



Chemists and Druggists Association of Assam Elections for 2025–2028 Term Concluded Unopposed
129th Birth Anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Observed with Patriotic Fervour in Haflong

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Haflong, Jan 23: The 129th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was observed with great respect and patriotic spirit in Haflong, in line with celebrations held across the country. The programme was organised by the Bangali Kalyan Parishad, Haflong, in collaboration with the Bangali Parishad Assam, Dima Hasao District Committee. The observance began with a motor rally through the main streets of Haflong, with participants carrying portraits of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and raising patriotic slogans. Netaji's valour, nationalist zeal, and monumental contribution to India's freedom struggle were remembered as a source of inspiration for generations. The main programme was attended by Chief Executive Member (CEM) of the Dima Hasao Autonomous Council

(DHAC), Debolal Gorlosa, as the Chief Guest. Floral tributes were paid to the statue of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose located at Haflong Market. The CEM was accompanied by the DHAC Chairman Mohet Hojai, MACs Ratan Jarambusa and Herojit Jidung, Dima Hasao BJP Vice President Liton Chakraborty, and other dignitaries. Following the tribute, a meeting was held at the Cultural Institute Hall, Haflong. After the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, speakers deliberated on the life, ideals, and struggles of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Addressing the gathering, CEM Debolal Gorlosa highlighted the significance of the day, emphasising Netaji's patriotism, bravery, and sacrifices for the nation, and urged the younger generation to draw inspiration from his life. The DHAC Chairman and other

speakers also addressed the gathering, underlining the importance of Netaji Jayanti. Netaji Jayanti, officially known as Parakram Diwas (Day of Valour), is observed annually on 23 January to commemorate the birth of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, a towering figure in India's freedom movement. He played a pivotal role in the struggle for independence, served as the head of the Indian National Army (Azad Hind Fauj), and was the founder-head of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind. In the evening, the celebrations concluded with the lighting of lamps at Netaji's statue, followed by a colourful patriotic cultural programme. Prominent local artists showcased their performances, and a prize distribution ceremony was also held, adding vibrancy to the day-long observance.

Chemists and Druggists Association of Assam Elections for 2025–2028 Term Concluded Unopposed

Guwahati, Jan 18: The election process of the Chemists and Druggists Association of Assam (CDAA) for the 2025–2028 term was completed smoothly on Saturday in Guwahati

Dr. Natawar Lal Agarwal was elected as President, Haladhar Deka as General Secretary, and Kaustav Kumar Guha as Treasurer. All three office-bearers were elected unopposed.

According to an official notification issued by the CDAA, the election was held for the posts of President, Secretary, and Treasurer for the 2025–2028 term. The last date for submission of nomination papers was January 16, 2026, up to 6:00 PM. As no additional nomination papers were filed by any other candidates within the stipulated time, the candidates were declared elected unopposed.

The successful completion of the election process was confirmed in a statement issued by Election Officer Debananda Tamuli, along with Assistant Election Officers Gautam Barua and Mantosh Pal.

The statement further informed that office-bearers for the Association's seven zones, comprising various districts across Assam, have also been elected as part of the organizational structure.



Assam Darshan Scheme Strengthens Religious Harmony in Dima Hasao; Minister Nandita Gorlosa Emphasises Cultural Significance, Thanks CM Himanta

Haflong, Jan 23: In a significant step towards preserving religious and cultural heritage, cheques under the Chief Minister's Assam Darshan Scheme were distributed on Friday for the conservation of places of worship across 28 constituencies of Dima Hasao district. The programme, held at the Haflong Municipal Board Ground, saw the distribution of cheques amounting to ₹1.5 lakh each to nearly 200 sacred worship sites. These include the traditional Madaikho of the Dimasa community, Hindu temples, Naamghars of various communities, gurudwaras, churches, and other indigenous faith-based institutions such as Sonongs, Boljols, and Kelumkis, reflecting the district's rich religious diversity. The event was graced by State Sports and Youth Welfare Minister Nandita Gorlosa, along with Dima Hasao District Commissioner Munindra Nath Nagatey, MAC Ngamrothang Hmar, Women Organisation President Kirang Jeme, and several BJP party office-bearers. Representatives from

National Girl Child Day Observed in Dima Hasao with Rally and Awareness Programme

Haflong, Jan 23: The District Health Services, Dima Hasao, observed National Girl Child Day with a rally followed by an awareness programme, underscoring the importance of empowering the girl child and ensuring her rights, education, and well-being.

(To be continued in page- 9)



DHAC Hands Over Appointment Letters to 31 Young Footballers; CEM Reaffirms Commitment to Youth Empowerment and Sports Development in Dima Hasao

Guwahati, Jan 18: In a significant move aimed at empowering the youth and strengthening sports at the grassroots level, the Dima Hasao Autonomous Council (DHAC) on Thursday handed over appointment letters to 31 outstanding football players of the district. The beneficiaries included one player from the CEM's Cup, two from the MAC Cup, and 28 players from the Inter-Polling Football Tournament. The initiative marks an important step towards encouraging sports among the younger generation, nurturing local talent, and steering youth away from negative influences by providing them meaningful

opportunities through sports. The ceremonial distribution programme was attended by Chief Executive Member (CEM) of DHAC, Debolal Gorlosa, along with DHAC



Chairman Mohet Hojai, Deputy Chairman Amin Leinthang, Dima Hasao BJP Prabhari Vijay Kumar Gupta, Dima Hasao District BJP President and MAC Dhriti Thaosen,

(To be continued in page-9)



various beneficiary committees and faith-based organisations were also present. Addressing the gathering, Minister Nandita Gorlosa highlighted the deep religious and cultural importance of places of worship, stating that they are not only centres of faith but also pillars of social harmony and community identity. She informed that under the Assam Darshan Scheme, the Chief Minister has sanctioned ₹3 lakh for each selected place of worship, of which ₹1.5 lakh is being released as the first installment. The Minister urged the managing committees to ensure that the funds are used strictly for renovation, preservation, and development of the worship sites, and not to divert the money for any other purpose. Expressing her heartfelt gratitude, Minister Gorlosa thanked Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma for conceptualising and approving the Assam Darshan Scheme for 113 Haflong (ST) Legislative Assembly Constituency, describing it as a visionary initiative that promotes inclusive development, religious harmony, and preservation of Assam's cultural heritage. The programme marked a meaningful milestone in strengthening communal unity and safeguarding the spiritual legacy of Dima Hasao district.

In Brief

Assam's Media Community Mourns the Loss of Swambudhan Phonglo



Haflong, Jan 21: Swambudhan Phonglo (32), a media person and owner of the weekly Dimasa newspaper Haflong Khurang, breathed his last at 12:30 AM on 21 January, 2026 Wednesday at Holy Spirit Hospital, Haflong. Son of Sukhen Phonglo, the late Swambudhan Phonglo was a resident of Sengya Sambudhan Raji Sarkari Bagan, Haflong. His untimely demise has sent a wave of shock and grief across the media fraternity and the local community of Dima Hasao. As the owner and publisher of Haflong Khurang, a prominent weekly Dimasa paper, he played an important role in promoting local language journalism and highlighting grassroots issues of the district. Despite his young age, he was widely respected for his dedication to journalism and community service. Condolences have been pouring in from journalists, civil society organizations, and well-wishers. The sudden passing of Swambudhan Phonglo has left a deep void in the media and social circles of Haflong.

CM Nitish Kumar Sets 2030 Goal for a Developed Bihar; Opposition Skeptical

Go with the Action-Oriented version if this is for a news snippet

Patna, Jan 23: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Friday asserted that the state would be elevated into the league of developed states by 2030, triggering sharp reactions from opposition parties. Addressing a public meeting during his ongoing "Samriddhi Yatra" in Muzaffarpur, Nitish said his government would fulfil all its development promises by 2030. The state government's "Saat Nischaya-3" programme has fixed the target of making Bihar a developed state by 2030, he asserted. During the yatra, Nitish reiterated that providing jobs and employment to as many young people as possible in Bihar was the government's priority. To achieve this, he said industries would be established in all districts of the state and youth would be skilled so that they could easily find employ-

ment.

The Chief Minister also inaugurated and laid foundation stones for projects worth Rs 853 crore in Muzaffarpur dis-

trict. These included 89 new schemes valued at Rs 194 crore, the inauguration of 47 completed projects worth Rs 212 crore, and the launch of work on 36 projects amounting to Rs 447 crore. Reacting to Nitish's claim, Congress leader Rishi Mishra said Bi-

har ranked 20th or even lower among states on several parameters of economic development. He questioned how Bihar could become a developed state when factories, including ethanol manufacturing units, were shutting down, and demanded an explanation from the Chief Minister. RJD chief spokesperson Shakti Singh Yadav alleged that the Chief Minister's claim was hollow,

stating that Bihar had the lowest per capita income and that industrial units were closing down across the state. Despite this, he said, the government was giving false assurances about setting up new industries.

BJP leader Suresh Rungta and JD(U) MLA Meena Kumari, among others, said special attention had been given to industrial growth over the past five years, asserting that economic prosperity would follow once one crore jobs and employment opportunities were provided to the youth. Nitish launched the 'Samriddhi Yatra' on January 16 following the landslide victory of the National Democratic Alliance in the state Assembly elections, the results of which were announced on November 14 last year. The NDA won 202 of the 243 Assembly seats.



SC Seeks Response from Centre and TN on Plea for ASI Control of Thirupparankundram Temple



New Delhi, Jan 23: The Supreme Court on Friday sought a response from the Centre, the Tamil Nadu government and others on a plea seeking directions on the ASI's takeover of the Thirupparankundram temple and daily lamp lighting on

top of the 'deepathoon' (stone pillar). A bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and Vipul M Pancholi issued notices to the Union of India, Tamil Nadu government, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and others on a plea filed by the Hindu Dharma Parishad.

During the hearing, the top court was informed that the Madras High Court on January 6 had upheld the single judge's order on lighting the lamp. The top court was hearing a plea

filed by Hindu Dharma Parishad seeking directions that the ASI take control of the Thirupparankundram Lord Murugan Subramaniya Temple at Madurai and on lighting one lamp on top of the 'deepathoon' at all times. The plea has also sought directions that every year on the day of Karthigai in the month of Karthigai, the entire hill be lit with lamps and Muruga devotees be allowed to worship.

The high court on January

6 upheld a single judge's order allowing the lighting of a lamp on the Thirupparankundram hill, and slammed the DMK government, calling "ridiculous" its claim that lighting of the lamp will cause disturbance to public peace. A division bench of Justices G Jayachandran and KK Ramakrishnan delivered the judgment, making it clear that the spot on which the stone pillar is located belongs to the Sri Subramania Swamy Temple.

'Communal Laboratory': Ashok Gehlot Slams Rajasthan's 'Disturbed Areas' Law

Jaipur, Jan 23: Former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot on Friday attacked the BJP over the proposed 'Disturbed Areas' law, alleging that the state government was trying to turn the state into a "communal laboratory." Gehlot alleged that the BJP government was resorting to polarisation to divert attention from its administrative failures. The remarks came a day after the Rajasthan Cabinet approved the draft of a Bill aimed at protecting the rights of permanent residents and tenants in areas declared as "disturbed." Referring to the proposed legislation, the senior Congress leader said Rajasthan, known for its tradition of brotherhood, warmth and the ethos of 'Padharo Mhare Des', was now being branded as "disturbed" through the Act, calling it a "deeply shameful step" in the state's history.

Gehlot said there was a clear difference between the approaches of the two governments, claiming that the previous Congress regime, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's ideals, had set up the country's first Department of Peace and Non-Violence to strengthen society through dialogue, harmony and love. "The BJP government shut down that department soon after coming to power and is now trying to turn Rajasthan into a communal laboratory by imposing this law," he said.

Accusing the present government of dismantling that initiative, Gehlot said the BJP government had shut down the department soon after coming to power and was now attempting to impose the new law to promote communal division. He asserted that there were no such circumstances in Rajasthan warranting such



a law and that the state did not have fertile ground for hatred. Gehlot warned that the proposed law would lead to a fall in property values and divide communities that have lived together for centuries. "By pushing polarisation, the BJP government is trying to hide its administrative failures. The people of Rajasthan want peace and harmony, not the 'disturbed' tag," he said, adding that the Congress would strongly oppose what he termed a divisive move.

Odisha's Nabrangpur district declared 'Naxal-free'



Bhubaneswar, Jan 23: Odisha's Nabrangpur district has been declared "Naxal-free" after nine Maoists surrendered in neighbouring Chhattisgarh, police said Saturday. Seven women were among these surrendered Naxalites. They were carrying a total bounty of Rs 47 lakh. The surrendered Naxalites were operating in Nabrangpur and Chhattisgarh's Dhamtari district, an official said. "With their surrender, Nabrangpur district has become free from Naxal activity," police said in a statement.

The district has witnessed several incidents of Naxal violence, including the assassination of BJD MLA Jagabandhu Majhi and his personal security officer, PK Patro, on Sept 24, 2011. The Maoists had also attacked the Kundei police station in Raigarh block on July 16, 2010. "However, there has been no major trouble in the district after 2011," a police officer said. Of the state's 30 districts, Maoist influence now remains confined to pockets of just seven districts -- Kandhamal, Kalahandi, Bolangir, Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, and Boudh, he said. "Nabrangpur becoming free of Naxalites is a major achievement, with the Centre's target of eliminating Left-Wing Extremism from the country by March 31 approaching," he added.

Magh Mela Row: Yogi and Maurya Divided Over Seers



Lucknow, Jan 23: Amid the ongoing controversy involving Jyotirpeeth Shankaracharya Swami Avimuktешwaranand and the Magh Mela administration, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya have taken contrasting positions, issuing differing statements on the protest. While Chief Minister Yogi, on Thursday, implicitly criticised the protest, describing it as a conspiracy to weaken Sanatan Dharma by elements masquerading as religious leaders, Deputy Chief Minister Maurya adopted a conciliatory approach.

He said he bowed before the seer, requesting him to end the protest, close the chapter of controversy and take a holy dip at the Sangam. Conveying a message of restraint and respect, Maurya clarified, in response to questions over the alleged insult to the Shankaracharya, that disrespect to any revered saint, acharya or Shankaracharya was unacceptable. He said that if any instance of disrespect or insult were to come to light, an inquiry would be conducted and action taken against those found guilty. Maurya said the priority at present was to bring the controversy to an end. He said: "I pray at the feet of Shankaracharya requesting him to end whatever protest is ongoing after taking a dip in the Sangam." Earlier, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had said that for a yogi, saint and sanyasi, nothing was more important than religion and the nation. He said a sanyasi had no personal property, adding that his wealth was his religion and the nation was his pride.

The Chief Minister had also said that elements who allegedly conspired to weaken Sanatan Dharma under its guise posed a threat to society. "It is necessary to be vigilant against such people," he said. Meanwhile, continuing his protest for the sixth day on Friday, the seer fell ill with a high fever, following which he went inside his vanity van at around 10 am. However, after 2 pm, he came out and sat on his chariot, resuming his dharna.

Tripura's ₹574-cr upgrade: Scindia leads push



Agartala, Jan 23: Union Minister for Development of the North Eastern Region (DoNER), Jyotiraditya Scindia, will undertake a three-day visit to Tripura from January 23, during which he will review and inaugurate projects funded by his ministry, Transport Minister Sushanta Chowdhury said on Thursday.

Briefing reporters, Chowdhury said the Union minister would lay foundation stones for several infrastructure and tourism-related projects supported by the DoNER Ministry. He added that Scindia would also call on Chief Minister Manik Saha and jointly visit multiple project sites during the tour. As per the official itinerary, Scindia will address a programme at Rabindra Satabarshiki Bhawan in Agartala. He is also scheduled to offer prayers at the Tripura Sundari Temple in Udaipur, Gomati district.

Chowdhury noted that a multi-storied car parking facility at the temple has been

sanctioned by the DoNER Ministry, and the Union minister will inspect the proposed project site. Scindia will visit Kadamtala in North Tripura district on January 24, where he will lay the foundation stone for a cluster management project, the transport minister said.

He will then proceed to the Unakoti rock carvings, a major heritage site in Unakoti district, before travelling to Narikelkunja, where he is scheduled to stay overnight.

Chowdhury said he would receive and accompany the Union minister during the Narikelkunja visit. Scindia will lay foundation stones for projects under the Matabari tourism circuit development plan at Narikelkunja on January 25. The Chief Minister will join the programme virtually from Agartala, he added. Following these engagements, Scindia will depart from Maharaja Bir Bikram Airport for Guwahati, Chowdhury concluded.

Chowdhury concluded.

March 9: Mizoram gears up for Chapchar Kut

Aizawl, Jan 21: Mizoram's traditional Chapchar Kut festival, one of the state's largest cultural celebrations, will begin on March 9 with a week-long programme, officials said on Tuesday after a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Lalduhoma. The celebrations will open on March 9 with the customary 'Kut Run', during which the Central Young Mizo Association will provide T-shirts to participants, continuing a long-standing tradition. On March 10, exhibitions showcasing handlooms, textiles and handicrafts will be held, along with a food court and flower show. These events will take place at Aijal Club, with the main venue to be finalised soon.

Painting and photo exhibitions, along with a film screening, are scheduled for March 11 at Vanapa Hall. The Information and Public Relations Department will also organise the Lianchhiri Run in Aizawl on the same day. On March 11 and 12, a living museum highlighting Mizo cultural heritage will be set up at Zokhua in Falkawn village, around 15 km from Aizawl. The main programme will be held on March 13 at 10:30 am at Lammual ground. Chief Minister Lalduhoma will serve as

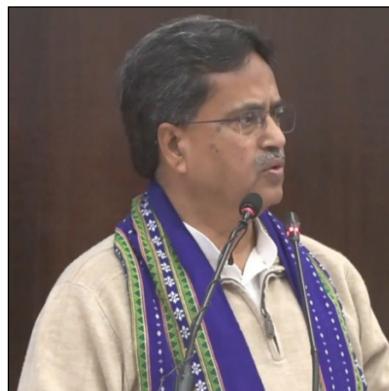


'Kut Pa' (festival father), while Art and Culture Minister C Lalsawivunga will be the 'Kut thlengtu' (host). The organisers have announced that the festival will be observed as a garbage-free event, appealing to participants to maintain cleanliness. The theme for this year's Chapchar Kut is "Zo nun ze mawi – Inremna" (Mizo code of ethics – Peace). The Chief Minister's Trophy, carrying a cash award of Rs 1 lakh along with a citation and memento, will also be presented. Similar celebrations will be organised across other parts

of Mizoram.

Chapchar Kut is traditionally linked to jhum cultivation and marks the completion of forest clearing and burning before sowing. The festival is believed to have originated about 500 years ago in Suipui village near present-day Myanmar. Though it was discouraged in the late 19th century by Christian missionaries, it was revived in 1973 without animistic rituals or alcohol. Over the years, Chapchar Kut has become a major attraction for tourists from India and abroad.

Tripura govt bearing burden of financial, legal lapses of past: CM



Agartala, Jan 21: Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Thursday said the current state government is facing financial and legal pressures arising from decisions taken by the previous Left Front regime, including bad loans and prolonged litigation. Speaking at a felicitation programme organised by the Minorities Department for meritorious students, Saha said several loans disbursed through state-run public sector undertakings had turned into non-performing assets. He alleged that some beneficiaries included close relatives of people who were in power at the time.

The chief minister said he had raised the issue with the central government during a recent visit to New Delhi. He added that the minister in charge of the Other Backward Classes (OBC) department had informed him that loans amounting to around Rs 60–65 crore had become irrecoverable, with no repayments being received. Saha said the state government

is also dealing with legal complications linked to past administrative decisions. "I attended a review meeting of the law department. The concerned officials told me how bad the situation has become. We are losing cases one after another in court because of previous mistakes, and these are creating an additional financial burden on the state exchequer," he said. He said the government is required to

comply with court orders irrespective of which administration was responsible for earlier policy decisions. Saha added that a fiscal deficit of about Rs 13,000 crore was left behind after the Left Front governed the state for 25 consecutive years. The chief minister said the current government is working with a different approach despite inherited challenges. "Tripura has made progress in recent years, and steps are being taken to address long-standing issues," he added. Saha also said that 1,899 WAKF assets, including mosques, properties, and graveyards, have been identified across the state. He said measures are being taken to restore and utilise these assets for the benefit of religious minorities.

Urging members of the Muslim community to focus on modern education, the chief minister said scientific and technical learning is essential in the era of artificial intelligence and machine learning.

Assam: Veteran trade union leader Mukta Bahadur Chetry passes away in Dibrugarh

Digboi, Jan 23: Mukta Bahadur Chetry, a veteran trade union leader and former office bearer of the Assam Oil Company Labour Union (AOCLU), died on Friday afternoon at a private hospital in Dibrugarh after a prolonged illness. He had been undergoing treatment for multiple ailments for over a month.

Chetry, a resident of Itabhatta, was a retired employee of IOC-Assam Oil Division (AOD) and served the AOC-LU as secretary for several terms. He was known for his role in strengthening the union's organisational structure

and representing employee concerns through negotiation and dialogue. Colleagues described him as a calm and firm leader who consistently worked for the welfare of workers and organisational discipline. During his tenure, he played a key role in articulating service-related issues of AOD employees and fostering unity within the workforce. Apart from his trade union activities, Chetry was associated with various social and cultural organisations in Digboi. He served as treasurer of the Nepali Kali Mandir Samity and was involved in initiatives aimed at community welfare and social

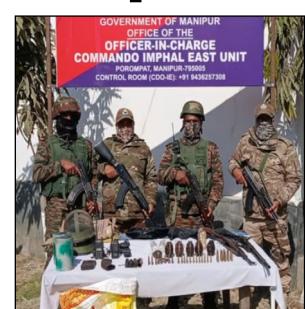
harmony. Expressing condolence, social worker and former AOCLU president Tarun Hazarika recalled Chetry's contribution to the union, describing him as a leader who guided the organisation during critical periods. Several organisations and institutions in Digboi paid tribute to Chetry, acknowledging his lifelong association with employee welfare and social causes.

The mortal remains will be kept at the AOD Hospital morgue on Friday evening. The last rites will be performed on Saturday morning at the Itabhatta Hindu Cremation Ground.

Arms cache seized in Imphal East camp raid

Imphal, Jan 23: Security forces dismantled a temporary camp allegedly set up by suspected insurgents and recovered a cache of arms, ammunition and explosives during an anti-insurgency operation in Imphal East district, police said on Friday. The operation was carried out on Thursday at Uchol village and the adjoining foothill areas under Andro police station limits. On noticing the movement of security personnel, the suspects fled the area, police said. No arrests were made during the operation.

During the search, security forces recovered a locally made barrel gun, a .22 rifle with magazine, five No. 36 hand grenades without detonators, one Chinese hand grenade, 30 rounds of live ammunition of various calibres, four



tube-launching devices, two Baofeng wireless sets with chargers, three tear smoke shells, one rubber bullet shell, two improvised explosive devices weighing about 2 kg each, three arming rings, one tear smoke grenade, two helmets and one SLR magazine. All seized items were handed over to the concerned police stations for further legal proceedings. Police said cases have been registered under relevant sections of the law.

Editorial

Investing in Youth, Scoring for the Future

The Dima Hasao Autonomous Council's decision to hand over appointment letters to 31 young footballers is more than a ceremonial gesture—it is a policy statement with long-term implications for youth empowerment and sports development in the hill district. At a time when unemployment, substance abuse, and lack of structured opportunities continue to challenge young people in remote regions, this initiative sends out a clear and hopeful message: talent will be recognised, and commitment will be rewarded.

By selecting players from the CEM's Cup, MAC Cup, and the Inter-Polling Football Tournament, the DHAC has demonstrated faith in grassroots sporting platforms. These tournaments, often organised with limited resources but immense local passion, have now been elevated as genuine pathways to opportunity. This recognition validates years of hard work by young athletes who have trained on uneven grounds, with minimal facilities, driven largely by passion and community support.

Chief Executive Member Debolal Gorlosa's emphasis on sports as a tool for discipline, teamwork, and positive engagement deserves particular attention. In regions like Dima Hasao, where youth are especially vulnerable to negative influences due to isolation and limited exposure, sports can act as a powerful social intervention. The CEM's assertion of "Promise made, promise kept" is politically significant—it reflects governance that translates words into action, a quality often demanded but rarely witnessed consistently.

Equally important is the broader vision this initiative represents. Appointments linked to sports performance not only provide financial security to young players but also accord dignity to sporting careers, which are too often dismissed as impractical. This move could encourage parents to support their children's sporting ambitions and inspire younger students to see sports as a viable and respectable avenue for growth.

The friendly match between the

CEM's XI and the Chairman's XI, organised alongside the event, added symbolic value. It reinforced the idea that leadership must not remain confined to speeches but should actively engage with the spirit of the youth. Such gestures help bridge the gap between administration and the community, fostering trust and shared purpose.

However, this initiative should be viewed as a beginning, not an end. Sustained investment in sports infrastructure, professional coaching, exposure to higher-level competitions, and transparent selection processes will be crucial to ensure that this momentum is not lost. If backed by consistent policy support, Dima Hasao could emerge as a nurturing ground for sporting talent in the region.

In empowering its footballers, the DHAC has taken a commendable step towards empowering its future. The real victory will be measured not just in goals scored on the field, but in lives shaped, confidence built, and a generation steered towards purpose and pride.

One more bhasha, many questions

The University Grants Commission's recent directive ambitiously titled 'Learn One More Bharatiya Bhasha' presents itself as a progressive reform couched in the rhetoric of cultural pride and linguistic revival. It promises to promote multilingualism, bridge regional divides and shift India away from an 'English-dominant framework' to a 'Bharatiya bhasha-centred learning ecosystem'. Yes, it sounds uplifting. However, a closer examination of both the wording and the structure of the guidelines reveals a series of long-standing anxieties that this initiative does little to address.

The very title raises suspicions from states with a history of opposing central language policies. 'Learn one more Bharatiya bhasha' may sound innocent, but this is precisely the phrasing that Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and even Maharashtra have objected to for decades, viewing it as a thinly-disguised version of the old three-language formula. The document reaffirms that every higher education institution (HEI) must offer courses in at least three Indian languages. The logic is unclear: if the goal is multilingualism, why limit it to three?

More importantly, who decides the additional languages? Going by experience, Hindi will undoubtedly find a place, further fuelling the charge that the new guidelines are not new at all; they simply repackage an older, contentious formula in glossy language about national integration and employability.

Even the celebrated idea of awarding students who learn five or more languages seems more symbolic than real.

At the postgraduate and doctoral levels, where students are deeply immersed in research, the likelihood of taking up multiple additional languages is minimal. It is hard to imagine a PhD scholar balancing coursework, fieldwork, deadlines, and the mandatory research output while simultaneously chasing certificates in four or five languages. The incentive is impressive to read, but impossible to implement. The pretence becomes even more evident as the National Education Policy's credit structure itself has reduced the space for languages in undergraduate programmes. What used to be a three- or four-semester engagement with language learning in many institutions has now shrunk to a single semester. If the system genuinely valued multilingual learning, it would not have reduced its curricular space in the first place.

Let's examine the guidelines in detail. They insist that all HEIs offer courses at three levels—basic, intermediate and advanced—and that these courses be open to all: undergraduate and post-graduate students, doctoral scholars, teachers, staff members and even local community residents. In principle, this inclusivity sounds generous. In practice, it becomes unwieldy. Research has consistently shown that adult learners face significantly greater difficulty in acquiring new languages. Expecting

students in their twenties and beyond to learn an additional language simply because an institution needs to meet an accreditation requirement is unrealistic at best and coercive at worst. The UGC quite deceptively uses the word 'encourage' while the incentive structure tells the real story. When national accreditation and institutional ranking scores—metrics that shape funding, reputation, admissions and research grants—are linked to compliance, no guideline can be treated as optional. Institutions cannot afford to ignore anything linked to rankings. As we saw with the Indian knowledge system mandate, colleges will likely scramble to produce rapid, symbolic compliance.

Once again, the burden of this coercion will fall not on administrators, but on staff and students. Another troubling aspect of the initiative is the push to replace the so-called 'English-dominant' framework. While the desire to strengthen Indian languages is legitimate, the assumption that English must be pushed aside for Indian languages to flourish reflects a false binary. English has become the language of aspiration, mobility and global opportunity, not simply because of colonial legacy, but because of current academic, economic and professional realities.

By turning language learning into yet another compliance mechanism, the initiative can easily burden students, polarise states and weaken India's multilingual future.

Thaw in Arctic, meltdown in Alps

Who could have expected that news of the end of the world would be broadcast not from the UN General Assembly or a parliament, but from a talk-shop run by an NGO set up by an engineer? That's what Davos is, actually. And who could have expected that 1970s' vintage Václav Havel would be invoked to make sense of the news? Or that the news peg would be Arctic Greenland, whose vicinity has been in the news only because global warming is shrinking the permanent ice pack, with consequences for global weather? Only the Russians are pleased because their northern ports may become all-weather, and anyway, they're tired of being cold and dreaming of holidays in Goa and Pattaya. The Arctic is also important for aviation, and found its place in culture in Arlo Guthrie's 1969 hit 'Coming into Los Angeles', which described his flight amid a plane load of chickens: "Coming in from London from over the pole/ Flying in a big airliner." During the Cold War, ballistic missile flight paths between the US and the USSR also passed over those regions, hence the strategic importance of US assets in Greenland. But the Cold War is long over and though Moscow still owns more nukes, Russia is not the same as the USSR. In contrast, Xi's China is greater than Mao and Deng's China. The geopolitical landscape has changed.

Canadian PM Mark Carney and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen turned a page in world affairs when they said at Davos that the crisis over Greenland and Nato is not a temporary aberration, and that the rules-based system and the idea of global governance are already history. Carney quoted Havel's 1978-79 samizdat essay, 'The Power of the Powerless', which had travelled underground to Poland, where it provided the moral basis of the Solidarity movement. Carney quoted Havel's parable of a grocer who puts up a sign on his shop window every day that says: "Workers of the world unite." Neither the grocer nor the observers believe in the Marxist slogan, but he puts it up in a ritual of compliance. The ritual is observed by all, and their mass compliance props up the totalitarian state. Havel had alluded to the work of another now-forgotten dissident, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who urged his readers not to live a lie. In Havel's parable, when one of the millions of people propping up the lie by observing empty rituals just stops, the edifice of absolute power begins to crumble. Carney applied the logic to the post-war world, which had willingly worked towards common security. But in the face of annexation, it is time for the grocer to take down the sign. Indeed, the idea of a grand Western alliance of equals was a lie, because after the colonial period, European powers declined while the US grew. The latter became the steward of a reasonably stable global system that protected the interests of lesser Western powers. It was flawed, but far more humane than the multi-polar network of spheres of influence it supplanted, in which it was easy to get away with murder in your own territory. Nations hesitated to intervene in the spheres of influence of others—which included their imperial possessions. The Bengal famine of 1943 killed millions because Winston Churchill rejected international aid. The Allies were capable of shipping grain to Calcutta despite wartime rationing among their own people, but they hesitated to intrude without permission upon a British colony. A decade earlier, Stalin's forced collectivisation policy had precipitated the Holodomor in Ukraine. In the press, the world saw pictures of starved people in the streets of Kharkiv, which was then the capital—a decade later, they would see similar scenes in the streets of Calcutta.

But Ukraine was part of the Russian empire, and nations and agencies that would have liked to help hesitated to cross a line. Similarly, the Western powers knew of atrocities committed by the Japanese for over three decades in Korea and Manchuria. They did not intervene for fear of having to tangle with Japan—until Pearl Harbour was attacked. These are only a few of many humanitarian outrages which could have been contained, had not the great powers carved up the world into imperial territories and spheres of influence. The idea of an 'international community' developed after the Second World War and the founding of the UN. It is a legal fiction, but since it represents the union of national wills—often via the UN—it carries much more moral weight than individual nations, even those which lay claim to manifest destiny. This quality gave legitimacy to the coalition intervention in the Balkans, and to elements of the international community that have intervened in African conflicts from Biafra to Rwanda and Mali.

IndiaSkills North-East Meet begins in Guwahati, 162 youth compete across 26 skills

Guwahati: The IndiaSkills Regional Competition 2025–26 for the North-East was inaugurated on Sunday at Gauhati University, bringing together young participants from all eight North-Eastern states to compete across 26 skill categories. The event was inaugurated by Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, who said that the youth of the North-East are prepared to take a leading role in India's skilled workforce.

Organised by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship with the National Skill Development Corporation as the implementation partner, the competition



is being held in the region for the first time. A total of 162 competitors are taking part in skills ranging from automobile technology, electronics, CNC and welding to cloud computing, fashion technology, hospitality, health care and

retail services. The event also reflects rising participation of women in core technical trades.

Speaking at the inauguration, Chaudhary said the competition reflects the Centre's focus on taking national plat-

forms closer to regional talent and aligning skill training with education under the National Education Policy 2020. Winners from this stage will move on to the national competition, with select candidates qualifying for the WorldSkills event in Shanghai later this year.

In Guwahati, the event is expected to give a modest boost to local businesses, including hotels, transport operators, food outlets and small service providers, as participants, officials and trainers from across the North-East stay in the city during the competition. Traders say such national-level events also help position Guwahati as a hub for education, training and skill-based activities in the region.

Ai+ Enters Wearables Market with Fashion-Led Nova Watch Series



Guwahati: Ai+ Smartphone has announced its entry into the fast-growing wearables segment with the launch of NovaWatch, a smartwatch line-up that blends safety, health tracking, and fashion-forward design. Scheduled for a nationwide rollout in Q1 2026, the series marks a strategic expansion of the brand's connected device portfolio under its "Add A Plus" vision.

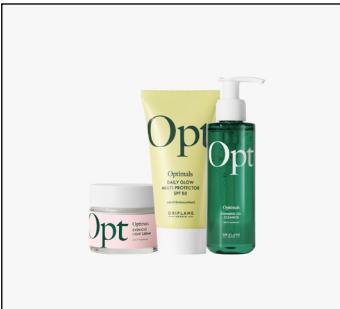
The NovaWatch range includes Active, designed for everyday users seeking accessible wellness metrics; Wearbuds, a hybrid smartwatch with integrated Bluetooth earphones combining audio and time-keeping; Kids Geo Fencing 4G Watch, focused on family safety and simple connectivity; and Rotatcam 4G LTE Watch, an industry-first wearable with a rotating camera positioned for creators and style-conscious users. Commenting on the launch, Madhav Sheth, CEO of Ai+ Smartphone and founder of NxtQuantum Shift Technologies, said the lineup was built around real-world usage, emphasizing that wearables must feel natural, personal, and relevant to daily routines.

Pricing and detailed specifications will be revealed closer to launch. NovaWatch will debut alongside Novapods on Flipkart and through select offline partners in Q1 2026.

Oriflame Expands Optimals Portfolio with Launch of Even Out Range in India

Mumbai: Swedish beauty and wellbeing brand Oriflame has expanded its Optimals skincare portfolio in India with the launch of the Optimals Even Out range. The new collection is designed to address dark spots, hyperpigmentation, and uneven skin tone—among the most common skincare concerns in the country.

Aligned with Oriflame's skinimalism philosophy, the range offers a simplified yet performance-driven routine suitable for all skin types. Dermatologically tested, the products are powered by Niacinamide, Rainbow Algae Extract, Glycolic Acid, and Para-probiotic technology, which work together to improve skin tone, reduce pigmentation, accelerate surface cell renewal, and support barrier health, hydration, and microbiome bal-



and protect.

Commenting on the launch, Edyta Kurek, Senior Vice President and Head of India and Indonesia, said the new range provides a gentle yet effective solution for pigmentation while strengthening the skin barrier.

The range is built on three key pillars: tone improvement, surface renewal, and barrier support. It includes tailored routines for dry, oily, and combination skin, featuring creamy and foaming cleansers, the Optimals Even Out Serum, rich and light creams, Daily Glow Multi-Protector SPF 50 with UVA/UVB and pollution protection, and Hydra Glow Gel Face Patches for eye care. The regimen follows a simple four-step format: cleanse, boost, moisturise,



TVS Motor launches Orbiter electric scooter in West Bengal with 158 km range

Guwahati: TVS Motor Company has announced the launch of its new electric scooter, TVS Orbiter, in West Bengal, marking a fresh push into the state's growing urban EV market. Priced at ₹1,03,200 (ex-showroom West Bengal, inclusive of the PM e-Drive scheme), the Orbiter has been positioned as a practical and feature-rich option for daily city commuting.

The TVS Orbiter comes with several segment-first features, including a claimed 158 km IDC range, cruise control, hill hold assist and a spacious 34-litre under-seat boot that can accommodate two helmets. An industry-first 14-inch front wheel has been introduced to improve ride stability and comfort. The scooter is powered by a 3.1 kWh battery and is offered with connected features such as geo-fencing, time fencing, towing alerts and crash or fall notifications.

The electric scooter also features a coloured LCD connected cluster with call display, a connected mobile app, and

TVS Apache racing experience goes international, debuts in Nepal to mark 20 years of Apache series

Guwahati: TVS Motor Company has announced the international debut of the TVS Apache Racing Experience (ARE GP) with the launch of its first overseas event in Nepal. The day-long programme, held at the Vehicle Academy and Research Center in Satungal, marked a key milestone as the company celebrates 20 years of the TVS Apache brand.

The Apache Racing Experience is a structured platform that allows Apache owners to test the racing potential of their motorcycles in a safe and professionally managed environment, while learning

advanced riding and racecraft from seasoned TVS Racing champions. The first selection round in Nepal saw participation from over 55 riders and drew around 300 visitors.

Riders competed across three classes—160cc, 200cc and 310cc—on a technically designed circuit with 10 challenging corners. Performance was judged on fastest lap timings. The top three finishers in each category earned a chance to race at the Madras International Circuit in April 2026, competing with riders from four countries.

Winners will receive rewards including an all-ex-

penses-paid MotoGP experience and entry into the TVS India One Make Championship. The event also featured performance shows, gymkhana sessions and cultural programmes.

Vimal Sumbly of TVS Motor Company said Nepal's growing performance biking community made it a natural choice for expansion, while Shahil Agrawal of Jagdamba Motors said the initiative would help nurture local racing talent.

In Guwahati, motorsport-led branding by TVS is steadily influencing buyer interest in premium and



performance motorcycles. Dealerships in Guwahati have reported rising enquiries for Apache models, driv-

Nissan appoints Gagan Mangal as Head of Communications as India pushes gain space



Guwahati: Nissan Motor India Pvt. Ltd. on Friday announced the appointment of Gagan Mangal as Head of Communications for India, with effect from January 12, 2026. Based in Gurugram, Mangal will lead all communications for the company, reporting to Katherine Zachary, Vice President – International Communications, and working closely with Saurabh Vatsa, Managing Director, Nissan Motor India.

Welcoming the appointment, Vatsa said the company is entering a pivotal phase of its India journey. "As we accelerate our brand resurgence and prepare for exciting product launches, Gagan's leadership will be instrumental in strengthening our communications strategy and building a compelling Nissan narrative in India," he said.

Mangal joins Nissan from Volkswagen India, where he headed Press and Marketing Communications. A management graduate, he brings over 18 years of experience in corporate communications and marketing, having also worked with Hyundai. His career spans product launches, large-scale events, brand strategy, campaigns and media relations at both national and regional levels.

In Guwahati, auto industry stakeholders say leadership appointments at global carmakers often indicate sharper regional focus. Dealers in Guwahati expect stronger brand communication and clearer messaging to support customer engagement as companies like Nissan look to deepen their presence in emerging markets across the Northeast.

Expressing his views, Mangal said India remains a priority market for Nissan, with significant opportunities to strengthen brand relevance, trust and customer connection. He added that he looks forward to working closely with teams in India and globally to build a clear, confident and customer-centric narrative aligned with Nissan's global ambitions.

Mahindra refreshes Bolero Camper and Bolero Pik-Up with new design, comfort features

Guwahati: Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. has launched refreshed versions of its Bolero Camper and Bolero Pik-Up range, adding updated styling along with new comfort, convenience and connected technology features.

The company said the new Bolero Camper is now equipped with the advanced iMAXX telematics solution on select variants, offering real-time vehicle insights to improve operational efficiency and fleet management. The Camper also gets a bolder exterior with new decals,

body-coloured ORVMs and door handles. On the comfort front, it now offers rear-seat headrests, air conditioning, a heater and a Bluetooth-enabled music system.

Mahindra has also standardised several features across all Bolero Camper variants, including a recliner driver's seat with headrest, a wider co-driver seat, central locking and rear seat belts, aimed at improving everyday usability.

The Bolero Pik-Up range has been refreshed with a new front design, a reclining driver's seat with headrest

and a wider co-driver seat. For the first time, heating and air-conditioning systems have been introduced on select variants to ensure better comfort in different weather conditions.

Mahindra said the updates strengthen its leadership in the pickup segment, targeting customers who depend on these vehicles for daily business and livelihood needs. Prices for the refreshed range start at ₹9.19 lakh (ex-showroom) for the Bolero Pik-Up and ₹9.85 lakh for the Bolero Camper, depending on the variant.

Bajaj General Insurance unveils 'Fetal Flourish' rider, expands prenatal coverage at ₹1,025 premium

Pune: Bajaj General Insurance Limited on Tuesday announced the launch of Fetal Flourish, a pioneering fetal health insurance rider aimed at supporting advanced in-utero medical procedures and high-risk pregnancies—an area largely outside the scope of traditional maternity insurance.

Launched in Pune on January 14, the rider is priced at an affordable premium of ₹1,025 and is offered along with the insurer's flagship products, My Health Care Plan and Health Guard. The solution is applicable for women aged 18 to 45 years and carries a nine-month waiting period from policy inception.

Fetal Flourish offers coverage of up to ₹2 lakh per maternity event for the first two maternity events under the base health indemnity policy. It covers 16 specialised in-utero interventions, including amniocentesis, chorionic villus sampling, fetoscopic laser surgery for twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome, fetal reduction, intrauterine transfusion, surgeries for neural tube defects, and procedures for congenital diaphragmatic hernia, among others.

The launch comes at a time when preg-



nancy-related complications are rising, with reports indicating that around 17% of women in India give birth after the age of 35, increasing the need for advanced fetal procedures that are often costly and uninsured.

Commenting on the launch, Dr. Tapan Singhel, MD and CEO of Bajaj General Insurance, said the rider aims to

ease financial pressure during medically complex pregnancies, allowing families to prioritise timely treatment and outcomes.

With Fetal Flourish, the insurer strengthens its focus on innovation in health insurance, extending protection to one of the earliest and most sensitive stages of life.

Amway India expands beauty-from-within portfolio with launch of Nutrilite Biotin C Plus

Imphal: Amway India has announced the launch of Nutrilite™ Biotin C Plus (with Zinc & Beta Carotene), a new nutraceutical designed to support skin, hair and nail health. The product has been introduced at a time when consumers are increasingly turning to nutrition-based solutions to address the impact of stress, poor sleep habits and nutrient-deficient diets on overall well-being.

Positioned as a "beyond biotin" formulation, Nutrilite™ Biotin C Plus delivers 100 per cent of the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) of Biotin, Vitamin C and Zinc, along with Beta Carotene. According to the company, the formulation draws on Nutrilite's over 90 years of nutrition expertise and focuses on science-backed, plant-forward ingredients to support everyday wellness.

Speaking at the launch, Rajneesh Chopra said the product strengthens Amway's beauty-from-within nutrition



range. He noted that consumers are increasingly linking external appearance

with internal health and are seeking comprehensive nutrition solutions rather than single-ingredient supplements.

The product combines Biotin for hair growth, Zinc for nail strength and skin health, and Vitamin C for collagen production and antioxidant protection. Beta Carotene, sourced from algae, helps reduce the effects of UV exposure and supports skin protection.

In Imphal, rising awareness about wellness supplements and growing interest in preventive health are creating steady demand for nutraceuticals in the region. With consumers becoming more informed and open to daily nutrition solutions, products like Nutrilite™ Biotin C Plus are expected to find a receptive market among urban and semi-urban buyers in Manipur.

Nutrilite™ Biotin C Plus is available through Amway Business Owners, Amway stores across India and online at amway.in.



5 Pickle and Meal Combinations Evoke Nostalgia for Home-Cooked Food

Nothing elevates a basic Indian meal to instant comfort food quite like the perfect achaar. These zesty, spicy pickles, which are essential items in every region's pantry, contribute crunch, heat, and flavor to dal-chawal, parathas, or khichdi, transforming ordinary dishes into delightful feasts without the need for additional cooking. From fiery mango pickle that cuts through rich gravies to zesty chilli pickles that brighten bland rice, these no-fuss condiments add bold flavours to any meal instantly. Perfect for busy days, pickles elevate humble meals with probiotics for gut health, vitamins from seasonal fruits, and that nostalgic homemade taste. Stock your shelf with regional gems to make any dish feel festive and soul-soothing. Try a familiar flavour pairing with an everyday meal, which is the easiest way to reconnect with our roots, suggests Chacha's Pickle, a homegrown Indian condiment brand built on 53 years of family recipes and generational food wisdom. Hot Rice, Ghee & a Green Chilli Pickle There's something deeply comforting about steamed rice with ghee, and when paired with a traditional vegetable or green mango pickle or green chilli pickle that's made with home-style preparation, it's even better.



This pairing is popular among those who want a no-fuss dinner that still feels complete. It's simple, satisfying, and timeless—much like the meals many of us grew up eating on quiet afternoons. Paratha, Roti or Garlic naan with a Non-Veg Pickle For working professionals with little time to cook, soft rotis or parathas paired with a boneless chicken pickle made with slow-cooked masala and visible whole

spices can be a practical go-to. Protein-rich and full of flavour, this pairing works for late dinners, hostel meals, or travel days where no curry is required. It's the kind of pairing that doesn't feel like a compromise. Curd Rice or Khichdi with Lemon Pickle When you crave light meals, don't compromise on flavour. A spoonful of lemon pickle or mixed vegetable pickle adds brightness and balance to comfort dishes like curd rice or khichdi, making them feel complete without overpowering them. This pairing is especially popular among people looking for easy, gut-friendly meals that still carry familiar Indian flavours. Egg Wrap with Spicy Pickle Why not experiment in the kitchen by blending tradition with convenience? Toast or wraps paired with a spicy pickle (be it mixed vegetable pickle or green chilli pickle) are becoming a favourite for rushed mornings and late-night bites. It's a modern pairing, but the flavour brings back memories of how pickles were once used to elevate even the simplest foods.

International Hot and Spicy Food Day: 3 Simple Recipes for Spice Enthusiasts

Indians have a profound passion for spice! From curries and pickles to chutneys and even chaats, this obsession with spice is deeply ingrained. If you were to open any kitchen cabinet in an Indian home, you would discover an array of chillies and spices that impart intense heat and flavor to every dish. It is an integral part of our identity. From the fiery Bhut Jolokia found in Assam, recognized as the world's hottest chili with over 1 million Scoville units, to the vibrant Guntur Sannam in Andhra Pradesh and the smoky Kashmiri Mirch, every region in India is home to distinct chillies that have influenced the local culinary traditions. Whether it is the deep red color of Byadagi chillies used in the rich coconut gravies of Karnataka or the Madras chillies that enhance the Tamil sambar, the levels of spice are indicative of the local character and taste.

Buldak Spicy Ramen with Crispy Chicken Nuggets

Cook the noodles in boiling water as per the pack instructions. Drain most of the water, leaving about 3-4 tablespoons in the pan. Add the spice sauce and mix well so the noodles are evenly coated. In a separate pan or air fryer, cook the chicken nuggets until golden and

crispy. Heat a pan with butter or oil, add the cooked noodles and toss on medium heat for 30-40 seconds to let the sauce thicken. If using an egg, crack it into the pan and quickly mix it into the noodles for a creamy, spicy coating. Add the crispy nuggets, and toss lightly so they stay crunchy but get coated in the sauce. Transfer to a bowl and top with spring onions and a few sesame seeds or chilli flakes. Jhol Momo with Chicken Bites Method: Cook the momos as per the packet instructions and keep aside. Cook the chicken bites until crisp and set aside. Heat oil in a pan. Add onion, garlic and ginger. Sauté till soft and fragrant. Add tomato puree, atomic sauce, chilli powder, cumin and coriander powder. Cook till the oil starts to separate. Add the peanut paste and mix well to form a thick, spicy base. Add water or stock and let it simmer for 4-5 minutes to form a thin, flavourful jhol. Add the cooked momos and chicken bites to the gravy. Let them sit in the broth for 2-3 minutes so they absorb the spice. Garnish with fresh coriander and serve hot. Peri Peri Chicken Bites Wrap Method: Cook the chicken bites until hot and crisp. In a bowl, mix peri peri sauce, mayonnaise (or curd), garlic paste and



lemon juice to make a spicy spread. Toss the hot chicken bites in a little of this sauce so they are evenly coated. Warm the tortillas or rotis on a pan with a little butter. Spread the remaining peri peri sauce on each wrap. Add lettuce, onion, tomato and a generous layer of the saucy chicken bites. Roll tightly and toast on the pan for a minute on each side so the wrap holds and gets lightly crisp. Cut in half and serve hot.

The 8 Best Broccoli Recipes That You Will Adore

From swift weeknight meals to exquisite culinary creations, broccoli contributes a satisfying crunch, delightful flavor, and lively color to your dish. Regardless of whether you choose to steam, roast, stir-fry, or bake it, these recipes highlight the finest qualities of this green nutritional powerhouse, rendering it a beloved choice for both children and adults. Garlic Butter Roasted Broccoli: Tender broccoli florets roasted with garlic and butter develop a rich, savoury flavour. Crispy edges and a hint of garlic make this simple side dish irresistible alongside any main course. Broccoli Cheddar Soup: Creamy broccoli soup enriched with sharp cheddar cheese creates a com-

forting, hearty meal. Perfect for chilly evenings, it's smooth, flavourful, and packed with nutrients in every spoonful. Stir-Fried Broccoli: Quick and tasty, broccoli is stir-fried with ginger, garlic, and soy sauce. This Asian-inspired dish is crisp, flavourful, and pairs perfectly with rice or noodles for a wholesome meal. Broccoli And Cheese Casserole: A baked casserole combining broccoli, melted cheese, and breadcrumbs makes a cheesy, golden side dish. It's perfect for family dinners or holiday feasts, offering both comfort and flavour. Lemon Garlic Broccoli Pasta: Broccoli tossed with al dente pasta, olive oil, garlic, and lemon juice makes a light yet flavourful

meal. It's fresh, zesty, and ideal for a quick weeknight dinner. Broccoli Salad: Crisp broccoli florets combined with sweet cranberries, toasted almonds, and a rich dressing create a delightful salad. It is sweet, tangy, and ideal for picnics or potlucks. Broccoli Fritters: Shredded broccoli combined with eggs, flour, and spices, then pan-fried to golden perfection, creates crispy fritters. Serve them as appetizers or snacks for a healthy, tasty treat. Broccoli and Mushroom Stir Fry: A quick and delightful side dish, this recipe features broccoli and mushrooms sautéed in a savory sauce. Rich in flavor and nutrients, it pairs wonderfully with rice, noodles, or grilled proteins.

8 International Winter Delicacies You Should Experience



From delightful desserts to substantial meals, seasonal dishes enable individuals to celebrate, remain warm, and engage with their cultural

heritage. Whether you are exploring new places or experimenting with recipes in your kitchen, these winter specialties are ideal for satisfying

your palate and uncovering culinary gems from around the world. Hotteok (South Korea): Hotteok are delightful Korean pancakes that are filled with brown sugar, cinnamon, and nuts. They have a crispy exterior and a gooey interior, making them a favored winter street snack, ideal for warming chilly hands while savoring the festive street-food ambiance in Korea. Fondue (Switzerland): Swiss fondue consists of melted cheese presented in a shared pot, paired with cubes of bread for dipping. Typically savored during cold winter months, it is a communal and comforting meal that fosters warmth, joy, and indulgence during family gatherings. Champurrado (Mexico): Champurrado is a thick, chocolatey Mexican drink made with masa, milk, and

spices like cinnamon. Often served during winter holidays, it's rich, warming, and perfect with sweet breads or pastries, making it a beloved treat during chilly Mexican mornings. Gingerbread Cookies (Germany): German gingerbread, or Lebkuchen, is a fragrant spiced cookie often decorated with icing. A holiday staple, it's sweet, slightly chewy, and filled with warming spices like ginger, cloves, and nutmeg, offering both festive cheer and a comforting winter aroma.

Raclette (France): Raclette is a melted cheese dish traditionally served over potatoes, pickles, and cured meats. Popular during alpine winters, it's hearty and indulgent, perfect for gatherings where everyone melts their own cheese and enjoys a cozy, communal meal. Miso

Soup (Japan): Miso soup is a savory Japanese broth made with fermented soybean paste, tofu, and seaweed. Served hot, it warms the body and soul during cold winters, providing comfort and nourishment while complementing traditional Japanese winter meals. Borscht (Russia): Borscht is a beetroot soup popular in Eastern Europe, often served hot with sour cream. Its earthy, tangy flavour is especially comforting in winter, providing warmth, nutrients, and a taste of traditional Slavic winter cuisine that has endured for generations. Hot Toddy (United Kingdom): A hot toddy is a warm alcoholic drink made with whiskey, honey, lemon, and spices. Perfect for cold winter nights, it's soothing, comforting, and often enjoyed before bed or during holiday gatherings to chase away the chill.

How alcohol can impact performance in bed, especially for men



Many people who consume alcohol would agree that it often brings a temporary boost in confidence. It is not uncommon for people to reach for a drink or two when they are feeling low, anxious, or insecure about themselves. Naturally, this leads to the assumption that alcohol can also help ease inhibitions in intimate moments and improve confidence in bed. However, for some men, the effect of alcohol can be quite the opposite. Instead of enhancing performance, alcohol may interfere with sexual response and arousal. In everyday slang, this condition is commonly referred to as 'whiskey dick', a term used to describe alcohol-induced difficulty in

achieving or maintaining an erection. Dr P Vamsi Krishna, clinical director, senior consultant and head – urology, robotic, laparoscopy and endourology surgeon at CARE Hospitals, Hyderabad, says that temporary erectile difficulty after drinking is usually short-lived. "Alcohol is a depressant, so it slows nerve signals and affects blood flow, both of which are essential for an erection. Even moderate drinking can cause this in some men, especially if they are tired, stressed, or dehydrated. Heavier drinking increases the likelihood. Most men will experience this at least once in their lives, even if they don't have ongoing erectile problems," Dr Krishna explains.

The doctor further tells India Today that alcohol can lower inhibitions initially, which is why people often feel more relaxed or confident. But physiologically, it reduces testosterone levels temporarily and dulls the brain's response to sexual stimulation. As drinking continues, desire often drops rather than increases. In simple terms, alcohol may make you feel interested, but it interferes with the body's ability to respond. Yep, alcohol is to be blamed, but it is crucial to remember that it doesn't always mean a lack of desire. Someone may feel emotionally or mentally interested in sex but find that their body isn't responding the same way. And, this disconnect can be frustrating

and, at times, embarrassing, especially because alcohol is often part of dates, celebrations, or intimate evenings. So, it isn't unnatural for this condition to impact relationships. Even when it's short-term, it can lead to anxiety, embarrassment, or confusion between partners. "Some men begin to worry it might happen again, and that worry itself can affect the next experience. Partners may take it as a lack of interest or attraction. If it keeps happening and isn't talked about, it can slowly impact confidence and communication," says Dr Krishna.

But occasional alcohol-related erectile difficulty is not a medical condition, and it usually improves by reducing alcohol intake, staying hydrated, eating properly, and allowing enough rest. However, if the problem happens even without alcohol, or becomes frequent, it should be medically evaluated. The expert concludes that as a general guideline, having more than two standard drinks at a time raises the risk. Drinking heavily on a regular basis can eventually affect erections by harming blood vessels, nerves, and hormone levels. Reducing intake, spacing out drinks, and keeping a few alcohol-free days each week often helps.

Could this common vaccine help slow biological ageing



These included inflammation, innate and adaptive immune responses, blood flow through organs, and markers linked to neurodegeneration. Researchers also observed improvements in age-related genetic changes, gene expression, and a composite biological ageing score. The study, conducted by researchers associated with the University of South Carolina, analysed health data from the US Health and Retirement Study. The dataset included more than 3,800 adults aged 70 and above in 2016, allowing researchers to assess seven different aspects of biological aging. Their findings showed that individuals who received the shingles vaccine after the age of 60 exhibited slower biological aging on average compared to those who were unvaccinated. Importantly, this association held even after accounting for factors such as race and ethnicity, income levels, and underlying health differences. The research comes on the heels of another study published last year in the journal Nature, which linked the shingles vaccine to a reduced risk of dementia, further fuelling

The rise of lactation experts in India – what happened to conventional wisdom

Perry was talking about her struggles with breastfeeding after becoming a new mother—and it turns out, she was far from alone. For generations, women were simply expected to know how to breastfeed. While traditional wisdom from mothers, older women in the household, midwives, and nurses formed part of the support system, professional help was rarely sought when difficulties arose. Struggling was often normalised, quietly endured, or dismissed as a personal failing rather than a medical or physiological challenge. This gap in support has been one of the many factors contributing to the remarkable growth of the baby formula market worldwide, including in India. According to a Ken Research report, the baby food and infant formula market in India is valued at Rs 205 billion, with infant formula account-

ing for the largest share. Despite growing awareness, breastfeeding rates still reveal cause for concern. Data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-

5, 2019–21) shows that only about 63.7 percent of babies under six months are exclusively breastfed. While this marks an improvement from 54.9 percent in NFHS-4 (2015–16) and is higher than the World Health Organization's global estimate of 44 percent, the gap remains significant. The encouraging shift, however, lies in



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changing attitudes. More women are trying—and when they struggle, they are increasingly seeking professional support.

Lactation consultants, peer counsellors, and medical professionals are slowly becoming part of the mainstream conversation, signalling a move away from silent endurance toward informed care. International health organisations recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months after birth. Breast milk is a complete source of nutrition for most babies, barring a few that require special, doctor-approved care. Lately, India

has seen a rise in the number of lactation experts and consultants, driven by a gap in traditional knowledge and practically applicable advice. Some experts India Today spoke with explained why that may be happening. "No one thought about breastfeeding as a 'learned skill' until some time ago.



The report shows that festive indulgence, reduced physical activity and irregular routines led to short-term health issues across metabolic, lifestyle and mental wellbeing indicators. While these changes were temporary, they were clear enough to trigger a strong return to preventive health checks once employees got back to regular schedules. The year-end festive period saw

employees consuming more sugar, moving less and sleeping irregularly. These habits translated into visible health shifts. Blood sugar abnormalities rose by 5 per cent immediately after festivals, while average step counts dropped by 18%, pointing to a sharp fall in physical activity. Liver function markers showed the steepest movement, with abnormalities increasing by 8.9% post-festivities. Mental wellbeing was also affected. The report notes a 21% rise in mental health consultations after the festive season, suggesting higher stress levels as employees transitioned back to work routines.

NE is 'Land-Linked,' Not Land-Locked: Mizoram Minister



Aizawl Jan 23: Mizoram Health Minister Lalrinpuii on Tuesday suggested that the Northeast be referred to as a "land-linked" region instead of "landlocked," highlighting the significant improvements in connectivity over the years.

Speaking at the international conference on "Northeast India at the Crossroads: Inclusion, Culture and a Sustainable Future" in Bengaluru, Lalrinpuii noted that projects such as the Agartala-Akhaura railway line, the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport project, and the Asian Highway have enhanced the region's connectivity. She encouraged the youth to adopt the term "land-linked" when referring to the Northeast.

The conference was organised by Christ University, Bengaluru. Lalrinpuii, who attended as chief guest, emphasised that advances in digital technology, including 4G and 5G, have enabled students in remote areas of Mizoram to access the same quality of education and skill development opportunities as their peers in Bengaluru. She also underscored the growing global demand for the region's handloom and handicraft products, as well as medicinal herbs, noting that these are valuable intellectual properties that extend beyond museum preservation. "Given that the Northeast is the source of the country's clean air, its development priorities must evolve. Eco-tourism, carbon credits, and clean energy should be at the forefront," Lalrinpuii said.

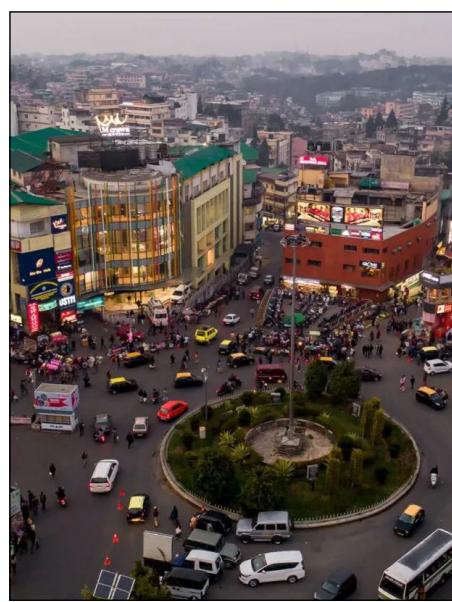
DHAC Hands Over Appointment Letters to 31 Young Footballers; CEM Reaffirms Commitment to Youth Empowerment and Sports Development in Dima Hasao

Executive Members Probita Johori, Samuel Changsan, Niranjan Hojai, Paudamini Nriame, Manjit Naiding, Biswajit Daulagupu, Zosumthang Hmar, and several MACs, including Monjoy Langthasa, Rupali Langthasa, Ratan Jarambusa, Projith Hojai, Lalremsiam Darnei, Herojit Jidung, Pronath Rajiyung, Noah Daime, John Phoitong, and Ramgulungbe Jeme, along with CDC Chairmen from different constituencies. Addressing the gathering, CEM Debola

Meghalaya: Avenue plantation drive launched for New Shillong

Guwahati, Jan 23: The Meghalaya government has launched an avenue plantation project aimed at developing New Shillong as a climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable urban centre. Under the project, initiated in 2025, the State plans to plant 6,000 trees along more than 25 km of roads and 2 km of medians in the upcoming township, with an investment of ₹2.5 crore over five years. Officials said the initiative seeks to ensure that rapid urban development does not come at the cost of ecological balance. Plantations are being carried out along major arterial roads in New Shillong Township, including the Ummir Junction-Mawkhun corridor, where 6,340 saplings have already been planted along a proposed road stretch of 16.56 km. The project targets a total of 10,000 plants along this corridor.

According to official documents, the avenue plantations are designed as a green infrastructure intervention rather than a routine beautification exercise. The initiative is expected to reduce air pollution, mitigate the urban heat island effect, control soil erosion, and improve road safety and aesthetics. Pollution-tolerant native species suited to Meghalaya's climate are being prioritised to regulate microclimates, provide shade, and enhance roadside biodiversity. The avenue design includes layered plantations, with trees for shade and shrubs to improve visibility and commuter safety. The project also incorporates community participa-



tion, with local residents involved in planting, training, and long-term maintenance, a move expected to generate employment and ensure sustainability.

The government has proposed long-term monitoring mechanisms, including tracking survival rates, canopy growth, and air quality indicators. Officials said the green corridors are expected to improve urban health, biodiversity, and overall liveability as New Shillong develops into the State's future administrative hub.

Nagaland: Healthcare drones to tackle hilly terrain

Dimapur, Jan 23: The Nagaland GIS & Remote Sensing Centre (NGISRSC) and the Health & Family Welfare Department signed a memorandum of agreement (MoA) on Thursday at the Directorate of Health & Family Welfare in Kohima to integrate drone technology into the state's healthcare framework. According to an official statement, the MoA aims to address challenges posed by Nagaland's difficult terrain and limited accessibility by deploying drones for emergency medical supply delivery, responses during disease outbreaks and natural calamities, aerial support for vector control, and geospatial mapping for informed planning and decision-making.

Under the agreement, NGISRSC will manage drone operations, capacity building, data analysis, and regulatory compliance, while the Health & Family Welfare Department will provide logistical support, coordination, and deployment planning. The senior project director of NGISRSC highlighted that the integration of emerging



technologies would enhance the efficiency of healthcare service delivery across the state. The principal director of the Health & Family Welfare Department noted that the collaboration would strengthen preparedness and response mechanisms during emergencies and ensure timely delivery of essential medical supplies. Officials described the MoA as a significant milestone in Nagaland's journey toward technology-enabled healthcare and a model for inter-departmental collaboration in leveraging emerging technologies for public welfare.

Manipur celebrates Netaji's 129th birth anniversary

Manipur, Jan 23: Manipur on Friday observed Parakram Diwas to mark the 129th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, paying homage to the legendary freedom fighter and leader of the Indian National Army (INA).

The main programme was held at the INA Auditorium, Moirang, and was attended by Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla, Commissioner of Art and Culture Gyan Prakash, Chairman of the INA Local Advisory Committee and Moirang AC MLA Thongam Shanti, and Nambol AC MLA Th. Basantakumar, DC of Bishnupur District, among others.

On the occasion, the INA Calendar 2026 was formally launched. The Governor also flagged off the North East Integration Rally, organised by the Knowledge Research Centre, as part of the com-



memorative events.

Meanwhile, former Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, in a post on X, paid tribute to Netaji, describing him as one of India's most extraordinary freedom fighters and inspirational leaders. He said the people of Manipur share a deep emotional connection with Netaji's legacy, recalling with pride the historic hoisting of the Tricolour at Moirang by the INA, and expressed hope that Netaji's ideals would continue to inspire future generations to strive with integrity and determination.

AAC meets to review airport upgrades and safety



Representatives from CASO, BCAS, airline station managers, Heads of Departments of the Airports Authority of India (AAI), and other stakeholders were also present. The Airport Director, who is also the Convenor of the AAC, presented the proceedings in detail.

The committee held extensive deliberations on issues related to overall airport development, enhancement of passenger facilitation and amenities, improvement of air connectivity, airport beautification, and measures to further strengthen safety and security.

The meeting concluded with several constructive recommendations and emphasized a coordinated approach among all concerned agencies for effective implementation of the decisions taken.

National Girl Child Day Observed in Dima Hasao with Rally and Awareness Programme

The awareness programme was graced by Probita Johori, EM, NCHAC, as the Chief Guest. The event was also attended by Dr Sarsing Rongpi, Joint Director of Health Services, Dr Marina Changsan, Additional C.M&H.O (FW), Rijit Kachari, SDIPRO, Maibang, along with other officials and participants.

Speakers at the programme highlighted the need to promote gender equality, education, and health awareness, while stressing collective responsibility in building a safer and more inclusive society for girls.

The observance served as a reminder of the district's commitment to protecting and empowering the girl child through awareness and community participation.

Liverpool fans rally behind Konate after death of his father

Reds support defender after loss

Liverpool, Jan 23: Liverpool fans have rallied around Ibrahima Konate after the defender confirmed the passing of his father, Hamady, following his absence from the club's recent UEFA Champions League clash against Marseille. Konate was not part of Liverpool's travelling squad for the fixture in France, with the club initially stating that the centre-back was dealing with a family matter. The 26-year-old later took to Instagram to share the heartbreaking news, confirming his father's death.

Alongside details of Hamady's funeral, which is scheduled to take place on Friday, Konate wrote a brief message that read: "From Him we come, and to Him we return." The French international had also been absent from Liverpool's open training session at Kirkby earlier in the week, prompting questions about his availability. While the club chose not to go into detail initially, head coach Arne Slot addressed the situation ahead of the Champions League encounter, confirming the seriousness of the matter. Speaking to TNT Sports before



kick-off, Slot said: "No, first of all for the family matter, why he is not here, it is very sad for him." The Dutchman also admitted that Konate's absence was felt from a footballing perspective, adding: "Second of all, we miss him because I mainly played him." Support for Konate quickly poured in from Liverpool supporters, with fans flooding social media with messages of sympathy and encouragement. Many referenced the club's long-standing culture of unity, offering reassurance to the defender during a deeply personal moment. Liverpool captain Virgil van Dijk, who regularly partners Konate in central

defence, also expressed his support after the match. "My thoughts are with him," Van Dijk said, underlining the personal impact of the situation on the squad. Born in Paris, Konate is the second youngest of eight siblings. His parents migrated to the French capital from Mali, and he left home at just 15 to join the youth academy at Sochaux. His late father played a defining role in his journey. In a previous interview with French media, Konate recalled Hamady's advice when he left for Sochaux: "Become someone good," a message he later said stayed with him throughout his rise in professional football.

Historic Win: Jesus Starts as Arsenal Conquer Inter Milan

Ending a 26-month wait, the Brazilian found the net in Europe for the first time since November 2023

Milan, Jan 21: Gabriel Jesus is already hitting top form just a month after returning from a lengthy injury layoff. The Arsenal forward was given only his third start this season and he scored twice in a dynamic first half to set his side on the way to a 3-1 victory at Inter Milan in the Champions League on Tuesday. Jesus, who was named player of the match at San Siro, was out for almost a year after tearing his ACL last January. "It's a dream night. I always dreamed of being a footballer," Jesus told Amazon Prime. "I watched when I was a kid, I watched a lot of Serie A, so to be here in this stadium and score here is tears in my eyes because I always dreamed of being here. "There is always a reason that things happen even whether it's good things or difficult things. I learned that during my 11 months out of the field." Jesus returned in December but has made mainly substitute appearances since then, with his only starts prior to Tuesday coming in domestic cup competitions. However, Arsenal coach Mikel Arteta named the Brazilian in the starting lineup at San Siro in place of Viktor Gyökeres, who has struggled to adapt since his big-money move



from Sporting Lisbon in the summer. "Everyone wants to start," Jesus added. "I am a very respectful guy. I am not a kid anymore, I am 28, so I understand football. "I am very happy Vik came on and scored a goal. I am so happy I scored and Vik scored."

BCB moves ICC dispute panel; Scotland near WC qualification

Chennai, Jan 23: Even as the Bangladesh Cricket Board has written to the ICC Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC), it may be only a matter of time before the global governing body replaces them with Scotland. It is understood that the ICC might not make any other statement until the final decision is made. A day after standing firm on their decision of not travelling to India, BCB wrote to the committee, appealing against the ICC's decision to uphold the original T20 World Cup schedule. However, per the Terms of Reference ICC document for the DRC, Bangladesh's appeal cannot be heard by the committee.

According to the ICC rules, the committee cannot hear on the matters where the ICC or the ICC board had already made a decision. In this case, the ICC board on Wednesday voted against Bangladesh's request to move matches out of India. The point 1.3 of the ICC document reads: "The Committee shall not operate as an appeal body against decisions of the ICC or any decision-making body established under the ICC's Memorandum and Articles of Association or under any



rules and regulations of the ICC, but shall operate as the sole forum and procedure for challenges to the lawfulness of such decisions, with the Committee exercising a supervisory jurisdiction."

The Committee, chaired by Michael Beloff KC, involves five independent lawyers, an Independent Code of Conduct Commission Representatives, a Chair of Audit Committee, an Ethics Officer and a management support. Its responsibility is to "fairly and promptly" resolve any disputes that arise according to procedures appropriate to the nature of each dispute and in a manner complementary to other methods of dispute resolution applicable to the activities of the ICC, its officers and directors, its Members and other relevant persons. It is established in order to help achieve that objective by providing independent panels to hear and resolve, by arbitration, disputes within the established scope.

National Records Fall to Mane and Sakshi

New Delhi, Jan 23: Maharashtra's Sakshi Sunil Padekar and Railways' Shahar Tushar Mane bettered national records during the final and qualification rounds of the 10m air rifle women and men events at the National Selection Trials 1 & 2. Sakshi shot 254.3 in T2 final round while Mane scored 637.1 in the qualification at the Karni Singh Shooting Range on Friday. According to NRAI press release, these scores will not be counted as an official national record. After struggling on Thursday, Olympian Arjun Babuta won T2 final of 10m air rifle men, while Sakshi claimed the women's 10m air rifle final. Olympian Rahi Sarnobat claimed the T2 final of 25m Pistol Women.

Olympian Arjun Babuta claimed top honours in a closely contested 10m air rifle men final, finishing with 253.4. Babuta, who had qualified second with 632.4, elevated his performance in the final to edge Maharashtra's Parth Rakesh Mane by the narrowest of margins. Parth finished just 0.1 points behind on 253.3. Kiran Ankush Jadav was third. Haryana's Vibhuti Bhatia once again impressed to secure second place with 35 hits. Paris Olympic medallist Manu Bhaker was third with 31 hits.

match against Lens in November 2023.

Inter leveled eight minutes later through Petar Sucic, but Jesus was again in the right place at the right time to again put Arsenal in front in the 31st minute. Bukayo Saka swung in a corner from the right to the far post, where Leandro Trossard nodded it back across for Jesus to head home. Gyökeres came on for Jesus in the 75th and scored Arsenal's third, nine minutes later. "This is great, we've been missing Gabby a lot," Arteta said. "It's going to raise his confident level, that of the team's because we have now different profiles in that position. "And the fact that those players are playing at that level — Victor comes in, he had a great impact as well in the game — it only makes us better and that's what we're seeking."

The victory assured table-topping Arsenal of a spot in the knockout stage of the Champions League and also saw it win seven European games in a row for the first time in its history. Arsenal has never won the Champions League, although it reached the final in 2006 — losing to Barcelona. Arteta's side also tops the Premier League, with a seven-point advantage, and hosts Manchester United on Sunday.