

- District Administration and NCHAC celebrated District Day, honoring the council's 55th anniversary with a unity rally, cultural presentations, road safety skits, and a Bihu Dance.
- ED in Arunachal Pradesh has launched a coordinated operation against several liquor companies, including Niraj Sharma, NEFA Breweries Pvt Ltd, Rajan Lohia, and Rajesh Aggarwal, alleging tax evasion.
- Haflong mourns the death of senior citizen Aslam Khan, 69, who passed away in a private hospital. Khan was a retired Circle Inspector, sports fan, and charitable activist.

NEWS BEARER

NEWS FROM NEAR & FAR

RNI No. ASSENG/2015/66506 ■ VOL 09, ISSUE 26 ■ DIMA HASAO PAGES: 8 ■ PRICE 10.00 ■ FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 07, 2025

North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council Celebrates Its Fifty-Fifth Anniversary

Haflong, Feb 02: NCHAC in collaboration with the District Administration, commemorated its 55th anniversary today by celebrating District Day with a vibrant display of cultural heritage, community unity, and historical pride. The event commenced with a unity rally that symbolized the district's rich history and diverse culture. The District Commissioner welcomed the gathering, setting the tone with a heartfelt address acknowledging the community's significant contributions to the region's progress. Principal Secretaries of NCHAC followed with insightful reflections on the district's journey and aspirations for the future. A highlight of the day was the felicitation of Padma Awardee 2025, Shri Joynacharan Bathari, for his exceptional contributions to society through Dimasa Folk Music. This recognition stood as a testament to the district's cultural richness and commitment to preserving its traditions. The celebrations also featured a range of captivating performances. A skit on road safety drew emotional



resonance from the audience, while renowned artists such as Emmanuel Tuolor, Ujjaini Dey, Sushmita Das, and Sheeli Nath delivered mesmerizing musical performances. Traditional dances, including Dimasa and Jeme Naga, showcased the region's cultural diversity and added a colorful dimension to the festivities. Two enlightening talks were delivered during the event. The first focused on the district's historical evolution, and the second highlighted the cultural wealth of the indigenous communities in Dima Hasao, exploring the potential for cultural tourism to boost the region's economy. The grand celebration concluded with an

energetic Bihu Dance that infused the atmosphere with joy and vibrance, followed by a prize distribution ceremony to honor individuals and groups for their remarkable contributions. The Chief Guest's closing address applauded the collective efforts of all stakeholders in preserving and promoting cultural heritage and fostering community development. The event saw the esteemed presence of Chairman of NCHAC Mohet Hojai, Executive Members Shri Donpainon Thaosen and Probita Johari, as well as several Members of NCHAC, government officials, students, youth clubs, and citizens of Dima Hasao.

ED conducted coordinated raid on liquor establishments Arunachal Pradesh's liquor shop

Itanagar, Feb 05: ED in Arunachal Pradesh launched coordinated operation against several liquor companies. Itanagar Capital Region, Bordumsa, Namsai, and Tippi were among the locations where the operation was conducted. According to sources, the liquor companies owned by Niraj Sharma, a wealthy businessman known for his connections to influential state political figures, were singled out by the ED. His businesses in Namsai and Naharlagun were also included in the search results, and his company, United Brothers Distilleries Private Limited, was one of the top companies in the market. Another target was NEFA Breweries Pvt Ltd, a business owned by Sanjay Dewan and situated in Lekhi. Among the company's well-known beer brands are Red Star and Tuborg. According to reports, Dewan shares directorship with Lily Nabam and Pooja Dhanuka. Dibrugarh,



Assam-based businessman Rajan Lohia was another target of the operation. In Naharlagun, they looked through his liquor bond. The popular Manohari Gold Tea, which made national headlines when it sold for a record amount at auction, is one of Lohia's well-known business ventures. Rajesh Aggarwal's Royal Style and Blue Whisky brewery in Banderdewa and Naharlagun was raided by the ED due to allegations of tax evasion.

NE & Assam railway networks expand by 1,824 km

Guwahati, Feb 05: Railway network in Assam and the Northeast has expanded by 1,824 kilometers in the last decade, which is a significant achievement. The Modi administration has significantly improved the railway network in Sri Lanka, demonstrating their commitment to infra-

structure enhancement for increased connectivity and economic growth. The government has authorized Rs. 10,440 crore for Assamese railway projects in 2025-2026, including modernizing infrastructure and building 50 Amrit Bharat Stations to enhance passenger amenities.

Assam CM posted on his official X handle: "Did you know that the Assamese and North-eastern railway network has grown by 1,824 kilometers in the past ten years? That's more than Sri Lanka's whole rail network! The Modi government is concentrating on the Northeast."

Manipur Police arrest 4 extortion militants

Imphal, Feb 05: Manipur Police arrested four militants from various underground groups involved in extortion activities, while two members of the KCP (PWG) group were detained at Mahabali. Police arrested UNLF group cadre Lourembam Mani Singh and found them extorting money from public servants, business owners, and the public in Greater Imphal. 47-year-old PLA member Pukhrabam Prem Singh was detained in Ningthoukhong, Bishnupur District, for extorting large sums of money from government offices, public, business owners, and officials. Three cell phones, a wallet, and identification documents such as Aadhaar and PAN cards were found on him by the police.

Renowned senior citizen Aslam Khan is bid farewell by Haflong

Haflong, Feb 05: Haflong mourns the loss of one of its esteemed senior citizens, Aslam Khan, who passed away on January 30, 2025, at 5 PM in a private hospital in Haflong. At the age of 69, Khan's untimely demise has left the community grieving. Born to the Late Yusuf Khan, Aslam Khan was a retired Circle Inspector under the N.C. Hills Autonomous Council, a respected position he served with dedication and integrity. In addition to his career, Khan was a well-known sports fan and a committed participant in a number of charitable organizations, which allowed him to positively impact the lives of innumerable people.



His wife, son, and daughter survive him. renowned

for his unwavering optimism and readiness to lend a hand.

BJP's Molin Kumar Chakma sworn in as Chakma Council's CEM

Aizawl, Feb 05: Molin Kumar Chakma was sworn in as the CEM of the Chakma Autonomous District

celebrating the new executive committee under the BJP, urging cooperation from political parties, NGOs,



Council in Mizoram, with the oath of office and confidentiality administered by Lawngtlai Additional Deputy Commissioner Zoramsiama Hmar. Rasik Mohan Chakma, MNF MP, and high-ranking council officials attended an event cel-

and academic institutions. Following the oath of office, Chakma disclosed the names of the five individuals who will comprise the executive committee. He promised to release the individual portfolios of the committee shortly.

Akhilesh Yadav's Maha Kumbh Stampede Speech coming viral

Lucknow, Feb 04: Speaking in the Lok Sabha about the Maha Kumbh stampede, former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Akhilesh Yadav claimed that bodies were packed into JCB machines and tractors and that no one knew where they went. His remarks are likely to cause a stir before Prime Minister Narendra Modi travels to Prayagraj. Citing a lack of confidence in the Uttar Pradesh government's handling of the event, the leader of the Samajwadi Party asked the Center to immediately turn over management and administration of the Maha Kumbh Mela to the Indian Army. He further alleged that only after the prime minister and president mourned the deaths during stampede on January 29, the UP government accepted that nearly 30 people were killed. "It took them 17 hours



to accept," Akhilesh said. The leader of the Samajwadi Party urged the government to provide precise numbers regarding the number of fatalities, the care given to the injured, and the preparations made for the occasion. "While the government is continuously giving budget figures, please also give the figures of those who died in Mahakumbh. I demand an all-party meeting

should be called to give clarification about the arrangements for Mahakumbh. The responsibility of Mahakumbh disaster management and lost and found centre should be given to the Army. The figures for the deaths in Mahakumbh accident, treatment of injured, availability of medicines, doctors, food, water, transport should be presented in the Parliament," he said.

On February 12, PM Modi most likely visit to the United States

New Delhi, Feb 04: According to MEA sources, PM Modi is expected to travel to the US on February 12. Following President Donald Trump's historic return to the White House, this would be PM Modi's first trip to the US. Within weeks of the Trump administration taking office, PM Modi will be one of only a few foreign leaders to make a bilateral trip to Washington, DC. On February 10 and 11, PM Modi will travel to Paris for the Artificial Intelligence Action summit. PM Modi's visit to the US would coincide with Indian apprehensions about Donald Trump's immigration and tariff policies. Donald Trump declared that imports from Canada and Mexico would be subject to a 25% tariff, and that Chinese goods would also be subject to an additional 10% tax. He later suspended tariffs on imports from Mexico, but he made no announcements regarding the other two. A week following the inauguration of the new US president, PM Modi and Donald Trump agreed over the phone to work toward a "trusted" partnership, with an emphasis on strengthening India-US cooperation in trade, energy, and defense. According to the White House, Donald Trump emphasized how crucial it is that India increase its purchases of security equipment manufactured in the US and work toward a fair bilateral trade



relationship. India has already made it clear that it is eager to deepen its energy relations with the United States, particularly in the area of clean energy. Ahead of PM Modi's anticipated trip to the US, India announced plans on Saturday to establish a nuclear energy mission and amend its nuclear liability law. The historic civil nuclear agreement that was forged between the two nations sixteen years ago has been hampered by certain provisions in India's Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act. India is reportedly investigating the potential for civil nuclear cooperation with the United States in the context of SMRs. The Department of Atomic Energy is reportedly interested in working with Holtec International, a US-based company that is one of the top exporters of SMRs.

CM Atishi's complaint led to booking of BJP leader Ramesh Bidhuri's son for MCC violation

New Delhi, Feb 04: Following a complaint from the CM & Aam Aadmi Party candidate from Kalkaji Atishi, Delhi Police have charged Manish Bidhuri, the son of Ramesh Bidhuri and the leader of the Bhartiya Janata Party, with breaking the election model code of conduct. "In this matter, taking cognisance of the complaint against Manish Bidhuri & Ravi Dayama for violation of MCC, legal case under section 126 RP Act has been registered against them in PS Govindpuri," a post on the



official handle of the Deputy Commissioner of Police, SE Delhi. Atishi had claimed that Manish Bidhuri had meddled

in the Delhi seat. Despite the prohibition on outside interference during this time, she claimed that Manish was seen

in the vicinity with three or four outsiders. The chief minister of Delhi further asserted that voters in the Juggi Jhopti camp in the Girinagar area had been threatened by Bidhuri's Tughlakabad team. "Today, the election campaigns have ended. During the silence period after 6 pm, no one from outside is allowed in the Assembly constituency. We received information that someone from Ramesh Bidhuri's Tughlakabad team is threatening the people in JJ camp, Girinagar area," she told to media.

To implement Uniform Civil Code, Gujarat forms committee

Gandhinagar, Feb 04: Gujarat, ruled by BJP, declared that committee would be established to carry out the UCC. "A historic decision has been made," said Minister of State for Home. A committee has been established. CM Bhupendra Patel said that 'Indianness' is our religion, and the Constitution is our 'sacred text'. "As we celebrate 75 years of the Constitution, PM Modi has decided to implement uniform law across country to ensure equal rights," he said. The committee will also

include social worker Geetaben Shroff, former vice chancellor Dakshesh Thaker, advocate R C Kodekar, and retired IAS C L Meena. The state government will make a decision following the 45-day period in which this committee submits its report.

There are 15% of tribal people in the state, and there are disturbed zones in a number of places. Sanghavi gave his word that nothing in the UCC would interfere with the tribal community's traditions and customs.

Dima Hasao Health Society dedicated to using SPARSH to fight leprosy

Hafong, Jan 30: District Health Society & NLEP have launched SPARSH Leprosy Awareness Campaign to promote early diagnosis & treatment of the leprosy disease. Despite being completely curable, leprosy is still stigmatized and misunderstood deters many from getting treatment. According to N.K. Bailung, Joint Director of Health Services, "Early diagnosis and timely treatment are vital to prevent disabilities caused by leprosy." Although only 3 patients in district are receiving treatment at the moment, he pointed out that many cases may go unreported. The campaign aims to promote free MDT & educate communities about leprosy, addressing social taboos through social media & collaboration with NGOs and civil society organizations.



Assam faces 1,040 leprosy cases, requiring prompt treatment. District health authorities provide comprehensive care and support, focusing on skin, nerves, respiratory tract, and eyes. Dr. M. Changsan, Additional CMO & H.O, and healthcare staff attended the awareness campaign launch event, emphasizing the initiative's importance in achieving a leprosy-free Dima Hasao.

Voter turnout was recorded at 33.31% until the afternoon

New Delhi, Feb 05: A fierce triangular contest between the AAP, Congress, & BJP, voting for the Delhi assembly elections, will elect a 70-member House, started across 13,766 polling stations in the nation's capital. In a post on X, PM Modi encouraged young people to cast their ballots & take part in the "festival of democracy." Outcomes of 699 candidates will be determined by 13,766 polling places spread across all 70 assembly constituencies. There are approximately 1.56

cr eligible voters in the city. To guarantee a fair and seamless voting process, 220 paramilitary companies and more than 30,000 police officers have been stationed throughout Delhi. In relation to his claims that the Haryana government had "poisoned" the Yamuna water, AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal has been charged. A fierce contest will pit Arvind Kejriwal against Parvesh Varma of the BJP and Sandeep Dikshit of the Congress. Delhi CM Atishi, Congressman Alka

Lamba, and BJP candidate Ramesh Bidhuri are also competing in the Kalkaji seat.

The QMS app, released by the Indian Election Commission, will allow voters to view crowd levels in real time. Senior citizens and people with disabilities have been given special consideration. The conduct, publication of exit polls between 7 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. on February 5 is prohibited by a notification issued by the ECI. February 8 is when the votes will be counted.

Shahid Kapoor's film 'Deva' sees steady box progress, on day 3 collection

Mumbai, Feb 03: On its first Sunday, Shahid Kapoor's *Deva* saw a minor increase in box office receipts. According to a Sacnilk report, the Rosshan Andrews-directed film made ₹1.15 crore on day three. On February 2, the action thriller's overall Hindi occupancy rate was 15.34%. *Deva* has made a total of ₹19.05 crore so far. *Deva* is a remake of *Mumbai Police*, a 2013 Malayalam film directed by Rosshan Andrews. But the climax in the original film was different. Shahid Kapoor plays ACP Dev Ambre in *Deva*, while Pooja Hegde plays Diya Sathaye. Manish Wadhwa, Girish Kulkarni, Kubbra Sait, Pravesh Rana, and Pavail Gulati all have significant roles in the movie. Bollywood trade Taran Adarsh shared *Deva*'s second-day box office results on X in a note posted on Sunday. He wrote, "#Deva sees minimal growth on Day 2,

with the crucial jump - essential after a weak start - clearly missing... Ideally, the 2-day total should've been the opening day score... The film must re-



cover lost ground on Sunday." Shahid Kapoor gave his co-star Pooja Hegde a lot of praise during *Deva*'s promotions. He praised her remarkable dancing abilities and acknowledged her career path in the field. Shahid

Kapoor said, "She has worked hard to be where she is. And I put that very high. Everybody is not able to make it on their own. So I appreciate that about

her. Also, the way she dances, she has her way of doing it. It is very charming the way she dances, and I enjoy that." *Deva* has been jointly produced by Zee Studios, Roy Kapur Films and Malvika Khatri.

During a live concert Sonu Nigam suffers spasm pain

New Delhi, Feb 03: It appears that Sonu Nigam, one of the nation's most well-known singers, is not doing well. While performing live, the singer of "Kal Ho Naa Ho" recently experienced a severe back spasm. Nevertheless, he overcame his discomfort and, as usual, delivered an outstanding performance. Sonu Nigam shared a video on Instagram telling his InstaFam about his experience. He was heard saying, "One of the most difficult days of my life, but very fulfilling. I was singing and moving, which triggered a spasm, but I managed it somehow. I never want to do less or give less than people expect from me. I am glad this shaped up fine." The music maestro added, "But excruciating pain, excruciating, it was like a needle has been put in my spine, and if it moves even a little bit, it would enter the spine." Sonu Nigam's post was captioned, "Sarasvati ji did hold my hand last night", with a folded hands emoji. As soon as the post was up, worried netizens flooded the comment section with wishes for the singer's speedy recovery. How could Saraswati Maa not have her favorite child's back? asked one Instagram user. @sonunigamofficial, you embody the saying, When things get tough, the tough

get going. There are a lot of us who believe in you, pray for you, and only send good vibes. Come what may, you can't be stopped! Another one penned, "Please take care. You are our precious gift by God!" The third comment read, "I can't even see you in pain.. must be



so difficult for you! But look at you dancing! Oh my god.. you are a miracle...God is always blessing you dear kind soul sending lots of love & hugs. Please take care." A cybercitizen wrote in the comment section, "Seeing you in so much pain makes me cry sir...I know you had a hard time doing the concert yesterday.. Take some rest sir & take care of yourself... Get well soon sir...Mata rani bless you always @sonunigamofficial bahut saraaaaa pyaar."

Old kissing videos of singer Udit Narayan gone viral

Pune, Feb 03: A video of singer Udit Narayan kissing female fans during a live performance went viral, sparking a huge online backlash. Tip Tip Barsa Paani is performed by the seasoned vocalist in the video. Social media users were outraged when the singer kissed them on the lips after taking pictures. Old videos of Udit kissing other female

He said, "Fans itne deewane hote hain na. Hum log aise nahi hain, hum decent log gain. Some people encourage this and show their love through this. Udaake kya karna hai ab iss cheez ko? There are so many people in the crowd,



celebrities, such as singers Alka Yagnik, Shreya Ghoshal, and Karisma Kapoor, reappeared on social media after the video went viral. In one video from an Indian Idol event, Udit kisses Alka on the cheek, causing her to quickly leave in shock. Alka looks uneasy in a different video when Udit gives her another kiss at a different occasion. Another time, after Shreya won the Best Female Singer award, Udit gave her a cheek kiss. Actress Karisma Kapoor was also kissed by the singer, and she appeared equally taken aback by the sudden gesture.

and we have bodyguards present too. But fans think they are getting a chance to meet, so someone extends their hands for a handshake, some kiss the hands... yeh sab deewangi hoti hai. Uspe itna dhyaan nahi dena chahiye." Udit Narayan is a renowned singer who has sung in multiple languages, including Telugu, Kannada, Tamil, Bengali, Sindhi, Odia, Bhojpuri, Nepali, Malayalam and Assamese. Over the years, he has earned acclaim for his songs in iconic films like *Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak*, *Rangeela*, *Pukaar*, *Dhadkan*, *Lagaan*, *Devdas*, *Veer-Zaara*, and *Student of the Year* and has won four National Film Awards.

On a special request, Naga Chaitanya & Sai Pallavi dance to Namoh Shivaya

Chennai, Feb 03: *Thandel*, featuring Naga Chaitanya and Sai Pallavi, is set to release, and the actors have captivated fans with an unexpected rendition of their hit song, *Namoh Shivaya*. Few videos of their incredible performance soon started making the rounds on social media. Naga Chaitanya, despite being a little shy, joined Sai Pallavi, who is well-known for her elegant dance moves, in leading the performance with effortless charm. Fans were in awe of the pair's effortless chemistry and were excitedly anticipating their on-screen reunion. Next up is *Thandel*, which follows a group of fishermen who are



apprehended by the Coast Guard after inadvertently drifting into Pakistani waters while fishing. After that, they are arrested and held for a year and a half in a Pakistani prison. The movie chronicles their terrifying ordeal and how they make their way home. In

the midst of these difficulties, a lovely love story also occurs. *Thandel*, which is produced by Bunny Vasu and directed by Chandoo Mondeti under the esteemed Geetha Arts banner, will be released in theaters on February 7. After their highly regarded film *Love Story*, this is also Naga Chaitanya and Sai Pallavi's second collaboration. Naga Chaitanya had earlier shared insights into the physical and mental changes he underwent for the role with ANI. He said, "I had to work on the Srikakulam dialect and body language. There is a dance sequence with Sai Pallavi, so it also involved a lot of rehearsals and workshops for that."

Union Budget 2025 paves way for FMCG growth, says Aasif Malbar

Guwahati, Feb 06: The Union Budget 2025 has been welcomed by the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector, with industry leaders highlighting its focus on rural development, manufacturing, and consumer spending. Aasif Malbari, Chief Financial Officer of Godrej Consumer Products Ltd., praised the Budget for laying a strong foundation for a consump-



tion-driven economy.

Malbari said that increased investments in rural infrastructure and job creation would boost economic activity, leading to higher consumer demand and market expansion.

He also lauded the National Manufacturing Mission as a significant step toward strengthening domestic production, reducing import dependencies, and improving cost efficiencies.

Moreover, Malbari noted that tax reforms favoring the middle class would enhance disposable income, further driving demand for both essential and aspirational FMCG products. "Overall, the Budget lays a strong foundation for a more consumption-driven economy, creating significant growth opportunities for the FMCG industry," he said.

Maharashtra embraces linguistic inclusivity with Marathi version of Skill India Digital Hub

Guwahati, Feb 06: In a bid to create a more inclusive and dynamic skilling ecosystem, Maharashtra Chief Minister Shri Devendra Fadnavis unveiled the Marathi version of the Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH) during the Vishwa Marathi Sammelan 2025 at Fergusson College in Pune. The initiative, launched alongside Deputy Chief Ministers Shri Eknath Shinde and Shri Ajit Pawar, aims to break language barriers and empower the state's youth with accessible skill development tools in their native language. The SIDH platform, offering over 7,000 courses, including in-demand areas



such as AI, Machine Learning, and Drone Technology, will provide Marathi-speaking individuals with tailored resources for career growth. The event highlighted the platform's rapid success, with Maharashtra rank-

ing among the top states in terms of registrations and user traffic, showcasing its widespread appeal. A notable feature of the initiative is its focus on linguistic inclusivity, aligned with the National Education Poli-

cy (NEP) 2020. "With the Marathi version of SIDH, we aim to ensure that language never becomes a barrier to skilling," said Shri Ved Mani Tiwari, CEO of NSDC. The platform has recorded more than 1.26 crore registrations nationally, with Maharashtra's contribution being significant. In Guwahati, the growing demand for digital skilling platforms is mirrored by increasing interest in specialized courses in IT and electronics, showing a similar trend to Maharashtra's. Local youth, eager to upskill and tap into emerging sectors, are embracing these digital opportunities for professional development.

Budget 2025: A boon for farmers, says Godrej Agrovet leaders

Guwahati, Feb 06: The 2025 budget has been lauded by Godrej Agrovet leaders as a significant step towards strengthening India's agricultural sector and empowering farmers. Balram Singh Yadav, Managing Director, emphasizes the budget's comprehensive strategy, highlighting initiatives like increased Kisan Credit Card loan limits and the push for self-reliance in pulses and edible oils.

He believes these measures will be instrumental in achieving a "Viksit Bharat." Rajavelu N.K., CEO of Godrej Agrovet's Crop Protection Business, praised the focus on crop productivity and protection, particularly the Mission for Cotton Productivity and the Prime Minister DhanDha-

nyaKrishiYojana. He stressed the importance of integrating crop protection, sustainable farming, and post-harvest infrastructure for farmer prosperity and food security. A robust agricultural sector is vital for a thriving economy.

In Guwahati, a major trading hub for agricultural produce in Northeast India, these initiatives are expected to have a positive ripple effect. Increased farmer incomes and improved agricultural infrastructure will likely boost trade and economic activity in the region, benefiting both farmers and consumers. The focus on high-yielding, climate-resilient seeds and diversification could particularly benefit Assam's farmers, who often face climate-related challenges.

Budget 2025: A boost for skills, startups and rural India

Guwahati, Feb 06: The Union Budget 2025, unveiled on February 1st, focuses on investing in people, innovation, and rural prosperity, aiming for inclusive growth and a sustainable future. Hon'ble Minister Jayant Chaudhary emphasized the budget's forward-looking vision, highlighting tax reforms, support for key sectors like agriculture and MSMEs, and a focus on skills development. Tax relief for individuals earning up to Rs. 12 lakh was also announced. The budget prioritizes skilling and education, with initiatives like 50,000 Atal Tinkering Labs, BharatNet expansion, and skill development programs. Five National Centres of Excellence for Skilling will be established, focusing on global standards and "Make for India, Make for the World." ARs 10,000 crore Fund of Funds for Startups will support over 1.5 lakh ventures. A Centre of Excellence in AI for Education with a Rs. 500 crore investment will revolutionize learning. Employment-led growth initiatives include skill development, Mudra loans for home stays, and incentives for states. The "Rural Prosperity and Resilience" program will address rural underemployment through targeted skilling and investment. In Guwahati, the budget's focus on skilling and entrepreneurship is expected to resonate strongly. The establishment of National Centres of Excellence for Skilling could create opportunities for local youth, enhancing their employability in sectors relevant to the Northeast's growing economy. The support for startups and MSMEs could also stimulate growth in Guwahati's business community, particularly in sectors like tourism and logistics, which are vital to the region's development. The emphasis on rural development could further boost the demand for goods and services in Guwahati, the gateway to the Northeast.

Air India Express boosts Northeast connectivity with Dibrugarh-Guwahati direct flights

Dibrugarh, Feb 06: Air India Express has launched daily direct flights between Dibrugarh and Guwahati, enhancing regional connectivity. The new service also provides seamless onward travel to Delhi on the same aircraft, eliminating the need for layovers. Dibrugarh becomes the airline's fifth destination in the Northeast, joining Agartala, Dimapur, Guwahati, and Imphal.

The newly introduced route follows the schedule of a daily 1:45 PM departure from Dibrugarh, arriving in Guwahati at 3:15 PM. Passengers can then continue to Delhi at 3:50 PM, reaching the capital by 7:00 PM. The return leg from Delhi departs at 9:10 AM, ensuring daily connectivity. With this expansion, travelers from Dibrugarh gain one-stop access to five major



Indian cities—Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Jaipur, and Kolkata. As part of its Tales of India initiative, Air India Express has also introduced Assamese-themed liveries on two aircraft, featuring Gamosa and Jaapi motifs to celebrate Assam's cultural heritage. Dibrugarh, known for its tea exports and growing trade sector, is expected

to benefit from enhanced air connectivity.

The new flights are anticipated to facilitate faster business travel and tourism, strengthening economic ties with Guwahati and beyond. Air India Express continues to expand its network, now covering over 50 destinations, with plans to surpass 100 aircraft soon.

Interest rate cuts likely from RBI MPC

New Delhi, Feb 06: Economists predict a 25 basis point rate cut as the RBI Monetary Policy Committee begins its second day, the first in five years. Key interest rates and policies to improve domestic liquidity and control INR volatility are being discussed by the MPC. The fact that this is the first meeting led by Sanjay Malhotra, the recently appointed RBI Governor who replaced Shaktikanta Das as the 26th governor in December, makes it especially noteworthy. Many analysts expect the MPC to announce a 25 bps cut, with the last rate cut occurring in May 2020. Shreya Sodhani, Regional Economist at Barclays, stated.

Vi launches 'Number Rakshak' at MahaKumbh to reunite separated pilgrims

Prayagraj, Feb 06: To address the recurring issue of pilgrims getting lost during the MahaKumbh, leading telecom operator Vi has launched the "Vi Number Rakshak" initiative. The program provides Rudraksh and Tulsi bead bracelets engraved with personal emergency contact numbers, ensuring quick reunification of separated individuals. Every KumbhMela witnesses thousands of people losing contact with their families amid massive crowds. In 2013, around 70,000 individuals were reported missing during the PrayagrajKumbh. This year, over 250 cases were reported on the first day alone. With millions expected to gather at TriveniSangam for the ShahiSnan in February, Vi's initiative offers a simple



yet effective solution to keep pilgrims connected. The Vi Number Rakshak booth, located near Swami RamanandAcharyaShibirAkhada, provides these complimentary bracelets, particularly benefiting elderly pilgrims and children who may not have mobile phones or struggle with remembering numbers. AvneeshKhosla, Chief Marketing Officer of Vi, stated, "Vi is committed to connecting people when it

matters most. This initiative is a testament to our belief that connectivity goes beyond the network." Alongside this initiative, Vi has strengthened its network infrastructure in the region, deploying 30 new sites and 40 additional macro and small-cell sites to enhance connectivity. With a significant number of pilgrims traveling from Siliguri and North Bengal, local telecom retailers have noted a rise in inquiries about Vi's network services. Many travelers prefer Vi for its expanded coverage at the Kumbh, ensuring uninterrupted communication. The initiative has been well received by Siliguri-based travel agencies, who are recommending Vi to pilgrims for a seamless experience at the religious gathering.

Budget 2025-26 lauded for focus on financial inclusion and MSME growth

Guwahati, Feb 06: Satish Kumar Kalra, MD & CEO of North East Small Finance Bank, has praised the Union Budget 2025-26 for its emphasis on financial inclusion, rural development, and MSME growth. Kalra highlighted the increased Kisan Credit Card limit of ₹5 lakh and the new taxation reforms as particularly positive steps. He believes these measures will empower individuals and



communities, especially in regions like the Northeast, by boosting access to credit and financial services, thereby fueling entrepreneurship and economic development.

Oesophageal Cancer cases surge in Northeast, experts call for advanced medical technologies

Guwahati, Feb 06: The Northeast is witnessing a worrying rise in oesophageal cancer cases, with experts urging the adoption of advanced medical technologies to address the crisis. According to a recent Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) report, the region's high tobacco consumption—48.2% among adults compared to the national average of 29%—is a key factor driving this surge. In Assam, the prevalence of oesophageal cancer is particularly alarming. Dibrugarh district records the highest proportion of cases at 15.7%, with 1 in 54 males at risk. Kamrup Urban follows closely with 14.3% (1 in 27 males), while Cachar reports an incidence rate of 11.6% (1 in 53



males). The lack of advanced medical infrastructure forces many patients to travel to other parts of the country for specialized treatment. Renowned oncologists Dr. Surender Kumar Dabas and Dr. Bikram Kumar Deka emphasize the urgent need for advanced interventions like robotic-assisted surgery. Dr. Deka, Consultant - Surgical Oncology & Robot-

ic Surgery at Max Hospitals, notes that despite gradual improvements, medical facilities in the Northeast remain inadequate. "PET scans, crucial for cancer diagnosis and staging, are not widely available, and innovative surgical technologies are underutilized," he stated. Dr. Dabas, Vice Chairman & HOD - Surgical Oncology at Max Hospitals, advocates for the adoption of robotic-assisted surgery in the region. "Traditional oesophageal surgeries pose high risks and complications. Robotic-assisted procedures, using technologies like the da Vinci system, improve patient outcomes by reducing morbidity, ensuring faster recovery, and enabling quicker follow-up treatments," he ex-

plained. Experts also highlight dietary habits as a potential risk factor. Dr. Deka pointed to the high consumption of smoked meat and betel nut in the Northeast as possible contributors to the cancer burden, despite lower smoking and alcohol consumption compared to other states. Guwahati, as the medical hub of the Northeast, faces increasing pressure to upgrade its healthcare infrastructure. With a growing number of patients seeking treatment in private hospitals, the demand for cutting-edge cancer care is surging. Healthcare providers are now looking to integrate robotic-assisted surgery to cater to local and regional patients, reducing the need for expensive travel to metropolitan hospitals.

HSBC Mutual Fund launches HSBC Financial Services Fund to tap into growing sector

Guwahati, Feb 06: HSBC Mutual Fund has announced the launch of its new open-ended equity scheme, the HSBC Financial Services Fund, targeting long-term capital appreciation by investing primarily in the financial services sector. The New Fund Offer (NFO) will open on February 6, 2025, and close on February 20, 2025. The financial services sector in India is on a strong growth trajectory, fueled by factors like increasing financial inclusion, digitalization, and evolving regulatory policies. The HSBC Financial Services Fund seeks to capitalize on these growth opportunities by investing in a diversified portfolio of companies in both the lending and non-lending segments, including banks, asset management companies, insurance firms, fintech, and more. Managing the fund, Gautam Bhupal, SVP Fund Management Equities at HSBC Mutual Fund, brings deep expertise in navigating the sector's complexities to provide investors with



exposure to India's long-term growth potential. The fund will track the BSE Financial Services Index TRI. With the ongoing digital shift in financial services, the Guwahati is witnessing an increasing demand for financial products. Investors in the region are becoming more inclined to explore avenues like mutual funds, as local market trends indicate a growing interest in long-term wealth creation, supported by robust economic policies. Kailash Kulkarni, CEO of HSBC Mutual Fund, emphasized India's projected GDP growth, noting that the financial sector is set to outpace GDP growth, playing a crucial role in achieving the nation's vision of a "Viksit Bharat" by 2047.

MG Sewa empowers over 70,000 women and girls, drives social change in India

Guwahati, Feb 06: MG Motor India's social initiative, MG Sewa, has touched the lives of over 1.2 lakh beneficiaries across India, with more than 70,000 women and girls benefitting from its transformative programs in 2024 alone. Focusing on girl child education, women empowerment, and community health, MG Sewa is making strides in rural and underserved areas, aiming to uplift families by providing access to education, sanitation, and hygiene. The initiative has expanded its reach through

various programs, including WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene), which has significantly impacted over 16,000 women and girls, promoting menstrual hygiene in areas with limited access to essential resources.

MG Sewa's educational efforts also include making mathematics more accessible in tribal communities across rural Odisha, helping over 80,000 children break educational barriers. MG Sewa stands out for its mission-driven philosophy, initiated even before the compa-



ny's first car was launched. Without being mandated as a CSR obligation, the program thrives due to the dedication of JSW MG Motor India's employees and dealer partners, who go above and beyond to mentor, fund, and engage with the communities they serve.

In Guwahati, MG Sewa's impact resonates with local

Swiggy's stock price drops more than 7%

Mumbai, Jan 06: Following the announcement on Wednesday that the food and grocery delivery giant saw an increase in its consolidated loss to ₹799.08 crore for the third quarter ending December 2024, Swiggy's share price fell 7.4% during Thursday's trading session. The business reported a net loss of ₹574.38 crore during the same time last year. The price of Swiggy's shares opened at ₹387.95 on the BSE today. The stock went as low as ₹387 and as high as ₹410.75 on the BSE.

Nissan Magnite expands global footprint with over 10,000 units exported

Guwahati, Feb 06: Nissan Motor India has commenced exports of over 10,000 units of the Left-Hand Drive (LHD) New Nissan Magnite,

Transformation & President of Nissan India Operations, emphasized the company's commitment to expanding exports, stating, "This is a



reinforcing its 'One Car, One World' strategy. The first shipment of approximately 2,900 units was dispatched in January 2025 to select markets in the Latin American (LATAM) region. A second wave, comprising over 7,100 units, is set to be shipped in February 2025 to the Middle East, North Africa, and select markets in LATAM and Asia-Pacific. The New Nissan Magnite, manufactured at Nissan's Alliance JV plant in Chennai, will now be available in over 65 global markets. Frank Torres, Divisional Vice President of AMIEO Region Business

significant milestone as we continue to position India as a key global hub." In India, the Magnite has gained traction in key regions, including Guwahati, where SUV sales have surged due to increasing demand for feature-rich, compact models.

The vehicle's affordability and turbocharged 1.0-litre engine have appealed to customers looking for a balance between performance and efficiency. With its growing global presence, Nissan's 'Make in India, Make for the World' vision continues to gain momentum.

Catch Spices launches new campaign with Akshay Kumar and Rajpal Yadav

Guwahati, Feb 06: Catch Spices, a leading brand under Dharampal Satyapal Group, has launched two fresh TVCs featuring Bollywood stars Akshay Kumar and Rajpal Yadav. This new campaign emphasizes the brand's slogan, "Kyunki Khana Sirf Khana Nahin Hota" (Food is more than just food), bringing humor and heartfelt narratives to the forefront. The commercials, centered on Catch Turmeric and Catch Garam Masala, highlight the role of these



spices in transforming meals and fostering connections. The Catch Turmeric TVC showcases a light-hearted mix-up, which leads to a warm, unexpected meal with neighbors. Akshay Kumar delivers the punchline, "Catch Haldi hi laatah aikhaanemeinasli rang," reinforcing the theme of food bringing people closer. Meanwhile, the Catch Garam Masala TVC illustrates how the spice adds life to cooking, with a chef's journey capturing the essence of flavorful food. The campaign is set to reach audiences across television and digital platforms, including YouTube and OTT. Additionally, Catch Spices has secured brand integrations with popular shows like "Laughter Chef" and "MasterChef." With a strong presence in over 7 lakh retail touchpoints, Catch Spices continues to see impressive growth, making significant strides in modern trade and e-commerce. Guwahati has shown a growing preference for premium, locally available spices, which aligns with Catch's focus on quality and authenticity, helping the brand build a deeper connection with its consumers in the region.

communities, as the company continues to build relationships and drive positive change in the region. The growing involvement of employees and dealer partners in Guwahati amplifies the initiative's presence, fostering an environment of support and empowerment for women and children. Rajeev Chaba, CEO Emeritus of MG Motor India, stated, "Our vision is simple – to support as many women as the cars we sell. We are committed to creating a brighter and more equitable future for all."

Mount Fuji hikes and Kyoto nights

Kyoto authorities announced Tuesday plans to hike lodging taxes, as Japan's ancient capital seeks to assuage grumbles from locals about too many tourists. Lured by its myriad sights and a weak yen, Japan has seen foreign tourism numbers explode in recent years, with arrivals in 2024 expected to have hit a record of more than 35 million. But like other hotspots worldwide such as Venice in Italy or Maya Bay in Thailand, this is not universally welcome, particularly in tradition-steeped Kyoto. The city, which is a modest bullet train ride away from Tokyo -- with a view of Mount Fuji on the way -- is famed for its kimono-clad geisha performers and Buddhist temples. Residents have complained of disrespectful tourists harassing the geisha like paparazzi in their frenzy for photos, as well as causing traffic congestion and littering. For rooms costing between 20,000 and 50,000 yen (\$127-317) per night, visitors will now see their tax double to 1,000 yen (\$6.35) per person per night, under the new plans. For accommodation over 100,000 yen per night it will soar tenfold to 10,000 yen. The new levies will take effect next year, subject to approval from the city assembly. "We intend to hike accommodation tax to realise 'sustainable tourism' with a high level of satisfaction for citizens, tourists and businesses," a statement said. Tensions are highest in the Gion district, home to teahouses where "geiko" -- the local name for geisha -- and their "maiko" apprentices perform traditional dances and play instruments. Last year authorities moved to ban visitors from entering certain narrow private alleys in Gion after pressure from a council of local residents. One council mem-



being torn and another who had a cigarette butt put in her collar. In 2019, the Gion district council put up signs saying



ber told local media about an instance of a maiko's kimono



"no photography on private roads" warning of fines of up

to 10,000 yen. "I appreciate tourists visiting the city, but there are also some downsides like the impact on the environment," resident Daichi Hayase told AFP, welcoming the new taxes. "But it doesn't mean the city should impose excessive taxes. Tourists are coming despite painful inflation," the 38-year-old photographer said. "If there's a burden on the infrastructure, I do think taxing tourists is a good idea," said Australian tourist Larry Cooke, 21. But he said that the city had to find the "right balance". Tourism has been booming for over a decade in Japan, with foreign arrivals rising five-fold between 2012 and when the Covid pandemic torpedoed foreign travel in 2020. Since restrictions were lifted, and the government is hoping to welcome 60 million tourists per year by 2030, almost double last year's expected total. Authorities have also taken steps beyond Kyoto, including introducing an entry fee and a daily cap on the number of hikers climbing Mount Fuji. Last year a barrier was briefly erected outside a convenience store with a spectacular view of the famous snow-capped volcano that had become a magnet for photo-hungry visitors. And in December Ginzan Onsen, a Japanese hot spring town with made-for-Instagram snowy scenes began stopping anyone arriving after 8:00 pm if they don't have a hotel booked.

Dermat recommends morning and night skincare for bright

Hands toil tirelessly throughout activities. From frantical- the morning to adeptly for dinner. So at the they appear dry and Most skincare are directed at to make the soft and sup- the quest for a face, other of the body go overlooked, cluding your Dr David Kim, board-certified tologist, addressed dull, wrinkly hands in video and recommended night skincare routine to get ised hands. Vitamin C- Apply 2-3 antioxidants and brightening. Moisturizer with ceramides- This is effective for moisturising. Sunscreen- Dr Kim called sunscreen 'the best anti-ageing product'. So when you step out in the morning, as you slather sunscreen on your face and neck, don't just rub the remnants between the palms. Be generous as you apply to your hands as well. Brightening serum- The dermat advised using a serum that contains ingredients like tranexamic acid,



the day, engaging in endless ly typing at work in chopping veggies end of the day, worn out. practices the face skin look ple. In glowing parts often in - hand. a derma - the issue of an Instagram the morning and bright and moistur- drops every morning for with ceramides- This is effective for

niacinamide, azelaic acid, kojic acid, and arbutin to make the skin bright. Emollient- After a serum, emollient helps to lock in actives like niacinamide acid better, enriching their absorption and effec- care is not a h a s



hand. derma - wrinkly hands morning and night skincare routine to get bright and moisturised hands.

iveness. Again, it goes without saying that skin- one-size-fits-all approach. Every person unique needs, much like how facial skincare does. Similarly, for the hands' hydrating and bright- ening needs, a customized routine is essential. Dr. Kim's morning and hand skincare routine is a general one, focusing on moisturizing and brightening needs. But, for more target- ed and individualised needs, personal dermat consultation might yield better results. In the quest for a glowing face, other parts of the body often go overlooked, including your Dr David Kim, a board-certified tologist, addressed the issue of dull, in an Instagram video and recommended the morning and night skincare routine to get bright and moisturised hands.

Curd Or Buttermilk Which One Is Better For You Expert Weighs In

Curd and buttermilk (chaas) are among the most widely consumed dairy products. Whether on their own or along with other dishes, such as dal, roti, or sabzi, both taste delicious and are super refreshing. While both are fermented dairy products, they bring different things to the table. Many of us think that curd and buttermilk offer the same benefits, but this is not true. So, which one is really better for you? Have you also ever wondered about this question? Fret not!

Recently, Ayurvedic health coach Dr Dimple Jangda took to her official Instagram handle to reveal which one makes for a better pick. Intrigued to know? Read on! Curd and buttermilk are both dairy products, but they differ in many ways. The major difference between the two is the consistency. Curd is thicker, whereas buttermilk is more liquid. Not only this, but buttermilk is also less sour in taste than curd. Additionally, curd and buttermilk have varying effects on digestion. Dimple explains



that curd is a heavy food, which means it takes longer to digest, whereas buttermilk is light and easier to digest. Curd is a great source of protein and vitamins B12 and D, making it great for boosting immunity and supporting bone health. Since it is high in protein, it can help keep you full for longer and aid in weight loss.

Moreover, curd also contains probiotics which help maintain a healthy gut. Click here to discover interesting ways to incorporate curd into your diet.

What Are The Benefits Of Buttermilk? Buttermilk can transform your health in incredible ways. Along with being rich in protein and calcium, it is enriched with lactic acid, making it great for skin health. It has a cooling effect on the body and can also help prevent dehydration. What's more? Consuming buttermilk on a daily basis may help improve blood pressure and oral health. Click here for delicious buttermilk-based recipes.



Health? Now that you know the benefits of curd and buttermilk, the question in your mind would be: which one is really better for you?

According to Dimple, both curd and buttermilk offer numerous health benefits. However, buttermilk takes the lead when it comes to digestive health. The fact that it is lighter and contains condiments like cumin, pink salt, hing, curry leaves, etc., gives it an edge over curd. Whereas curd is warmer and heat in nature due to the presence of live bacteria, which start fermenting in the presence of heat in the stomach.

Hence, curd is not recommended for those who have a pitta imbalance, such as a burning sensation, acid reflux, psoriasis, or eczema. On the other hand, buttermilk is tridoshic in nature, meaning it is suitable for all three body types - vata, kapha, and pitta. Plus, it can be consumed during all seasons of the year.

Gut bacteria may help dietary fiber fight colorectal cancer

Dietary fiber is the part of plant foods that we cannot digest, but our gut microbiome can. Fiber is an essential part of a healthy diet, helping to prevent constipation, keep the gut healthy, and maintain a healthy weight. However, few Americans eat enough fiber, with research suggesting that as few as 1 in 20 people meet the adequate intake of 14g of fiber per 1,000 kcal each day. A new study has reinforced advice that you should incorporate plenty of fiber-rich foods in your diet. Researchers found that when gut bacteria break down plant fiber, they produce two compounds that act on genes to help prevent the growth of cancers. The study is published in *Dr.*



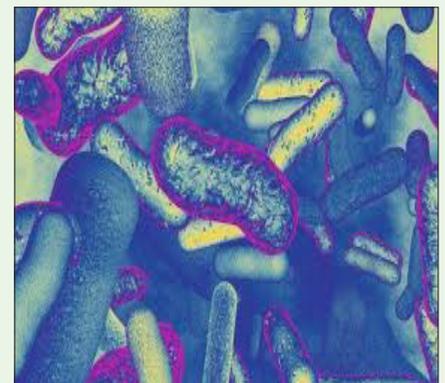
Eamon Laird, Assistant Lecturer in Human Nutrition at Atlantic Technological University Sligo and Adjunct Assistant Professor Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, who was not involved in the study, commented: "This is a well-run and comprehensive cell study with good methodologies but limited in scope — there are further questions to ask with many cell line variations and also real-life scenarios — the typical diet and lifestyle will have major effects, and it is unknown if these compounds still display these potential effects in the field, so to speak." The gut microbiome is made up of many millions of bacteria and other microorganisms that help us digest what we eat. Although people cannot digest plant fiber, our gut bacteria break it down into molecules that we can then use. One type of molecule these microbes produce from fiber is short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs). SCFAs are essential for modulating immune responses and may help prevent the formation of tumors in the gut. In this study, the researchers investigated the effects of two SCFAs, propionate and butyrate, that are produced by gut bacteria, on healthy and colon cancer cells. Previous studies have suggested that propionate may moderate appetite and can reduce cholesterol, and that butyrate may help regulate inflammation and immune responses and protect against colorectal cancer. The researchers found that both propionate and butyrate altered gene expression in several isolated human cell types: healthy cells and treated colon cancer cells. Similar effects were seen in cells in the intestines of living mice. Importantly, these epigenetic changes occurred in genes that regulate the differentiation and multiplication of cells, as well as genes controlling programmed cell death, or apoptosis. All these processes are

these compounds then?

There is still a lot more to investigate," he said. On average, in the U.S., around 17g of fiber is consumed daily, which is less than 50% of the recommended amount for men and not quite 70% for women. In the UK, the average intake is around 60% of the daily recommended amount by the British Dietetic Association. To increase fiber intake, it is to include a wide variety of plants in your diet, eating the skins of those with fiber. Good sources of plant fiber include fruits, such as avocados, apples, raspberries, and seed vegetables, particularly legumes, potatoes, sweet potatoes, broccoli, and squashes. Whole grain foods, such as freekeh, bulgur wheat, and brown rice, are also good sources. The researchers welcomed the findings, telling MNT: "Eating enough fiber increases SCFA production in the gut, which may help prevent colorectal cancer by supporting healthy gene regulation. It's a clear reminder of how closely diet and health are linked. [It] opens exciting doors for using diet and gut health to influence gene activity and prevent disease."

important for controlling or disrupting the rapid cell growth and proliferation that is characteristic of cancers. Ünlüoğlu told Medical News Today that one of the most interesting findings was how butyrate works in cancer cells: "It blocks enzymes called histone deacetylases (HDACs), leading to changes in DNA packaging that can slow down cancer cell growth or even trigger their [the cancer cells'] death."

Laird emphasized that, as a cell study, this "is on the bottom part of the evidence pyramid." "I would like to see this in real life — for instance large-scale observational studies measuring indicators of these markers and then risk of cancer and disease followed by the gold standard of randomized controlled trials before we start implementation of the findings. [...] Is there a benefit or other effects in cells being treated for cancer?" he told Medical News Today. "What about those with Crohn's disease or other conditions that cannot tolerate high fiber — what is the effect of



investigate," adults eat per day, required of that age fiber 30g recommended. It is important in your diet to include:

pears and

Andre Russell plays in Bangladesh league less than 24 hours after playing in ILT20

New Delhi: West Indies all-rounder Andre Russell turned up to play in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) less than 24 hours after taking part in the ILT20. On Sunday, February 2, Russell played for the Abu Dhabi Knight Riders in their match against Dubai Capitals at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium. Immediately after playing for ADKR, Russell left for Bangladesh and joined the Rangpur Riders. On Monday, February 3, the veteran played for the Riders in their Eliminator against Khulna Tigers at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur. Russell, however, could not perform in either of the games. Against the Capitals, Russell bagged a golden duck after Dushmantha Chameera dismissed him. For the Riders, he scored four runs off nine balls before Mohammad Nawaz rattled his woodwork. Overall, in the ILT20, Russell scored only 130 runs from 10 matches at an average of 18.57



and a strike-rate of 156.62 with a top score of 37 not out against the MI Emirates at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi. Russell has been one of the most prolific all-rounders in T20 cricket. Back in 2018, he scored an unbeaten 121 and picked up a hat-trick in the same match against Trinbago Knight Riders in the Caribbean Premier League. Back in 2016, Russell notched a 44-ball hundred against the Knight Riders in the CPL Eliminator. In 2019, Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR)

failed to go through to the play-offs, but Russell won the award for the Most Valuable Player in the Indian Premier League. In 14 games, Russell hit 510 runs at an average of 56.66 and a strike-rate of 204.81 with the help of 52 sixes. Russell also was the leading wicket-taker for KKR with 11 wickets to his name at an economy rate of 9.51. Overall in 83 T20Is, the Jamaican has scored 1063 runs with three half-centuries and 60 wickets at an economy rate of 9.27.

Travis Head beats Pat Cummins by over 60 votes to win Allan Border Medal

New Delhi: Swashbuckling batter Travis Head won the Cricket Australia Men's Player of the Year award on February 3, Monday. Head, who put up a sensational performance across formats in 2024, was conferred with the Allan Border Medal. Head beat Australia captain Pat Cummins by over 60 votes. Under Cummins, Australia dominated India in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, clinching the series for the first time in a decade. Head received the award remotely in Sri Lanka on Monday, with Australia currently touring Sri Lanka for their 2-match series. Head received 208 points from the Cricket Australia members, 50 more than the

runner-up Josh Hazlewood (158 votes). Pat Cummins came third with 147 votes to his name, followed by Steve Smith (105) and Mitchell Starc (87), rounding out the top five. With the eligibility period beginning from January 10, 2024, Head was the outright top scorer in the Australian ranks. Head scored 1427 runs across formats, in 29 games, nearly double that of the next best, Steve Smith, who slammed an impressive 806 runs from 21 matches. The aggressive batter also beat Adam Zampa (50 wickets from 31 games) and, as mentioned before, Pat Cummins (49 wickets from 18 matches). Head started off the year with a 119

against the West Indies at Adelaide. As the year progressed, Head's white-ball form kept growing as Australia toured Scotland and England after the T20 World Cup. Head scored a red-hot 154* from only 129 balls in an ODI at Trent Bridge in September, capping a successful tour of the United Kingdom, where he also scored two blazing fifties. After that, Head was instrumental in Australia winning the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, where he slammed two important hundreds in Adelaide and Brisbane to put the hosts in a dominant position in the series. Head reacted to the announcement remotely from Sri Lanka and said

Pep Guardiola slams 'fragile' Manchester

Mumbai: Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola did not hold back in his criticism of his players, calling them "fragile" after their humiliating 5-1 defeat to Arsenal in the Premier League on February 2. The loss further deepened City's struggles this season, with even star performers like Erling Haaland failing to make an impact. While injuries have plagued Guardiola's squad, with key players like Rodri, Ruben Dias, Nathan Ake, and Oscar Bobb sidelined, the thrashing at the hands of Arsenal exposed City's defensive vulnerabilities even further. However, Guardiola made it clear in his post-match comments that injuries were no excuse for failing to execute basic responsibilities on the pitch. He stressed that regardless of the squad's fragility, he expected better discipline and focus from his players, particularly in high-stakes encounters. "They can be fragile, it happened many times, but they have a duty and they didn't do it..." "I only regret the last 25 minutes. We forgot to do what we should do, what we have done for 65, 70 minutes. Of course, it's a difficult game starting in this stadium, against that team in the first minutes, it's happened many times this season," Guardiola told BBC. "City, who have been struggling for consistency, appeared completely out of sync, with Arsenal punishing every mistake. Adding to City's embarrassment was a moment of poetic revenge for Arsenal. When 18-year-old Lewis-Skelly curled in Arsenal's third goal, he celebrated by taunting Erling Haaland, mimicking the Norwegian striker's signature celebration. The act was a direct response to their previous Premier League encounter, where Haaland had mocked Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta, telling him to "Stay humble." This time, it was Haaland and City who were on the receiving end of humiliation, as Arsenal fans and players took full advantage of their dominance. For Guardiola, the heavy defeat serves as a wake-up call for his squad. While injuries remain a challenge, the lack of cohesion and discipline in crucial moments is a major concern. With the Premier League top-4 race heating up, City, who currently stand in 4th place, must quickly regroup and address their defensive shortcomings if they hope to keep their European aspirations alive.

Surviving Taper: A Guide to Thriving During the Most Exciting Time of the Season

New Delhi: It's that time of year again. Practices gradually become shorter, the yards start to decrease, and the energy is at an all-time high. It's taper time. For swimmers, tapering marks the beginning of championship season – a period of rest and recovery carefully catered to each swimmer to help you perform at your absolute best at the most important moment. While taper may sound like a welcome break, the truth is that it can be a tricky time for many swimmers. Between restless energy, adjusting to lighter practices, and the pressure of upcoming meets, navigating taper can feel like walking a fine line. What is Taper, Anyway? Tapering isn't just about swimming fewer laps or spending less time in the pool – it's a way to ensure your body is well-rested, recovered, and ready to perform. During taper, the volume of training decreases, but you'll find race pace and the intensity is still there. Quality over quantity. Coaches become artists who carefully tailor taper to each

swimmer, accounting for individual needs, events, and even strokes. For sprinters, taper can feel like a month-long vacation with plenty of rest to sharpen speed and power. Distance swimmers, on the other hand, may only get a few days to recover, with taper looking more like a subtle easing off rather than a full-blown break (sorry distance swimmers). No matter where you fall on the spectrum, tapering is both a physical and mental process – and it can take some getting used to. The Emotional Roller Coaster of Taper Taper isn't just about resting your body; it's also about strengthening the most important muscle – your mind. With less time spent training, many swimmers experience the taper hyper. This can lead to feeling jittery, restless, or even a little irritable. At the same time, the anticipation of your big meet can bring on a whirlwind of emotions – excitement, nerves, and maybe even self-doubt. It's completely normal to feel a bit out of sorts during taper. The key is to embrace



the process and trust in the work you've put in all season. Tips for Thriving During Taper Trust the Process It's easy to second-guess yourself during taper. "Am I doing enough?" "Will I lose my endurance?" This includes your pre-practice rituals, meal times, and even your warm-up routine. Familiarity can help you feel grounded and focused as you prepare for competition. Control what you can control. Stay Positive It's normal to feel a mix of emotions during taper, but keeping a positive mindset can make

all the difference. Instead of dwelling on doubts, focus on the things you're excited about—like racing, spending time with your teammates, and showing off all the hard work you've put in. Listen to Your Body Everyone responds to taper differently. If something doesn't feel quite right—whether it's an ache, fatigue, or even an unusual burst of energy—communicate with your coach. Taper is a collaborative process, and small adjustments can make a big difference. Lean on Your Teammates