

Rahul Attends Wedding in Haryana Village



the daughter of farmer Sanjay. He blessed the bride and gave a gift and 'shagun'. Gandhi interacted with family members about Haryanvi wedding traditions. He also tasted traditional sweets and had milk 'choorma'. Sanjay and the village sarpanch had gone to Delhi on February 25 to personally invite Rahul Gandhi to the wedding. A party leader said that the villagers were excited to see Gandhi at the wedding of the daughter of an ordinary farmer. Earlier, Deepender Hooda along with other Congress leaders, received Gandhi on his arrival in Madina village.

Chandigarh, Mar 10: Senior Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday visited Madina village in Sonapat district of Haryana, where he attended the wedding of farmer Sanjay's daughter, three years after his earlier visit to the same village. In 2023, he had planted paddy and driven a tractor in the field of the same farmer. Accompanied by Member of Parliament from Rohtak Deepender Singh Hooda, Rahul Gandhi reached the wedding venue and was given a traditional welcome. Farmer Sanjay and fellow villagers tied a white ceremonial turban (pagri) on his head before he proceeded to meet the family and local residents.

Gandhi stayed for nearly an hour to participate in the marriage ceremony of Tanu,

Earlier, Gandhi had visited Madina village on July 8, 2023, where he interacted with farmers and farm labourers. During that visit, he reached Sanjay's fields where farmers were busy sowing paddy. Gandhi entered the water-filled fields by rolling up his trousers and participated in paddy sowing. He also drove a tractor to plough the field. After that visit to Madina village in Haryana, Rahul Gandhi and his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Member of Parliament from Wayanad, had hosted Sanjay and a group of farmers from the village for lunch at their Delhi residence.

Manipur Budget Session Begins Today



Imphal, Mar 09: The Budget session of the 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly having a total of seven sittings, will begin from Monday and will continue till March 17 with the presentation of the State Budget for 2026-27 on the first day of the session. The session of the Assembly will start with obituary references, if any, presentation of the Business Advisory Committee (BAC) report, presentation of Budget estimates (2026-27) and discussion on the Governor's address, according to the provisional calendar of sittings issued by the Secretary of Manipur Legislative Assembly. The general discussion on supplementary demands for grants 2025-26, discussion and voting on supplementary demands for grants 2025-26, and general discussion on Budget estimates 2026-27 will be held on the second day of the session on Tuesday.

Nitish Launches 'Samriddhi Yatra' for Developed Bihar

Patna, Mar 10: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Tuesday resumed his 'Samriddhi Yatra' from the Kosi region, reiterating the NDA government's resolve to make Bihar one of India's progressive states. He said that Bihar is progressing steadily with the Centre's cooperation.

This is Nitish's last official tour in the state as chief minister. During his 20-year tenure as CM, he undertook more than a dozen Yatras by different names to assess development work and issued necessary directives to officials of the departments concerned.

Embarking on his Yatra from Supaul, Nitish outlined the NDA government's development initiatives and said that development is taking place in every district. "Bihar is receiving full cooperation from the Centre," he asserted.

Lashing out at Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) for its lawlessness and lack of vision, Nitish said that now there is no sense of fear among people across the state. Questioning the previous RJD government, the chief minister said, "Have they (RJD) done anything for state's women and children? On the contrary, we have worked for everyone." Nitish's hour-long address, however, did not mention leaving the CM's post, although he had filed nomination papers for the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections. At another public meeting in Madhepura, Nitish requested the crowd to rise in endorsement of the development work undertaken by the NDA government under his leadership. "I request you all to rise and tell me much about

works." The crowd responded in positive.

Taking a swipe at the RJD, Nitish said that now there is brotherhood and comrade all around in the state. No incident of communal violence has been reported from any part of the state in recent years. "Bihar is now free from communal disturbances," he told the gathering. The CM also mentioned the appointment of 5.24 lakh teachers in schools and vowed to double income and employment opportunities in the next five years. He reiterated the government's commitment to create one crore job and employment opportunities.



He stated that 1.69 crore Jeevika members have been enrolled and are being provided benefits under the Mukhyamanti Mahila Rojgar Yojna. He revealed that the government has initiated the process of forming SHGs (self help groups) even in towns. He said that Rs10,000 each has been provided to Jeevika members.

The government has decided to provide Rs 2 lakh to them depending on viability of their business proposal," he said, adding that it will help them make economically self-dependent.

Speaking on the occasion, deputy chief minister Samrat Choudhary said that Nitish Kumar would continue to guide the NDA government in Bihar. "He is not going anywhere, he will continue to guide us," he added. Choudhary's remarks come in the wake of Nitish filing his nomination papers for Rajya Sabha elections to be held on March 16. During his 'Samriddhi Yatra', Nitish will cover the districts under the Kosi and Seemanchal regions.

EC committed to peaceful Bengal polls, says CEC Gyanesh Kumar

Commission Reviews Special Electoral Roll Revision

Kolkata, Mar 10: Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar on Tuesday assured that the upcoming Assembly elections in West Bengal will be conducted in a free, fair and violence-free manner. The election dates and the number of phases will be announced in Delhi. "Our only priority is to hold elections in the state that are free, fair and peaceful, without violence or fear. No violence will be tolerated. There will be mandatory, absolute non-partisan conduct by every polling personnel throughout the entire election process," the CEC told reporters during a press conference in Kolkata's New Town area. "We have directed each officer, including district magistrates and superintendents of police, to enforce the rule of law without fear or favour. They must act with complete impartiality, and this is mandatory for them," Kumar said.

The CEC assured stern action, including departmental proceedings, if any officer is found negligent or showing partiality while performing duties related to conducting elections without violence or fear. "Not a single genuine voter will be deleted from the electoral rolls. Every eligible voter will be able to cast their vote.

The final list after the post-SIR exercise was published on February 28, but a large number of cases are still awaiting decisions by judicial officers as per the directive of the Supreme Court," the CEC said. According to him, democracy runs very deep in West Bengal. Voting percentages in the state have remained very high, and electors and the public at large respect the Constitution and believe in peaceful and participatory elections. Highlighting the scale of the electoral exercise, he said West Bengal has around 80,000 polling stations, of which about 61,000 are located in rural areas. Kumar also announced that the Election Commission would implement 100 per cent webcasting in all polling stations across the state.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has also banned the use of mobile phones by voters inside polling booths. Voters will have to keep their mobile phones outside the booth before entering to cast their votes. Any candidate contesting the polls can request a recheck of EVMs within seven days after the counting. Home voting facilities will also be available for voters aged 85 and above. Bengal has around 3.78 lakh voters in this age group. The full

bench of the Election Commission — comprising the CEC and Election Commissioners SS Sandhu and Vivek Joshi — addressed the media after holding a series of meetings on poll preparations with political parties and senior officials, including state Chief Secretary Nandini Chakraborty, the Home Secretary, the Director General of Police (DGP), commissioners of police from different commissionerates, officials from the RBI and the excise department, and Booth Level Officers (BLOs). The Commission was on a two-day visit to the state to review the situation related to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls. The full bench also held separate meetings with major political parties on Monday at a private hotel in New Town to hear their concerns and suggestions regarding the conduct of elections in the 294 Assembly constituencies of West Bengal.

The ruling Trinamool Congress and the CPI(M) expressed concerns over what they described as "unbearable" harassment faced by common citizens during the Special Intensive Revision hearings. They also raised issues about more than 60 lakh voters being placed "under adjudication" status, urging the Com-



mission not to conduct elections without finalising proper voter lists with genuine electors. The main opposition BJP remained silent on the SIR issue but demanded that the elections be conducted in a peaceful, violence-free environment. Almost all political parties, including the Congress, demanded that the Election Commission hold the elections in one or two phases. The 2021 Assembly elections in West Bengal were conducted in eight phases, while the 2024 Lok Sabha elections in the state were held in seven phases. However, the Trinamool Congress did not clearly state its position on the number of phases.



Sikkim CM Leads Public Outreach in Gangtok

Gangtok, Mar 10: Prem Singh Tamang chaired the Mukhyamantri Jan Sambadh Programme under the “Connect to CM” platform at Samman Bhawan on Tuesday, where assistance under multiple welfare schemes was extended to beneficiaries from DESME BPL and economically weaker sections. The programme connected 34 Block Administrative Centres (BACs) across the state through video conferencing, enabling interaction with Block Development Officers and beneficiaries from different districts.

During the programme, beneficiaries received support under several government schemes, including the Chief Minister’s Medical Assistance Scheme (CMMAS), Chief Minister’s Discretionary Grant (CMDG), Chief



Minister’s Self-Employment Assistance Scheme (CM-SEAS), Sikkim Garib Awas Yojana, allotment of land to landless families, and the Chief Minister Education Assistance Scheme (CMEAS) for students from economically weaker backgrounds. Opportunities related to government employment were also announced for eligible beneficiaries.

The Chief Minister stated that beneficiaries were selected following a verification process to ensure that assistance reaches eligible individuals. He informed beneficiaries that official orders and related benefits would be delivered at their respective BACs within a week so that they do not need to travel to government offices. During the interaction, the Chief

Minister said the government would continue to extend support to BPL families and economically disadvantaged sections. He also stated that the Mukhyamantri Jan Sambadh programme aims to improve access to government services at the grassroots level. According to the Chief Minister, the programme will be organised once every two months. Distribution of benefits will also be facilitated at the respective BACs.

The “Connect to CM” platform, launched on October 14, 2025, functions as a channel for citizens to raise grievances, seek assistance and communicate with the government. Officials stated that the platform has been used to address several complaints related to administrative issues through direct intervention and follow-up.

Assam OKs ₹30 Wage Hike for Tea Garden Staff

Guwahati, Mar 10: The Assam government has approved a ₹30 increase in the daily wages of tea plantation workers, according to an official notification issued on March 7. The revised wage will come into effect from April 1, 2026. The increase will apply to workers employed in both estate tea gardens and small tea gardens across the state, one of India’s largest tea-producing regions.

The decision follows a recommendation made by the



state’s Minimum Wages Advisory Board during its meeting held on February 26. The notification stated that the interim wage increase has been sanctioned by the Governor of Assam. The revised wage will be implemented across tea plantations in the state starting April 1.

ASPF Urges Assam CM to Protect Garo Traders



Guwahati, Mar 08: The Achik State People’s Front (ASPF) has formally appealed to Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, urging the state administration to protect traders from Garo Hills working in border regions. In a letter submitted on Saturday, the group raised concerns over rising hostility toward the Garo population in South Salmara, Dhubri, and Goalpara. ASPF general secretary Bernita Marak pointed to cases where market sellers in Mankachar reportedly had their merchandise damaged, with similar events reported in Krishnai, Goalpara. The organisation also mentioned that traders frequently face harassment and seizure of their goods in areas like Hatsingimari, Lakhipur, and Rongsai. The letter warned about misleading social media content, including a video showing individuals demanding an “entry fee” from Garo vendors while using abusive language. To mitigate these risks, the ASPF recommended establishing a dedicated reporting channel, increasing security presence at border markets, and monitoring online platforms to curb the spread of inflammatory content.

New Air Monitor at Bajali School to Boost Climate Awareness

Pathsala, Mar 10: In a step aimed at promoting environmental awareness and climate education among students, an Air Quality Monitoring System has been installed at Bajali Higher Secondary School in lower Assam’s Pathsala. The system was installed by the Bajali district administration in collaboration with the Assam Forest Department. The initiative is expected to help



students observe and understand local air pollution levels while encouraging greater responsibility toward environmental protection.

According to officials, the monitoring device will measure key air quality parameters and provide real-time data on pollution levels in the area. The system typically tracks indicators such as PM2.5, PM10, carbon dioxide, and other gases that are important for assessing environmental health. The installation programme was

attended by Bajali District Commissioner Mridul Kumar Das, president of Mahabahu Climate Forum Anjan Sarma, environmental activist and Director of Green Mission Bajali Ananda Khataniyar, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of the North Kamrup Division T. C. Ranjith Ram, and Bajali Higher Secondary School Principal Ranjan Chakraborty.

The event was conducted

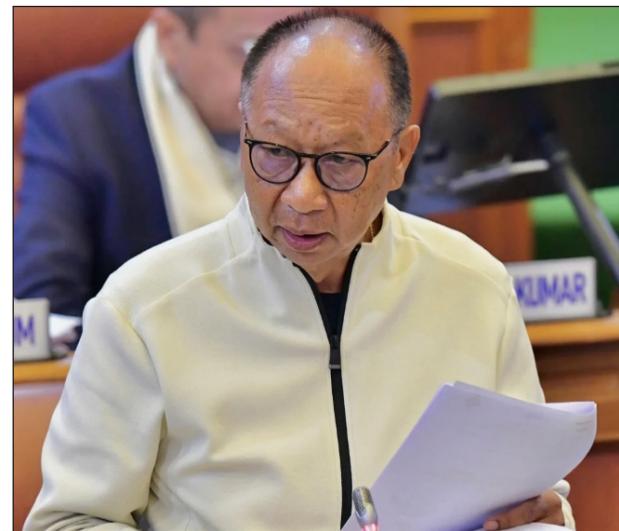
by writer Pulu Kumar Sarma, while Assistant Commissioner and Executive Magistrate of Bajali Ashfaque Laskar extended special cooperation in organising the programme. On the occasion, a book titled Everyday Climate Action was also launched in the presence of the guests.

Speaking at the event, Anjan Sarma said Bajali was chosen for installing the monitoring system to promote environmental awareness and climate education among students. He noted

that direct exposure to the equipment would spark curiosity among students about environmental issues and encourage them to take responsibility for protecting nature. Sarma also said that since the formation of Bajali district, District Commissioner Mridul Kumar Das has shown a strong commitment to addressing climate change through awareness initiatives and community engagement. Addressing the gathering, Das emphasised the need for greater discussion and awareness about climate change.

He noted that although the issue may sometimes appear distant, its impacts are already visible in places like Byrnihat in Meghalaya, where severe air pollution has affected residents’ daily lives. Environmental activist Ananda Khataniyar described the installation of such a system in a government school as an encouraging step, saying it would help monitor pollution levels while also building awareness among students and the wider community. Teachers and students of the school, along with representatives from government and private institutions, welcomed the initiative, noting that the monitoring system would also support environmental education and research activities.

Manipur Assembly Pays Obituary References To 15 Leaders



Manipur, Mar 10: The Manipur Legislative Assembly on Monday paid obituary references to 15 leaders who passed away in 2025 and 2026, including former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Breaking News Alerts Members from both the ruling and opposition benches participated in the session, expressing condolences and paying tribute to the contributions of the departed leaders. Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh addressed the House and described the passing of Manmohan Singh as “a great loss to the nation,” recalling his contributions to the country’s governance and economic development. The Assembly also remembered sitting legislators Vungzagin Valte and N Kayisii, along with several former ministers and other prominent leaders. Referring to Valte, the Chief Minister said he died last month at a private hospital in Gurugram after suffering injuries in an unfortunate incident, adding that his demise had deeply affected the Assembly

and the people he represented. The session saw participation both in person and virtually, with Deputy Chief Minister Nemcha Kipgen joining remotely.

Other attendees included BJP MLAs LM Khaute and N Sanate, as well as Kinneo Hangshing of the Kuki People’s Alliance. Officials confirmed their virtual participation, ensuring that the tributes and legislative proceedings continued with broad representation. The ongoing Assembly session, which resumed on Monday, is scheduled to continue until March 17 with seven sittings. During this period, the House will take up key legislative business, including the presentation of the state budget estimates for 2026–27, supplementary demands for grants for 2025–26, and the report of the Business

Advisory Committee. The Assembly had earlier convened for a one-day sitting on February 5 following the swearing-in of Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh.



MSDE, Bajaj Auto partner to train 1,000 youth in advanced auto motive manufacturing



Guwahati: In a move to strengthen industry-led skill development, the Directorate General of Training (DGT) under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has signed a Flexible Memorandum of Understanding (Flexi-MoU) with Bajaj Auto Ltd. to deliver advanced automotive manufacturing training to Indian youth.

Under the revised Flexi-MoU Scheme introduced in June 2024, Bajaj Auto will function as an Industry Training Partner (ITP) and conduct National Skills

Qualification Framework (NSQF)-aligned training programmes at its manufacturing facilities in Maharashtra and Uttarakhand. In the first year, the company has proposed to train 1,000 candidates through programmes lasting up to 24 months, combining classroom learning with hands-on shopfloor exposure to advanced manufacturing systems.

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Jayant Chaudhary said the collaboration would strengthen industry-linked

skilling and help youth become job-ready through real production environment exposure. The signing ceremony was attended by MSDE Secretary Debashree Mukherjee, DGT Director General Dilip Kumar, Deputy Director General Sunil Kumar Gupta, along with senior officials from DGT and Bajaj Auto, including Chief HR Officer Ravi Kyran Ramasamy.

In Guwahati, the initiative reflects the growing importance of industry-driven skill development for youth in the Northeast. With rising automobile sales and expansion of service networks in the Guwahati market, demand for trained technicians and manufacturing-linked skills is increasing. Industry-integrated training programmes like this could help bridge skill gaps, improve employability of youth from Assam and neighbouring states, and strengthen the region's participation in India's expanding automotive and manufacturing ecosystem.

Blenders Pride Packaged Drinking Water launches 'The One And Only' campaign to reinforce aspirational brand identity

New Delhi: Blenders Pride Packaged Drinking Water has unveiled its latest campaign titled 'The One And Only', aiming to strengthen its positioning around aspirational success, individuality and cultural influence in India's evolving lifestyle market.

Announced on March 2, 2026, the campaign highlights the brand's belief that in a world where markers of success are increasingly visible and crowded, true achievement lies in distinction. The campaign narrative focuses on individuals who stand apart with confidence, style and influence. The campaign features three protagonists; Avanti Nagrath, Kirandeep Chahal and Mahika Sharma each representing a different facet of the brand's identity. Avanti reflects fearless confidence and individuality,



Kirandeep represents magnetic presence and bold charisma, while Mahika embodies poise and quiet admiration. Through these characters, the campaign portrays an aspirational world where many may appear equal, yet only a few rise above with unmistakable aura and influence.

Blenders Pride has long positioned itself as a cultural icon shaping aspirational success in modern Indian culture, supported by brand innovations, industry-first initiatives and iconic fashion platforms.

The 360-degree integrated campaign is being rolled out across digital and social media platforms, front-page advertisements in leading newspapers and high-impact outdoor displays across major cities, along with visibility during the ongoing ICC T20 World Cup.

Debasree Dasgupta, Chief Marketing Officer at Pernod Ricard India, said the campaign reflects the aspirations of India's youth who seek not only recognition but also admiration and influence while pursuing success.

Women investors gain ground as confidences urges but planning gappersist: DSP Winvestor Pulse

Guwahati: Women across India are increasingly taking control of their financial decisions, but a gap between investor confidence and structured planning remains, according to the DSP Winvestor Pulse 2025-26 released by DSP Mutual Fund in partnership with YouGov. The nationwide study surveyed 5,050 urban investors across 13 cities and highlights evolving investment behaviour and aspirations.

The report shows that 56% of women now take investment decisions independently, up sharply from 44% in 2022 — the most significant shift recorded in the study. While men continue to lead with 68%, women are increasingly combining independence with professional guidance, with 24% saying they consult financial advisors while making decisions. Women are also more likely to consult their spouses when investing, and the proportion of self-taught women investors has risen from 13% to 16%.

Despite growing confidence, a planning gap remains. While 84% of investors feel confident investing on their own,

only 33% have both a clear financial goal and a structured plan. Nearly half define long-term investing as three years or less, and only 28% associate it with five years or more. The survey also found 94% satisfaction among investors who consult advisors, though 39% of non-users cite privacy concerns.

Commenting on the findings, Aditi Kothari Desai, Chairperson of DSP Mutual Fund, said Indian women are moving "from participation to ownership" in their financial journeys, increasingly seeking knowledge, consulting advisors and shaping financial aspirations independently. Kalpen Parekh, MD & CEO of DSP Mutual Fund, added that when women invest with confidence, families become more secure and long-term financial outcomes improve.



Ambuja Cements, Adani Foundation drive sports development in rural Assam with football initiative

Umrangso: Ambuja Cements, the world's ninth-largest building materials solutions provider and part of the diversified Adani Portfolio, along with the Adani Foundation, has launched a football promotion programme in Umrangso in Assam's Dima Hasao district, aimed at nurturing sporting talent and promoting holistic development among rural youth.

The initiative has been rolled out across Borolokhindong, Tharvelangso and Chotolokhindong villages to address

the lack of proper sports infrastructure and training opportunities in rural areas where football enjoys deep cultural significance and strong popularity among young people.

Through the programme, Ambuja Cements supported 81 rural youths, including 54 boys and 27 girls, by improving playground facilities and distributing sports kits to enable structured football training. The intervention aims to equip young players with the resources re-

quired to develop their skills and pursue competitive opportunities.

The programme has also played a key role in encouraging girls' participation in sports by creating an inclusive and supportive environment for them to actively engage in football.

With increased exposure and improved facilities, several participants are now exploring opportunities to compete at the district level, opening potential pathways for future sports careers.

ITC Sunrise launches 'Udyoini' to honour Assam's women changemakers on International Women's Day

Guwahati: ITC Sunrise Spices has launched Udyoini, a purpose-driven platform aimed at recognising women changemakers across Assam, marking International Women's Day. Organised in collaboration with Red FM 93.5, the initiative felicitated 15 women achievers from different districts whose leadership, entrepreneurship and social contributions have created a meaningful impact on their families and local communities.

The event brought together key institutional stakeholders and government officials, including Smt. Moyuri Ojha, Director of Handloom & Textiles, Ambari, Guwahati; Smti Manju Rani Gogoi Talukdar, Joint Director at the Commissionerate of Industries & Commerce, Assam Udyog Bhawan; Shri Mara Koko, Managing Director of North Eastern Handicrafts & Handlooms Development

Corporation Ltd (NEHDC); Shri Omkarnath Rath, COO from the Department of Innovation, Incubation & Startups, Government of Assam; and Shri Shouvik Chanda, Head and Director of Bureau of Indian Standards, Guwahati.

Among those honoured were Dalimi Devi, a retired teacher who educates underprivileged children and trains school dropout girls in stitching and knitting; Debayani Bhuyan, a chef from Beltola who runs two office canteens while promoting Northeast tribal cuisine; journalist Darshana Baruah; and entrepreneur Anushka Das, founder of Anurupa Studio.

Speaking at the event, Piyush Mishra, Business Head of Sunrise Spices at ITC Ltd., said the brand aims to extend its role beyond the kitchen and empower inspirational women through recognition, visi-



bility and institutional linkages.

In Guwahati, initiatives like Udyoini are expected to strengthen the ecosystem for women-led enterprises in the region. As Guwahati continues to emerge as a key commercial hub of the Northeast, such platforms can improve market visibility for grassroots entrepreneurs, artisans and small businesses, enabling them to connect with institutional networks and growth opportunities.

India, Finland explore deeper skill partnership to boost workforce mobility and vocational training

Guwahati: India and Finland on Thursday discussed expanding cooperation in skill development, vocational education and workforce mobility during a bilateral meeting between Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Minister of State for Education Jayant Chaudhary and Finland's Minister of Employment Matias Martinen in New Delhi.

The discussions focused on strengthening collaboration between institutions, industry and training systems to build resilient and future-ready talent ecosystems. Both sides highlighted opportunities to deepen partnerships between vocational education and training institutions, promote knowledge exchange and create pathways for skilled workforce mobility.

Jayant Chaudhary said India is steadily moving towards becoming the "Global Skill Capital of the world," driven by its young and dynamic workforce and expanding skilling ecosystem. "India's demographic strength and Finland's technological and vocational excellence cre-



ate a natural partnership in the domain of skills," he said, stressing the importance of building practical bridges between training systems and global employment opportunities.

Martinen said Finland values its growing partnership with India and appreciates the contribution of skilled Indian professionals working across sectors in the country. He added that closer cooperation could help address labour shortages while promoting innovation and sustainable economic growth.

Both sides identified sectors such as healthcare, construction, green technologies and advanced manufacturing as key

areas for collaboration. Discussions also covered trainer capacity building, language training for international mobility and smoother recognition of vocational qualifications.

In Guwahati, expanding global skill partnerships could open new employment pathways for youth in Northeast India. Training centres and skilling institutes in Guwahati are increasingly aligning with national programmes, and stronger international collaboration could boost opportunities for skilled workers from the region to access overseas labour markets.

The Finnish delegation included senior officials from labour migration, innovation and workforce development agencies, while the Indian side was represented by senior officials from the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, NCVET and the Directorate General of Training. Both countries agreed to continue engagement to identify priority sectors and strengthen institutional partnerships.

Ambuja Cements, Adani Foundation expand CSR footprint with safe drinking water initiative in Assam

Umrangso: Ambuja Cements, the world's ninth-largest building materials solutions provider and part of the diversified Adani Portfolio, along with the Adani Foundation, has strengthened its community outreach in Assam by improving access to safe drinking water in Tharvelangso village of Umrangso through a targeted CSR intervention.

The initiative aims to address the long-standing issue

of contaminated water sources in the area, which had led to recurring cases of diarrhoea and other stomach-related illnesses among rural families. As part of the 2025-26 community health programme, Ambuja Cements and the Adani Foundation distributed reverse osmosis (RO) water filters to 215 families across three core villages, ensuring access to safe drinking water at the household level.

The impact of the interven-

tion is already visible in the community. Residents report a decline in water-borne diseases, leading to reduced medical visits and lower healthcare costs. For many families, this has eased financial pressure and improved overall health security.

Mrs. Ruptalin Engtipi, a resident of Tharvelangso village, earlier faced frequent health concerns within her family of six. Each illness required travelling nearly 17 km to

the civil hospital in Umrangso, costing around ₹1,500 in travel expenses and approximately ₹3,000 on medicines, placing a significant financial burden on the household.

With access to clean drinking water at home, the initiative has helped reduce health risks while reinforcing Ambuja Cements' commitment to sustainable development and improved quality of life in underserved rural communities.

Bandhan Mutual Fund strengthens northeast footprint with new Guwahati branch

Guwahati: Bandhan AMC Limited (Bandhan AMC) has expanded its presence in the Northeast by opening a new branch office in Guwahati, aimed at improving services for investors and mutual fund distributors (MFDs) in the region. The new facility is located on the first floor of Ganapati Enclave, Bora Service, Ulubari, Guwahati - 781007.

The branch has been designed to strengthen investor engagement and distribution support. It features a fully equipped meeting-cum-training room that will be used for training mutual fund distributors and conducting investor awareness programmes. The company said the new office is expected to enhance customer service while supporting financial literacy initiatives and promoting mutual fund participation in the region.

Commenting on the launch, Gaurab Parija, Chief Business Officer of Bandhan AMC, and Chandra Shekar Ghosh, Founder of Bandhan Group,



said Guwahati has emerged as a high-growth market for the company. "We are happy to have received strong feedback and support from our partners and investors over several years. Our new office further strengthens our commitment and presence in this key market," they said, adding that the facility will help generate greater interest in mutual funds and deliver superior service to customers.

In Guwahati, the move reflects the rising interest in mutual fund investments across Assam and the wider Northeast. Financial sector observers note that increasing awareness, expanding distributor networks, and a growing base of retail investors are making Guwahati an important hub for asset management companies seeking to deepen their reach in the region.

Meghalaya's Nidaiohi Biam builds entrepreneurial success through social-selling platform

New Delhi: Nidaiohi Biam's journey from a remote village in Meghalaya to financial independence highlights the growing opportunities emerging from social-selling platforms in India. Born into a modest family with four sisters and five brothers, Biam faced economic hardships early in life and began supporting her education while still in school. Determined to change her circumstances, she balanced studies with work and contributed to her family's income as one of its breadwinners.

Her professional journey began in Jowai, where she worked as a helper in an IT shop. Seeking wider exposure, she stepped beyond her hometown to gain experience and develop new skills. However, recognising the importance of education



and long-term stability, she returned home to resume her studies, convinced that continuous learning would help her achieve her ambitions.

Biam has achieved financial independence and earned recognition for her work. Beyond personal success, she actively mentors aspiring entrepreneurs in her community, helping many women build networks and pursue financial self-reliance.

CDSL IPF launches 'Ms. Atmanirbhar Investor' campaign to boost women's participation in securities market

Guwahati: Central Depository Services (India) Limited (CDSL) Investor Protection Fund (IPF) has launched a digital awareness campaign titled 'Ms. Atmanirbhar Investor', aimed at encouraging women to responsibly begin their investment journey in the securities market. The campaign has been introduced around International Women's Day under CDSL IPF's flagship investor awareness initiative 'AtmanirbHER'.

As part of the campaign, CDSL IPF has released two digital advertisement films, which have been rolled out in 12 Indian languages to reach women investors nationwide. The first film depicts a group of friends encouraging a hesitant woman to overcome her doubts and take the first step towards informed investing. The second film celebrates her decision to begin investing, symbolising confidence and financial independence. Together, the films promote the message #BanoMsAtmanirbharInvestor, emphasising the im-



portance of research-backed and planned investing.

Speaking about the campaign, NayanaOvalekar, Chief Regulatory Officer at CDSL and Trustee of CDSL IPF, said financial self-sufficiency is a powerful form of empowerment and that informed investing can help women build

long-term financial security.

In Guwahati, awareness initiatives and digital investment platforms are encouraging more women in the region to open demat accounts and explore securities market opportunities, reflecting a gradual shift towards financial participation and independence.



MSDE to host breakout session on skilling 1.5 lakh caregivers at post-budget webinar

Guwahati: The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) will host a breakout session on “Strengthening India’s Care Ecosystem: Skilling 1.5 Lakh Multiskilled Caregivers” during the Post-Budget Webinar on the theme ‘Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas – Fulfilling Aspirations of People’. The webinar is part of a series organised by the Ministry of Finance following the Union Budget 2026–27.

The day-long webinar will be led and coordinated by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Prime Minister

Narendra Modi is scheduled to address the Post-Budget Webinar 2026–27 on March 9. The platform will bring together key stakeholders to discuss implementation strategies outlined in Para-54 of the Union Budget speech, which proposes building a strong care ecosystem covering geriatric and allied care services.

India’s skilling ecosystem—including NCVET, Sector Skill Councils, ITIs, NSTIs and flagship schemes such as PMKVY, PM-NAPS and Jan Shikshan Sansthan—will support the initiative. Thousands of candidates have already

been trained in roles such as Geriatric Caregiver, Home Health Aide and General Duty Assistant.

In Guwahati, the initiative is expected to create new opportunities for skill development institutes and healthcare service providers in Assam and the wider Northeast. With the region witnessing growing demand for geriatric care and home-based healthcare services, training programmes for caregivers could open employment avenues for local youth while strengthening the healthcare support ecosystem in cities like Guwahati.

Data & AI take centre stage in education governance discussions at Mumbai roundtable

Itanagar: The Sterlite EdIndia Foundation on Thursday hosted the Data & AI for Education Governance Roundtable in Mumbai, bringing together senior leaders from municipal corporations, district administrations, education departments and leading education foundations to discuss how technology can strengthen education systems in India. Held at the Sterlite Electric Office in Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC), the roundtable focused on improving student learning outcomes and strengthening administrative planning in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the National Curriculum Framework (NCF). Participants highlighted the growing need for insight-driven systems to improve planning, monitoring and evaluation across classrooms and institutions.



sai) discussed how data and AI can enable targeted and equitable interventions across diverse education contexts.

Leaders from organisations such as Adhyayan Quality Education Foundation, Vipra Foundation, Pehlay Akshar and Dasra also shared insights on strengthening governance through data-driven planning and improved monitoring of learning outcomes, teacher deployment and attendance.

In Itanagar, education experts say the adoption of data analytics and AI-driven systems could significantly benefit education administration in Arunachal Pradesh. Officials noted that districts such as Namsai are already exploring data-based planning models that may gradually influence education governance practices across the Itanagar region, helping authorities track student performance and deploy resources more effectively.

The roundtable concluded with a call for stronger collaboration between governments, foundations and system leaders to build transparent and scalable education systems that improve learning outcomes nationwide.

Sterlite EdIndia Foundation works in teacher education, data analytics support and institutional strengthening of education systems as part of a CSR initiative incubated by Sterlite Electric, Resonia and Serentica.

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.

Khandsari Gujiya: A wholesome Holi sweet by Chef Yogendra Negi, Organic India

Guwahati: Ingredients: For the Crust (Pastry): All-purpose flour (Maida): 2 cups, Organic India Ghee (Melted): 1/4 cup (for moyen/shortening), Water: As needed (chilled water works best for crispness), Salt: A tiny pinch. For the Filling: Mawa (Khoya): 200g (crumbled), Organic India Desi Khandsari Sugar: 3/4 cup (adjust to taste), Semolina (Sooji): 2 tbsp (roasted until golden), Dry Fruits: 1/4 cup (finely chopped almonds, cashews, and pistachios), Desiccated Coconut: 2 tbsp, Cardamom Powder: 1 tsp, Ghee: 1 tsp (to roast the mawa). Instructions: 1. Prepare the Dough: 1. In a large bowl, mix the flour and salt. Add the melted ghee. 2. Rub the ghee into the flour using your fingertips until it reaches a breadcrumb consistency. If you hold a lump of flour in your fist, it should hold its shape. 3. Add water little by little and knead a stiff, firm dough. 4. Cover with a damp cloth and let it rest for at least 30 minutes. 2. Prepare the Filling: 1. Heat 1 tsp ghee in a pan. Add the crumbled Mawa and roast on low heat until it turns light golden and starts releasing a pleasant aroma. 2. Add the roasted Sooji, nuts, and coconut. Mix well and turn off the heat. 3. Crucial Step: Let the mixture cool down to room temperature. 4. Once cool, stir in the Khandsari sugar and cardamom powder. (If you add Khandsari to hot mawa, it will melt and make the filling soggy. 3. Shaping and Frying: 1. Divide the dough into small lemon-sized balls and roll them into thin circles (puri size). 2. Place a spoonful of filling on one half of the circle. 3.



Apply a little water or milk to the edges. Fold the other half over and press to seal. 4. Use a Gujiyamould or a fork to create a crimped edge pattern. 5. Heat the ghee or vegetable oil in a deep pan on low to medium heat. 6. Fry the Gujiyas in batches until they are golden brown and crisp. Pro-Tips for the Best Gujiya: Temperature Control: Always fry on low heat. If the oil is too hot, the Gujiya will develop bubbles on the crust and won't be as crunchy. The "Organic India Desi Khandsari Sugar" Edge: Since Khandsari has a distinct grainy texture, you can pulse it in a blender for 2 seconds if you prefer a smoother filling, though the slight crunch is traditional. Storage: Let them cool completely before storing in an airtight container; they'll stay fresh for up to 10 days.

Hon'ble PM calls for scalable models to strengthen India's human capital and care economy

Guwahati: The Post-Budget Webinar 2026 on the theme “Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas – Fulfilling Aspirations of People” was organised bringing together policymakers, industry leaders, multilateral institutions, private organisations, etc. to deliberate on the effective implementation of the Union Budget 2026–27 announcements. The webinar is part of the Government’s annual post-Budget consultation process aimed at translating policy announcements into actionable implementation frameworks. Addressing the gathering, Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi emphasised that the Union Budget provides a roadmap for building a future-ready workforce and strengthening human capital for a Viksit Bharat, highlighting the need for scalable models, innovation-driven growth, and stronger linkages between education, skilling, and the real economy. Shri Jayant Chaudhary Hon’ble Minister of State

(Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Minister of State for Education, Government of India, also participated in the Inaugural session. In the concluding Session, he highlighted the strategic importance of the care economy in India’s growth trajectory. He said, “Through the Budget announcement to train 1.5 lakh multiskilled caregivers, we are building a professional ecosystem that combines healthcare, wellness, and assistive technologies while creating dignified employment opportunities, particularly for women.”

As a part of the Post-Budget Webinar, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) steered a dedicated breakout session on the sub-theme “Strengthening India’s Care Ecosystem: Skilling 1.5 Lakh Multiskilled Caregivers” in blended mode. In her opening remarks, Ms. Debashree Mukherjee, Secretary, MSDE, underscored

the importance of building a robust, quality-driven training ecosystem to support the emerging care economy. She said, “As we move forward with the Budget announcement on strengthening India’s care ecosystem, our focus is on developing a structured and quality-driven training framework that prepares multiskilled caregivers to meet emerging care needs.” While welcoming the participants, Ms. Manisha Sensarma, Senior Economic Adviser, MSDE, outlined the strategic vision behind the budget announcement to train 1.5 lakh multiskilled caregivers, aimed at addressing rising domestic demand from an ageing population as well as global shortages of care and allied healthcare professionals. The session brought together an eminent panel of few stakeholders. The Post-Budget Webinar witnessed large participation of various stakeholders through both online and physical modes.



Make This Sweet, Spicy And Tangy Treat At Home



The mere mention of tamarind candy can evoke nostalgic memories of childhood for many. With its ideal combination of sweetness, tartness, and a touch of spice, this cherished delicacy continues to be a strong favorite among both young and old. The most delightful aspect? It is remarkably simple to prepare in the comfort of your own home. By utilizing tamarind, jaggery, and several basic spices, you can create a batch of homemade tamarind candy that is just as delightful as the commercially available version, and at a significantly lower cost. Even if you need to purchase all the ingredients, it shouldn't cost you more than Rs 20. Plus, it keeps well, making it a perfect sweet-and-sour snack for any time cravings.

Ingredients To Make Tamarind Candy

1 cup seedless dates ½ cup tamarind (seeds removed) ½ cup seedless dates 1 cup grated jaggery 1 tsp red chilli powder (optional – reduce for children) 1 tsp chaat masala ½ tsp roasted cumin powder Salt to taste 1 tsp ghee (clarified butter) 1 cup hot water (for soaking)

How To Make Tamarind Candy? Soak the tamarind and dates in hot water for about 30 minutes or until soft. Blend the mixture with a little water to form a smooth paste. Strain the paste, then pour it into a non-stick pan and cook over a low flame. Add the grated jaggery and stir continuously until it melts and blends well. Keep stirring to prevent the mixture from sticking. Once it thickens slightly and develops a glossy sheen, switch off the heat and allow it to cool. Mix in the red chilli powder, chaat masala, roasted cumin powder, and salt. Combine well. Add a teaspoon of ghee for a glossy finish and soft texture. Spread the mixture on a greased plate and let it cool completely. Once firm, cut into small pieces. Roll each piece in icing sugar if you like, and wrap in butter paper or cling film. **Storage & Additional Tips** Store in an airtight container and it'll keep for several days. If making for children, you can reduce the chilli or leave it out entirely. Want to add a twist? Sprinkle in some desiccated coconut or sesame seeds.

Soft Serves Are Scooping Up A New Dessert Era

The dessert landscape in India is currently undergoing a delightful transformation. From classic ice cream parlours and traditional mithai shops to modern, globally-inspired dessert bars, the nation's appetite for sweets has reached new heights of adventure. A notable recent trend in this changing culinary scene is the resurgence of soft serve. As the frozen dessert market in India becomes increasingly competitive, international brands are now offering more than mere indulgence. They are introducing innovative products that resonate with local tastes. Sumer Sethi, the Founder of Unify Foodworks, exemplifies this understanding by bringing Carvel, the American brand known for creating soft serve ice cream, to India. "India has a sweet tooth, and for Indians, there is always something sweet after every meal," Sethi remarks. Global Heritage, Local Heart For decades, soft serve has symbolised carefree joy – the perfect swirl of creamy texture and nostalgia. But in India, that nostalgia comes with a distinctly local twist. The new wave of frozen desserts is as



much about cultural comfort as it is about global indulgence. "At Carvel India, we researched intensely to figure out the taste preferences of India's target audience and developed flavour profiles in tandem with the supply chain," says Sumer. The result: a line-up that blends the familiar with the new — Gulab Jamun Lava Sundaes, Filter Coffee Dashers, Tutti Frutti Carvelanches, and Mango Soft Serve, flavours that bridge the gap between traditional mithai nostalgia and contemporary dessert culture. A Treat For Every Generation India's love for desserts cuts across age groups, and that inclusivity has shaped the brand's strategy. "There are only a few taste profiles that the consumer from 8 to 80 years old enjoys, and we've focused on exactly that. The offering needs to have something for everyone," says Sethi. "As the frozen dessert space in India grows, it's clear that the next wave of indulgence is both familiar and fresh. With a mix of nostalgia, innovation, and accessible pricing, soft serve is no longer just a childhood treat, but it's becoming a lifestyle experience."

Tamatar Chaat to Tehri: Lesser-Known North Indian Dishes That Every Food Enthusiast Should Experience

When the conversation turns to North Indian cuisine, the initial thought that comes to mind is the delectable gravies and tandoori specialties. Spanning from Delhi to Jammu and Kashmir, there exists a wide variety of dishes that embody the traditional values, distinctive flavors, and regional tastes of the north. These delicacies may not be popular, but they are sure to entice food lovers from all over the country. Taking a culinary ride across the foothills up north, let's explore today these underrated dishes that would be great for everyone's taste buds. Banarasi Tamatar Chaat Originating in Uttar Pradesh, this dish features tangy tomatoes cooked in desi ghee and mixed with spices. It is served hot with crunchy namak pares and a dollop of chutney for a blend of sweet and sour taste. Expect an explosion of flavours inside your mouth from the moment you take the first bite. Traditionally, the chaat is made of aloo tikkis and pakodas. But this unique UP offering once again establishes the north Indian state as the chaat capital of India. Bhutte Ka Kees Hailing from Madhya Pradesh, not far off the north of India, Bhutte Ka Kees is a dish combining grated corn with milk, mustard seeds and spices. Packed with sweet and spicy flavours, Bhutte Ka Kees is a creamy, fragrant snack that is quite popular in Indore and Bhopal. Gogji Razma The valleys of Jammu & Kashmir are home to the Gogji Razma, a won-



derful winter delicacy featuring kidney beans and turnips. It is a traditional comfort food in the state. Combine the mildly spiced Gogji Razma with steamed rice and you may experience a heavenly abode. Kachri ki Chaat In the North-West state of Rajasthan, the Kachri ki Chaat (wild melon chaat) is made by blending wild melon with a host of essential Indian spices. It has a tangy, earthy flavour and goes perfectly with a ghee-laden bajre ki roti (pearl millet). In desert regions, the Kachri ki Chaat aids people's digestive systems. It is a regularly consumed in Marwari households. Tehri In Uttar Pradesh's Aligarh, Tehri is commonly found in households and is even consumed as a party dish at many places. It's a yellow rice dish packed with vegetables and multiple Indian spices, which enhance its taste and make it an everyday favourite delicacy for locals.

Are you frying Pooris or Pakodas? Here is a guide on how to safely reuse the cooking oil.

Frequently, when preparing pooris, pakoras, or other fried dishes at home, a significant quantity of oil remains in the pan or wok. Many individuals are reluctant to reuse or reheat the same oil, as this may pose health risks. Nevertheless, if the oil is stored and reused properly, it can be preserved from disposal and remain safe for consumption. Just keep a few simple tips in mind to reuse it wisely. **First Step To Safely Reuse Oil: Cooling And Straining** First, allow the oil to cool completely after frying puris or any other items. Never strain hot oil directly, as this can cause it to lose its nutrients. Once cooled, strain the oil through a fine sieve or muslin cloth to remove burnt bits or dough residues, which can be harmful if reheated. Cleaned oil not only lasts longer but also tastes better. **How To Store Leftover Cooking Oil?** Next, consider the proper way to store the oil. Always keep leftover oil in an airtight



steel or glass container. Avoid plastic containers, as chemical reactions may occur. Store the oil in a cool, dark place, never in direct sunlight or near the stove, as heat and light spoil its taste and quality. Try to store the same type of oil together, for example, mustard oil with mustard oil and refined oil with refined oil, to preserve flavour and quality. **How To Check If Leftover Oil Is Safe To Reuse?** When it comes to reuse, first smell the oil. If it has a burnt or sour odour, discard it immediately. Such oil can produce free

radicals in the body, which are harmful to the heart and liver. Clean, fresh-smelling oil can be reused for frying vegetables or parathas, but avoid heating the same oil more than twice, as repeated heating increases trans fats, which are detrimental to health. **Smart Ways To Use Leftover Cooking Oil** Leftover oil can be used for everyday cooking such as tempering, frying potatoes, or parathas. Avoid reusing this cooking oil for deep frying. If the oil becomes very dirty, mix it with soil in plant pots to help keep pests away.



WB Judiciary Security: SC Orders Logistical Support

Veto Power: The Calcutta HC Chief Justice holds final authority over procedural disruptions

New Delhi, Mar 10: The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the West Bengal government and the Election Commission to provide all logistical support to judicial officers in the ongoing special intensive revision of electoral rolls in the state. A three-judge bench comprising Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices R Mahadevan and Joymalya Bagchi said the judicial officers, deployed in the SIR process, so far have dealt with 10.16 lakh objections and claims of those facing deletion from the electoral rolls. The bench asked the EC to ensure that no mandatory step is introduced which can disrupt the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process unless approved by



the Calcutta High Court chief justice. It said technical disruptions in the EC's portal shall be looked into and ensured that no such disruptions take place.

The bench said new login IDs for judicial officers be created promptly to ensure smooth revision of electoral rolls. It also said that decisions of the judicial officers cannot be examined in appeals by any administrative officers of the Election Commission.

The top court bench said the chief justice of the high court can form a bench of former CJs and HC judges to deal with appeals and asked the poll panel to issue a notification for setting up an appellate body to deal with the appeals against the judicial officers' decisions in the SIR process. The bench was hearing a batch of pleas related to the ongoing SIR exercise in the state.

SC: Frame No-Fault Policy for Vaccine Adverse Events



New Delhi, Mar 10: The Supreme Court on Tuesday directed the Centre to frame a no-fault compensation policy for serious adverse events following Covid-19 vaccination.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta said the existing mechanism for monitoring adverse events following immunisation shall continue. "No separate court-appointed expert body is considered necessary in view of the existing mechanism for scientific assessment of adverse events following immunisation," Justice Nath said while pronouncing the verdict.

The bench clarified that its judgement shall not preclude any person from pursuing such other remedies as may be available in law. "Equally, the formulation of the no-fault framework shall not be construed as an admission of liability or fault on the part of the Union of India or any other authority," it said.

The top court delivered its verdict on pleas, including the one which alleged that two women lost their lives in 2021 after taking the first dose of the Covishield vaccine. The plea alleged that both of them suffered from severe adverse effects following immunisation.

Posters in Patna Pitch Chirag Paswan for CM



Patna, Mar 10: Posters cropped up at several places in Patna on Sunday, demanding the chief minister's post be given to Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) chief and Union minister Chirag Paswan. Names of several BJP leaders are doing the rounds for the post after the present incumbent Nitish Kumar decided to move to the Rajya Saba. The posters mentioned "No riots, no violence. Only Chirag should be the chief minister of Bihar". The posters also read, "Modi has blessed his Hanuman. Chirag will be the new leader of Bihar. Bihar demands Chirag. Now, the time has come to appoint a young chief minister. The National Democratic Alliance will form the government, and only Chirag will be the chief minister." The poster was put up by the party's district president from Sheikhpura Imam Ghazali. Earlier, Paswan's mother Rajkumari Devi had expressed desire to see him as the chief minister. She had said that Paswan would perform better than Kumar as chief minister. From the BJP's stable, several names are also doing the rounds for the post, prominent among them being Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary and Union minister Nityanand Rai. Before the spell of political uncertainty began in Bihar, the leaders of Paswan's party had demanded the chief minister's post for Kumar.

Centre forms panel as LPG crunch hits hospitality sector amid West Asia conflict

New Delhi, Mar 10: The Oil Ministry has constituted a committee to examine supply issues after a sudden shortage of commercial LPG cylinders alarmed the hospitality sector, with restaurant associations warning that eateries could shut down within days if supplies are not restored. As the widening conflict in the Middle East disrupted fuel lifelines, including India's LPG supplies, the government has prioritised domestic cooking gas supplies to households. This has led to supply crunch for hotels and restaurants which use market priced commercial LPG. "For LPG supply to other non-domestic sectors, a committee of three Executive Directors (EDs) of Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have been constituted to review the representations for LPG supply to restaurants/hotels/other industries," the ministry said in a social media post.

India consumed some 31.3 million tonnes of LPG annually. As much as 87% of this is in the domestic sector, including household kitchens, and the rest in com-

mercial establishments such as hotels and restaurants.

Of this total requirement, as much as 62% is met through imports. The US and Israel attack on Iran and Tehran's retaliation has shut the Strait of Hormuz - the conduit through which India got 85-90% of its LPG imports from countries like Saudi Arabia. As alternate sources are being scouted, the limited supplies available meant the government prioritising supplies to the domestic sector, and in process the commercial establishments have suffered. Industry sources say the disruption has already begun affecting operations in Mumbai and Bengaluru, as hotels and restaurants struggle to secure cooking gas. Vijay Shetty, president of the India Hotels and Restaurant Association, said the shortage is spreading rapidly and could soon paralyse the sector. While maintaining that the country has adequate fuel stocks, the Ministry in recent days directed refineries to maximise LPG output by curtailing petrochemical streams and extended the LPG refill



booking cycle to 25 days from 21 days. "In light of current geopolitical disruptions to fuel supply and constraints on supply of LPG, the ministry has issued orders to oil refineries for higher LPG production and using such extra production for domestic LPG use," the ministry said in the social media post. "The Ministry has prioritised domestic LPG supply to households and introduced a 25 day inter-booking period to avoid hoarding/black marketing." Non domestic supplies from imported LPG are being prioritised to essential non domestic sectors such as hospitals and educational institutions, it said.

Odisha Crime Data: CM Reports 54 Riots, 7 Lynchings

Bhubaneswar, Mar 10: Around 54 communal riots and seven mob lynching incidents were reported in Odisha between June 2024 and February 2026, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi informed the Assembly on Monday. In a written reply to a question from Goutam Buddha Das (BJD), the chief minister said communal riots were confined to only five districts - Balasore, Khurda, Koraput, Malkangiri and Bhadrak - while lynching incidents were reported from four districts of Rayagada, Dhenkanal, Deogarh and Balasore. Majhi informed that police have arrested 298 and 61 people for their alleged involvement in riots and mob lynching incidents respectively, in the last 20 months.

"The highest number of 24 communal riots were reported from Balasore district in which 95 people were arrested during the period," he said.

The chief minister further informed that 16 communal riot cases were reported from Khurda district in which 120 people were arrested. He said that in

eight riot cases reported from Koraput district, police arrested 33 people. Malkangiri and Bhadrak districts also reported four and two incidents of riots for which 26 and 24 people were arrested respectively, he added. Stating that the highest three mob lynching incidents took place in Rayagada district for which 48 people were arrested, Majhi said two such incidents were reported from Dhenkanal district for which no arrests have been made so far. Similarly, Deogarh and Balasore districts reported one case of mob lynching each for which six and seven people were arrested respectively. "Steps have been taken to prevent communal riots and mob lynching incidents and peace committees formed in various places for the purpose. Efforts are being made by the local administration to maintain harmony among communities. Action is being taken against those who are trying to disturb peace and harmony by collecting secret information," the chief minister said.

He added that legal action is also being tak-



en against persons involved in mob lynching and awareness programmes are being conducted to prevent such incidents.



LPG shortage effect: Closely monitoring the situation, says IPL GC Chair Arun Dhumal

BCCI Monitors Fuel Crisis and Logistics Ahead of IPL 2026

Chennai, Mar 10: A day after the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas issued a statement on social media saying that LPG supply to domestic and essential non-domestic sectors is being prioritised due to fuel supply constraints, Indian Premier League Governing Council Chairperson Arun Dhumal said the league is monitoring the evolving situation closely. With the US-Israel-Iran war in West Asia continuing to escalate, the supply of petroleum and LPG products has taken a hit. Over the last couple of days, hotel owner associations in both Bengaluru and Chennai have said they have LPG supply for a day or two. Several hotels have already started to restrict the menu to optimise the usage of LPG.

IPL GC Chairperson Dhumal said that the league is keeping a close eye on the developing situation. "We are reviewing the development. Since this is an evolving sit-

uation, nothing can be said as of now. But given the requirement of the situation, we will take a call accordingly," Dhumal told The New Indian Express.

Though the schedule is yet to be announced, the board



is working out the nitty-gritty details to avoid clashing with the election in several states, and the tournament is set to start on March 28. However, if this ongoing situation persists, the BCCI and IPL may have to make a call as it will affect not just the league but

people from all walks of life, including industries, hospitals and educational institutions.

Meanwhile, several franchises have already started their camps in their respective cities. Chennai Super Kings camp has been going on for a

few days with around 10 players training every day in their high performance centre.

Apart from the LPG supply, logistics will also be a challenge as it was seen during the recently concluded T20 World Cup, which India won. Several teams, including Zim-

babwe, West Indies and South Africa, could not leave India immediately because of the ongoing war in West Asia and the flight routes to their respective countries. Earlier on Monday, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas issued orders to oil refineries for higher LPG production and using such extra production for domestic LPG use. "The ministry has prioritised domestic LPG supply to households and introduced 25 day inter-booking period to avoid hoarding/black marketing. Non domestic supplies from imported LPG is being prioritised to essential non domestic sectors such as Hospitals and Educational institutions. For LPG supply to other non-domestic sectors, a committee of three EDs of OMCs have been constituted to review the representations for LPG supply to restaurants/hotels/other industries," Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas stated on Monday night.

Australia Grants Asylum to 5 Iranian Footballers



Wellington, Mar 10: Australia has granted asylum to five members of the Iranian women's football team who were visiting the country for a tournament when the Iran war began, Australia's Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke said Tuesday. The announcement followed days of urging by Iranian groups in Australia and by U.S. President Donald Trump for the Australian government to offer help to the women, who had not spoken publicly about a wish to claim asylum. The team drew widespread speculation and news coverage in Australia when players didn't sing the Iranian anthem before their first match.

In the early hours of Tuesday morning local time, Australian federal police officers transported five of the women from

their hotel in Gold Coast, Australia "to a safe location" after they made asylum requests. There, they met with Burke and the processing of their humanitarian visas was finalized, the minister told reporters in Brisbane hours later. "I don't want to begin to imagine how difficult that decision is for each of the individual women, but certainly last night it was joy, it was relief," said Burke, who posted photos to social media of the women smiling and clapping as he signed documents. "People were very excited about embarking on a life in Australia."

The women granted asylum were happy for their names and pictures to be published, he said. Burke added that the players wanted to make clear that they were "not political activists."

Sabalenka, Osaka set Indian Wells clash as Gauff retires injured

Indian Wells, Mar 09: Aryna Sabalenka and Naomi Osaka lined up a fourth-round clash at Indian Wells on Sunday as fourth-ranked Coco Gauff retired with a left arm injury. World number one Sabalenka powered past Romania's Jaqueline Cristian 6-4, 6-1 to book a last-16

Gauff said the pain "felt like a firework going off inside of my arm, and then my whole arm felt like it was on fire. "And then as the match played, it got progressively worse, even on shots that I wasn't even using my left arm for ... it was a scary feeling." Gauff trailed 5-2 in the

cheered on as usual by a big contingent of Filipino fans. "But this is still a really big moment for me to be able to play on Stadium One of Indian Wells and against such a great competitor," she added, wishing Gauff a speedy recovery.

Earlier action was relatively drama-free. "So many things I felt like I did great today," Sabalenka said after overpowering Cristian with a performance that included 23 winners. "Serving well, happy with the way I stayed focused no matter what (and) of course happy with the win." Sabalenka is chasing a first title in the prestigious ATP and WTA Masters 1000 event after twice coming up empty in the final.

Osaka won her first title in Indian Wells in 2018, going on to win the US Open that year in a run that included a victory over Sabalenka. That's the only meeting to date between the two -- who are now both four-time Grand Slam champions. "I'll have a chance to get a revenge, hopefully," Sabalenka said.

meeting with former champion Osaka. Japan's Osaka, seeded 16th, pounced for a 6-1, 3-6, 6-1 victory over Camila Osorio to avenge a demoralizing first-round loss to the Colombian here last year. They were joined in the fourth round by the Philippines' rising star Alexandra Eala, who was leading Gauff 6-2, 2-0 when the American retired with a left arm injury.



India's T20 WC triumph a moment of great joy, says BCCI VP Rajeev Shukla



Ahmedabad, Mar 09: India's historic ICC Men's T20 World Cup final victory has drawn widespread praise, with Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Vice President Rajeev Shukla hailing the victory as a moment of immense pride and joy for the country. India scripted history on Sunday by defeating New Zealand by 96 runs in the final at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, becoming the first team to win three Men's T20 World Cup titles while also successfully defending the crown and lifting the trophy on home soil.

Reacting to the landmark achievement, Shukla said the consistent success of Indian teams across formats and age groups had made the moment even more special. "The Indian team has won the final, which is a matter of great happiness for us. We have been winning World Cups consistently. We have won the women's tournament as well, and the Under-19 one too. Winning so many trophies

together is quite remarkable. It is a very pleasant feeling and a moment of great joy. We have achieved a huge success, and no amount of praise for this success would be enough," Shukla told IANS. India's commanding victory came after posting a massive 255/5 in their 20 overs, powered by Sanju Samson's blistering 89 off 46 balls, along with half-centuries from Abhishek Sharma and Ishan Kishan. The bowlers then delivered a clinical performance, dismissing New Zealand for 159 in 19 overs to seal a comprehensive 96-run win. With the victory, captain Suryakumar Yadav joined the elite list of Indian captains to have led the country to a men's cricket World Cup title, as India concluded a dominant campaign in the tournament. Notably, Kapil Dev, MS Dhoni, Rohit Sharma, and Harmanpreet Kaur are the only four captains, apart from Surya, across senior men's and women's cricket, to have led the nation to an ICC title.

