

SC Stays Executions, Mandates Mitigation Reports in Death Penalty Cases

Mandatory Three-Member Legal Teams for Convicts

New Delhi, Apr 28: The Supreme Court has stayed the execution of convict Aman Singh in a death reference case and issued important directions to reform the sentencing process in capital punishment cases across the country. A three-judge bench headed by Justice Vikram Nath, along with Justices Sandeep Mehta and Vijay Bishnoi, stayed Singh's death sentence till the final adjudication of his appeals. The court also called for records from the trial court and the High Court, along with translated copies for effective consideration.

Earlier, the trial court in Bihar and the Patna High Court had awarded the death penalty to Singh. While considering the mitigating and aggravating circumstances and the need for meaningful legal representation in death penalty cases, the apex court laid down several directions for trial courts, High Courts and legal services authorities. "The report pertaining to aggravating and mitigating circumstances shall, as a matter of course, be called for by the trial Court itself once the accused is convicted, prior to the determination of sentence. In the event such a report has not been called for or placed on record before the trial Court, the High Court shall mandatorily call for the same at the stage of admission of the death reference. The concerned authorities shall ensure that such reports are comprehensive, duly verified, and furnished within a stipulated timeframe so as to avoid any delay in the adjudicatory process, and to



aid and enable the Courts to undertake a meaningful, and informed, constitutionally compliant sentencing exercise. Upon receipt of such report, the Court concerned shall afford adequate opportunity to the parties to peruse the same and to advance oral submissions thereon. In cases where the reports procured by the trial Court are found to be ineffective or lacking in proper details, the High Court would be at liberty to call for a fresh report," the top court said in its 13-page order passed on April 27.

The bench further directed that in every death sentence confirmation reference before High Courts and the Supreme Court, the concerned Legal Services Committee must assign a dedicated legal team consisting of one Senior Counsel and at least two advocates with a minimum of seven years of practice to represent the convict. Such legal representation will be provided even if the convict has engaged private counsel, to ensure full and effective assistance to the court in matters involv-

ing death penalty. "The National Legal Services Authority shall frame and circulate appropriate guidelines identifying the relevant fields of enquiry for gathering mitigating circumstances and may engage trained teams, including legal and social science professionals, to undertake fieldwork involving interaction with the convict, their family, and relevant authorities, for the purpose of collecting detailed information regarding background, antecedents, socio-economic conditions, mental health status, and other relevant factors. Such information shall be made available to the appointed legal team, which shall, in turn, place before the Court a holistic and well-documented account of the convict's potential for reformation along with all pertinent mitigating and aggravating circumstances," the court said.

The Supreme Court also directed the State to place probation reports on record, while jail authorities were asked to submit detailed reports on the conduct, work and behaviour of the appellants in custody. It also ordered psychological evaluation of the appellants through a government medical facility.

The court further allowed mitigation experts associated with NALSAR University of Law to conduct in-person interviews of the appellants for preparing a Mitigation Investigation Report, ensuring confidentiality and access to relevant medical and socio-economic records.



Modi inaugurates projects worth Rs 1K crore in Varanasi

Lucknow/ Guwahati, Apr 28: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday balanced a sharp political offensive in Uttar Pradesh with a celebration of sustainable development in the Northeast. Addressing a 'Jan Akrosh rally' in Varanasi, the PM launched a scathing attack on the INDIA bloc, accusing the Congress, SP, TMC, and DMK of "betraying women" by stalling the 131st Constitution Amendment Bill for women's reservation. Describing the initiative as a "Mahayagya," he asserted that "Nari Shakti" (women power) remains the strongest pillar of a Viksit Bharat. During the visit to his constituency, he also inaugurated 163 projects worth ₹6,350 crore, including a new Signature Bridge and a super-specialty hospital, while flagging off key trains to Pune and Mumbai.

Later, in Gangtok, while marking 50 years of Sikkim's statehood, the Prime Minister hailed the state as a national blueprint for organic and natural farming. He highlighted Sikkim's immense ecological wealth—noting it houses 25% of India's floral diversity despite its small size—while criticizing previous administrations for long-standing infrastructure delays, specifically the Sevoke-Rangpo railway project. Modi accused the Congress of historically ignoring the Northeast's potential and urged tourists to dedicate 5% of their travel budgets to local products. By promoting eco-wellness and adventure tourism, he emphasized a vision where regional heritage drives national growth, contrasting his "development-first" approach with the "family-centric" politics of his rivals.

Rahul Warns of Post-Poll Fuel Hike



New Delhi, Apr 28: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi warned on Tuesday that petrol and diesel prices are set to surge after April 29, the final day of polling in West Bengal. He accused the government of "looting" the public by pocketing profits when global crude was cheap and now shifting the burden of rising costs—fueled by the West

Asia conflict—onto consumers once elections conclude. However, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas dismissed these claims as rumors. Joint Secretary Sujata Sharma clarified there is "no proposal" for a price hike, urging the public to avoid panic buying despite reports of state-run retailers incurring daily losses of ₹2,400 crore.

Aviation industry SOS as jet fuel prices zoom

New Delhi, Apr 28: Alarmed by the steep rise in aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices, IndiGo, Air India and SpiceJet have warned of shutting down operations unless the government intervenes to save the aviation sector, which is already bleeding due to the frequent airspace closures amid the war in West Asia. The Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA), which represents the three airlines, have written to the civil aviation ministry seeking its urgent intervention to set the same fuel pricing mechanism uniformly across both domestic and international operations.

The letter pointed out that this was done in 2022 through the establishment of the 'crack band' mechanism (pricing framework linked

to fair refining margins, or 'crack spread', between crude oil and ATF). This was set at \$12–22/barrel in 2022. As global jet ATF prices



more than doubled to \$180–190/barrel since the war broke out in West Asia on February 28, the Indian government last month limited the hike to ₹15 per litre for

domestic operations. However, for international operations, the price rose by ₹73 per litre. ATF prices account for 30–40% of an airline's

overall operating cost. Following the April hike, this percentage band increased to 55–60%.

The letter said the 'irrational increase' in ATF prices

will result in 'insurmountable losses' for airlines, grounding of aircraft and cancellation of flights. "In order to survive, sustain and continue operation, we request your urgent intervention for immediate and meaningful financial support to tide over the current situation," said the letter dated April 26.

The airlines are also seeking a temporary suspension of excise duty (currently set at 11%) on ATF and VAT rates in key states. FIA has called for a pricing framework based on the 'crack band mechanism' (\$12–22/bbl), which was implemented in October 2022, claiming this leaves room for a reasonable and fair margin for oil marketing companies



Debbarma Leads Militant Talks Delhi

Agartala, Apr 28: In a significant move aimed at advancing the peace process in Tripura, Tipra Motha Party supremo Pradyot Kishore Manikya Debbarma has initiated efforts to resolve issues faced by repatriated members of insurgent groups, including the All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF). On Tuesday, Debbarma held a meeting with repatriated ATTF members, where discussions focused on the challenges they continue to face following their return under the peace accord. Sources indicated that concerns related to rehabilitation, livelihood opportunities, and access to basic civic amenities were raised during the interaction.

Following the meeting, it was announced that a high-level delegation comprising representatives of both the ATTF and the National Liberation Front



of Tripura (NLFT) will soon travel to Delhi. The delegation, led by Debbarma, is expected to engage with senior officials of the Central Government to push for the implementation of key provisions of the peace agreement, particularly those concerning rehabilitation and reintegration. The development was highlighted on

social media by Ranjit Debbarma, MLA of Ramchandraghat and a senior Tipra Motha leader. He described the initiative as part of a broader effort to ensure lasting peace and inclusive development for the indigenous Tiprasa community. He also reiterated the party's commitment to ensuring that all clauses of the accord are implemented in full, enabling repatriated individuals to reintegrate into society with dignity. Political observers view the proposed Delhi visit as a crucial step, especially in the context of recent developments in Tripura's hill areas and the ongoing peace process involving former insurgent groups. Repatriated members have expressed optimism that the initiative will help resolve long-pending grievances and accelerate their transition into mainstream society.

Honeymoon Murder: Court Bails Accused Wife



Shillong, Apr 28: Sonam Raghuvanshi, the principal accused in the high-profile Indore honeymoon murder case, has been granted bail by a Shillong court. The confirmation came from Raja Raghuvanshi's brother Vipin, though the detailed bail order has not yet been released. Police allege that Sonam conspired with her alleged lover, Raj Kushwaha, to kill her husband Raja during their honeymoon. The couple had arrived in Shillong on May 21 and travelled to Sohra on May 26, the day they were reported missing. A massive search operation was launched by Sohra police, the Special Operations Team, NDRF, SDRF, mountaineering groups, and local villagers. On June 2, Raja's

body was discovered in a ravine near Wei Sadong Falls.

Investigators claim Sonam and Kushwaha plotted the murder with three hired assailants Akash Singh Rajput, Vishal Singh Chauhan, and Anand Kurmi who allegedly executed the crime in Sonam's presence. Within a week, police arrested five accused, including Sonam and Kushwaha. All of them have denied the charges.

On September 5, police submitted a 790-page chargesheet before the First Class Judicial Magistrate of Sohra subdivision, detailing the alleged conspiracy and evidence. The case continues to attract widespread attention due to its shocking circumstances and the involvement of multiple accused.

Police: Speeding Night Out Ends Fatally



Guwahati, Apr 28: The investigation into the fatal road accident at Mathgharia in Guwahati, which claimed the lives of three young women, has revealed key details about the events leading up to the crash. Guwahati Deputy Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Jayanta Sarathi Bora while sharing the findings on Tuesday said that the injured victims were immediately rushed to Gate Hospital after the accident. "However, the driver was missing from the scene, and the vehicle's driver-side door was found open, raising initial concerns. Police later identified the accused driver as Shamim Ahmed," DCP Bora said.

He said investigations revealed that the car was registered in the name of Pan-kaj Kumar Dutta and had been rented to Bhargav Deka. Ahmed had reportedly taken the vehicle from Deka earlier that day. Bora said GPS data and CCTV foot-

age were crucial in reconstructing the timeline. "The vehicle was first traced near Rudraksh Mall at around 11:00 pm, where it remained parked for several hours. CCTV footage confirmed that Ahmed and the three women were at a rooftop bar there for nearly five hours, reportedly spending around Rs19,000," he said. "At about 3:00 AM, the group left the location. GPS tracking showed the vehicle moving across major roads such as GS Road, RG Baruah Road, and Mother Teresa Road, reaching speeds of up to 130 km/h. The crash occurred at 4:02 AM when the car, travelling at around 96 km/h, rammmed into a stationary truck," Bora added. Following the accident, Ahmed allegedly fled, travelling through Shillong, Sivasagar, and Dibrugarh, before being detained. The truck driver has also been arrested, and a detailed investigation is ongoing.

Arunachal Employer Arrested After Assam Youth's Suicide

North Lakhimpur, Apr 28: Lakhimpur Police arrested Rohit Sharma from Nirjuli, Arunachal Pradesh, following the suicide of his employee, Bipul Saikia. Saikia, a resident of Laluk, Assam, reportedly took his life a month ago after enduring alleged physical and mental torture at his workplace. The victim's family claims Sharma and others accused Saikia of theft, subsequently assaulting him with a hot iron press. This severe harassment allegedly drove the youth to suicide. Sharma was apprehended and brought to Laluk Police Station. Authorities are currently investigating the case to identify other accomplices involved in the fatal abuse.

Nagaland Launches IT Equipment Distribution And Aadhaar Enrolment For Children In Dimapur

Nagaland, Apr 28: Dimapur witnessed a significant step towards strengthening vital statistics and inclusive identity systems with the launch of Aadhaar enrolment for children aged 0-5 years and the distribution of IT equipment under the Registration of Births & Deaths programme. The event, organized by the Office of the District Economics & Statistics Officer (DESO), Dimapur, took place on April 28, 2026, at Hotel Saramati. Neisatuo Puro, Additional Director of Economics & Statistics and Joint Chief Registrar of Births & Deaths, presented an overview of the online registration system, highlighting its role in improving service delivery. He underscored the importance of village councils and local authorities as primary notifiers of births and deaths, urging them to ensure accuracy and vigilance against manipulation of records. Puro noted that while online registration has been op-



erational since April 2023, Nagaland continues to lag in implementation, and he appealed for greater support in digitizing old certificates to maintain reliable records. He added that computers, printers, and internet dongles are being provided to committed Registrars, urging them to remain proactive in fulfilling their responsibilities. Deputy Commissioner of Dimapur and District Chief Registrar of Births & Deaths, Dr. Tinojongshi Chang,

emphasized that vital statistics such as birth and death rates often remain inaccurate due to non-registration. With the census process set to begin this year, he stressed the need for proper registration to ensure credible data. Chang highlighted the growing importance of digital records, noting that digital birth certificates are essential for education, career opportunities, and welfare schemes. He cautioned against irregularities such as

multiple certificates and urged Registrars to maintain strict diligence.

District Education Officer Jevika Kiba described the distribution of IT equipment as a step towards empowering institutions with digital tools. She emphasized the role of teachers as community leaders who can strengthen registration systems and educate communities on their importance. Kiba also welcomed the launch of Aadhaar enrolment for young children as a crucial measure for inclusive identity, acknowledging the support of community leaders, church secretaries, and teachers in the initiative. In his welcome address, R. Akang Ao, Joint Director & DESO, Dimapur, reiterated the importance of strengthening digital systems for efficient registration services. The programme concluded with the formal distribution of IT equipment to Registrars and the launch of Aadhaar enrolment for children aged 0-5 years.



MSDE accelerates skill push in border areas, clears 74 projects under vibrant villages programme

Guwahati: The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has stepped up efforts to drive economic transformation in India's border regions by advancing skill-led initiatives under the Vibrant Villages Programme. At a high-level workshop held at Kaushal Bhawan, the ministry brought together key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Home Affairs, ministries of Textiles, Tourism and Rural Development, along with state missions and district administrations from Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Sikkim and Uttarakhand.

The flagship programme targets the development of 662 villages into self-reliant growth centres. MSDE, which plays a central role in evalu-



ating and implementing proposals, has so far sanctioned 74 skill development projects. These initiatives are aligned with demand-driven local needs and are being monitored through the Skill India Digital Hub.

Deliberations focused on reviewing ongoing projects

and addressing bottlenecks such as trainer availability, mobilisation of beneficiaries and infrastructure gaps. The ministry outlined a forward roadmap, emphasising structured project pipelines, faster rollout of in-situ training using schools, ITIs and community centres, and stronger

coordination among District Administrations, State Skill Development Missions and Sector Skill Councils.

Senior officials, including Smt. Hena Usman, Smt. Manasi Sahay Thakur and Smt. Archana Mayaram, along with representatives from central ministries and states, participated in the discussions.

In Guwahati, the initiative is expected to strengthen regional economic integration by creating a skilled workforce in border districts. This could boost trade flows, tourism circuits and small enterprise growth, positioning Guwahati as a key gateway for distribution, training services and market access linked to emerging opportunities in these strategically important regions.

Michael Evans Builds Global Women Focused Content Platform

Kohima: Michael Evans' digital venture has rapidly emerged as one of the fastest growing women focused content ecosystems worldwide. Expanding from just 1,000 YouTube subscribers in August 2025 to over 2.5 million today, the platform has crossed 45 million views and continues to add nearly 10,000 subscribers weekly.

With women comprising more than 97 per cent of its audience, the platform's growth is being driven largely by Asian markets, including Nagaland, South Korea, Singapore, and Indonesia. Unlike entertainment led models, Evans' content focuses on emotional awareness, identity, and social pressures faced by women in traditional societies, creating a deeply engaged user base. His flagship book, *The REAL Matrix*, and the "Elara" storytelling project—designed for both adult women and young girls—form the intellectual property backbone of the platform, now expanding into audio and multilingual formats. Evans, also founder of USPA Nationwide Security, has invested over \$100 million through his nonprofit "Kingsman" in rescue operations for trafficked women, strengthening brand credibility. Recognised by global platforms, the venture is increasingly positioned as a purpose-driven content business, blending storytelling, social impact, and scalable digital growth.

Aviva India bets on growing retirement market with launch of 'Secure Nest' annuity plan

Guwahati: Aviva India has launched the "Aviva Secure Nest Annuity Plan", a retirement-focused financial product aimed at addressing the rising demand for guaranteed post-retirement income solutions in India. The plan enables customers to secure lifelong regular income through a one-time single premium payment and offers entry eligibility up to 80 years of age.

The company said the plan has been designed with multiple annuity options, including single life and joint life coverage, flexible payout frequencies, and a return of purchase price feature to safeguard nominees' financial interests. The product is also aligned with Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) regulations, making it suitable for National Pension System (NPS) subscribers looking for

stable retirement income solutions.

Commenting on the launch, Asit Rath said the company aims to provide customers with "a simple yet powerful way" to ensure financial security and dignity during retirement while protecting family interests. Ajai Kumar Tripathi said the annuity plan has been structured to combine guaranteed returns with flexibility through features such as joint life coverage and return of purchase price.

In Guwahati, financial advisors and insurance distributors say awareness around retirement planning products has increased significantly in the city, driven by rising financial literacy among middle-income households, government employees, and private sector professionals seeking dependable long-term income and family protection after retirement.

Nissan Motor India, Avis India join hands to drive growth in corporate mobility leasing market

Guwahati: Nissan Motor India Private Limited has partnered with Avis India to launch integrated leasing and subscription-based mobility solutions aimed at India's growing corporate mobility market, as companies increasingly shift towards flexible and asset-light transportation models.

Announced on Wednesday, the partnership will offer leasing and subscription plans for the Nissan Magnite and the all-new Nissan GRAVITE. The plans will be available for tenures of up to 60 months with usage limits of up to 50,000 km. Monthly rentals will start from ₹9,399 for select variants, excluding GST and subject to terms and conditions.

The collaboration is expected to strengthen Nissan's presence in India's fleet and corporate mobility segment while enabling enterprises to access structured and cost-efficient transport solutions without large capital investments.

Saurabh Vatsa, Managing Director of Nissan Motor India Private Limited, said the partnership aligns with the company's long-term strat-



egy of expanding customer-centric mobility solutions in India. Aman Naagar, Managing Director of Avis India, said the collaboration would help deepen operational capabilities and build scalable mobility platforms for enterprise customers.

Under the agreement, Avis India will manage the entire lease lifecycle, including procurement, registration, insurance, maintenance, and end-of-term services, offering businesses predictable operating costs and seamless fleet management solutions.

Medanta expands Northeast outreach as kidney transplant awareness gains momentum

Guwahati: Medanta – The Medicity has intensified its outreach in the Northeast with a renewed focus on kidney transplant awareness, post-operative care and patient support services, amid rising cases of chronic kidney disease linked to diabetes and hypertension.

In a statement issued on April 28, the Gurugram-based hospital, ranked India's best hospital by Newsweek in 2026, said kidney transplantation continues to be the preferred treatment option for patients suffering from end-stage renal disease. The hospital highlighted its multidisciplinary transplant programme supported by advanced medical technologies, including robotic surgical systems, aimed at improving patient outcomes and safety.

Dr. Manish Jain, Senior Director, Nephrology at Medanta Gurugram, said long-term care remains critical for transplant success. "A transplant is not a one-time event but a long-term com-

mitment. Patients require regular follow-ups and continued medications," he said. He added that transplant patients must maintain hygiene and follow strict medication routines to reduce infection risks caused by immunosuppressant drugs.

India sees nearly two lakh patients requiring kidney transplants annually, with most organs donated by living relatives, while deceased donor transplants are gradually increasing due to growing awareness around organ donation.

In Guwahati, healthcare demand for specialised nephrology consultations and transplant-related services is witnessing steady growth as awareness about kidney disease rises across Assam and the Northeast. Hospitals and healthcare providers in Guwahati are increasingly focusing on advanced treatment access, multilingual patient assistance and specialist outreach programmes to cater to patients travelling from neighbouring states for tertiary healthcare services.

From awareness to action: India's retirement readiness faces reality check

Guwahati: A growing gap between financial awareness and actual planning is leaving many Indian households vulnerable in their retirement years, according to insights drawn from the India Retirement Index Study (IRIS) 5.0. Despite widespread familiarity with financial products and investment tools, experts warn that most Indians continue to treat retirement planning as a non-urgent priority, creating what is described as an "Awareness–Action Divide."

The report highlights behavioural patterns such as optimism bias and dependency bias, where individuals rely on future windfalls or family support, even as traditional joint family structures decline. Inaction bias further delays decision-making, with many waiting for the "perfect time" to begin saving.

The data underscores the growing impact of inflation, with monthly expenses of

₹50,000 today projected to rise to nearly ₹2.87 lakh over 30 years. While India's retirement index score has improved to 46, the financial preparedness pillar remains weak, indicating that savings are insufficient to counter long-term inflation.

Healthcare costs, rising faster than general inflation, have added urgency to retirement planning, shifting focus from income replacement to medical security. The study also flags the "liquidity trap," where retirees remain asset-rich but cash-poor due to investments in gold or land that fail to provide regular income.

In Guwahati, there is a gradual shift in investor behaviour, with rising interest in annuity and pension products. However, traditional preferences for physical assets continue to dominate, indicating that deeper financial engagement and product ownership are still evolving in the region.

Premium snack segment heats up as Britannia 5050 launches cheeze and caramel dipped sandwich range

Guwahati: Britannia Industries has strengthened its presence in India's premium snacking segment with the launch of Britannia 5050 Cheeze Dipped and Caramel Dipped Crunchy Layered Sandwiches, signalling growing competition in the evolving packaged foods market. The launch comes as consumer demand for texture-based and indulgent snack products continues to rise across urban and semi-urban markets.

The newly launched products feature 22 baked layers designed to deliver a crunchy texture, combined with cheese and caramel coatings that provide a melting finish. Positioned as a premium yet affordable snack, the range expands the brand's long-standing "50-50" identity beyond flavour into texture innovation. Industry observers say such differentiated snack formats are increasingly driving consumer interest in the organised packaged food sector.

Siddharth Gupta, Vice-President, Marketing at Britannia Industries, said the company is focusing on evolving consumer preferences by introducing more engaging snacking experiences while strengthening the brand's foothold in the premium category. The company has also launched a marketing



campaign featuring cricketers Rishabh Pant and Jemimah Rodrigues, reviving the iconic "Na Re Naa Naa" jingle to connect with both existing and younger consumers.

Xiaomi expands budget portfolio with REDMI A7 series launch, targets value segment growth

Guwahati: Xiaomi India on Tuesday launched the REDMI A7 Series, introducing the REDMI A7 and REDMI A7 Pro with a focus on affordability, performance, and long battery life, as the company strengthens its foothold in the entry-level smartphone segment.

The REDMI A7 features a 6.88-inch display, while the A7 Pro offers a larger 6.9-inch HD+ display with up to 120Hz refresh rate for smoother visuals. Both devices come with TÜV Rheinland-certified eye protection and wet touch technology. They support 15W charging with an in-box charger and 7.5W wired reverse charging for added convenience.

The series is equipped with 64GB storage, LPDDR4X RAM, and virtual RAM expansion to enhance multitasking. Camera features include a 13MP rear and 8MP front lens. Additional highlights include a side-mounted fingerprint sensor, IP52 durability, 3.5mm headphone jack, dual



nano SIM support, and expandable storage up to 2TB. The A7 Pro also integrates Google Gemini and Circle to Search for smarter user interaction.

In Guwahati, retailers anticipate steady demand driven by price-sensitive consumers seeking reliable smartphones with larger displays

and battery efficiency. Trademarkers note that aggressive pricing—₹10,499 for REDMI A7 and ₹11,499 for REDMI A7 Pro—positions the devices competitively against rivals in the budget segment.

The REDMI A7 Series will be available from April 24 via Mi.com, Amazon India, Flipkart, and Xiaomi retail outlets.

Fatty liver cases rising silently in India, Medanta doctors stress early lifestyle changes for recovery

Dibrugarh: With fatty liver disease emerging as a major health concern across India, specialists from Medanta – The Medicity have warned that the condition is affecting millions silently and could lead to severe complications if left untreated. According to experts, nearly 39 per cent of India's adult population is estimated to be living with fatty liver disease, with cases also increasing among children. Doctors said most patients today suffer from Metabolic Dysfunction-Associated Steatotic Liver Disease (MASLD), a condition linked to obesity, diabetes, unhealthy diets and sedentary lifestyles. Dr. Pawan Rawal, Senior Director of Gastroenterology

at Medanta Gurugram, said fatty liver is often called a "silent disease" because symptoms usually do not appear in the early stages. He said the disease is often detected only through ultrasound scans, blood tests or after complications begin. Dr. Rawal stressed that the condition can be reversed in its early stages through sustained lifestyle changes, including healthier diets, regular exercise and avoiding alcohol and smoking. He advised people to consume fruits, vegetables, whole grains and omega-3-rich foods while avoiding sugary drinks, processed foods and fried items. In Dibrugarh, healthcare professionals said awareness around preventive

healthcare and lifestyle-related diseases is steadily growing in the town, with rising demand for specialised consultations, diagnostic screenings and wellness-focused medical services. Local residents are increasingly seeking expert advice on liver health amid changing food habits and sedentary urban lifestyles.

Medanta announced that Dr. Rawal will be available for consultations in Dibrugarh on April 29 at Dibrugarh Medicity. The hospital has also launched a dedicated Northeast helpline offering support in Assamese, Bengali, Nagamese, English and Hindi for appointments and medical guidance.

Godrej Industries bets big on future growth, unveils new identity with Rs 5 lakh crore valuation goal

Guwahati: Godrej Industries on Tuesday unveiled a new corporate purpose and brand identity as the diversified conglomerate laid out an ambitious roadmap to achieve a combined market capitalisation of ₹5,00,000 crore by 2031. The announcement was made at Godrej One, marking what the Group described as a defining phase in its 129-year legacy. The Group introduced its new purpose statement, "Crafting tomorrow since 1897," aimed at aligning its businesses under a unified vision across consumer products, real estate, financial services, agriculture and chemicals. The company said it plans to expand from three to five publicly listed platforms while targeting over 15 per cent annual sales growth and more than 20 per cent EPS growth in the coming years.

Pooja Godrej, Chairperson Designate of the Group, said the new purpose reflects the company's commitment to balancing strong financial growth with responsible business practices. The Group also reiterated sustainability goals, including net-zero operations



by 2035 and a planet-positive supply chain by 2047.

Meanwhile, Tanya Dubash said the refreshed identity would create a more contemporary and unified expression for the Group's future ambitions through a new visual language, typography, sonic identity and signature fragrance developed by its in-house design team DISCO.

In Guwahati, the Group's expansion strategy and sustainability-focused positioning could strengthen its presence in Northeast India's growing consumer and real estate markets. Retail observers in Guwahati said the renewed branding may resonate strongly with urban consumers and emerging middle-class buyers in Assam, where demand for trusted national brands continues to rise.

SportVot-AFA deal to stream 380 matches set to digitally power Assam football ecosystem

Guwahati: Global sports-tech platform SportVot has partnered with the Assam Football Association (AFA) to live stream and digitise state-level football competitions, in a move aimed at scaling visibility and commercial potential of grassroots football in Assam. The collaboration will cover around 380 matches across the Assam Youth League (U13, U15, U17 for boys and girls), Assam State Premier League, and the Assam Women's League, with youth league coverage beginning from the quarter-final stage.

All matches will be streamed globally via SportVot's mobile and web platforms, supplemented by highlights, curated content, and fan engagement features. SportVot Co-founder and CMO Shubhangi Gupta said the initiative seeks to create a "sustainable digital ecosystem" enabling discovery and engagement for players and clubs. AFA Honorary Secretary Dr Sangrang Brahma termed the partnership a "significant milestone" in improving accessibility and professionalising the state's football structure.

The initiative positions Assam among

the largest state-level football digitisation efforts in India, transitioning tournaments from offline formats to scalable digital sports properties with global reach.

In Guwahati, the development is expected to unlock new revenue streams through sponsorships, local advertising, and digital viewership growth. As the region's commercial hub, Guwahati could see increased participation from brands and stakeholders looking to tap into the expanding sports-tech and grassroots football ecosystem.



Hyundai, TVS join hands to roll out electric three-wheelers for India's last-mile mobility

Guwahati: Hyundai Motor Company and TVS Motor Company have signed a Joint Development Agreement (JDA) to develop and commercialise electric three-wheelers (E3Ws) tailored for India's last-mile mobility needs. The move follows the successful showcase of the concept at the Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025.

Under the pact, Hyundai will lead design and co-development, leveraging its R&D capabilities, advanced mobility technologies and human-centric design approach. TVS Motor will contribute its electric three-wheeler platform, engineering expertise and deep understanding of Indian customers, while also leading local sales and manufacturing for domestic demand and exports. Senior Vice President Joongsun Ko said the collaboration aims to expand access to safe and sustainable mobility across India. TVS Motor's President Sharad Mishra noted that the partnership would deliver purpose-built solutions and set new benchmarks in quality, technology and customer experience.

The E3W will feature adaptive ground clearance, enhanced safety systems, ergonomic design and thermal management suited for Indian conditions. The companies also plan to localise component manufacturing to strengthen the supply chain,



reduce costs and ensure faster after-sales support.

In Guwahati, one of Northeast India's key commercial hubs, the proposed electric three-wheelers are expected to see strong demand in both passenger transport and goods delivery segments. With rising fuel costs and frequent urban congestion, fleet operators and small businesses in the Guwahati market are increasingly shifting towards electric mobility solutions. Industry observers say the Hyundai-TV S partnership could accelerate EV adoption in the city by offering cost-efficient, locally adapted vehicles suited to challenging road and weather conditions.

HPCL's digital LPG system ensures fast, reliable doorstep deliveries nationwide

Guwahati: Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) has highlighted how its digital-first LPG booking system is driving efficient and timely cylinder deliveries across India. The company said that 99.2 per cent of bookings are now made through digital platforms such as IVRS, SMS, WhatsApp, and HP PAY, enabling real-time processing from the moment a request is placed.

Between April 1 and 18, HPCL delivered over 230 lakh LPG cylinders nationwide, supported by a strong logistics network and over 1.43 lakh tankers ensuring steady supply. Orders are automatically routed to nearby distributors, with systems aligning inventory and delivery schedules based on demand clusters.

HPCL said data-driven planning helps optimise routes and reduce delays, while last-mile delivery teams ensure timely service even in remote and high-density areas. Deliveries are authenticated through OTP-based systems for transparency and security.

The company also conducted 5,482 inspections and 661 raids during the period to curb irregularities, registering 41 FIRs and seizing 3,674 cylinders. HPCL said its supply system remains stable and urged consumers to avoid unnecessary stocking.

Oriflame targets growing premium beauty demand with 'Love Potion Cherry on Top' fragrance range



Mumbai: Global beauty and wellness company Oriflame has expanded its premium personal care offerings in India with the launch of its "Love Potion Cherry on Top" range, reflecting the growing consumer demand for indulgent and experience-driven beauty products in the fragrance market.

The newly launched portfolio includes the "Love Potion Cherry on Top Eau de Parfum," priced at ₹4,899, and the "Love Potion Cherry On Top Hand Cream," priced at ₹469. The Eau de Parfum features an ambery fruity profile with notes of mandarin, juicy cherry and lipstick accord at the top, followed by black cherry, rose and Peru balsam in the heart. The fragrance is anchored by a warm base of chocolate truffle accord, cedarwood and roasted tonka bean, creating a long-lasting gourmand scent positioned for all-day wear.

The accompanying hand cream, enriched with almond oil, is designed to provide hydration while leaving behind a soft cherry and chocolate truffle fragrance. The company is also positioning the product as a complementary layering option alongside the perfume to enhance scent longevity.

NPCI strengthens digital payment safety awareness with consumer advisory campaign

Aizawl: The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has reinforced its commitment to secure digital transactions by issuing a nationwide consumer advisory aimed at promoting safer digital payment practices as online transactions continue to grow across India. As part of the awareness initiative, NPCI shared five key guidelines for users to ensure safer payment experiences. The organisation advised customers to carefully verify the recipient's name before making payments and use only trusted payment applications and official websites

for financial transactions. It also urged users to keep confidential information such as UPI PINs, OTPs, and banking credentials private and avoid sharing them with anyone, including individuals claiming to represent banks, police authorities, or government offices. NPCI further encouraged consumers to avoid making rushed payments under pressure and recommended keeping SMS and app-based payment alerts activated to monitor all transaction activity. In cases of suspicious activity or fraud attempts, users have been asked to report incidents

through the national cybercrime helpline by dialing 1930 or via the Department of Telecommunications platform. The organisation also advised users to preserve screenshots and records of suspicious interactions to assist investigations. In Aizawl, traders and small businesses are increasingly relying on digital payment platforms for daily transactions. Local retailers say growing awareness about secure online payment practices is essential as more consumers shift towards cashless payments in the city's expanding retail and service sectors.

Indians eye Asia for summer travel as Gen Z drives surge: Airbnb data

Guwahati: Indian travellers are increasingly turning to Asian destinations this summer, with cities like Osaka, Tokyo, Busan, Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok leading search trends, according to new data released by Airbnb on April 21, 2026. The shift reflects a growing preference for destinations closer to home that offer a mix of cultural familiarity, connectivity and shorter travel durations.

The report highlights the strong influence of Gen Z travellers, who account for over 40% of summer searches and are growing at nearly 60% year-on-year. This group is increasingly planning trips around experiences such as festivals, concerts and food exploration, reshaping travel patterns across Asia. Osaka, Tokyo and Busan recorded search growth of over 85%, 90% and 95% respectively, while Kuala Lumpur and

Bangkok continued to witness steady demand. Domestic travel trends also show a shift towards culturally rich destinations. Locations such as Thiruvananthapuram, Puri, Jaipur and Meghalaya saw significant growth in interest, indicating travellers are exploring beyond traditional hotspots. "What we are seeing this summer is travel driven by curiosity and culture," said Amanpreet Singh Bajaj, Country Head, Airbnb India and Southeast Asia, noting that Asian destinations offer both familiarity and discovery. In Shillong, the rising interest in Meghalaya highlights growing tourism potential for the region. Travel operators in Shillong are witnessing increased inquiries, especially from younger travellers and group tourists, boosting local hospitality and allied sectors as the summer season gains momentum.

Vi sees subscriber recovery momentum as rural growth and 5G expansion strengthen market position

Mumbai: Vodafone Idea continued to show signs of recovery in the highly competitive telecom market after reporting net subscriber additions for the second consecutive month, according to the latest telecom subscription data released by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India.

The March 2026 TRAI report showed that Vi added 1,02,899 subscribers during

the month, following net additions of 21,927 users in February 2026. The company also posted strong traction in rural markets with the addition of 1,92,211 rural subscribers, reflecting improving penetration beyond urban centres.

Market-wise, Vi recorded subscriber additions across 15 telecom circles. Gujarat and Karnataka led the growth chart with additions

of 1,01,748 and 1,00,701 subscribers respectively. Bihar added 57,452 subscribers, while UP-East saw additions of 47,869 users. Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Punjab and Maharashtra also contributed positively to the company's monthly growth numbers.

Analysts said the back-to-back subscriber gains suggest early stabilisation in Vi's user base as the telecom

operator accelerates network investments and product expansion. The company's "Nonstop Hero" and "Super Hero" plans, offering flexible unlimited 4G benefits, along with its expanding 5G rollout, appear to be strengthening customer engagement.

Vi recently announced the expansion of its 5G services to 90 additional cities, taking its total 5G footprint to 133 cities by May 2026.





Pot Pie Recipes the Whole Family Will Love

From classic chicken pot pie to hearty beef pot pie, these one-pot meals are the definition of hearty comfort food. Pot pie is always delicious—it's comforting and full of complex textures. Filled with hearty meat (like chicken, beef or turkey) and packed with nutritious vegetables, it's a full dinner all in one, and pie crust or puffed pastry adds buttery flavor and flaky texture. Regardless of how you make it, this filling dinner is the definition of family-friendly comfort food. Better yet? It's a classic one-pot meal that cuts down on cleanup. These recipes, which range from traditional to twists on the classic (pretzel topping, anyone?) all share one thing in common: they're sure to satisfy the whole family. This classic dish is as hearty and wholesome as it gets. It's creamy and meaty with bold flavor from fresh thyme, bay leaves and black pepper. Mushrooms, peas, carrots and pearl onions add fresh, vegetal flavor to help round out the rich filling. A buttery, crunchy topping gets baked until golden and

crispy. Prepare the crust. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough with a floured rolling pin into a 12-inch square. Transfer to the prepared baking sheet, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate while you make the filling. Cook the chicken. Combine the chicken broth, peppercorns, thyme sprigs, bay leaves and quartered onion in a large pot over high heat. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer 30 minutes. Add the chicken to the pot. Increase the heat and return to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer until the chicken is just cooked through, 10 to 15 minutes. Using tongs, transfer the chicken to a plate to cool. Strain the stock through a fine-mesh sieve. You'll need 2 1/2 cups for the filling; reserve the rest for another use. When the chicken is cool to the touch, cut it into bite-size chunks and set aside. Make the filling. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Melt the butter in a large skillet over medi-

um heat. Add the pearl onions and carrots and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the mushrooms and peas and cook until softened, another 5 minutes. Stir in 5 tablespoons flour and cook, stirring, 1 more minute. Add 2 1/2 cups chicken stock and the milk, stirring constantly. Cook until thickened, about 5 minutes. Remove the skillet from the heat. Add the chicken and chopped thyme; season with salt and pepper. Form the pot pies. Set out four 2-cup ovenproof bowls or ramekins. Transfer the pastry to a floured surface. Using a paring knife, cut out 4 rounds of dough that are slightly larger than the mouth of the bowls. Place the bowls on a baking sheet and spoon in the filling. Place 1 dough round on each pot pie, pressing the pastry against the side of the bowl to seal. Brush the dough with the beaten egg using a pastry brush. Cut a slit or hole in the center of the dough to vent. Bake until the pastry is puffed and dark golden brown, about 35 minutes.

Kids can eat healthy tiffin options like idli and chapati.

Parents always struggle to pack the proper school lunch. It must be easy to consume in between classes, nutritious, and satisfying. Idlis and chapatis are two popular options in Indian homes. While both are vital, which is the superior school tiffin? Let's make a comparison. A fermented batter of rice and urad dal is used to make idli. It is easy to digest, light, and fluffy. Probiotics that are good for the gut are produced through fermentation, which also improves nutrient absorption. Idli is a good option for kids who require a mild yet stimulating supper because a typical serving is low in calories and fat. Chapati, on the other hand, is made from whole wheat flour and is rich in complex carbohydrates and fibre. It provides slow-releasing energy, keeping children full longer and preventing mid-morning hunger pangs. Chapatis are also a good source of iron and B vitamins. For school lunches, practicality matters. Idlis are bite-sized, non-messy, and easy for children to eat quickly without the need for extra accompaniments. Chapati usually requires a curry or sabzi, which may spill or turn soggy in the lunchbox, though dry curries or a roll-style chapati can work well. While chapati is more filling, it may feel heavy for some children, especially if eaten in a rush. Idlis, being



steamed and soft, are lighter on the stomach and easy to digest even when eaten cold. For very active kids who need sustained energy, chapati might be more suitable, but for younger ones, idli is often the easier choice. Both idli and chapati have their place in a healthy school lunch. If you want a light, gut-friendly, quick-to-eat meal, idli is the winner. But if your child needs a filling, energy-packed option to stay full till afternoon, chapati works best. A smart way is to alternate between the two. Pack idlis with chutney or podi for one day and chapati rolls with vegetables the next. This not only balances nutrition but also keeps your child's tiffin exciting.

Korean food craze is not over yet. And it's not just a metro city crush

Most trends and viral sensations have a shelf life; sooner or later, they fade into the background, be it the craze for a travel destination, food item, or even artists. However, we can't say the same about Indians' love for everything Korean.

The craze can be traced back to the global phenomenon of PSY's "Gangnam Style" in 2012 (roughly), which paved the way for several other Korean bands – BTS, Blackpink, Exo, and Seventeen. And rest, as they say, is history. And the craze is pretty much the same when it comes to Korean food too. We were first introduced to it through K-dramas and variety shows, watching characters slurp bowls of ramen, share bubbling hotpots, or grill meat at the table. That on-screen indulgence sparked our curiosity, and soon, instant ramen packets and ready-to-eat tteokbokki found their way into our kitchens. Now, Korean restaurants, once a niche find, are commonplace and packed with diners eager to try everything from bibimbap to kimchi fried rice.

It's more than a trend, a phe-

nomenon that has continued. Don't believe it? Well, Swiggy's data reveals that orders for Korean food have shot up 50 per cent year-on-year (July 2025 vs July 2024) across the country. And while big cities like Bengaluru, Mumbai, and Hyderabad still lead the way, it's the non-metro cities that

keywords. The survey also reveals that the Korean McAlloo Tikki Burger has surprisingly emerged as the most-ordered item, and other favourites include Korean Corn & Jalapeno Garlic Bread, Korean Tangy Chicken Roll, and Korean Spicy Chicken Burger. Korean-inspired drinks are



are turning heads. Emerging markets such as Surat, Thiruvananthapuram, Vadodara, Mysuru, and Mangaluru have seen a 59 per cent jump in Korean food orders over the past year.

True to form, Gen Z is at the forefront of this culinary trend, responsible for 27 per cent of all Korean food orders on the app. Korean bun, Korean cheese bun, Korean ramen, and Korean chicken are among the most popular

also making waves. The tangy-sweet Korean Yuzu-Pop Sprite is one of the beverages riding this trend. So, you see, the rise of Korean cuisine in India is a sign of how open Indian consumers are becoming to experimenting with international flavours. Restaurants and brands are taking note, and many are localising these global tastes into familiar, snackable formats that appeal to a wider audience.



BJP 'Chameleon' Slur at Pilot Sparks Row

Shekhawat Invokes 2020 Manesar Factionalism

Jaipur, Apr 28: A political row has erupted in Rajasthan after senior BJP leader Radha Mohan Agarwal referred to senior Congress leader and party general secretary Sachin Pilot as a "chameleon" and a "fugitive." The remarks drew strong criticism from the Congress, with state Congress president Govind Singh Dotasra and Leader of Opposition Tikaram Jully calling them inappropriate and unbecoming of a senior leader. Dotasra, in a post on X, termed the remarks "indecent" and said they reflected the BJP's "declining political culture." He said political opposition is natural, but personal attacks and breach of decorum are unacceptable. Jully also demanded that the BJP control its leaders and sought a public apology from Agarwal. "The BJP leadership should immediately rein in its leaders, and Radha Mohan Agarwal must

publicly apologise for his derogatory remarks," Jully wrote on X. Several Congress leaders, including Pratap Singh Khachariyawas and Divya Maderna, also called the statement derogatory and demanded an unconditional apology.



The BJP, however, intensified its attack. Union minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat referred to the "Manesar episode" of 2020 to highlight the Congress's internal rift. He alleged that Ashok Gehlot had

orchestrated the crisis while Pilot was only a pawn and claimed Gehlot still uses Pilot for political manoeuvring. BJP state president Madan Rathore also took a swipe, saying Gehlot still treats Pilot as a "child," exposing the party's

internal contradictions. "Gehlot's own statements create confusion about Pilot's standing within the Congress," he added. Responding to the controversy, Pilot maintained a measured stand and stressed

the need for dignity and decorum in public life. He said political differences are natural in a democracy, but they must be expressed with restraint. "I have never met Mr. Agarwal before and do not know why he harbours such 'special affection' for me. If I ever happen to meet him, I will certainly ask what the matter is," Pilot said.

He further added that while organisational work and expressing views are legitimate, maintaining decorum is essential in politics. Former Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot also condemned Agarwal's remarks. The controversy has intensified the BJP-Congress confrontation in Rajasthan and once again brought the Congress's internal factionalism into focus, especially the aftereffects of the 2020 Manesar crisis when Pilot revolted against Gehlot's leadership.



Mumbai: 10% Water Cut From May 15

Mumbai, Apr 28: Residents of Mumbai should brace for a 10% water cut amid the scorching summer heat. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), Asia's richest civic body, has announced the reduction starting May 15 as the city's drinking water reservoirs are depleting rapidly. BMC Commissioner Ashwini Bhide stated that the reservoirs currently hold only 28.35% of usable drinking water, which must last until the active phase of the monsoon. According to the BMC's hydraulic department, live storage during the same period last year was 25.28%, and 19.99% in 2024.

She noted that this year's situation is further impacted by El Niño, which has adversely affected monsoon patterns and rainfall. As a result, precautionary measures are necessary to ensure that the existing water stock lasts until sufficient rainfall replenishes the reservoirs. Ashwini Bhide also said that the BMC has requested additional carryover water stock from the state government. "We will receive 147 million cubic metres (MCM) from the Bhatsa dam and 90 MCM from the Vaitarna reservoirs, totaling 237 MCM as carryover storage," she said.

She added that the current water stock, the 10% water cut from May 15, and the additional carryover supply from the state government will together help maintain adequate water supply in Mumbai until August 17, 2026. "These are precautionary measures," Bhide stressed. According to the BMC's hydraulic department, the Upper Vaitarna reservoir currently has 23.56% live storage (compared to 23.02% last year). Modak Sagar stands at 34.77%, Tansa at 23.33%, and Middle Vaitarna at 32.73%. Meanwhile, Bhatsa has 27.52% live storage, Vihar stands at 52.58%, and Tulsi at 36.86%. These reservoirs collectively supply drinking water to Mumbai.

2,400 Detained Before Bengal Polls

Kolkata, Apr 28: In a massive security crackdown, West Bengal authorities have apprehended 2,473 individuals over 60 hours leading up to the second phase of the state assembly elections. The Election Commission (EC) initiated these preventive measures to neutralize "potential troublemakers" and ensure peaceful polling on April 29.

The scale of detentions escalated sharply by Tuesday, with Purba Bardhaman recording the highest count at 479, followed by North 24 Parganas with 319. Other significant actions occurred in South 24 Parganas, Hooghly, and Nadia. This follows an earlier sweep where over 1,000 individuals were taken into custody between Sunday and Monday.

The EC has reiterated its stance on maintaining a "free and fair" electoral process, backing the arrests with an enhanced deployment of central forces and observers across sensitive constituencies. These intensified surveillance measures aim to curb factional violence and voter intimidation during the high-stakes voting phase.

FSSAI: Eco-Friendly Packaging for Pan Masala



New Delhi, Apr 28: In a significant move toward environmental sustainability, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) proposed on Tuesday to replace plastic packaging for pan masala with eco-friendly alternatives. The draft notification suggests expanding permissible packaging materials to include paper, paperboard, cellulose, and other naturally derived options. The FSSAI aims to eliminate the use of synthetic polymers—such as polyethylene, polypropylene, and PVC—along

with aluminum foil and metallized layers, aligning with the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016.

Key highlights of the proposal include: Eco-friendly Shift: Focus on biodegradable materials to ensure product safety and quality. Industry Flexibility: Continued allowance of traditional tin and glass containers to suit various commercial needs. Sustainability Goal: Promoting "safe, sustainable, and eco-friendly" practices in one of India's most widely consumed product sectors.

FSSAI officials stated that the measures are designed to be practical and science-based while supporting a progressive business environment. Stakeholders have been invited to submit their comments on the draft within the next 30 days. This transition reflects a broader effort to reduce plastic waste and leverage technological feasibility in food sector packaging.

Sitharaman: Ignore Naysayers, Focus on 'Viksit Bharat' Goal

Mangaluru, Apr 28: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday characterized 'Viksit Bharat 2047' as a "national resolve" rather than a mere slogan, calling on citizens to contribute to a collective effort to transform India into a developed nation within two decades. Delivering the Nitte Vinaya Hegde Oration 2026, Sitharaman emphasized that achieving this goal requires shedding colonial mindsets and ignoring "naysayers." She noted that while colonial rule saw India's share of global GDP plummet from 24%

to under 4%, the last decade has marked a significant turnaround. Currently the world's fastest-growing major economy, India is projected by the IMF to maintain a 6.5% growth rate through 2027. The Finance Minister highlighted major milestones, including: Poverty Reduction: Over 25 crore people lifted out of multidimensional poverty (2013–2023). Financial Stability: Foreign exchange reserves reaching \$700 billion.

Digital Leadership: UPI now accounting for nearly half of all global real-time digital pay-

ments.

Sitharaman stressed that "Viksit Bharat" focuses on inclusive development for farmers, women, and marginalized groups. She advocated for infrastructure investment, simplified taxation, and a private-sector-led growth model where the government acts as an enabler. Key pillars for this transition include strengthening MSMEs to boost manufacturing, leveraging a median age of 28, and fostering sustainable growth through clean energy and climate resilience. Positioning India as a "Vish-



wamitra" for the Global South, she concluded that the aspirations of 900 million young

Indians would be the primary driver of this national transformation.



Carrick: United Within Reach of Champions League Glory



Manchester, Apr 28: Manchester United took a significant step toward securing their place in the 2026-27 UEFA Champions League with a resilient 2-1 victory over Brentford at Old Trafford on Monday, April 27. Despite the celebratory atmosphere in the stands, interim manager Michael Carrick remained steadfast, insisting that his squad's mission is far from complete.

The Math to Europe The victory, fueled by goals from Casemiro and Benjamin Sesko, propelled United to 61 points. This result creates a command-

ing 11-point cushion over sixth-placed Brighton and Hove Albion with just four fixtures remaining. Under the current qualification format—where the Premier League's top five teams earn a seat at Europe's elite table—United require just two more points to mathematically confirm their return to the Champions League.

However, Carrick was quick to temper the excitement, emphasizing that qualification is a baseline requirement, not the ultimate goal. "The Champions League is one thing, but it's not some-

thing that we should be over-celebrating," Carrick told reporters. "We want to be finishing as high as possible... so our season doesn't get to a close when that happens." Casemiro's Final Flourish A major talking point of the evening was the performance of veteran midfielder Casemiro. Scoring his ninth goal of the campaign, the Brazilian showcased his trademark commitment despite an impending departure from the club this summer. Carrick praised the midfielder's professionalism, noting that the clarity regarding his future has allowed him to play with a sense of freedom.

"He's given absolutely everything," Carrick remarked. "Credit to him because, given the situation, he has still delivered some massive moments for us." The Road Ahead United's resolve will be tested immediately as they prepare for a high-stakes encounter against Liverpool on Sunday, May 3. While the Champions League berth is nearly secured, Carrick is pushing his players to maintain their intensity to improve their standing in the Premier League table. With momentum building, the interim boss is determined to ensure United finish the season on an upward trajectory rather than simply limping across the finish line.

The Cruel Twist: Axar Patel Blames 'Bad Luck' for Recent Fall

New Delhi, Apr 28: Delhi Capitals skipper Axar Patel has offered a candid post-mortem following his side's dramatic batting implosion against Royal Challengers Bengaluru, attributing the defeat to a psychological hangover from their previous fixture and a recurring streak of misfortune.

In a match that was effectively decided within the opening exchanges, the Capitals found themselves reeling at a staggering 6 for 8. Axar pointed to a sense of "hesitation" among the batting ranks, suggesting the team was still mentally grappling with their inability to defend a massive 264-run total against Punjab Kings in their prior outing. "I think because of what happened in the last game... there was some hesitation," Axar admitted. "Other than that, I think it was bad luck. No batter could really settle... we lost wickets in clusters." Conditions and Miscalculations The skipper noted that the surface at the Arun Jaitley Stadium behaved differently than anticipated. While the pitch mirrored the one used two days prior, atmospheric factors—specifically the wind and the shift to day-night conditions—resulted in significant early swing

Axar highlighted that while the movement subsided once the ball lost its initial shine, the damage was already ir-



reparable. "Early wickets put pressure. As professionals, we should be ready for that," he noted, refusing to blame the bowlers for failing to defend a meager total. Squad Updates: Starc's Arrival In a silver lining for the franchise, Axar confirmed that Australian spearhead Mitchell Starc has joined the squad. Starc is expected to be available for selection after May 1, pending workload management assessments. Regarding the debut of youngster Sahil Parakh—who fell for a duck to a Bhuvneshwar Kumar yorker—Axar remained supportive. He emphasized that the decision was based on training form and the tactical need for

a left-right opening pair, asserting that one match is insufficient to judge the youngster's potential. Staying the Course Despite the heavy loss, the DC captain ruled out "knee-jerk reactions" or wholesale changes to the lineup. He maintained that the collapse was a rare lapse in an otherwise competitive season. "Changing the team will not guarantee results. It is more about mindset, staying mentally strong, and sticking together," Axar concluded, while also calling on the DC faithful to remain steadfast: "Support should not only be there when we win... it should remain the same regardless of the result."

Sooryavanshi and Manu Bhaker: A Controversial Clash

New Delhi, Apr 28:

Double Olympic medalist Manu Bhaker has once again demonstrated that her composure is as sharp during press conferences as it is on the shooting range.

However, while Bhaker is being praised for her maturity, the internet has erupted in fury over a reporter's decision to pivot an Olympic celebration toward a teenage cricket sensation. The Controversy at NRAI Event The incident took place at a New Delhi gala commemorating 75 years of the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI). Amidst the cream of the shooting fraternity, a journalist shifted the focus away from Bhaker's historic Paris 2024 haul to ask for her thoughts on Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, the 15-year-old cricketer currently making headlines in the IPL.

The question sparked immediate backlash on social media, with fans and experts criticizing the perceived "cricket-bias" of Indian media. Renowned sports broadcaster Joy Bhattacharjya led the critique on X, stating: "Folks, she is an Olympic medalist. To ask her what she thinks of Vaibhav Sooryavanshi is unfair on her achievements and her sport... your sports editors do not need another celebri-



ty quote to spin a headline." A Masterclass in Grace Despite the jarring change in topic, Bhaker refused to show irritation. Instead of dismissing the query, she delivered a thoughtful perspective on the pressures of being a young athlete. "If the mentorship is good... then age is just a number. There is no age for talent," Bhaker responded, emphasizing that talent can emerge at "six or sixty" given the right environment. Her ability to bridge the gap between sports while maintaining her dignity has been hailed as a masterclass in professional maturity. The "Shadow of Cricket" Debate The exchange has reignited a long-standing debate regarding the "shadow of cricket" in India. Critics argue that even when Olympic athletes achieve historic milestones, the media landscape remains disproportionately obsessed with cricket narratives. For many, the incident served as a stark reminder of the uphill battle non-cricketing legends face in securing the nation's undivided attention, even at their own celebratory events.

Vinesh creates stir, registers for ranking tournament

Chennai, Apr 28: Wrestler Vinesh Phogat is set to return to the mat at the open ranking tournament in Gonda, UP, marking her first competition since her 2024 Paris Olympics disqualification. Now competing in the 57kg category, Phogat's return was preceded by a brief controversy regarding online registration.

While Vinesh claimed a "closed link" delayed her application until Tuesday, WFI President Sanjay Singh asserted she registered Monday night, dismissing her claims as false. The event holds significant



weight as Phogat—now a Haryana MLA—competes at the stronghold of former WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh following their high-profile legal standoff.