



## BRIEF NEWS

### Sukhbir Singh Badal Attacked

**Amritsar**  
A former Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) terrorist opened fire at Shiromani Akali Dal leader Sukhbir Singh Badal at the entrance of the Golden Temple in Amritsar on Wednesday.

### Bomb threat at Taj Mahal hoax

**Agra**  
The Tourism department of the Taj Mahal in Uttar Pradesh's Agra received a bomb threat via email on Tuesday.

"The tourism department received the email. Based on that, a case is being registered at Tajganj police station.

### 5.3 magnitude earthquake hits Telangana, AP

**Hyderabad**  
An earthquake of 5.3 magnitude struck Mulugu in Telangana on Wednesday morning, the National Center for Seismology said.

### MP Gets 8th Tiger Reserve in Ratapani

**Bhopal**  
The Ratapani Wildlife Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh was on Monday declared a tiger reserve following in-principle approval from the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change through the National Tiger Conservation Authority.

### Rahul Gandhi, others MPs to Visit Sambhal

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi along with the five other party MPs from Uttar Pradesh will visit Sambhal on Wednesday, Uttar Pradesh Congress chief Ajay Rai said.



Preparations are underway for the oath-taking ceremony of the Maha Yuti government, scheduled for December 5, 2024, at Azad Maidan in Mumbai - (PTI)

## Devendra Fadnavis to be sworn in as Maharashtra chief minister on Dec 5

**Mumbai**

BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis is all set to take charge as Maharashtra Chief Minister for a third term after a consensus was reached at a crucial BJP meeting on Wednesday, ending days of suspense after the Mahayuti alliance stormed back to power in India's financial capital. Shiv Sena chief Eknath Shinde is likely to become the Deputy Chief Minister along with NCP's Ajit Pawar.

Fadnavis, Shinde and

Pawar will take oath on Thursday at 5 pm at the iconic Azad Maidan in Mumbai, said BJP Maharashtra president Chandrashekhar Bawankule. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend the swearing-in ceremony. Addressing a party event after being named the chief ministerial pick, Fadnavis reiterated PM Modi's 'ek hai, safe hai' slogan. It seemed to be a hint that the Mahayuti coalition was united. At the BJP meeting, Fadnavis's name for the top job was proposed by Vi-

jay Rupani, who was sent as the party's observer to Mumbai. The proposal was unanimously seconded by senior BJP leaders like Sudhir Mungantiwar and Pankaja Munde. The development comes nearly two weeks after the Mahayuti received a massive mandate (232 out of 288 seats) in the Assembly polls. However, the coalition had not been able to decide the contours of the new government after Shinde's initial insistence on being made the Chief Minister again.

## India-China relations have progressed: S Jaishankar

**New Delhi**

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is expected to make a statement in the winter session of Lok Sabha on Monday regarding the recent developments in India-China relations following the border disengagement agreement.

Jaishankar's address to the Lok Sabha follows his meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, whom he met weeks ago on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Brazil, marking the first high-level interaction between India and China after the border deal.

India and China announced a major border breakthrough in October to end the longstanding standoff that followed the 2020 Galwan clash, during which both armies had amassed troops, military infrastructure, and temporary posts on each side. Beijing stated that a resolution had been reached on "relevant matters" and that it would work alongside New Delhi to implement the terms of the agreement.

Following this, both armies began disengagement, dismantling the structures they had set



up, starting with the friction points in Depsang and Demchok, and pulling back personnel to the positions held prior to the confrontation. The process completed two friction points in the Ladakh region and will continue at other points.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping held bilateral discussions on the margins of the Brics summit in Kazan in October, and both leaders directed officials of their respective countries to carry forward the discussions at multiple levels.

Jaishankar was part of a series of discussions held in the recent past that led to the historic border agreement between the two Asian giants.

Ending the military standoff between India and China is expected to have a significant impact on trade, technology, manufacturing, and other areas of bilateral cooperation. Jaishankar recently noted that the "tension" seen in the past four years has "not served either of us well".

## SC slaps Rs 50k cost on Centre for appeal against soldier's pension to widow

**New Delhi**

The Supreme Court on Tuesday imposed a cost of Rs 50,000 on the Centre for filing an appeal against an order of the Armed Forces Tribunal, which granted a liberalised pension to the widow of a soldier who died during a counter-terrorism patrol in Jammu and Kashmir.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih said the widow should not have been dragged to court. "In our view, in a case like



this, the respondent ought not to have been dragged to this court, and the decision-making authority of the appellants ought to have been sympathetic to the widow of a deceased soldier who died in harness. Therefore, we propose to impose costs quantified as Rs 50,000, which will be payable to the respondent," the bench held.

## AAP more interested in liquor sales than health of Delhi citizens: Mandaviya

**New Delhi**

Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Monday slammed the AAP dispensation for not implementing the Ayushman Bharat health insurance scheme and said it is more interested in liquor sales than the health of Delhi's citizens.

The Delhi assembly polls are slated for early next year. The minister's remarks also assume significance as they come a week after the Delhi High Court sought the AAP government's stand on a plea by Delhi's BJP MPs seek-



ing implementation of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).

Addressing a press conference here, Mandaviya said it was unfortunate that states like Delhi and West Bengal are not implementing the scheme even after repeated requests by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and letters from the

Centre.

"There could be political differences but public welfare works must be prioritised in India's federal democratic set up for the welfare of all," he said.

"The government of India has written to the Delhi government urging it to implement the scheme but the Delhi government is more interested in liquor sales and excise policy. They should rather focus on health of the citizens and for that it is important that the scheme is implemented in the national capital," he said.



## Hornbill Festival 2024 Sees 17,588 Visitors on Day 2 Nagaland's Hornbill Festival draws Over 41,000 Visitors in Two Days

Kohima

The 25th edition of Nagaland's iconic Hornbill Festival, held from December 1 to December 10, 2024, has already drawn an impressive 41,498 visitors in just two days, according to the Directorate of Tourism, Nagaland.

On the opening day, December 1, the festival witnessed a turnout of 23,910 visitors, including 513 foreign tourists, 5,486 domestic tourists, and 17,911 local attendees from Nagaland.

The momentum continued on December 2, with 17,588 visitors comprising 428 foreign tourists, 4,698 domestic travellers, and 12,462 local participants.

The Hornbill Festival, often referred to as the Festival of Festivals, is celebrat-



*Nagaland's Hornbill Festival*

ed annually in Nagaland to showcase the rich cultural heritage, traditional crafts, cuisine, and vibrant music of the state's 17 tribes.

Held at the Naga Heritage Village in Kisama, the festival has become a major attraction for tourists, fostering cultural exchange and boosting local tourism.

Officials are optimistic about the numbers increasing in the coming days as the festival unfolds

with diverse performances, art exhibitions, indigenous games, and food fairs. With a blend of tradition and modernity, the event continues to captivate audiences from around the globe. The Directorate of Tourism expressed its gratitude to visitors and the participating communities, emphasizing the festival's role in promoting Nagaland's culture and hospitality on an international platform.

## Meghalaya extends land lease period to attract big investors

Shillong

The Meghalaya government has taken a significant step to boost large-scale investments in the state. On Monday, the Cabinet approved an increase in the lease period for government land from 30 to 60 years.

Tourism Minister Paul Lyngdoh explained that the decision was driven by the need to enhance the Return on Investment (RoI) for major projects.

The current 30-year lease period was deemed insufficient to attract significant investments, especially for large-scale ventures. "We recognize that investors require a reasonable period to recoup their investments.

## Assam CM fears Manipur Violence spillover, boosts security in Barak Valley

Guwahati

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday expressed concern over the potential spill-over effects of the ongoing violence in neighbouring Manipur, particularly in the state's Barak Valley region, which shares a border with Manipur's Jiribam district.

Speaking at an event in Cachar district, the Assam Chief Minister said, "I think the situation in Manipur will definitely have some impact on Assam. That is why we have deployed additional police forces in Barak Valley to see that nothing spills over to Assam."

Barak Valley, located in southern Assam, borders Jiribam, an ethnically diverse region that saw fresh unrest earlier this year. Although initially spared from the ethnic clashes that en-

gulfed Imphal Valley and its adjoining hills, violence erupted in Jiribam in June after the mutilated body of a farmer was discovered in a field.

Manipur has been reeling under ethnic violence since May 2023, with over 250 people killed and thousands displaced in clashes between the Imphal Valley-based Meitei community and Kuki-Zo groups from the surrounding hills. The conflict intensified on November 11, when a gunfight between security forces and suspected Kuki-Zo militants left 10 insurgents dead. Following this, six members of the Meitei community, including three women and three children, reportedly abduction by armed militants in Jiribam. Their bodies were later found dead, exacerbating tensions.

## Arunachal CM Inaugurates Walkway at Yomgo Riverfront



Itanagar

Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Monday inaugurated the newly constructed walkway along the Yomgo River at Puak Ghat, Aalo, hailing it as a transformative project blending nature's charm with modern design.

The riverfront walkway, developed at an initial cost of Rs 4.95 crore, is poised to enhance the quality of life for Aalo residents and boost tourism in the region.

The walkway is more than an infrastructural development—it is a space for recreation, safety, and economic growth.

Key benefits outlined for Aalo residents include:

**Recreational Space:** A scenic area for relaxation, exercise, and socializing,

promoting physical and mental well-being.

**Tourism and Economic Boost:** Expected to attract visitors, creating income opportunities for local families and fostering economic development.

**Enhanced Safety and Infrastructure:** Modern amenities like parking, public utilities, and illumination ensure accessibility and security, while RCC retaining walls protect against erosion and flooding. **Community Pride:** A source of pride symbolizing Aalo's progress and improved quality of life. The project faced significant challenges, including rising river levels during monsoons, land disputes, and disruptions caused by elections and landslides along transportation routes.

## Seven held for vandalising Bangladesh consulate in Tripura

Agartala

Police in Tripura have arrested seven members of a Hindu organization for allegedly breaking into the Bangladesh consulate in Agartala and vandalizing its property. The incident, which took place on Monday, has drawn sharp criticism and raised concerns over diplomatic relations between India and Bangladesh.

According to senior police officials, the accused forced their way into the consulate premises, damaging furniture and documents. The motive behind the attack is still under investigation, though initial reports suggest the group was protesting alleged incidents of violence against Hindus in Bangladesh. Seven individuals have been detained and charged under various sections of the Indian Penal Code for trespassing, vandalism, and causing damage to diplomatic property," said a senior police officer.

## Tripura Protests Persecution of Hindu minorities in Bangladesh

Agartala

A massive protest, including a sit-in demonstration, was launched on Monday in front of the office of the Bangladesh Assistant High Commissioner in Agartala, protesting atrocities against Hindu minorities and demanding the release of ISKCON member Chinmoy Das Prabhu.

The protest was joined by the 'Hindu Sangharsh Samity,' a right-wing organization that drew participation from people across various sections.

"The Bangladesh interim government has illegally arrested Hindu leader and ISKCON member Chinmoy Das Prabhu. What we heard is that they didn't even serve food to him. This is totally illegal and inhumane. We are demanding the immediate release of Chinmoy Das Prabhu. As Hindus, we cannot tolerate the attacks on Hindu minorities living in Bangladesh," said one protestor.

She pointed out that in India, many Muslims, who



are a minority, live peacefully without facing any atrocities.

"We are not attacking our Muslim brothers and sisters here. Then why are they doing such things to us? Our protest will continue until the Yunus government releases the ISKCON leader," she told reporters.

BJP Vice President Subal Bhowmik, who also joined the protest, said that attacks on Hindu minorities have significantly increased over time.

"We strongly condemn such acts. For a long time, and especially after the change in government, these attacks have intensi-

fied. Today, we have come here from various organizations to stage this protest," he said.

He added that the Indian government has also warned the Bangladesh government.

"Md. Yunus is solely responsible for everything and for provoking people against the Hindu minority," Bhowmik added.

Tripura, which shares an 856 km-long international border with Bangladesh, has been witnessing massive protests against the attacks on Hindu minorities in the neighbouring country, with protesters burning effigies of Md Yunus.



## NSE partners with Meghalaya government to launch student skill building program

**Shillong:** In a major step towards empowering the youth of Meghalaya, the National Stock Exchange (NSE) has partnered with the Government of Meghalaya to launch a Student Skill Building Program aimed at enhancing competencies in the Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance (BFSI) sector. The MoU was signed by Meghalaya Chief Minister Shri Conrad Sangma, NSE's Chief Business Development Officer Shri Sriram Krishnan, and Senior Vice

President Shri Krishnan Iyer.

The initiative will focus on increasing financial literacy and developing skills that boost employability and self-employment opportunities in the BFSI sector. With skill development being a key theme in the Union Budget 2024, the program aligns with the government's vision to prepare youth for emerging opportunities in India's growing financial landscape.

Chief Minister Sangma highlighted the importance

of this partnership, stating, "This collaboration is a significant step in empowering our youth and driving Meghalaya's prosperity by equipping them with essential financial knowledge."

In Shillong, the growing demand for financial services presents a unique opportunity. As local businesses expand and more financial services are introduced, skilled professionals will be needed to manage this influx, creating a robust job market for trained youth in the region.

## The Royal Enfield Goan Classic 350 a tribute to seventies Goan moto-culture

**Imphal:** Drawing inspiration from the '70s and '80s iconic Goan moto-culture, Royal Enfield, global leader in the mid-size motorcycle segment (250-750cc), launched the Goan Classic 350 — a bobber-inspired motorcycle, that celebrates and embodies non-conformity and free-spirited lifestyle. The Goan Classic 350 is a tribute to the kaleidoscope of self-expression that formed India's unique Goan moto-culture. It is a child of the freewheeling counter-culture that emerged in Goa

in the seventies and eighties - a four-stroked, sun-soaked hippie machine, always on the path of self-discovery and self-liberation.

Powered by Royal Enfield's popular 349cc air-oil cooled, single-cylinder engine, the Goan Classic delivers 'good vibes only', with a relaxed and smooth ride. Launched in Goa at Motoverse, the motorcycle is available in four vibrant single and dual-toned colourways priced at INR 2,35,000/-\* and INR 2,38,000/-\* respectively.

Bookings and test rides begin.

Siddhartha Lal, Managing Director - Eicher Motors Ltd. said, "The Goan Classic is a heartfelt tribute to the spirit of freedom and individuality that Royal Enfield has championed for decades. To me, this motorcycle is an embodiment of the cool, laid-back Goan moto-culture, and Royal Enfield's passion to build motorcycles that are more than just machines, and are a means to self-discovery and expression."

## Assam's fight against child marriage gains momentum with nationwide campaign

**Guwahati:** The Bal VivahMukt Bharat campaign has garnered remarkable support across Assam, with thousands participating in programs led by the Just Rights for Children (JRC) alliance. Spanning 28 districts and 3,900 villages, the campaign engaged stakeholders from police officers to child marriage survivors in marches, awareness drives, and pledges to combat the practice. The JRC alliance, a collective of over 250 NGOs, has prevented over 2.5 lakh child marriages

nationwide, including significant interventions in Assam. The state, where 31.8% of women aged 20-24 were married before 18, remains a key focus area for the campaign, which aims to change societal norms and improve workforce participation among women. In Guwahati, the campaign found a strong base, with bustling markets and schools amplifying its message. Retailers, local leaders, and residents collaborated to highlight the economic repercussions of

child marriage, which limits girls' educational and professional opportunities. This urban engagement underscored the city's role as a hub for social and economic progress in Assam. Launched by Union Minister Annpurna Devi, the campaign is expected to reach 25 crore citizens nationwide. With a dedicated reporting portal and grassroots outreach, Assam is set to strengthen its resolve to end child marriage, driving both social reform and economic growth.

## Dr. Reddy's Laboratories Ltd. announce the launch of Toripalimab in India

**Guwahati:** Dr. Reddy's Laboratories Ltd. announced the launch of Toripalimab in India. Toripalimab is a New Biological Entity (NBE). It is the only immuno-oncology drug approved by various regulatory authorities around the world such as the United States Food and Drug Administration (USFDA), European Medicines Agency (EMA), Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), and others for the treatment

of adults with recurrent or metastatic nasopharyngeal carcinoma (RM-NPC). Only immuno-oncology drug approved by various regulatory authorities around the world such as the USFDA, DCGI, EMA, MHRA, NMPA and others for the treatment of adults with recurrent or metastatic nasopharyngeal carcinoma (RM-NPC). Combination of Toripalimab and standard of care chemotherapy has shown a 48% reduction in risk of progression or death.

Launched in India in the same year as its launch in the U.S., making India the third country in the world to receive access to this New Biological Entity (NBE).

M.V. Ramana, Chief Executive Officer, Branded Markets (India and Emerging Markets), Dr. Reddy's, said: "The launch of Toripalimab is a significant milestone for patients diagnosed with nasopharyngeal carcinoma (NPC) in India. NPC is a rare form of head and neck cancer."

## Hotel Polo Towers Shillong launches 'Tring Tring' – A vintage-themed dining and cocktail destination

**Shillong:** Hotel Polo Towers Shillong has launched Tring Tring, an all-day dining and cocktail bar designed to blend vintage aesthetics with modern luxury. Spanning over 3,200 square feet, the venue opens today, promising a unique culinary and cultural experience in the heart of Shillong.

Catering to diverse occasions, Tring Tring offers seating for 150 guests, featuring private booths, a lively bar, and a scenic verandah overlooking the hills. Inspired by the 90s, the décor includes vintage telephone booths and rotary phones, creating a nostalgic yet Instagram-worthy ambience.

ance.

The menu reflects an innovative mix of local flavors and global classics, with signature cocktails such as Taste of Shillong, Butterfly Effect, and The Landline, paired with standout dishes like Crispy Goat Cheese Salad and Grilled Fish with Caper Butter Sauce. Deval Tibrewalla, CEO and Director of Hotel Polo Towers Group, shared, "Tring Tring celebrates Shillong's cultural vibrance while introducing modern luxury with a vintage twist. We are excited to offer this unique experience to our guests."

## Soch expands footprint with grand opening of store in Guwahati

**Guwahati:** Soch, a leading brand in evening and occasion wear, has officially launched its first-ever store in Guwahati, marking its debut in Assam. Located at GS Road, the 1150 square feet store presents a curated selection of the brand's latest collections, including the newly launched Festive and Wedding wardrobe collections, which seamlessly blend contemporary styles with traditional craftsmanship.

The opening of this store is a key part of Soch's strategic expansion across India, with a focus on capturing the growing demand for premium ethnic wear in the northeastern region. The brand, which already operates over 175 stores

across 70 cities, is excited to bring its diverse offerings of sarees, lehengas, kurtas, and fusion wear to Guwahati's vibrant fashion market.

"Soch's trusted customer base and broad range of stylish ethnic wear position us well to tap into the promising Guwahati market," said Vinay Chatlani, CEO and Co-founder of Soch Apparels Pvt Ltd.

Guwahati presents a promising opportunity due to its growing urban population and increasing demand for high-quality ethnic fashion. The store is expected to cater to the city's discerning shoppers, further establishing Soch as a top destination for fashion-conscious women in the region.

## Inspiring Campaign #TogetherWeSoar launches by Shriram Finance with Legend Rahul Dravid

**Mumbai:** Shriram Finance Ltd., the flagship company of the Shriram Group and one of India's leading financial services providers, has launched an inspiring new brand campaign titled '#TogetherWeSoar'. This campaign reflects Shriram Finance's commitment to partner with aspiring India, highlighting the power of connection and unity. Today, many Indians are embracing the "So, what?" philosophy, reflecting the aspiration

to overcome any challenges in their journey to success. This campaign aims to celebrate this spirit and depict partnership as a means to soar ahead, with a slice from Rahul Dravid's own life. The message is clear: "Together, we soar. By building strong relationships with our customers, we help them step into their power and achieve their dreams."

Cricket legend Rahul Dravid features as the brand ambassador, em-

bodying the values of teamwork and resilience that Shriram Finance also stands for. His presence reinforces the brand's commitment to nurturing partnerships that inspire growth. Elizabeth Venkataraman, Executive Director of Marketing at Shriram Finance, shared insights about the campaign: "Our creative approach, tailored in seven languages, allows us to connect deeply with diverse audiences across the nation."

## Durex TBBT marks its third consecutive year as the official health partner of the Hornbill Festival

**Kohima:** Durex's The Birds and Bees Talk (TBBT), an impactful life skills program by Reckitt, a global leader in health and hygiene, has proudly marked its third consecutive year as the official health partner of Northeast India's most iconic cultural celebration—the Hornbill Festival.

As the festival celebrates its milestone 25th edition, TBBT is set to launch Asia's first Consent Café, a pioneering initiative designed to spark meaningful conversations around consent, equity, and healthy relationships.



The Hornbill Festival, expected to welcome over 150,000 visitors from December 1 to 10 at Kisama Heritage Village, Kohima, offers a unique platform to blend traditional heritage

with modern values. The TBBT Consent Café aims to provide an immersive space combining light, music, and art to help attendees reflect on the meaning of consent and

its role in fostering healthy connections.

Mr. Veyielo Duolo, Director, Tourism Department, expressed his enthusiasm: "The 25th Hornbill Festival stands as a beacon of cultural pride, and we are thrilled to have Durex's The Birds and Bees Talk implemented by Reckitt and Plan India as our official

Health Partner." Gaurav Jain, Executive Vice President, Reckitt—South Asia, remarked, "At Reckitt, we believe that knowledge is the foundation of empowerment.

## Vi introduces AI-powered spam management solution

**Mumbai:** Leading telecom operator Vi has launched an AI and machine learning-based spam management solution to enhance user security against unwanted messages. Effective immediately, this system aims to proactively identify and flag spam texts, addressing the rise in SMS-based fraud. Since its testing phase, the solution has flagged over 24 million spam messages. Jagbir Singh, CTO of Vodafone Idea Limited,

emphasized the importance of customer safety in the digital age, stating that the technology provides real-time protection against potential scams. Vi plans to expand its spam prevention measures to include voice calls and continues to enhance its mobile app for easier spam reporting. The company also conducts customer awareness campaigns to educate users on recognizing phishing attempts and managing spam effectively.



## Nissan motors achieves a milestone by crossing 5 lakh cumulative domestic sales

**Guwahati:** Nissan Motor India announced that it has achieved a significant milestone today with the crossing of 5 lakh cumulative domestic sales since the start of its operations, with a total of 5,13,241 units sold till date. Additionally, in November 2024, the company recorded consolidated wholesale dispatches of 9040 units, driven by consistent demand for its vehicles, including the new

Nissan Magnite SUV. The domestic sales accounted for 2342 units, while exports stood at 6698 units. Compared to October 2024, total consolidated wholesale saw a 62% (MoM) increase from 5570 units to 9040 units, driven by a substantial surge in export shipments. Exports in November 2024 recorded a (YoY) growth of 222% compared to 2081 units in November 2023 and a (MoM) growth of 173.5%

compared to 2449 units in October 2024. Mr. Saurabh Vatsa, Managing Director, Nissan Motor India, said, "It's a matter of great pride for all of us at Nissan Motor India to see our brand crossing the 5 lakh domestic sales milestone." The new Nissan Magnite features a bold, stylish design both inside and out, offering 20+ first & Best-In-Segment features and 55+ total safety features.

## Shopsy introduces a one-stop destination to make winter shopping easy

**Shillong/Guwahati:** Winter in India is more than just a season; it's a time to embrace warmth, comfort, and the spirit of togetherness. From the refreshing chill in the air to the joy of layering up in stylish outfits, winter brings its own special charm to every part of Bharat. Recognizing the unique needs of customers across the country, especially in the colder regions of the North, West, and East, Shopsy,

India's leading hyper-value e-commerce platform, is thrilled to announce its exclusive Wow Winter Sale. Designed to cater to Bharat consumers, the Wow Winter Sale offers an extensive range of winter essentials, combining style, comfort, and functionality, starting at just Rs 99. It features top categories like hoodies, sweatshirts, biking gloves, caps, jackets, and kids' winterwear, ensuring every member of the family

can stay warm while looking fashionable. Shopsy's winter sale offers exclusive deals and discounts, ensuring consumers can enjoy the season without breaking their budgets. These winter essentials are accessible across Shopsy's vast delivery network, which covers over 19,000 pin codes, ensuring customers in the most remote parts of Bharat get access to them seamlessly.

## Khaitan & Co and Godrej DEI Lab support the inclusion of people with disabilities in the workplace

**Guwahati:** Godrej DEI Lab, the diversity and inclusion arm of Godrej Industries Group, and Khaitan & Co, a leading full-service law firm, have commemorated International Day of Person with Disabilities. The second edition of the Khaitan & Co's Handbook on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in collaboration with Godrej DEI Lab, was unveiled at their Disability Inclusion Summit in Mumbai. The comprehensive handbook serves as a ready reckoner for un-



derstanding the evolution of Indian jurisprudence on disability rights framework. "This event represents a crucial milestone in our ongoing commitment to workplace inclusion," said

Parmesh Shahani, Head of Godrej DEI Lab. Speaking about the importance of workplace inclusion, Aakash Choubey, Partner, Khaitan & Co, said, "Creating an inclusive workplace for persons

with disabilities is not just a legal obligation but an imperative for organisations." The Handbook on Rights of Persons with Disabilities covers two crucial legislations – Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, and the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017, offering insights into beneficiaries, entitlements, and remedies. It also provides legal guidance on fundamental rights, legal capacity, education, employment, healthcare, transport, and mental health.

## IPRU Edge a mobile app offer by ICICI Prudential Life Insurance

**Aizawl:** IPRU Edge, a mobile app offered by ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, exclusively for its advisors, has led to a 37% increase in their productivity in H1-FY2025, resulting in higher earnings for them. Importantly, 98.1% of agents using IPRU Edge were paid commissions on the same day. ICICI Prudential Life is the first life insurer to pay out commissions on the same day to select distributors. The Company has a network of over 2 lakh advisors and approximately 61% of the Company's top advisors are now actively using the app which is helping them grow their business.

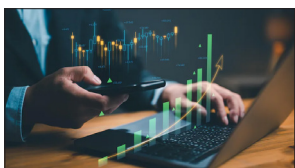
Mr. Rajiv Arora, Chief of Sales, Proprietary Channel, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, said, "Our mobile app, IPRU Edge has enabled our agents to grow their business. This is evident from the 37% increase in their productivity we witnessed in H1-FY2025."



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## Sensex extends rally, rises 111 pts led by HDFC Bank; Nifty ends flat

**Mumbai:** Benchmark equity indices BSE Sensex and NSE Nifty50 ended Wednesday's choppy session in positive territory, extending their winning streak for the fourth consecutive session. Sensex settled 110.58 points or 0.14 per cent higher at 80,956.33,



trading in the range of 81,245.39-80,630.53. The NSE Nifty50 ended at 24,467.45, up 10.30

points or 0.04 per cent. Nifty50 scaled day's high of 24,573.20 during intra-day trade, while the day's low was seen at 24,366.30.

30 out of the 50 constituent stocks on Nifty50 ended in the red, dragged by Bharti Airtel, Cipla, Bajaj Auto, Tata Motors, and

Adani Ports, with losses extending up to 2.28 per cent. HDFC Life, HDFC Bank, Apollo Hospital, NTPC, and Bajaj Finserv, on the other hand, were among the 20 stocks that ended in the green, with gains extending up to 2.52 per cent.



## Škoda Auto India announces value pricing across the Kylaq range

**Guwahati:** Škoda Auto India's first-ever foray into the sub-4m SUV segment, the Kylaq, is now out with its entire range of variants and pricing. The Kylaq will come in four variant options: Classic, Signature, Signature+, and Prestige. The SUV has a starting price of INR 7.89 lakh for the Kylaq Classic trim. The top-of-the-line Kylaq Prestige AT will be on sale at INR 14,40,000 lakh. Moreover, the first 33,333 customers will get a compli-



mentary 3-year Standard Maintenance Package (SMP). Bookings for the Kylaq open today at 4 pm with deliveries to begin on January 27, 2025. Kylaq has seen a great response already, with over 160,000 expressions of interest across Kylaq hand-raisers, Kylaq Club members, and

dealer enquiries.

Petr Janeba, Brand Director, Škoda Auto India, said, "The all-new Kylaq marks the advent of a new era for the Škoda brand in India." In addition, the Kylaq also offers a 3-year/100,000kms whichever earlier, standard warranty. Along with this, Kylaq also offers a six-year anti-corrosion warranty as standard across the range. This SUV, like the Kushaq and Slavia, is based on the MQB-A0-IN platform.

## adidas launches new ODI jersey for Team India, emphasizes sustainability and women's empowerment

**Guwahati:** adidas has launched the new ODI jersey for both the Indian Women's and Men's Cricket Teams, marking the second year of its partnership with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). The innovative design features a bold true-blue body with tricolour ombre sleeves, symbolizing India's pride and national fervor. Made from 100% recycled material, the jersey incorporates adidas' Climacool+ technology for enhanced comfort and sweat absorption during long matches.

The Women's Cricket Team will debut the jersey during the India-West Indies series beginning December 22, 2024. The match

jersey will be available from December 2, 2024, in select adidas stores and online at Rs. 5999, with a fan version priced at Rs. 999. adidas has also committed to providing both the Women's and Men's teams with updated training and travel gear as part of this collaboration. Guwahati region is expected to be a key hub for jersey sales. With growing interest in women's cricket, local fans are anticipated to enthusiastically support the new jersey. The availability of the jerseys in local stores and online platforms is likely to resonate well with the city's cricket-loving audience, further bolstering adidas' presence in the region.

## Toyota Kirloskar Motor joins hands to celebrate the Hornbill Music Festival in 2024

**Nagaland:** Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) has announced its continued association with the prestigious Hornbill Music Festival, one of India's most iconic cultural celebrations, for the third consecutive year through the title sponsorship. Held at the Naga Heritage Village, Kisama, in Kohima District, Nagaland, the festival runs from December 2 to December 10, featuring exciting performances, including a special opening act by Japan's renowned drum ensemble, Drum Tao. This unique collaboration



brings together traditional and contemporary musical experiences, showcasing a deep cultural bond. TKM's ongoing partnership with the Hornbill Music Festival

reflects the company's deeper connections with the people of Nagaland and Northeast, and support to promote the rich cultural heritage.

TKM is deeply engaged in the Northeast, with a strong commitment to elevating customer experiences and shaping the region's automotive landscape with its world-class products and exceptional services. Commenting about TKM's association with the Hornbill Music Festival 2024, Mr. Sabari Manohar—Vice President, Sales-Service-Used Car Business, Toyota Kirloskar Motor—said, "We are thrilled to continue our partnership with the esteemed Hornbill Music Festival for the third year in a row."

## NEW York Institute of Fashion provides its students across India with unprecedented exposure

**Guwahati:** NEW York Institute of Fashion—NIF Global has brought the exclusive and the exciting Fashion Series by New York and London experts, providing its students across India with unprecedented exposure. This month-long series, running from 14th November to 14th December 2024, bridges cultural and creative capitals, empowering students to experience global expertise right in their own classrooms. A New Era of Global Fashion Education at New York Institute of Fashion has redefined fashion education, merging New York's design expertise, London's forward-thinking innovation, and India's rich creativity.

At the Guwahati, students engaged directly with New York and London experts who have influenced global fashion trends, learning valuable insights and skills tailored to help them excel in the global arena. The Centre Director Adv Chinki Agarwal of Guwahati shared thoughts on this exclusive fashion series: "At the Guwahati we're dedicated to nurturing talent that shines beyond borders." New York Institute of Fashion - NIF Global is a premier institute for design education, known for its innovative approach to fashion design, interior design, management, and beauty education.

## National Council for Vocational Education and Training recognizes IN-SPACE as an awarding body

**Guwahati:** In a landmark development, the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET), Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Government of India, has officially recognized the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center (IN-SPACE) as an Awarding Body (Dual). The agreement, aimed at strengthening the vocational education and training landscape in the space sector, was signed in the presence of Shri Atul Kumar Tiwari, Secretary, MSDE, and Chairperson, NCVET.

NCVET, serving as the national regulator for vocational education and training,



plays a vital role in setting standards, developing regulations, and improving the quality and outcomes of skilling initiatives across the

country. Shri Atul Kumar Tiwari, Secretary, MSDE, and Chairperson, NCVET, emphasized the growing need

for a skilled workforce in India's space sector.

"As India continues to expand its space exploration capabilities and integrate emerging technologies, it is crucial to cultivate a highly skilled talent pool," he said.

Dr. Vinod Kumar, Director of the Promotion Directorate at IN-SPACE, represented the organization during the signing of the agreement.

He expressed his enthusiasm about the recognition, stating, "This recognition marks a significant milestone in our efforts to build a skilled workforce for India's growing space sector."

## QNET India highlights the need for the SHARP-QNET Zensational air purifier to tackle pollution and winter smog

**Guwahati:** As the festive glow fades, regions across India, especially northern India, have experienced a sharp decline in air quality. Winter is bringing an unwelcome rise in smog, with Air Quality Index (AQI) levels frequently exceeding 300 in cities, far surpassing the healthy benchmark of 50. This hazardous air is being caused by post-Diwali pollution, vehicle emissions, and crop stubble burning, creating a toxic blend of fine particulate matter and harmful toxins. Air pollution is a major global health concern, with the World Health Organization (WHO) linking it to 6.7 million premature deaths annually. With people spending nearly 90% of their time indoors, pollutants like smog, VOCs, allergens, and CO2 accumulate, creating an environment up to five times more polluted than the outdoors. Recognising the significance of National Pollution Control Day (December 2), QNET India is urging people to act. Air purifiers are a vital tool in protecting indoor spaces, and the SHARP-QNET Zensational Air Purifier offers a powerful solution for healthier, cleaner air. The SHARP-QNET Zensational Air Purifier protects your family by eliminating harmful contaminants, ensuring every breath you take is clean and refreshing.



## Ronaldo Leads Saudi Charge in ACL

Saudi Arabian football teams have attracted a lot of global football stars to join their ranks and it includes some of the best players in the world such as Cristiano Ronaldo, Neymar Jr and several others. Apart from the Saudi Pro League, Saudi clubs have also been participating in the currently ongoing Asian Champions League otherwise known as the AFC Champions League Elite and have been dominating the western zone part of the tournament.

Led by Cristiano Ronaldo, Riyad Mahrez and Aleksandar Mitrovic, Saudi Arabian clubs are dominating the western zone of the AFC Champions League Elite but, in the east, Japan is on top with Chinese clubs bouncing back after a difficult period.

Al-Ahli, Al-Hilal and Al-Nassr are first, second and third in the western zone group, the 24 teams in the tournament are divided into two groups of 12, and are already guaranteed a place in the Round of 16.

## Djokovic targets 25th Grand Slam at Brisbane

Novak Djokovic will begin his 2025 season and bid for an 11th Australian Open title at the Brisbane International, it was announced Wednesday, with the Serbian superstar now coached by Andy Murray. The 37-year-old is targeting a record 25th Grand Slam crown after failing to add to the total during a frustrating 2024, although he did win Olympic singles gold in Paris. The ATP-WTA event runs December 29-January 5, with the Australian Open to begin on January 12.

"I'm excited to be kicking off my Australian swing at the Brisbane International and to compete again at Pat Rafter Arena," said Djokovic. Djokovic was beaten in the Australian Open semi-finals this year by eventual.

## Wedding bells for PV Sindhu

PV Sindhu will get married to Hyderabad-based tech company executive in Udaipur on December 22.

New Delhi

The most successful Indian Olympic shuttler PV Sindhu is all set to start a new chapter in her life when she ties the knot with software engineer Venkata Datta Sai on December 22. The wedding ceremony will be held in Udaipur and the reception will be in Hyderabad on December 24.

"The two families knew each other but it was only a month ago that everything was finalised. This was the only possible window as her schedule will be hectic from January," Sindhu's father, PV Ramana said.

"That is the reason the two families decided to have the marriage ceremony in December," he added. "She will start her



PV Sindhu

training soon after as the next season is going to be important."

Sindhu's fiancé, an executive director at Posidex Technologies, holds a master's degree in data science and machine learning from IIT, Bengaluru. Posidex Technologies is an Artificial Intelligence-Machine Learning (AI-ML) company. His father GT Venkateshwar Rao is the managing director of the Hyderabad-based

company.

Sources said that Sindhu and Sai have been seeing each other for over a year. The couple has been seen in public - at matches and spotted at multiplexes. Divya, Sindhu's elder sister, also married a software engineer. Last month, former world No.1 Kidambi Srikanth married Shravya, the niece of film director Ramgopal Varma.

The 29-year-old Sindhu, currently a deputy collector with the Andhra Pradesh government, started her career under the tutelage of Pullela Gopichand. She shot into limelight by becoming the first woman to win a medal at the World Championships in 2013. Later she went on to win the World Championship in 2019.

## Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy

### Shardul Thakur's 4-Wicket Haul Redeems Expensive Spell

Hyderabad

India pacer Shardul Thakur snapped straight back into form with a stunning four-wicket haul in Mumbai's clash against Services on December 3 in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, after having faced two big blows only days prior.

The fiery spell marked a triumphant return to form for Thakur, who endured a challenging week that included going unsold in the IPL 2025 mega auction and bowling the most expensive spell in Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy history. Services, chasing 193 runs, were dealt a massive blow early in their innings as Thakur's searing pace



and accuracy dismantled their top order. His spell of 4/25, along with a 3/40 spell from Shams Mulani were instrumental in tilting the match heavily in Mumbai's favor, and ultimately played one of the most pivotal roles in giving his side a 39-run win.

The week began on a sour note for the 32-year-

old all-rounder. Once a sought-after name in the IPL, having represented Chennai Super Kings, Kolkata Knight Riders, and Delhi Capitals, Thakur was left without a bid during the IPL 2025 mega auction. Adding to his woes, he bowled a 1/69 spell against Kerala in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy.

### Pacer Siddharthh Kaul joins State Bank of India after days retirement

New Delhi

Former India pacer Siddharthh Kaul has embraced a new chapter in his life by joining the State Bank of India (SBI), just days after announcing his retirement from all forms of cricket in India. The 34-year-old

shared the news on his Twitter handle, posting a picture of himself at his new workplace with a caption announcing his transition.

The former right-arm pacer represented India in three ODIs and three T20Is, debuting in 2018.

His role in India's victorious U19 World Cup campaign in 2008 remains a career highlight. Under Virat Kohli's captaincy, Kaul led the bowling attack with 10 wickets, becoming the tournament's leading pacer for India.



Third One Day International - England v Australia - Riverside Ground, Chester-le-Street, Britain - September 24, 2024 Australia's Alex Carey in action (Reuters)

## Australia take confidence from pink ball record ahead of second India test: Carey

Melbourne

Australia will draw confidence from their exceptional record in day-night tests and expect to rebound from their Perth setback when they face India in the second match in Adelaide, wicketkeeper Alex Carey has said. Australia have won 11 of their 12 pink ball tests and all seven they have played at Adelaide Oval, including a victory over India in the last home test series when they skittled Virat Kohli's team for 36.

"We're excited. We should take a lot - and we do take a lot - of confidence out of our record from pink ball cricket," Carey told reporters on Tuesday.

"It doesn't mean we'll have the success but I think our methods, our style of play and the experience

we have with this group, we'll bounce back from Perth." "I'm sure India will be confident from the last game as well, so it will be a great contest," added Carey. India scored a resounding 295-run victory at Perth Stadium in the opening test of the five-match series. Australia's winning streak in day-night tests was ended in January by the West Indies, who won a cliffhanger by eight runs at the Gabba.

Australia head into the second test starting on Friday with some concern over the fitness of all-rounder Mitchell Marsh, who pulled up sore after bowling 17 overs in Perth. Australian media have speculated that Marsh may be retained as a specialist batsman alone, though selectors brought in another all-rounder into the squad in uncapped Beau Webster.

## Hazlewood ruled out of second India Test

Melbourne

Australia fast bowler Josh Hazlewood has been ruled out of the second test against India in Adelaide with a low grade side injury in a further blow to the hosts.

Hazlewood took five wickets in the first test in Perth where Australia were thrashed by 295 runs to fall 1-0 behind in the five-match series.

Cricket Australia said Sean Abbott and Brendan Doggett had been brought into the squad for the day-night test at Adelaide

Oval which starts Dec. 6, although Scott Boland is Hazlewood's most likely replacement.

Australia have another injury concern for all-rounder Mitchell Marsh who pulled up sore after bowling 17 overs in Perth.

Uncapped all-rounder Beau Webster was called into the squad two days ago as cover for Marsh.

Australia are already without regular all-rounder Cameron Green, who was ruled out of the series after opting to have surgery on a stress fracture in his lumbar spine.