officially been recognized as the first pizzeria in India to obtain the esteemed certification from the Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana (AVPN). Established in Naples in 1984, the AVPN serves as the worldwide authority dedicated to protecting the authentic tradition of Neapolitan pizza, boasting fewer than a thousand certified pizzerias in sixty countries. This distinction positions Si Nonna's within a prestigious global network committed to maintaining the age-old craft of Neapolitan sourdough pizza production. The certification confirms that Si



Nonna's sourdough pizzas meet every international standard set by AVPN — from the dough's 24-hour

fermentation to ingredient quality, oven design, and baking technique. The recipe itself traces its origins

to a serendipitous encounter with Nonna Galliano's original mother dough in Naples — the spark that inspired founder Ayush Jatia to bring authentic Neapolitan pizza to India. "Earning the AVPN certification is a landmark moment not only for Si Nonna's but also for the evolution of pizza culture in India," said Ayush Jatia, Founder of Si Nonna's. "It reaffirms our promise of bringing true Neapolitan flavours and techniques to Indian diners... This recognition reflects the hard work, dedication, and passion of our team, and it motivates us to continue sharing the joy of authentic Italian sourdough pizza with every guest who walks through our doors." Every stage of Si Nonna's process reflects meticulous craftsmanship —

from using natural yeast and Italian flour to baking pizzas in custom-built ovens lined with tiles made from Vesuvian lava. The certification stands as both a validation and a symbol of the brand's passion for authenticity. "We are delighted to welcome Si Nonna's into the global AVPN family," said Antonio Pace, President of AVPN. "Their respect for Neapolitan tradition in a market as diverse and fast-growing as India demonstrates the universal appeal of our heritage." With over 35 outlets across eight major cities, including Mumbai, Delhi NCR, Pune, and Bangalore, Si Nonna's continues to lead India's evolving gourmet culture, where Italian heritage meets Indian innovation, one sourdough pizza at a time.



India, Canada seal long-term uranium deal; advance trade talks

Prime Minister Modi said India & Canada will also work to enhance defence industries & maritime domain awareness

New Delhi, Mar 2: India and Canada, on Monday, inked a landmark agreement on cooperation in supplies of uranium, and decided to soon finalise a comprehensive economic partnership agreement following talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Canadian counterpart Mark Carney. Following the Modi-Carney talks, the two sides inked several agreements, including one for cooperation in the critical minerals sector. Under the agreement, Canada is going to supply uranium to India.

"In the civil nuclear energy sector, we have struck a landmark deal for long-term uranium supply. We will also work together on small modular reactors and advanced reactors," Modi said. The two sides also firmed up the terms of reference for the comprehensive economic partnership agreement. "India and Canada hold an unwavering faith in democratic values. We celebrate diversity. The well-being of humanity is our shared vision. This very vision inspires us to move forward in



every field," Modi said.

"Today, we discussed transforming this vision into a next level partnership," he added. The Prime Minister said India and Canada will also work to enhance defence industries and maritime domain awareness. The two leaders also deliberated on the precarious security situation in West Asia, with Prime Minister Modi asserting that India supports resolution of all conflicts through dialogue and diplomacy. "The current situation in West Asia is a matter of grave concern for us. India supports the resolution of all disputes through dialogue and diplomacy," Modi said, in his media statement. "We

will continue to work with all countries to ensure the safety of all Indian citizens present in this region," he added. The two sides also discussed ways to boost cooperation in combating terrorism. "We agree that terrorism, extremism and radicalisation are shared and serious challenges not only for both countries but for all of humanity," Modi said. "Our close cooperation against them is extremely important for global peace and stability," he said. In his remarks, Carney said Canada and India are charting their own course for the future which is the expansion of a "valued partnership" with new ambitions.

Assam Polls: Congress Names 42 Candidates; Gaurav Gogoi to Contest Jorhat

Guwahati, March 3: The Congress on Tuesday released its first list of 42 candidates for the Assam assembly elections, expected in April. The party's Central Election Committee cleared the list which has the names of experienced leaders as well as new faces. The state has 126 seats in all. The Congress is fielding its Assam president and deputy leader in Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi from the Jorhat seat in upper Assam. He had comfortably won the 2024 Lok Sabha polls from the Jorhat parliamentary seat. Gogoi contesting the polls from Jorhat holds significance considering the Congress' efforts to regain the lost ground in upper Assam. An Ahom, he is the party's most formidable face in the region that has a large number of voters from the Ahom community.

He expressed gratitude to the party leadership for its continued guidance and belief in his abilities. "I am grateful to the people of Jorhat Lok Sabha without whom I would not have reached this position. I am thankful to my late father Tarun Gogoi who taught me what it means to be an Assamese and a Congressman. I am also thankful to my family, my mother, sister, wife and two little kids who have endured a lot but

always with grace, joy and dignity. To my fellow Congress brothers, sisters, colleagues and elders, the time is now to take Assam in a new and bold direction. Let us dream once again of a #NatunBorAxom. #SamayParivartanor," Gogoi posted on X.

The list includes the names of five women and five MLAs. The women candidates are former minister Pranati Phukan, MLA Nandita Das, Mira Borthakur, Pallabi Saikia Gogoi and Suruchi Roy. Apart from Das, the four other MLAs are Debabrata Saikia, Nurul Huda, Abdus Sobahan Ali Sarkar and Diganta Barman. Saikia, the leader of Opposition, will contest from his pet Nazira seat, Huda from Rupahihat, Ali from Gauripur, Das from Hajo-Sulkuchi (SC reserved) and Barman from Barkhetri.

The list also has the names of former minister Ajit Singh (Udharband or Udharband), Dhurbri MP Rakibul Hussain's son Tanzil Hussain (Samaguri) and former MLA Kartik Sen Sinha (Patharkandi). Former state Congress president and former minister Ripun Bora will contest from Barchalla. He had joined the Trinamool Congress a few years ago before returning to the grand old party.



Kashmir Schools Closed Until March 7



Srinagar, Mar 03: Schools and colleges across Kashmir will remain closed till March 7 in the wake of protests against the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khomeini in a joint air strike by the Israel and the US. "All schools and colleges of Kashmir Division will remain closed till March 7, 2026," Education Minister Sakina Itoo said on Tuesday. With protests brewing, the government had on March 1 ordered closure of educational institutions in the Valley for two days.

Agitations against the top Shia cleric's killing continued for the third consecutive day on Tuesday with thousands of people taking to streets in several parts of Kashmir, including in Srinagar city. The protests have largely broken out in areas with major Shia population.

IndiGo Operates Repatriation Flights to Jeddah and Muscat

UAE Repatriation Flights Planned for March 4

New Delhi, Mar 03: IndiGo on Tuesday operated four repatriation flights to Jeddah and plans to have another flight to Muscat later in the day to bring back passengers stranded due to the West Asia conflict. There are also plans to operate repatriation flights to cities in the UAE on March 4, depending on the local situation and required necessary approvals, the airline said in a statement. After suspending flights to the Middle East and Europe due to the ongoing situation, IndiGo said it would start reinstating select flights to Muscat (Oman),

Jeddah, Madinah (Saudi Arabia) and Athens (Greece). The airline would operate a total of 26 flights to and from these four destinations. "For all other stations, IndiGo is closely monitoring the situation and working with the relevant authorities for local slots and permits to progressively restore its operational schedule," it said.

Regarding the repatriation flights for March 3, the airline said four such flights are now enroute to Jeddah and one is expected to be operated to/from Muscat, later in the day.

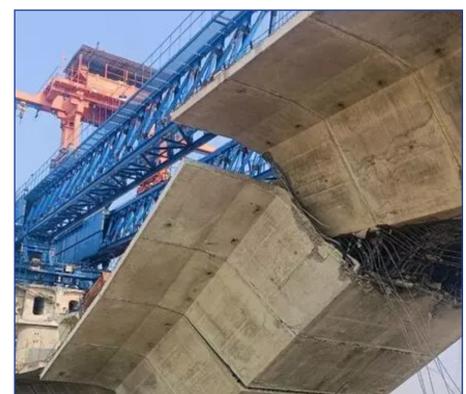


Under-construction bridge collapses in Gopalganj

Patna, March 2: An under-construction Reinforced Cement Concrete (RCC) bridge over the Ghoghari River collapsed during casting in Gangwa village in Bihar's Gopalganj district, said an official, adding that there was no casualty and no one was injured. The bridge, approximately 29 metres long, is being constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 2.89 crore. At the time of the incident, casting work was underway. Fortunately, no workers were injured, averting what could have been a major disaster. The SHO of Sidhwalia police station confirmed the incident. He said there was water in the river, which was not removed entirely before beginning the construction, thus leading to a mishap. "Fortunately, no one is injured in this incident," he said.

Eyewitnesses said that a loud noise was heard during the casting process, following which a portion of the bridge slab suddenly caved in. The structure under construction collapsed within moments, triggering panic at the site.

Villagers alleged that substandard construction materials and weak reinforcement bars (rebar) were used, leading to the collapse during casting. Local residents have raised serious questions about the role of the construction agency and concerned departmental officials. They have demanded a high-level technical investigation into the incident. Villagers said that if strict quality checks are not conducted, such lapses could result in a major accident in



the future. After receiving information, administrative officials and engineering teams rushed to the site to assess the damage. Construction work has been halted until further notice. Officials stated that a detailed technical inquiry will be conducted to determine the exact cause of the collapse, and appropriate action will be taken based on the findings. The incident has sparked widespread discussion in the district, with residents questioning the recurring reports of bridge and culvert collapses in Bihar. Concerns over construction quality, monitoring mechanisms, and safety standards have once again come to the forefront. The latest collapse highlights the urgent need for stricter supervision, accountability, and adherence to engineering standards to prevent similar incidents in the future.



“All England Missed: Sindhu Safely Back In Bengaluru Today”



Bengaluru, Mar 03: Two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu has safely returned to India following a terrifying period stranded in Dubai. The star shuttler was in transit to the UK for the All England Badminton Championships when the sudden escalation of conflict in the Middle East grounded her flight and shuttered regional airspace. A Close Escape at Dubai Airport In a detailed update, Sindhu described the “intense and uncertain” atmosphere at Dubai International Airport. The situation turned dire when the sounds of aerial interceptions were followed by a massive explosion in close proximity to the terminal. Near Miss: Sindhu revealed that her coach was merely 100 meters away from the blast site. The Experience: “Experiencing something like this in such close quarters truly shakes the very foundation you’re built on,” Sindhu stated. “You never expect these things to happen to you.” Gratitude for Support Teams Following the explosion, Sindhu and her team were moved to a secure location. She credited the Indian High Commission in Dubai for their “extraordinary support,” noting they deployed teams on “high super priority notice” to assist stranded Indian citizens. She also expressed deep gratitude toward the Dubai authorities, immigration staff, and Emirates airlines for their professionalism and empathy while managing thousands of displaced travelers. Impact on the Sporting Calendar While Sindhu is now “safe, resting, and resetting” in Bengaluru, the conflict continues to disrupt the global sports landscape:

Badminton: Sindhu’s withdrawal from the All England Championships is a significant blow to the tournament’s draw. **Cricket (Champions Trophy 2025):** South Africa faces a major setback as David Miller has reportedly sustained an injury ahead of the tournament. **Emerging Talent:** In domestic news, Nehal Wadhwa expressed excitement about a potential India call-up and the prospect of playing alongside Shreyas Iyer. Sindhu concluded her message by thanking fans for their prayers, stating it is now time to focus on her mental and physical recovery before determining her “next steps” on the court.

Full Stadium Closure For MBSG: AIFF Penalises Mohun Bagan After Fan Misconduct

New Delhi, Mar 03: The All India Football Federation’s (AIFF) disciplinary committee has fined Mohun Bagan Super Giant and ordered the club to play its next Indian Super League match behind closed doors following alleged spectator misconduct. The sanction applies to Mohun Bagan’s March 6 home fixture against Odisha FC at Kolkata’s Salt Lake Stadium.

The disciplinary action stems from alleged crowd trouble during Mohun Bagan’s 2-0 win over Chennaiyin FC on February 23.



While the club accepted the unspecified financial penalty, it strongly objected to the full stadium closure. In a statement posted on X, Mohun Bagan said: “While the Club has responsibly accepted the financial penalty imposed, AIFF has gone to the

extreme of ordering a FULL stadium closure for our home game against Odisha FC on 6 March 2026.” The club confirmed its appeal against the spectator ban was rejected. “Unfairly Punishes Our Supporters” Mohun Bagan expressed disappointment with

the ruling, arguing that thousands of law-abiding fans would be unfairly affected.

“We believe closing the stadium unfairly punishes thousands of passionate, law-abiding supporters who are the heartbeat of our Club.” The club added that its appeal was filed “in the interest of our fans,” concluding with a pointed message: “Football belongs to the fans. They deserve better.” The decision means one of the ISL’s biggest clubs will host a crucial league fixture in an empty stadium — not something common.

Zaheer Khan conducts specialised red-ball camp for fast bowlers at BCCI CoE

Bengaluru, Mar 03: Former India pacer Zaheer Khan on Monday conducted a specialised red-ball camp for the high-performance monitoring group at the Board of Control for Cricket in India Centre of Excellence (CoE), underlining the board’s renewed focus on strengthening India’s fast-bowling depth in the longest format. The three-day camp, designed to sharpen skills for high performance, featured pacers from the India A and Under-19 setups. With a clear emphasis on Test-match readiness, the programme focused on technical refinements, mental resilience and the finer details that define success in red-ball cricket. “The BCCI CoE had the privilege of extending the wisdom of one of the best fast bowlers, Mr. Zaheer Khan to the pacers from the high performance monitoring group,” the BCCI said in a post on X. “With this camp laying emphasis on red-ball bowling, these players worked closely

with the stalwart on technical skills and also heard first hand from him on developing other facets that are required to be successful in what is perhaps the most demanding discipline in cricket,” the board added. CoE head VVS Laxman spearheaded the initiative as part of a broader strategy to bring former greats into the development system. The aim is to mentor targeted players, emerging prospects from the India A and U-19 systems who are being groomed for future senior international roles. The CoE is currently without a full-time fast-bowling coach following the end of Troy Cooley’s tenure in December 2025, making Zaheer’s involvement timely as India look to build a sustained pipeline of Test-ready quicks. Participants included fast bowlers from various state associations and high-performance monitoring groups who are currently on the national selectors’ radar. Access to Za-



heer’s experience, particularly in handling overseas conditions and bowling long spells in demanding Tests, offered valuable insight. Zaheer was part of the Indian team that shared the 2002 ICC Champions Trophy with Sri Lanka and lifted the 2011 ODI World Cup. Across 303 international matches, he claimed 597 wickets, including 311 in Tests and 269 in ODIs, and finished as the joint highest wicket-taker in the 2011 World Cup with 21 wickets at an average of 18.76.

“Gavaskar: Attack England With Powerplay Bumrah”

Mumbai, Mar 03: India face England in Thursday’s T20 World Cup semifinal at the Wankhede Stadium. Legendary opener Sunil Gavaskar has made a bold tactical suggestion. He wants Jasprit Bumrah unleashed early in the powerplay to dismantle England’s formidable top order. Speaking to select media, Gavaskar strongly advocated for Bumrah bowling at least two overs in the first six. This is different from his typical introduction in the fifth over. The former India captain believes early strikes against Jos Buttler, Phil Salt and the in-form Harry Brook could break the back of England’s batting lineup. “I do believe that he should be bowling at least two overs in the powerplay because, as a new-ball bowler, if he can get those early wickets... Jos Buttler, Phil Salt and Harry Brook, he will have pretty much broken the back of the England batting,” Gavaskar explained. His reasoning is simple yet compelling. By the time Bumrah is typically introduced in the fifth over, batters have already faced around 20 deliveries. They had settled into their rhythm by then. “So, his coming in to bowl the fifth over, when four overs have al-

ready been bowled, and the batters have got about 20 deliveries, means that both batters have got about 8-10 deliveries to settle in. So, wouldn’t it be better than for Bumrah and for India if Bumrah were to bowl them first and get them out?” he wondered. The statistics support Gavaskar’s suggestion. In five games where Bumrah has bowled in the powerplay this tournament, he has claimed four wickets. However, he has rarely been given more than one over in the first six. The battle between Bumrah and England’s top order could prove decisive. Gavaskar believes getting Brook, Buttler and Salt out



early would effectively neutralise England’s batting threat. So what makes Bumrah such a devastating weapon across all formats? Gavaskar cited his ability to remain an enigma. He offered a fascinating comparison to tennis. He referenced Andre Agassi’s autobiography. The American revealed he decoded Boris Becker’s serve by watching the position of his tongue during the ball toss. If Becker’s tongue was on the left, he would serve wide. If on the right, he would serve down the centre line. “But in Bumrah’s case, he doesn’t give you anything away. Therefore, it’s very, very difficult to read

him. And because he sort of goes wide and then delivers the ball, you often tend to think it’s going to basically come in. But he can get the ball to move away. So that’s why he’s been such a devastating bowler in all three ways,” Gavaskar noted. Bumrah’s unique action and release point make him nearly impossible for batters to decode. He can swing the ball both ways without telegraphing his intentions. Unlike Becker’s tongue or other bowlers’ talents, Bumrah offers no clues. The tactical question now looms large over India’s strategy. Will captain Suryakumar Yadav heed Gavaskar’s advice? Will he deploy Bumrah from the opening over?

England’s top order is power-packed. They are familiar with Indian conditions through IPL stints. An early Bumrah spell could be the difference between breaking through and allowing England’s dangerous batters to settle in. The answer to that question could well determine whether India advances to another World Cup final. It could also decide if they fall short against their old rivals in what promises to be a high-stakes encounter in Mumbai.

