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Rohit Sharma

INDIA WELCOMES T20 WORLD CUP CHAMPS WITH DHOL & DANCE



Team India touched down in Delhi to a high-energy welcome following their victory in the T20 World Cup. They later continued the celebrations in Mumbai

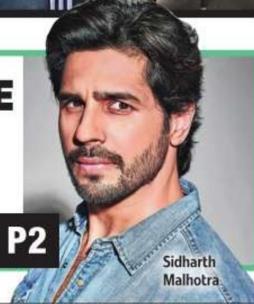
Hardik Pandya

Virat Kohli

CONTINUED ON P 2

I URGE ALL OF YOU TO EXERCISE CAUTION: SIDHARTH ON FANPAGE'S ₹50 LAKH SCAM

The actor released a statement after one of his fanpages allegedly duped a woman of ₹50 lakh over a period of two months



P2

Sidharth Malhotra

NAYAK AND KHALNAYAK:

Anil's two avatars on Bigg Boss OTT 3's Weekend Ka Vaar

Bigg Boss OTT 3's host, the ever-charming Anil Kapoor, has taken this season by storm. The audience is witnessing a cool, new avatar of the man, and appreciating him for his balanced approach when dealing with the contestants on the show. When arguments between contestants took a heated turn, he called them out, asked them to keep a check on their behaviour, and appreciated the ones who played the game well. The viewers witnessed the host rapping and sketching on stage with the celebrity guests, elevating the entertainment quotient during the weekend episode.

Talking about his experience of the first *Weekend Ka Vaar*, Anil said, "I was nervous and excited before we commenced shooting for the first *Weekend Ka Vaar* episode. While I rehearsed my choice of words before the weekend shoot, five minutes into the shoot, I got into my authentic personality and was unfiltered while reviewing the week that went by for the contestants. The format of the show is such that I will never be able to please all, and it's essential to call out the contestants as is when they go wrong."

I was nervous & excited before we commenced shooting for the first *Weekend Ka Vaar* episode. The show's format is such that I will never be able to please all, & it's essential to call out the contestants when they go wrong

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Exercise caution, says Sidharth after fan duped of ₹50L online

It has been brought to my attention that certain fraudulent activities/scams have been circulating on various social media platforms, allegedly claiming to be associated with or in relation to me, my family and people claiming to be my fans and seeking money.

I want to assure everyone reading this that neither I nor my family or team support any of this. I urge all of you to exercise caution when dealing with such matters. If you receive any suspicious requests, report them to the appropriate authorities and avoid spreading false information.

My fans have always been my biggest strength and your trust and safety are my top priorities.

Big Love and Hug!

Sidharth Malhotra; (inset) statement released on social media



Sidharth Malhotra took to Instagram on Wednesday to release a statement after a netizen shared how one of his fan pages duped her of ₹50 lakh. A US-based fan of Sidharth claimed on social media that the admins running a fan page of the actor fabricated stories about him and claimed that his wife Kiara Advani poses a threat to Sidharth's life. The netizen shared on X that she paid money to get inside information about the actor.

Sidharth wrote, "It has been brought to my attention that certain fraudulent activities/scams have been circulating on various social media platforms, allegedly claiming to be associated with or in relation to me, my family, and people claiming to be my fans and seeking money."

He added, "I want to assure everyone reading this that neither I nor my family or team support any of this. I urge all of you to exercise caution when dealing with such matters. If you receive any suspicious requests, report them to the appropriate authorities and avoid spreading false information. My fans have been my biggest strength and your trust and safety are my top priorities (sic)."

Manushi and Veer are the new couple in B-Town

There's a new couple on the block. BT has learnt that actress Manushi Chhillar and aspiring actor Veer Pahariya are dating. A source revealed, "They are very much in love. The two started dating earlier this year. Manushi is currently getting to know Veer's friends and his circle. They even went on a double date with Veer's brother, Shikhar Pahariya, and his girlfriend, Janhvi Kapoor."

Manushi and Veer recently vacationed in London. They had also attended Anant Ambani's pre-wedding festivities last month in Italy together.

Manushi, who was last seen in Akshay Kumar and Tiger Shroff-starrer *Bade Miyan Chote*

Myan, was reportedly dating businessman Nikhil Kamath earlier. Veer, who will be making his Bollywood debut soon with *Sky Force*, was linked to Sara Ali Khan in the past.

— Vinay MR Mishra

Mommy-to-be Deepika practises prenatal yoga; Ranveer responds

Deepika Padukone took to Instagram to celebrate self-care month, sharing a picture of herself practicing the Viparita Karani asana as part of her daily routine during pregnancy. In a long note, Deepika wrote, "But why celebrate Self-Care Month when you can practice simple acts of self-care every day? I love a good workout. I don't work out to 'look good' but to 'feel fit'. Exercise has been part of my lifestyle for as long as I can remember. However, when I can't fit in a workout, I practice this simple 5-minute routine. I do this every day, whether I work out or not. It's especially useful after a long flight or just to decompress (sic)".

Self-care advise Deepika shared on Instagram

BEFORE STARTING THE DAY

- Supports lymphatic and glymphatic systems, boosting your immune system
- Promotes the flow of oxygenated blood to the upper body and stimulates lymphatic fluid flow
- Aids in detoxification and lymphatic drainage
- Gently opens the hips and hamstrings

BEFORE SLEEPING

- Activates the parasympathetic nervous system, enhancing rest and digestion for better sleep quality
- Eases restless legs for improved sleep

WHEN PREGNANT (USE A BOLSTER OR CUSHION FOR SUPPORT)

- Relieves aching muscles, joints, and swollen ankles and feet
- Reduces pressure on the lower back and relieves feelings of heaviness and fatigue in the legs and hips
- Alleviates water retention
- Helps reduce swelling and discomfort in the ankles and feet

Deepika Padukone performs Viparita Karani asana; (inset) Ranveer Singh reacts on Insta post



ranveersingh 17 h Works like magic!

Her husband, Ranveer Singh, commented, "Works like magic." Deepika also cautioned those with glaucoma and uncontrollable high blood pressure to avoid this exercise, advising everyone to consult their yoga instructor before performing these asanas. She also highlighted the benefits of the Viparita Karani Yoga (Legs-Up-The-Wall pose).

Viparita Karani Yoga (Legs-Up-The-Wall Pose)

"In Sanskrit, viparita means inverted and karani translates to in action. This active inversion position is also called the restful inversion. Lying with your legs up against the wall can benefit your mental and physical health. From calming the nervous system to strengthening immune health, this ancient posture offers so much, especially in our stressful and busy world (sic)," she posted.

HEY BABY!

BIPASHA BASU and daughter DEVI had a fun day swimming together. "My sunshine is always with me," wrote Bipasha

Men in blue arrive in Delhi, bring the World Cup home

Location: ITC Maurya

After a three-days-long wait, fans got the chances to give a hero's welcome to the men in blue. (L-R) Ravindra Jadeja and Rishabh Pant

Pics: Ajay Kumar Gautam

Rahul Dravid

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TEAM INDIA'S BARBADOS-DELHI FLIGHT BECOMES THE MOST-TRACKED

Indian cricket fans couldn't hold back their excitement to see the T20 World Cup winners and trophy returning home. On June 3, the flight, call sign AIC24WC, became the most-tracked flight in recent times according to tracking portal Flightradar24. The chartered flight was being live-tracked by over 4,464 people at one point on the online platform.

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Shabana Azmi inaugurates a luxury residential project in SoBo

The Aga Hall Estate, a luxury residential project in Mazgaon, recently inaugurated its sales pavilion and show apartment. As per research, it was here that Aga Khan I established his residential domain in the 1840s.

Shabana Azmi, who was the guest of honour, inaugurated the sales pavilion and show apartment. She said, "The Aga Hall Estate is a testament to thoughtful urban development. It beautifully blends modern living with a deep sense of community and purpose, setting a new benchmark for residential projects in Mumbai."

Vipin Mittal (CEO, The Aga Hall Estate) added, "We are thrilled with the overwhelming response at the inauguration. The new sales pavilion is a reflection of our ethos of being customer-centric and our commitment to world-class execution. The construction is in full swing and the structure is emerging at an impressive rate."

The residential housing project offers apartments with energy efficient, state-of-the-art amenities and environmentally-friendly designs.



Shabana Azmi

This project is a testament to thoughtful urban development. It beautifully blends modern living with a deep sense of community and purpose

- Shabana Azmi

Challenges like hair loss should not hinder one's path to success: Experts



(L-R) Dr Pardeep Sethi, Mohammad Azharuddin and Dr Arika Bansal

As the Men in Blue bring home the T20 World Cup, Eugenix Hair Sciences – one of the global leaders in hair restoration procedures – celebrates its long connection with Indian cricketers, say Dr Pardeep Sethi, Chairman and Dr Arika Bansal, founder of the brand. "The team showcased exceptional skills, motivation and self-confidence on the ground. To gain personal confidence and enhance personality, several cricketers across different teams have been associated with us," the doctors add.

"From 2023 World Cup sensation Mohammed Shami to legends like Ravi Shastri, former Indian skipper Mohammad Azharuddin, former cricketer Nikhil Chopra, Indian fielding coach R Sridhar, and Rohan Gavaskar, to name a few, have trusted us, the hair transplant experts," they add.

The doctors inform that former Australian cricketer Michael Bevan, former physiotherapist for the Indian team Andrew Leipus, and English batsman Nick Compton have also been associated with Eugenix for hair treatments.

They add, "Here, we believe that personal challenges like hair loss should not hinder one's path to success. Our team is equipped with top-notch techniques and professional staff, with headquarters in Gurgaon and clinics in Mumbai and Hyderabad as well."

Website: <https://eugenixhairsolutions.com>
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Disclaimer: The views/suggestions/opinions expressed in the article are the sole responsibility of the experts.



Mohammed Shami

Ravi Shastri

I was fat-shamed on national TV: Oprah

Talk show legend Oprah Winfrey recently opened up about how *The Tonight Show* host Joan Rivers had fat-shamed her on live TV back in 1985. "Joan Rivers turns to me and she said, 'Tell me why are you so fat?'" Oprah, 70, said on the *The Jamie Kern Lima* podcast.

"On national television," Oprah said, adding, "and I don't know what to do with that... I just did, like, 'Oh, I just love potato chips, Joan.'" Rivers, who died in 2014, then told her: "Shame on you." Oprah shared that she had gone away to "this health retreat", which she explained was "at the time, they called them fat farms" to lose weight. She said that she was struggling to accept that her weight had lost her a role in *The Colour Purple*. She had finally given up on the idea of acting in the film, when a phone call changed everything, she told Lima.

I come to this conversation with the hope that we can start releasing the stigma and the judgment to stop shaming people for being overweight or how they choose to lose—or not lose—weight

The Colour Purple's producer, Steven Spielberg, told her: "I hear you're at a fat farm... You lose a pound, you could lose this part." Oprah said the phone call was a full-circle moment for her — because she'd finally "let go" of the part when she got the call. "That became my grounding teaching for the rest of my life and career," she shared. "Do everything you can, work as hard as you can, and then let it go," she said. Oprah did land the role of Sofia, which earned her an Academy Award nomination.



Oprah Winfrey; (top) Richard Blackwell gave her the title 'Bumpy, lumpy, and downright dumpy' on the TV Guide cover



Hugh Jackman was not the first choice to play Wolverine



While it is hard to imagine anyone else playing the character of Wolverine, Hugh Jackman was not the first choice for the role. Actors including Dougray Scott, Russell Crowe, Viggo Mortensen and Glenn Danzig all were considered for the role. In fact, Dougray Scott was offered the role, but the actor was busy shooting for *Mission Impossible 2* with Tom Cruise and had to turn down the iconic role.

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tours, historical explorations, and nature-based activities, which Eastern Europe offers in abundance," notes Kale.

BEAUTY AND THE EAST
When Mahima Qureshi, a marketing professional and travel content creator, visited Transylvania in Romania, she felt like she had taken a step back in time. "My husband and I spent our holiday wandering the cobblestone streets lined with colourful medieval houses, soaking in the rich history. But Transylvania isn't all charming towns and

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BLAZE YOUR TRAIL
In recent years, tourism in Eastern Europe has seen substantial growth. Improved infrastructure, increased accessibility, and greater awareness of the region's cultural and natural attractions have contributed to this trend. "Countries like Croatia and Hungary have become popular destinations, while others like Albania and Serbia are emerging as new travel hotspots. Visitors are increasingly seeking authentic experiences, such as local culinary

Jewels of the east

For your next vacation, ditch the tourist traps to uncover the magic of Eastern Europe

picture-perfect squares. As fans of the horror genre, we couldn't resist visiting Dracula's Castle, also known as Bran Castle, which was both eerie and fascinating. And though we've holidayed at popular cities in Western Europe, the mix of historical charm and the thrill of exploring such a legendary location in Eastern Europe made this holiday truly extraordinary."

ADD THESE TO YOUR BUCKET LIST

Off the beaten path: Nicknamed the 'City of a Thousand Windows', Berat in Albania is renowned for its distinctive Ottoman houses. It also features the impressive Berat Castle, a historic fortress with panoramic views of the city.

Nature lovers unite: Neretva Valley in Bosnia and Herzegovina boasts a unique landscape with opportunities for hiking, biking, and kayaking.

Chase fairy tales: Head to Prague Castle, a stunning complex showcasing styles from Romanesque to Baroque; and to Krakow's Wawel Royal Castle for an enchanting glimpse into Poland's rich history and grandeur.

—Inputs by Daniel D'Souza, president and country head — holidays of a tourism company

Lynn.Lobo @timesgroup.com

Europe—the word alone evokes images of cobblestone streets, iconic landmarks, and majestic mountains bathed in golden sunsets. For many Indians, this continent has long been a dream destination; after all, we've grown up watching actresses in chiffon saris being serenaded amid the pristine, snow-capped peaks of the Alps.

refreshing escape from the well-trodden paths of its western counterpart. Whether you're discovering the markets of Budapest, hiking through the Carpathian Mountains, or taking a boat ride on Lake Bled, this region is a repository of hidden gems. This is the Europe you've been dreaming of—unfiltered, enchanting, and waiting to be explored.

The debate between the west and east hinges on each region's distinct experiences. "With its iconic landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower in Paris and the Colosseum in Rome, Western Europe caters to explorers seeking familiarity and far-famed attractions. In contrast, Eastern Europe is all about historical towns, diverse cultures, and off-the-beaten-path experiences. Countries like Poland, Romania, and the Czech Republic draw visitors with their medieval alleys, vibrant local traditions, and less-crowded attractions," says Rajeev Kale, president and country



A TALE OF TWO EUROPE
Eastern Europe offers a

ON A SHOESTRING BUDGET
While travelling to Europe is a worthy goal, the cost can be a deterrent. Thankfully, Eastern Europe provides a delightful alternative for budget-conscious voyagers. Melanie Goretti Meyers, an executive secretary

who recently explored both regions with her family, echoes this sentiment. "We visited Paris (France) and Italy one year and Prague (Czech Republic) and Budapest (Hungary) the next. We observed that a meal at a mid-range restaurant in Budapest might cost a fraction of what one would pay in Paris. The attractions, too, come with much more budget-friendly price tags," she shares.

It's time to shift your travel gaze to Eastern Europe, where you can escape the crowds and transform your European adventure dreams into reality.

Anisha.Sahijwala @timesgroup.com

As a frequent flyer, travel can be a mix

of monotony and anxiety. However, seasoned travellers have mastered various habits that help them stay prepared, relaxed, and comfortable on the go.

Here are some tried-and-true practices that they swear by:

The jet-setter's playbook

Do you aspire to breeze through the airport like a seasoned traveller? Take a cue from these frequent flyers for an organised yet relaxed experience



1 PACK LIGHT TO TRAVEL RIGHT
Frequent flyers pack smartly, keeping a change of clothes, toiletries, and essentials in their carry-on to save time and avoid baggage fees. "To save space, I recently purchased a cabin bag with a front flap to hold a laptop, reducing my carry-on weight and making flying easier," shares Purnima Rajawat, a PR professional.

2 STAY ORGANISED
Travellers often prefer to keep their passport, foreign currency, travel insurance, boarding passes, and other relevant documents in design-

ated spots. "Recently, I purchased a sleek travel organiser, which conveniently holds a passport, forex cards, an international SIM card, and boarding passes. Travelling can be quite stressful, particularly for work-related trips. Therefore, staying

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organised is extremely helpful," says Devika Ramaiya, a management professional.

3 ONE-WAY TICKETS AND RED-EYE FLIGHTS
Seasoned travellers prefer booking one-way tickets, which offer the flexibility to book return flights at their convenience and are more economical. "Some prefer booking red-eye flights to sleep on the plane and arrive refreshed in the morning," reveals Renee Lester, a senior flight attendant.

4 COMFORT IS KING
During layovers, savvy travellers use airport lounges and fitness centres to stay active and maintain their health. Incorporate these habits and hacks to make the most of your travel time.

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Engineer creates world's first AI dress



Christina Ernst designs AI dress

Christina Ernst, a software engineer, has created what she claims is the world's first AI dress. She also runs a platform that aims to educate girls on building robots. Christina shared a clip of her AI dress, known as the Medusa dress, which has robotic snakes attached to it to detect faces.

I coded an optional mode that uses AI to detect faces and move the snakes' heads towards the person looking at you - Christina Ernst

The black dress has three golden-coloured snakes around her waist and a large robotic snake around her neck. In a shared video clip, Ernst explains, "I engineered this robotic snake dress, and it's finally done. I coded an optional mode that uses artificial intelligence to detect faces and move the snakes' heads towards the person looking at you. So maybe this is the world's first AI dress?" Ernst has also posted Instagram reels showcasing the creation process of the dress.

Canine weddings: A rising trend in China



Image generated by AI for representational purposes only

It was a dream wedding, complete with picturesque outdoor setting, white lace gown and a delectable cake. The perfect day for golden retrievers - Bree and Bond - to tie the knot in front of their closest human and canine friends.

Spending on furry companions in 2023 rose 3.2% to ₹3,15,062 crores from a year earlier, industry figures show

Pet weddings are on the rise in China, where government policies have had little success in encouraging more humans to wed in this fast-ageing society where the population is declining and marriage and birth rates remain

low. The popularity of pets and an increasing willingness to splurge on them are driving the trend.

People have weddings. Why can't dogs have weddings? - Bree's owner Rye Ling

"People have weddings. Why can't dogs have weddings?" Bree's owner Rye Ling said after escorting his female pet down the aisle, where she exchanged vows promising to always share treats and play with her husband Bond.



Pet weddings in India

In India as well, many pet owners marry their dogs. In one such incident, last year, a seven-month-old female dog Jelly got hitched to Tommy in Uttar Pradesh's Aligarh with Indian wedding rituals. "On the occasion of Makar Sankranti, we organised the wedding. Desi ghee food was also distributed among the neighbourhood dogs. We spent around ₹40,000-45,000 for it," said Dinesh Chaudhary, Tommy's owner.

Book fair aims to rekindle the love for reading

The Jain International Trade Organisation (JITO) and Raisoni Group of Industries & Foundation are all set to host the Nahar JITO Bookathon from July 7-14. Sukhranj B Nahar (Chairman, JITO APEX) says, "This exciting event will showcase 108 books, authored by 108 distinguished writers. The event seeks to rekindle the culture of book reading, featuring a curated selection of books on life, business and professional skills, combining digital and physical engagement."



Sukhranj B Nahar

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This event will showcase 108 books, authored by 108 distinguished writers - Sukhranj B Nahar

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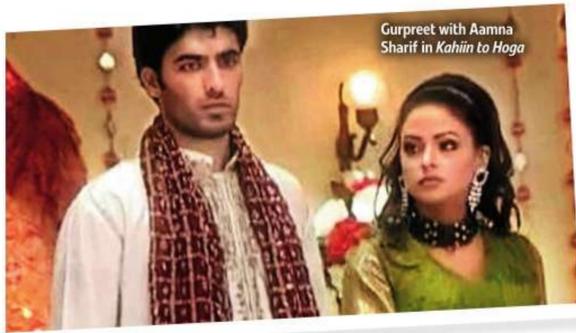
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Gurpreet with Aamna Sharif in Kahiin to Hoga

I am glad I didn't give up, says Gurpreet Singh

Gurpreet Singh started with a bang many years ago when he came in place of Rajeev Khandelwal to play the new Sujal in *Kahiin to Hoga*. But thereafter, the journey wasn't easy and Gurpreet went through his share of struggles. However, not one to give up, Gurpreet continued to try his luck in showbiz and today, he is happy to bag good roles consistently. It's his positive attitude that has kept him going, he says. "I always try not to think about the uncertainties that are a part of our profession. I don't dwell on that. There is nothing you can do about that, so why waste time thinking about it. You'd rather do what's in your capacity, which is to stay positive, focused and keep working hard. I used the time when I was free to hone my craft," says Gurpreet adding, "I am glad I didn't give up. Today, my mantra is to go with the flow and focus on my performances."

Gurpreet, who's currently seen in *Vanshaj*, has been a part of TV shows like *Porus* and *Naagin 6*.

— Hasti Doshi

I feel lucky to have bagged the role of Sujal in *Kahiin to Hoga*. My voice was similar to Rajeev Khandelwal's and I guess that's why they chose me. I was at the right place at the right time



Gurpreet Singh

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blood pressure, accompanied by recommendations for combating this silent yet deadly threat. The report reveals that nearly four out of five individuals with hypertension do not receive adequate treatment. However, if countries can expand their coverage, an estimated 76 million deaths could be prevented between 2023



PHOTOS: ISTOCK

For heart's sake: Rules to follow for cardiovascular health

Through active prevention, you can minimise the risks of heart disease, thus enhancing your overall well-being and quality of life

and 2050. "Heart attacks typically result from a combination of risk factors, including an unhealthy diet, obesity, physical inactivity, alcohol consumption, hypertension, diabetes, and elevated cholesterol levels. Alarmingly, almost half of those with hypertension worldwide are

unaware of their condition. Therefore, undertaking basic preventive measures can go a long way in averting CVD," shares Dr Dhruv Somani, a resident cardiologist at a private hospital.

WHAT IS CVD?

CVD refers to a group of disorders that affect the heart and blood vessels. It is one of the leading causes of death worldwide and encompasses a range of conditions, including coronary artery disease, heart failure, stroke, and peripheral artery disease. Most often, the underlying cause of cardiovascular disease is the accumulation of fatty deposits, cholesterol, and other substances in the blood vessels, leading to the narrowing and blockage of arteries. This process, known as atherosclerosis, reduces blood flow to vital organs, increasing the risk of adverse cardiovascular events.

Risk factors for

CVD include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking, obesity, diabetes, a sedentary lifestyle, and a family history, among others.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

You can lower the risk of heart disease or manage it, if you already have the condition, by adopting a healthy lifestyle. "Maintaining a heart-healthy diet is the most crucial step. This includes reducing your intake of saturated fats while incorporating healthier sources like oily fish, nuts, seeds, and olive oil in your diet," suggests Dr Pratibha Doshi, a clinical nutritionist.

Regular physical activity is key to cardiovascular health, too. "Adults are advised to engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate activity weekly, such as cycling or brisk walking. If you're new to exercise or are returning to it after a hiatus, begin at a comfortable pace and progres-

sively increase both duration and intensity. For those detected with heart disease, consult your general physician or cardiologist before you begin working out," adds Pratik Chavan, a fitness instructor. A crucial aspect of maintaining heart health involves regular monitoring of



pain, weakness, or numbness in your legs or arms, shortness of breath, rapid or slow heartbeat, palpitations, or swelling in your limbs," advises Somani, adding that one must avoid self-medication, which could worsen

the condition.

MIND YOUR HEART HEALTH

Several studies suggest that poor mental health can negatively impact heart health. "Those suffering from depression are more prone to heart disease. Depression, especially post myocardial infarction, is common. If left untreated, it can lead to several complications. Individuals grappling with mental health disorders like anxiety and other forms of depression may have an elevated likelihood of adopting unhealthy behaviours, such as smoking, leading a sedentary lifestyle, or failing to adhere to prescribed medication. This is primarily because individuals with mental health challenges may possess fewer effective coping mechanisms for managing stressful situations, making it difficult to opt for healthy life-

style choices," concludes psychiatrist Dr Harish Shetty.

The heart plays a vital role in circulating nour-

ishing blood throughout the body. Therefore, one must safeguard their cardiovascular health by adopting healthy habits.

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■ Anisha.Sahijwala @timesgroup.com

According to the World Health

Organisation (WHO), cardiovascular diseases (CVD) stand as the leading global cause of death, accounting for one in

every three fatalities. Recently, the organisation released its inaugural report on the worldwide impact of high

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The marvel of Mumbai's monsoon

Why does monsoon bind the city of dreams together?



■ Gladwin.Menezes
@timesgroup.com

Monsoons in Mumbai are special to every *Mumbaikar*. To a few, it is the gentle raindrops that pour down the windowpane as one looks over the vast skyline; to some, it is the perfect time to travel and have fun with their friends and family, while to the rest, it is having a simple cup of tea at a roadside stall that calms their mind. This season brings joy to *Mumbaikars* in more ways than one and it is evident by this common feeling that we have a special place in heart for Mumbai rains.

This season brings forth a whole wave of rejuvenation to plants and trees, making the city lush with greenery again. While lush greenery is hard to find in Mumbai, this season brings forth the once-

thought-to-be-lost greenery. People also head out to locations in search of such tranquillity and serene sights. From the vast green pastures to majestic waterfalls near the city, Mumbai begins to take occasional breaks from the fast-paced life it is known to have. The monsoon does add a pause button in the lives, by providing ample holiday travel options with the availability of hill stations that are not too far from the city.

Sitting in the comfort of one's home while munching on hot *pakor*as and sipping on tea is somewhat of a blissful experience that is special to the citizens of this city. While not everyone can enjoy the skyline of Mumbai during such instances, people do enjoy the sound of the raindrops hitting their windows and roofs in addition to the winds that create an amazing experience. "Every monsoon

when the rains are at their peak, I have a ritual of having onion fritters with a strong *masala chai*. It's something that I enjoy doing while looking out at the lush greenery with the raindrops engulfing the surroundings, in addition to the bliss of petrichor that fills me with joy. Heading to the beach in the rain too is quite a wonderful experience and living in Vasai makes it even more easy. Trees with lush greenery cover both sides of the road as you approach the roaring sea amid moderate rainfall. Having this is a luxury to me as it gives me a much-needed pause on an otherwise hectic life," shares Mishti Khadye, a food and travel blogger from Vasai.

For those who want to travel but not too far from the city, Marine Drive, Bandra, Juhu,



and Sanjay Gandhi National Park are a few popular favoured hangout spots within Mumbai. Citizens feast upon the vast sea that lies ahead of them with the vast city skyline behind. As wonderful as it sounds to be in the centre of the sea and dense forest, one needs to pay heed to the fact that these places are beyond control during the monsoons. The nature of the sea and places like waterfalls often gets volatile, creating a risk for people visiting these

places. Hence, it is always advised to go with caution.

At times of heavy rainfall, going out could be dangerous. Reminiscing about one such instance, Atul Kulkarni, a data analyst at an MNC, recalls the 2005 Mumbai floods when things came to a standstill in the city. He says, "I was stuck at Andheri as I was out at a friend's place. The water level kept rising and our safety concerns were mounting; we were luckily a few floors above and were extremely scared of what would happen if things didn't come under control. Amid this, the neighbours came together and lit candles and played board games, sang songs; we shared some stories as well. In such a dire situation, we all forgot our sorrow in those moments and were enjoying the laughter, the banter and the whole vibe that was created that day."

From civic issues to public negligence when travelling to outstation loca-

sea sure is better but it is quite risky as the waves come with full force during the time of high tides. This puts everyone there at risk and is better avoided." One needs to fully

embrace the fact that the monsoons don't only bring serenity but also come with caution for certain places.

As the city embraces the season, take a break from your

otherwise busy life. Go out shopping, or visit your favourite spot in and around the city. But do remember to take care of yourself and others while doing so.



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My career is not over, I have a long way to go: Pratiksha



Pratiksha Honmukhe; (inset) Shehzada Dhama

'Shehzada has always been there for me'

There were rumours of Pratiksha dating Shehzada Dhama, which caused further problems on the set. Ask her about this and she says, "Shehzada is a good friend and has been my greatest support system. He has always been there for me, but I am not having an affair with him."

The actress talks about her unceremonious exit from her debut show *Yeh Rishta...* and her return to TV

Back in March, Pratiksha Honmukhe was replaced overnight in her debut show *Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai* along with lead actor Shehzada Dhama. It wasn't easy, but the actress has now bounced back and is seen playing the antagonist in *Kaise Mujhe Tum Mil Gaye*.

'MY FAMILY MOTIVATED ME TO GET BACK TO WORK'

She says, "After my exit from *Yeh Rishta*, I shut off completely and wanted to take a break. But my family motivated me to get back to work and luckily, I bagged this role in *Kaise Mujhe Tum Mil Gaye*. It is an interesting role because I play Virat's (Arjit Taneja) first wife, who wants him back."

'I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT WENT WRONG WITH MY DEBUT SHOW'

Talking about her exit from *Yeh Rishta* during which there were rumours of Shehzada and her unprofessional behaviour, Pratiksha says, "I worked as an air hostess for seven years. In June 2023, I quit the aviation industry and that's when I bagged the role in *Yeh Rishta*. It was going well, but suddenly I was asked to quit in March. I still don't know what went wrong. Honestly, I was a newcomer and everyone takes some time to learn on the job. I was disciplined and nice to everyone on the set, so how can I be called unprofessional?"

'I HAVE JUST BEGUN MY JOURNEY'

Pratiksha adds, "I know I have done nothing wrong. Rajan Shahi sir (producer of *Yeh Rishta*) has never come up to me and told me the reason, nor have I gone up to him to ask what went wrong. I am grateful he gave me this show and it was a big start. Also, my career is not over just because things didn't go well in my first show. I have just begun my journey and I have a long way to go."

— Tanvi Trivedi



Important to give each other space in a relationship: Jasmine Bhasin



To stay updated on all the showbiz happenings, follow [@bombaytimes](#)

Taking a break doesn't mean we are neglecting our relationship. Communication and mutual respect is most important. One should give each other space, focus on your interests and hobbies and not always depend on each other

Jasmine Bhasin recently went on a trip to Uttarakhand. Incidentally, the actress wasn't accompanied by her beau Aly Goni. Jasmin, who visited Hemkund Sahib and Valley of Flowers, spoke to us about why it's important to have some 'me time' in life and how that actually helps strengthen a relationship.

She said, "Taking a break doesn't mean we are neglecting our relationship. It is about finding a healthy balance between togetherness and individuality. Communication and mutual respect is most important. One should give each other

space, focus on your interests and hobbies & not always depend on each other."

Jasmine and Aly started dating after their stint on *Bigg Boss* three years ago. Talking about how absence makes the heart grow fonder, Jasmine said, "You

tend to miss each other and your bond gets stronger. Absence also highlights the positive aspects in the relationship."

The year has been tough for Jasmine and it took a toll on her health. She shared, "My mom battled a serious heart condition and soon after, my cat Kylie passed away. I am still mourning the loss. Then, of course, we have professional goals that we are struggling with. I just felt that in every way, life was taking a toll on me. I was feeling really sad and hopeless, so I took this break to heal mentally and emotionally. Solo trips amidst nature can really help. I came back happy, liberated and with a lot of clarity."

— Onkar Kulkarni

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One bad experience can't stop me, says Akshay Kharodia

After his stint in the TV show *Pandya Store* ended in 2023, Akshay Kharodia decided to take a break from television and pursue films. Unfortunately, the film was shelved and that took a toll on the actor. Opening up about the difficult phase, he shares, "I shot for eight months after which I was told that the film is being put on hold. It was upsetting as I had given a lot of my time and energy to it. It affected me, but I knew I had to bounce back. I went for a week-long meditation retreat that helped me a lot."

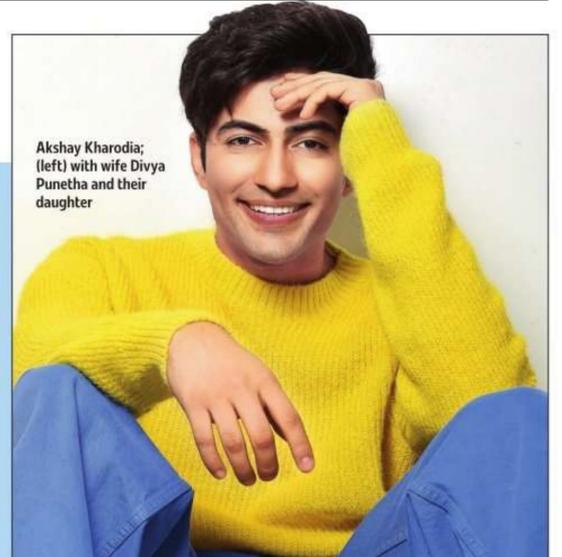
Akshay is back in action now and is currently seen in the TV show *Suhaagan*. Talking about his decision to return to the small screen, he says, "The experience has taught me that sometimes things may not work out, but one has to keep trying hard. One bad experience can't stop me. I'm sure some other project, be it films or OTT will work out in the future. For now, I decided to take up this TV offer because I found it interesting."

— Hasti Doshi



'Not easy to be in a long-distance relationship'

Akshay and his wife Divya Punetha are in a long-distance marriage. Divya lives with their two-year-old daughter in Dehradun. He says, "It is not easy to be in a long-distance relationship, but we've mutually decided to keep it this way because she prefers living there and I have my work here. But I keep travelling and we manage to spend time together."



Akshay Kharodia; (left) with wife Divya Punetha and their daughter

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SAVOUR A HEALTHY MONSOON PLATTER

Masumi Shah



Grilled fruit skewers

Monsoon calls for some cosy, delicious, and healthy snacks to enjoy while listening to the pitter-patter of the rain. Home chef Arpita Sisodia suggests, "Try grilled fruit skewers. Choose seasonal fruits like apple, pineapple or berries, grill them in skewers, add some salt or *chaat masala* and eat away." Chef Shiva Sharma shares, "A must-try snack is baked apple cinnamon chips. The natural sweetness of apples combined with the warmth of cinnamon is perfect for monsoon cravings."



Diet tips

- Herbal teas and soups are a great way to stay hydrated
- Probiotics like yoghurt and fermented foods help maintain gut health, which is crucial during monsoon
- Look for alternatives - baked sweet potato fries instead of regular fries, homemade granola bars with nuts, seeds, and dried fruits instead of chocolates, etc
- Skip the greasy pakoras. Embrace seasonal fruits like berries for antioxidants and veggies like gourds for vitamins.
- Grab almonds, walnuts, pumpkin seeds, or *makhana* for protein, healthy fats and fibre to keep you satisfied.



Cucumber cream cheese toast

To make banana oatmeal pancakes, blend bananas, oats, yoghurt, baking powder, vanilla extract, and cinnamon, and prepare golden brown pancakes in a pre-heat pan, greased with oil or butter. Drizzle honey, sprinkle chia seeds and serve hot



Banana oatmeal pancakes

Popular nutritious snacks

ROASTED CHICKPEAS: These are crunchy and flavourful, and with every bite, they offer a substantial source of protein and a delightful texture.

SPICY CHANA: Spicy *chana* offers a flavourful kick while providing essential nutrients, making it an ideal monsoon snack.

VEGGIE STICKS & DIPS:

Veggie sticks - carrots, cucumbers, or bell peppers, paired with dips like hummus, guacamole, or Greek yoghurt make for a filling snack.



Veggie sticks and hummus

Baked apple cinnamon chips

INGREDIENTS
 ● 2 large apples ● 1 tsp ground cinnamon ● 1-2 tsp sugar (optional)

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 93°C. Arrange apple slices on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Sprinkle cinnamon powder and sugar if you want them sweeter. Bake for 1.5 to 2 hours, flipping them once halfway through. The chips should be dry and crispy. Let the chips cool completely before storing them in an airtight container.



Cucumber cream cheese toast, made with whole grain bread, can be a simple yet fulfilling snack. It has a good balance of carbs, protein and healthy fats

— Chef Shiva Sharma

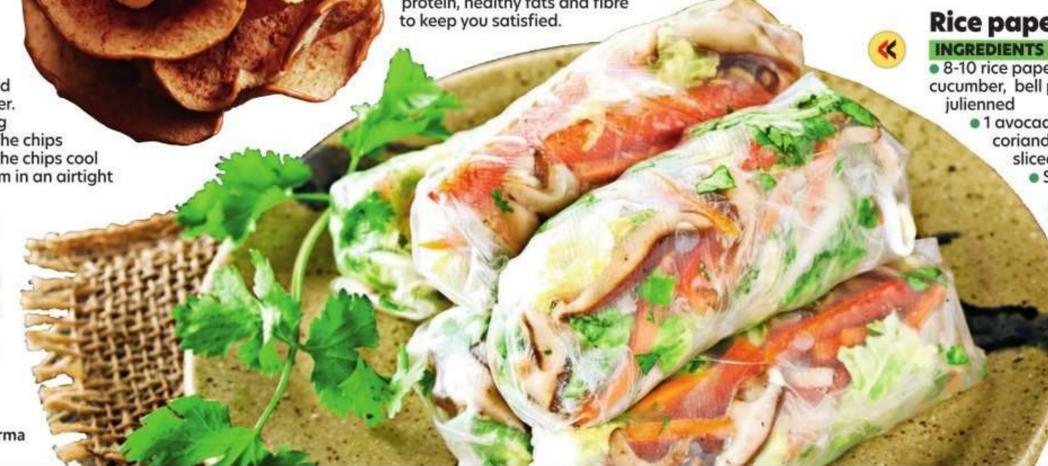
Rice paper rolls

INGREDIENTS

- 8-10 rice paper sheets ● Veggies - carrot, cucumber, bell pepper (red or yellow) - julienned
- 1 avocado, sliced ● Fresh herbs like mint, coriander and basil ● 1 block firm tofu, sliced into thin strips (optional)
- Soy sauce for dipping

METHOD

Fill a large bowl with warm water. Dip one rice paper sheet into the water for about 15-20 seconds until it softens. Lay it flat on a cutting board. Arrange veggies, a couple of avocado slices, tofu, and a few fresh herbs in the centre & roll it up. Serve with soy sauce or hoisin sauce for dipping.

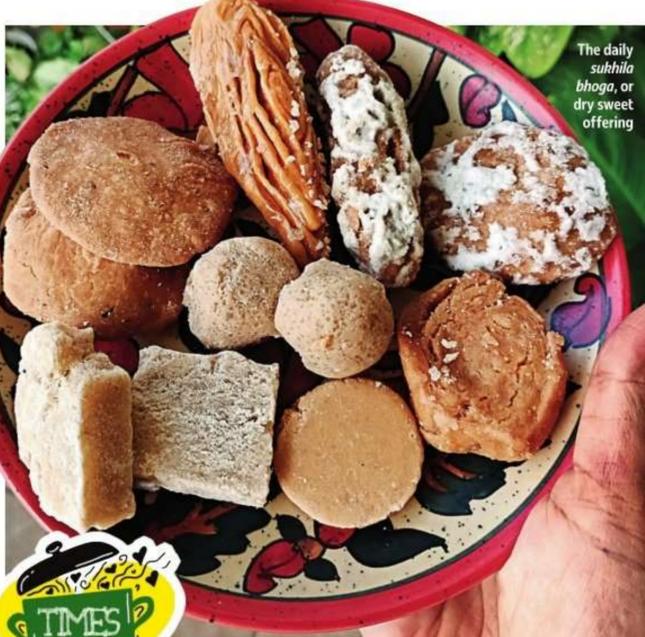


Pitha, Parijataka and Khaja: Sweet treats for Rath Yatra

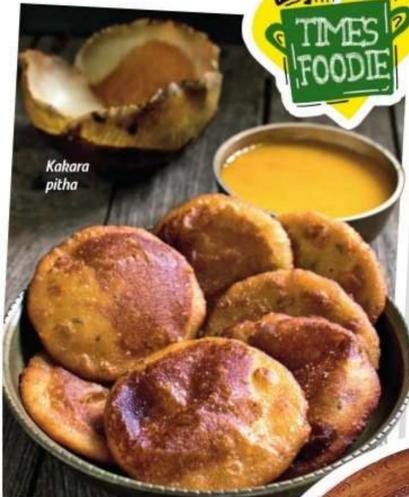
With Rath Yatra around the corner (July 7-8), here's a look at delicacies that are an essential part of the festivities and their unique histories

The essentials

The temple kitchen churns out a range of treats around this time of the year. Before boarding the chariot, the deities are offered *khichdi* and *pithas* such as *Takua*, *Chandamatha puli* and *Kanti pitha*. Once on it, fruits, *Amalu (malpua)*, a dish called *Ratha kora* made with coconut, *khand* and aromatic spices, along with sprouted green moong, *khai* are offered. Locals offer vessels of *Chuda ghasa* (flattened rice, ghee, sugar and coconut) as the chariot passes.



The daily *sukhila bhoga*, or dry sweet offering



Kakara pitha

Delights from the streets

Anyone visiting Puri during Rath Yatra cannot miss out on the local visuals - from *suaras* (processions) carrying *Abhada*, or food offerings from the various *Mathas*, to narrow lanes lined with shops selling milk-based desserts and the ubiquitous *khaja*.



Rasagola is offered as *prasad*

Folklore says that one of Jagannath's favourite beverages is the *ghasa* that has nutmeg in it. He used to have it post dinner, as it is considered to have medicinal properties

— Ashoka Manjuri Nayak, heritage enthusiast



Rasabali

Lost treasures

Many dishes that were once an integral part of the celebrations are no longer made in the temple kitchen such as *pithas* like *parijataka*, *mandua*, *chenna keli* and *kakara*. *Anna rasabali* too has been discontinued because of inflation.

— Compiled by Sweta Biswal

Learn secrets to cooking perfect pasta every time

Use a large pot and plenty of water:

Aim for 4-6 litres of water for 500 gm pasta. This ensures the pasta has room to move and cook evenly.

Salt the water: A good rule of thumb is 1 tsp of salt for every 4 litres of water. Don't skip this step!

Bring water to a rolling boil: This ensures even cooking and prevents pasta from sticking together.

Skip the oil: Oil in the water can interfere with the sauce clinging to the pasta.

Add the pasta: Once the water reaches a rolling boil, add the pasta all at once and stir gently.

Cook according to package instructions: Start checking for doneness a minute before the minimum recommended time.

Test for doneness (al dente): The best way to know if your pasta is done is to taste it. It should be cooked through but still have a slight bite to it.

Reserve pasta water: Take out about ½ cup of the starchy water, which can be used in the sauce.

Drain and toss: Drain pasta in a colander, immediately toss it with a little olive oil or butter to prevent sticking.

Add pasta to sauce: Don't rinse the pasta! Toss it directly into your sauce or sauce over the pasta.



Pics: iStock

Salting the water seasons the pasta as it cooks

TNN

Have you tried the 7-second coffee loophole trend yet?



The viral seven-second coffee trend is about combining coffee with other ingredients to lose weight. There are many recipes available on the internet, with ingredients including lemon, honey, cayenne pepper, cinnamon, etc. The idea is to consume black coffee with additional ingredients within seven seconds of feeling hunger pangs. This supposedly triggers hormones that suppress appetite and boost metabolism, leading to effortless fat burning. The seven-second loophole is founded on the relationship between hunger hormones and caffeine intake. The aim is to time your coffee consumption to combat the urge to eat.

While influencers and followers are making bold claims about this method, there isn't any robust research to back up these claims.

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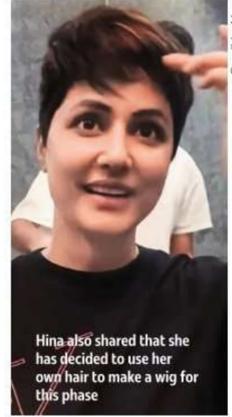
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Salman flaunts his new look

Salman Khan took to Instagram and shared a picture of that has him sporting a new look. In the picture, the actor can be seen wearing a black T-shirt. "Green Zone," he wrote with it. The actor's look included a slick-back hairstyle and beard. Fans wondered if the new hairdo is for his film *Sikandar*, which marks Salman's first collaboration with director AR Murugadoss of *Ghajini* fame.



Amid cancer battle, Hina Khan chops off hair



As she battles breast cancer, Hina Khan shared her haircut on Instagram. In a post, she wrote, "To all the beautiful people out there, especially women who are fighting the same battle, I know it's hard. I know for most of us, our hair is the crown we never take off. But what if you're facing a battle so tough that you have to lose your hair - your pride, your crown? If you want to win you've got to take some tough decisions. And I choose to win. I have decided to give myself every chance possible to win this battle. I choose to let go of my hair before it starts falling off. I didn't want to endure this mental breakdown for weeks. So, I choose to let go of my crown because I've realised my real crown is my courage, strength and the love I have for myself."

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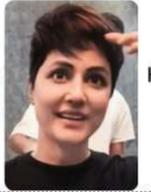


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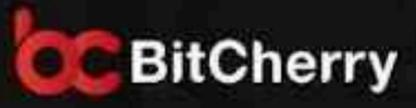
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