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India charges 150% tax on American alcohol, claims US amid tariff threat

■ *Trump previously criticized India's trade policies as unfair*

New Delhi, Mar 12: The United States has raised concerns over India's high tariffs on American goods, particularly alcohol, as part of ongoing trade discussions. According to the White House, India imposes a 150% tariff on American alcohol, such as Kentucky bourbon, and a 100%



tariff on agricultural products. These tariffs are seen as significant barriers for American businesses trying

to enter the Indian market.

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt emphasized the need for fair and balanced trade practices, highlighting these tariffs during a press briefing. She also pointed out similar high tariffs imposed by other countries, such as Canada and Japan.

Kanhaiya's march may strain Cong-RJD ties ahead of polls

New Delhi, Mar 12: Kanhaiya Kumar, a Congress leader, is set to begin a march called the "Naukri Do, Palayan Roko Yatra" (Give Jobs, Stop Migration March) in Bihar. This march aims to address issues like unemployment, migration, and education, covering around 100 Assembly constituencies. However, this initiative has caused ten-



sion between the Congress and its ally, the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD).

The RJD, led by Lalu Prasad Yadav and Tejashwi, views Kanhaiya's rise as a potential threat to their influence.

20-year-old shot dead on busy UP road

Lakhimpur, Mar 11: A 20-year-old man, identified as Amogh Seth, was tragically shot dead on a busy road in Lakhimpur Kheri, Uttar Pradesh. The incident occurred near a police outpost in the Mishrana locality, where Amogh was chased by five assailants. Seeking refuge, he ran into a bookstore, but the attackers opened fire, fatally wounding him. A bookstore employee, Aditya Kashyap, was also injured in the hand during the shooting but is reported to be out of danger.

The attackers fled the scene on two motorcycles. Preliminary investigations suggest that the attack stemmed from a dispute between Amogh and another individual, Anmol Puri Bala. The police have registered a case based on a complaint filed by Amogh's father, Bharat Seth, who accused Anmol and five unidentified accomplices of the crime. Multiple police teams are working to identify and apprehend.

Health Ministry urges IPL to ban tobacco, alcohol ads

New Delhi, Mar 10: The Union Health Ministry has urged the Indian Premier League (IPL) to ban all forms of tobacco and alcohol advertisements, including surrogate ads, during the upcoming IPL 2025 season. In a letter addressed to IPL Chairman Arun Singh Dhumal and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), Director General of Health Services Atul Goel emphasized the need for strict implementation of these regulations to protect

public health. The ministry highlighted that cricket players, being role models for the youth, should not be associated with promoting tobacco or alcohol products, either directly or indirectly. The letter also called for the prohibition of the sale of such products at all IPL-affiliated events and sports facilities.

Additionally, it urged the IPL to discourage sportspersons and commentators from endorsing products linked to tobacco or alcohol.

Bihar BJP MLA's 'stay indoors' remark for Muslims on Holi sparks controversy

Patna, Mar 10: Bihar BJP MLA Haribhushan Thakur Bachaul recently made controversial remarks regarding the celebration of Holi, which coincides with a Friday during the holy month of Ramazan this year. He appealed to Muslims to "stay indoors" on Holi and allow Hindus to celebrate the festival without disruptions. He justified his statement by saying that there are 52 Fridays in a year, and Muslims should not take offense if colors are smeared on them



during Holi. He also criticized Muslims for what he called "double standards," claiming they profit from selling Holi-related items but object to participating in the festivities.

These remarks sparked significant backlash. RJD MLA Israil Mansuri condemned the comments, stating that there has his-

torically been harmony between Hindus and Muslims during festivals and accusing Bachaul of attempting to create communal discord.

Meanwhile, JD(U) leader and state minority affairs minister Zama Khan assured that the administration would ensure peace and harmony during the festive season.

However, state minority affairs minister and JD(U) leader Zama Khan asserted that "there will be no untoward incident."

Uproar in J&K Assembly over civilian deaths and Gulmarg fashion event

Srinagar, Mar 10: The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly witnessed heated debates and disruptions over two major issues: the killing of three civilians in Kathua and a controversial fashion show held in Gulmarg during the holy month of Ramzan. The civilian killings in Kathua involved three individuals—Varun Singh (15), Yogesh Singh (32), and Darshan Singh (40)—who went missing on March 5 while returning from a wedding. Their bodies were discovered on March 8 in Ishu Nallah, triggering widespread outrage. Opposition members in the Assembly, including those from the National Conference (NC) and Congress, demanded an urgent discussion on the deteriorating security situation and accountability for the killings. The BJP countered these allegations, at-



tributing the incident to Pakistan-sponsored terrorism. The Lieutenant Governor has ordered a thorough investigation into the matter.

Simultaneously, the Assembly faced uproar over a fashion show held in Gulmarg, which many legislators and religious leaders criticized as "obscene" and insensitive, given its timing during Ramzan. The event, organized as part of a tourism promotion initiative, featured models showcasing winter ski wear. Critics, includ-

ing Kashmir's chief priest Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, condemned the show for disregarding local cultural and religious sentiments. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has ordered an inquiry into the event, promising appropriate action based on the findings.

The Assembly proceedings were marked by noisy scenes, with members from various parties clashing over these issues. Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather attempted to restore order.

ED raids ex-CM Bhupesh Baghel's son, others in Chhattisgarh liquor scam case

The raids sparked a political storm in the Assembly

Raipur, Mar 10: Enforcement Directorate (ED) team on Monday morning carried out an extensive raid at the residence of former Congress CM Bhupesh Baghel in Bhillai, about 30 km from Raipur, as part of a money laundering investigation against his son in the alleged liquor scam case, official sources said.

The premises of Bhupesh Baghel's son—Chaitanya Baghel—in Bhillai (Durg district), an alleged close associate of Chaitanya Baghel, Laxmi Narayan Bansal alias Pappu Bansal, and some others are also being searched under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the sources said.

Chaitanya Baghel shares the Bhillai accommodation with his father and hence the premises are being



covered. He (Chaitanya Baghel) is suspected to be the "recipient" of the proceeds of crime of the liquor scam, they said. About 14-15 premises are being raided in the state, they said.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) earlier said the Chhattisgarh liquor "scam" resulted in "massive loss" to the state exchequer and filled the pockets of the beneficiaries of a liquor syndicate with more than

Rs 2,100 crore of proceeds of crime.

The ED had arrested former minister and Congress leader Kawasi Lakhma in this case in January apart from Anwar Dhebar, the elder brother of Raipur Mayor and Congress leader Aijaz Dhebar, former IAS officer Anil Tuteja, Indian Telecom Service (ITS) officer Arunpati Tripathi and some others as part of this investigation.



Assam govt presents poll-focused budget

Welfare schemes, subsidies, and infrastructure projects highlighted

Guwahati, Mar 10: The Assam government, led by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, has presented a budget aimed at addressing the needs of the people while gearing up for the upcoming 2026 state elections. With an outlay of ₹1.55 lakh crore and a fiscal deficit of ₹620 crore, the budget, announced by Finance Minister Ajanta Neog, has been described as "election-centric" by the opposition. Key highlights



include substantial welfare schemes designed to benefit various segments of the population. One notable

initiative is the "CM's Jibon Prerona," which promises ₹2,500 per month for one year to students graduating

from government colleges in 2025. In a bid to support households, ration card-holders will receive subsidized rates on essentials such as lentils, sugar, and salt.

In addition to welfare, the government has targeted tea garden workers with a one-time financial grant of ₹5,000, along with a reduced electricity tariff of ₹1 per unit for select domestic consumers. Farmers have also been prioritized.

Manipur police arrest PLA cadres for recruiting minors

Imphal, Mar 11: Manipur police on Monday arrested two alleged cadres of the proscribed People's Liberation Army (PLA), the armed wing of the banned Revolutionary People's Front (RPF), who were attempting to recruit minor girls into their insurgency fold.

According to the police report, a joint team from the Kakching and Thoubal district police rescued two minor girls.

Police rescued one girl



from the Kakching Bazar area under Kakching PS, Kakching District, and another from the Wangbal Laikon area under Thoubal PS, Thoubal District.

The police stated that these underground cadres had recruited the minor girls into their organization, RPF/PLA.

Assam government names 20 for state civilian awards

Guwahati, Mar 10: The Assam government has revealed the names of 20 distinguished individuals who will be honored with the state's highest civilian awards for 2024. These accolades recognize exceptional contributions across diverse fields, including national security, education, science, social work, arts, and literature.



madorai, Dr. Bappi Pal, Dr. Purabi Saikia, Dwipen Baruah, Hemanta Dutta, and Uma Chetry, each lauded for their remarkable contributions to their respective fields.

Additionally, the Assam Gaurav Award, aimed at celebrating achievements that inspire societal development, will be presented to 13 individuals. These include professionals from diverse backgrounds, whose efforts have left a profound impact on their communities.

The prestigious Assam Baibhav Award, the highest of the honors, has been conferred upon Lieutenant General (Retired) Rana Pratap Kalita for his significant role in bolstering national security and defense strategies during his tenure in the armed forces.

Six achievers have been named for the Assam Sau-raw Award, which acknowledges excellence in various domains. The recipients include Subramanian Ra-

Tripura advancing towards prosperity under PM's guidance: BJP's JP Nadda

Nadda lauds the govt for ₹50,000 bonds to BPL newborn girls

Agartala, Mar 10: BJP National President Jagat Prakash Nadda, during a public meeting marking the second anniversary of the BJP-led coalition government in Tripura, highlighted the state's transformation under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Manik Saha. The event, held on March 9, 2025, showcased the government's achievements and future plans. Nadda criticized the previous Communist and Congress-led governments, accusing them of fostering violence, lawlessness, and political crimes in the state. He emphasized that under BJP rule, Tripura has become safer, with significant strides in development and governance. The BJP lead-



er announced two major schemes aimed at empowering girls in the state. The Balika Samridhi Yojana will provide ₹50,000 bonds to girls born in Below Poverty Line (BPL) families, which will mature to ₹10 lakh when they turn 18. The Kanya Atmanirbhar Scheme will award scooters to 140 top-performing girl students in higher secondary education.

Nadda praised the peo-

ple of Tripura for their continued support and urged them to remember the challenges of the past while embracing the progress made under BJP's leadership. He reiterated the party's commitment to serving the people and ensuring last-mile delivery of benefits. The event reflected the BJP's focus on development, safety, and empowerment, with Nadda calling for sustained efforts.

Historic 3,900-km bike rally flagged off from AP

Dibrugarh, Mar 12: The ambitious 3,900-km bike rally "Shaurya Yatra" kicked off on Monday from Vijayanagar, Arunachal Pradesh (East of the East), marking the start of the longest bike rally ever undertaken by the Indian Armed Forces.

The 3,900-km journey will take riders from the eastern frontiers to the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat, embodying the spirit of "Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat" (One India, Great India). The journey spans 3,900 kilometers, stretching from the easternmost frontiers of Arunachal Pradesh to the iconic Rann of Kutch in Gujarat. 90-year-old Rifleman Padam Singh Rawat attended the flag-off with ex-servicemen and Veer Naris in Vijayanagar.

Meghalaya pushes for NCTE waiver to boost teacher training programs

Shillong, Mar 10: Meghalaya has approached the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) to request exemptions from certain criteria to address the state's challenges in teacher training. The state aims to increase the intake capacity for B.Ed. (Bachelor of Education) and D.El. Ed. (Diploma in Elementary Education) courses. Currently, Meghalaya faces a shortage of training schools and limited slots for these programs, with only 200 vacancies available for D.El.Ed. training.



Rakkam A. Sangma, highlighted that while many teachers in the state have undergone practical training through short-term orientation programs, these are not recognized by the NCTE. This lack of certification poses a challenge, as there are approximately 18,000 untrained teachers in the state.

To improve the quality

of education, Meghalaya has also initiated training programs for science and mathematics teachers in collaboration with institutions like IIT Guwahati. Additionally, the state has been working on enhancing its educational infrastructure by constructing and renovating schools and establishing its first state university.

The exemption from NCTE would allow Meghalaya to expand its teacher training opportunities and address the pressing need for qualified educators in the region.

Mizoram CM Lalduhoma calls for unity to safeguard Mizo traditions

Lalduhoma stressed that respect, selflessness, and unity ensure harmony

Aizawl, Mar 09: Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma has called upon the Mizo community to unite and preserve their rich cultural heritage and traditions. Speaking at the state's most significant cultural festival, Chapchar Kut, held at the Assam Rifles ground in Aizawl, Lalduhoma emphasized the importance of safeguarding the values and customs passed down by Mizo ancestors.

The Chief Minister highlighted the practice of Hawihhawmna, which em-



bodies respect for others through words and actions, as a cornerstone of Mizo society. He urged the community to uphold values such as respect for elders, selfless service, mutual understanding, and helping one another in times of need. These principles, he noted, are essential for maintaining social harmony

and unity. The festival, themed "Zo Nun Ze Mawi-Hawihhawmna" (The Beautiful Zo Behaviour—Respect for Others), showcased vibrant cultural performances by various groups, including the Mizo Cultural Organisation, Young Mizo Association, and cultural troupes from neighboring states and countries. The event celebrated the unique identity and heritage of the Mizo people while promoting unity among different tribes.



Nissan's evolAD project paves way for autonomous driving in the UK

Guwahati: Nissan, in collaboration with four industry partners, has successfully completed evolAD, the UK's most rigorous autonomous driving (AD) research project. The initiative, backed by the UK Government's £100 million Intelligent Mobility Fund, enhances AD technology while preparing the supply chain for mass deployment.

The project builds on Nissan's HumanDrive and ServCity initiatives, culminating in over 16,000 autonomous miles driven across urban, rural, and residential roads—with zero accidents. Testing included 100% electric Nissan LEAFs, equipped with advanced AD technology, navigating complex real-world scenarios. David Moss, Senior VP of Nissan AMIEO, emphasized the project's significance: "This technology is key to safer, cleaner,



and more inclusive mobility. By reducing human error and improving efficiency, AD can revolutionize transportation." While the UK advances autonomous driving, markets like Guwahati are evaluating future mobility trends. With growing urban congestion, investments in smart transportation and connectivity could pave the way for semi-autonomous solutions

in India. Nissan's global AD research, including trials in Japan's Easy Ride Serena, signals a shift towards intelligent transport networks, which could influence emerging markets. With evolAD now shifting to assessing city readiness, Nissan and its partners continue to refine AD technology, setting the stage for real-world deployment in the coming years.

Tata Tea Premium Care debuts in North India, blends taste with wellness

Guwahati: Tata Consumer Products has launched Tata Tea Premium Care in North India, offering a blend that combines the bold taste of tea with the natural goodness of five time-tested ingredients—Tulsi, Ginger, Elaichi, Brahmi, and Mulethi.

The company aims to elevate everyday tea rituals by providing both flavor and wellness in every sip. Each ingredient in the new blend is known for its health benefits: Tulsi for immunity, Ginger for cold and cough relief, Brahmi for memory enhancement, Cardamom for digestion, and Mulethi for soothing sore throats. Priced at Rs 160 for a 250g pack, the tea is available in retail stores and e-commerce platforms across North India and Uttar Pradesh.

The launch is expected to impact tea markets beyond North India, including Guwahati, a key hub for tea consumption. Assam, known for its premium tea production, has a diverse consumer base that appreciates high-quality blends.



Government unveils AI skilling push, global collaborations in post-budget webinar

Guwahati: The Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) hosted a breakout session on "National Centres of Excellence for Skilling" as part of the post-budget webinar on "Investing in People" on March 5. The session brought together industry leaders, state officials, and international experts to discuss the roadmap for implementing key skilling initiatives announced in the Union Budget 2025-26. Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasized that investment in people stands on three pillars—education, skill, and healthcare. "Since 2014, we have provided skill training to over 3 crore youth, announced plans to upgrade 1,000 ITIs, and are establishing five Centres of Excellence with global partnerships to ensure our youth can compete globally," he said. He also highlighted the PM Internship Scheme, which connects students with industry leaders. Union Min-



ister Jayant Chaudhary introduced the Skilling for AI Readiness (SOAR) Program, which integrates AI literacy into vocational training from Class 6. "With global tech collaborations, micro-credentials, and industry-aligned courses, we are shaping India's AI workforce," he said. Guwahati is poised to benefit from these skilling reforms, particularly in IT, logistics, and digital services. Industry leaders expect a surge in demand for AI-trained professionals as businesses embrace automation and digital transformation.

RBI seeks proposals for self-regulatory body in account aggregator ecosystem

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has invited applications for a self-regulatory organisation (SRO) to oversee the Account Aggregator (AA) ecosystem. Introduced in September 2016, the account aggregator framework enables secure financial data sharing between different entities. According to the RBI's announcement, inter-



ested applicants must submit their proposals via the PRAVAAH portal by June 15. "The AA ecosystem is distinct in its complexity, involving the exchange of

data among a diverse array of regulated entities (REs) operating under varied regulatory environments. This complexity necessitates frequent coordination among these REs to address various operational issues such as dispute resolution, standardised agreements and common services," the RBI said in a press release.

JK Lakshmi Cement to invest Rs 11,000 crore in Assam, strengthens presence in Northeast

Guwahati: JK Lakshmi Cement (JKLC), a leading cement manufacturer, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Assam government to invest ₹11,000 crore over the next 7-8 years.

The agreement was formalized at the Advantage Assam 2.0 Investment and Infrastructure Summit in the presence of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and JKLC President & Director Arun Shukla. The investment will fund the establishment of a Greenfield cement project, focusing on cement production and value-added products. This move aligns with JKLC's vision of achieving 30 million tonnes (MT)

capacity by 2030 while promoting sustainable industrial expansion. "This initiative not only strengthens Assam's infrastructure but also generates employment and drives regional economic growth," said Arun Shukla. Guwahati is poised to benefit significantly from this development. Increased cement production will streamline supply chains, reduce material costs, and support large-scale infrastructure projects. With rising construction activity in the city, including residential and commercial developments, JKLC's investment is expected to enhance market competitiveness and cement availability.

Godrej Consumer Products launches Rs 515 crore greenfield plant in Tamil Nadu

Guwahati: Godrej Consumer Products Limited (GCPL) has launched its first integrated greenfield manufacturing facility in Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu. The ₹515 crore facility, spanning 27 acres, was inaugurated by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, along with Nadir Godrej, Chairperson of Godrej Industries Group, and Sudhir Sitapati, MD & CEO of GCPL.

The first production run rolled out the Cinthol Original soap bar, marking a key milestone for the company. The plant is expected to generate over 1,000 direct and indirect jobs, with a focus on employing



50% women and 5% from LGBTQIA+ and persons with disabilities communities. "This facility represents our commitment to innovation, sustainability, and inclusivity," said Nadir Godrej.

The factory will manufacture top brands like Cinthol, Godrej No.1, GoodKnight, and Godrej Aer, with a pro-

jected turnover of ₹1,500 crore. It is equipped with Industry 4.0 technologies, including AI and IoT, for enhanced efficiency.

The facility's production boost is expected to strengthen GCPL's presence in key markets like Guwahati, ensuring faster product availability and improved supply chain efficiency. This expansion will benefit retailers by meeting the growing demand for personal care and home products in the region. Chief Minister Stalin praised the investment, highlighting its role in Tamil Nadu's industrial growth and employment generation.



Airtel Payments Bank honours women business correspondents for driving financial inclusion

Shillong: Airtel Payments Bank celebrated International Women's Day by recognizing the contributions of women business correspondents (BCs) in Assam and Meghalaya who are transforming financial access in rural and under-served areas. The event, held in Guwahati, acknowledged five outstanding BCs—Wansuk Thangkhiew, Lanopat N Sangma, Smriti Mili, Ajami Nara Khatun, and Queen Marry Keot Bhuyan—for their dedication to expanding banking services. With over 100,000 women BCs across India, Airtel Payments Bank operates 500,000 neighborhood banking points. In Assam and Meghalaya alone, the bank has 24,600 BCs, including 2,600 women, with over 80% serving



unbanked regions. These correspondents facilitate essential financial services, including account openings, cash withdrawals, money transfers, bill payments, and insurance.

The event was attended by NABARD Assam Chief General Manager Loken Das and RDSDE Assam

Deputy Director Nizam Uddin Barbhuiya, who lauded their efforts. In Shillong, women BCs have enhanced financial accessibility, particularly benefiting small traders and self-employed individuals. Their role has helped accelerate digital transactions, reducing reliance on cash-based

dealings in local markets.

Shankar Chakraborty, VP – Sales (East), Airtel Payments Bank, said, “At Airtel Payments Bank, we view financial inclusion as more than just access to banking—it’s about making a real difference in people’s lives. Our women business correspondents are key to this change, delivering vital banking services to under-served communities while building trust at the local level. This International Women’s Day 2025 with over 100,000 women BCs working with the Bank, we proudly celebrate their accomplishments and share their stories. Our continued focus is on highlighting their success and inspiring more women to join the journey toward financial empowerment.”

Metropolis Healthcare expands footprint with advanced diagnostic lab in Dibrugarh

Dibrugarh: Metropolis Healthcare, India’s second-largest pathology chain, has launched a cutting-edge diagnostic laboratory in Dibrugarh, Assam, further strengthening its presence in the Northeast. The 1,200 sq. ft. facility, capable of processing up to 15,000 samples per month, offers a comprehensive range of tests, from routine pathology to specialized diagnostics. The facility was inaugurated by Dr. Aprajit Sandilya, Director of Urovision Hospital, in the presence of Metropolis Healthcare’s senior management, including Mr. Rajesh Tripathy, Strategic Business Unit Head, and Mr. Anindya Majumdar, Business Unit Head.

The lab, located at Galaxy Wing 2, Near Rahul Honda Showroom, Naliapool, A.T. Road, marks Metropolis’ fifth processing unit in Assam. Mr. Bhoopendra Singh Rajawat, Chief Business Officer (West, East & North India), Metropolis Healthcare Limited said: “The launch of this diagnostic laboratory in Dibrugarh reaffirms our commitment to delivering advanced, high-quality diagnostics closer to communities in Tier 2 and Tier 3 towns. By leveraging cutting-edge technology and the expertise of our

skilled professionals, we aim to strengthen the local healthcare ecosystem with fast, accurate, and reliable diagnostic services. We look forward to working closely with local hospitals, specialists, general physicians, and the government to ensure better healthcare outcomes for patients.”

Dr. Ronica Baruah, Director and Chief of Lab Services, Ekopath Metropolis Lab Services Private Limited commented: “We are excited to bring our expertise in accurate diagnostics and super-specialty pathology services to doctors and patients in Dibrugarh city. Whether for wellness, chronic disease management, or complex areas like oncology and transplant immunology, we are committed to setting new benchmarks in precise diagnosis and patient-focused care. Our dedication to assisting patients at every stage of disease detection remains unwavering.” Dibrugarh, a key commercial hub in Upper Assam, has witnessed rising demand for advanced medical facilities. The new lab is set to benefit the city’s thriving healthcare sector, catering to patients from Assam and neighboring states while enhancing local medical collaborations.

Amazon MX Player brings back Hip Hop India Season 2 with Remo D’Souza and Malaika Arora

Guwahati: Amazon MX Player is set to elevate India’s hip-hop scene with the return of Hip Hop India Season 2, premiering March 14 on its free video streaming service.

The new season promises high-energy dance battles, unmatched talent, and a deeper exploration of India’s underground hip-hop movement. The show features renowned choreographer-director Remo D’Souza and Bollywood icon Malaika Arora as judges, with Manisha Rani and Wicked Sunny adding their signature style as hosts. The recently released trailer showcases jaw-dropping performances and intense competition, setting the stage for a thrilling season. Amogh Dusad, Head of Content at



Amazon MX Player, highlighted the show’s impact, stating, “Hip Hop India has transformed India’s dance culture.

This season brings forward artists who embody hip-hop’s essence.” Remo D’Souza added, “Season 2 will take the competition to the next level with raw, unfiltered talent.” The rising popularity of hip-hop is making waves across India, including in Guwahati,

where the genre is rapidly gaining traction among young dancers. With growing interest in street performances and local dance crews emerging, the show is expected to fuel further enthusiasm in the market. With its high-energy format and star-studded panel, Hip Hop India Season 2 is poised to capture audiences nationwide, streaming exclusively on Amazon MX Player.

Axis Bank plans Axis Finance stake sale



Mumbai: India’s third-largest private lender, Axis Bank, is looking to raise ₹2,000-4,000 crore by offloading a portion of its stake in its whollyowned subsidiary, Axis Finance, according to a source familiar with the development.

The bank will use the proceeds from the stake sale to fund the non-banking financial company (NBFC). This move comes after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) indicated that it was not in favour of further direct equity infusion by the bank into the NBFC, the source added.

IndusInd Bank shares fall on derivative discrepancy

Mumbai: India’s fifth largest private bank, IndusInd Bank, has been hit by a major accounting discrepancy. The lender, on Monday, informed its shareholders that an internal review of forex derivative transactions has unearthed an accounting mismatch worth Rs 1,577 crore (post-tax), which is about 2.35 per cent of the bank’s net worth at the end of December 2024.

The development, which follows a less-than-expected extension given to managing director Sumant Kathpalia, has shaken investor confidence. On Tuesday, IndusInd Bank



share crashed 27.17 per cent on the BSE, recording its biggest one-day fall since listing. The stock ended at Rs 655.95 per share, its lowest level since November 2020.

On Wednesday, however, the stock was back in the green, up over 5 per cent at Rs 691 per share on the BSE, at 10:15 AM, recovering from an 8-per cent decline logged in morning deals.

NER Tech Hackathon 2025 concludes successfully, drives 5G innovation across Northeast

Guwahati: The North Eastern Regional Community Resource Management Society (NERCORMS), in collaboration with Amantya Technologies, successfully concluded the NER Tech Hackathon 2025, aimed at fostering 5G-driven solutions in Northeast India. Funded by the North Eastern Council (NEC) under the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER), the event brought together 57 teams from leading colleges and startups across the region. ShriLongkiPh-

ancho, Hon’ble Member of NEC, inaugurated the event, emphasizing the transformative role of 5G in the region’s economic landscape. Key industry figures, including Mr. Donald Mawlot (NERCORMS), Dr. Soumya Chakraborty (Nagaland Institute of Medical Sciences & Research), and Mr. Amit



Gupta (Amantya Technologies), underscored the importance of research-driven innovation to bridge the digital divide. The grand prize of ₹10 lakh was awarded to IndiMeat (Guwahati), while Nibiaa Devices (Imphal), Nutrexeric, and AgriSure (both from Guwahati) won ₹2 lakh each.



ISRL chose Bollywood superstar Salman Khan as their official brand ambassador

Guwahati: After a path-breaking inaugural season that transformed India's motorsports landscape, the Indian Supercross Racing League (ISRL) is delighted to have the Bollywood superstar Salman Khan on board as its official brand ambassador. With his larger-than-life image and mass popularity, Salman Khan's endorsement of ISRL represents a game-changer, taking the league into a new age of mainstream sports entertainment. With his motorsport passion and connect with audiences from all generations, Salman Khan's presence will boost ISRL's reach, ensuring Supercross becomes a household name in India. Expressing his enthusiasm about the collaboration, Salman Khan said: "I

am very excited to be a part of something I am truly passionate about—motorcycles and motorsports. What ISRL is building is truly revolutionary with a long-term vision." Veer Patel, Managing Director, ISRL, said: "Welcoming Salman Khan to the ISRL family is a landmark moment for motorsports in India." Vikram Tanwar, Co-founder of UBT (talent management company of Salman Khan), said, "We witnessed the immense success of ISRL Season 1, with top Indian and global-ranked riders showcasing incredible talent." ISRL's inaugural season



set new benchmarks for motorsport events in India with a physical attendance of over 30,000 and a viewership of 11.5 Mn in just 3 days of broadcast, establishing a new global record for a Supercross event. Salman Khan's Video Message—https://www.instagram.com/reel/DHF-trGYouJ/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link.

Amfi: Equity inflows drop 26% in February

Mumbai: With the market selloff continuing unabated—having lost close to 18% from the September peak—the net equity inflows into mutual funds has slumped 26% to Rs 29,303.34 crore in February, pulling down the total AUM of the industry by 4.04% to Rs 64.53 trillion. However, net inflows into open-ended funds though slipped yet managed to stay in the positive for the 48th month in a row and so did inflows into large-cap funds, which dipped just 6.4% to Rs 2,866 crore. However, midcaps and small caps, which have been facing the worst of the market selloff, with net investments into the smallcap funds plunging 35% to Rs 3,722.46 crore and those into midcap funds crash-

ing 33.8% to Rs 3,406.95 crore in February, the Association of Mutual Funds (Amfi) said Wednesday. Accordingly, Amfi said due to the heavy market-to-market losses in the equity segment, overall assets under management (AUM) of the industry fell 4.04% in February to Rs 64.53 trillion in the previous month. The fall in inflows has come at a time of deep market correction, as February saw the Sensex slumping 5.55% and Nifty falling a bit more to the tune of 5.89%, roiled by global uncertainties, weak earnings and a sluggish economy. All the equity fund categories, apart from the focused fund category saw a dip in inflows during the last month.

Retail Inflation dips to 3.61% in February



New Delhi: India's retail inflation dropped to a 7-month low of 3.61% in February, down from 4.26% in January, giving relief to consumers. The government's official data showed inflation fell more than what economists had predicted. It said February's headline inflation was 65 basis points lower than January and the lowest since July 2024. A big reason for the fall was a drop in food prices. The Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI) inflation stood at 3.75% in February, down 222 basis points from January. This is the lowest food inflation since May 2023. The data showed rural inflation was higher than urban inflation. In rural areas, overall inflation was 3.79% in February, down from 4.59% in January. Food inflation in rural India dropped from 6.31% in January to 4.06% in February.

Stock sell-off cuts mutual funds' AUM by ₹3 lakh crore in February 2025



New Delhi: India's mutual funds saw their combined net assets under management (AUM) dropping by around ₹3 lakh crore in February alone, due to the ongoing stock market sell-off. This is a loss of 4%, reaching ₹64.5 lakh crore in February from ₹67.3 lakh crore in January, according to an ANI report which cited data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI). However, retail investor interest in mutual funds through a Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) only declined marginally from ₹26,400 crore in January 2025 to ₹25,999 crore in February. Meanwhile, net equity inflows were worth ₹29,241.78 crore in February, which is down from the ₹39,669.6 crore in January.

Total inflows were ₹40,063 crore in February, with a huge ₹1,87,551 crore worth of outflows. Among the various mutual fund categories, small-cap funds saw a sharp drop in inflows from ₹5,721 crore in January to ₹3,722.5 crore in February. Meanwhile, mid-cap fund inflows declined to ₹3,407 crore from ₹5,148 crore previously, and large-cap funds saw a smaller decline of ₹2,866 crore, compared to ₹3,063.3 crore earlier. Debt funds meanwhile, had a mixed month, with inflows of ₹1,065 crore in February, which is a sharp recovery from an outflow of ₹217.4 crore in January, according to the report which added that overall inflows still remained subdued. Gold exchange-traded funds on the other hand attracted.

Godrej Vikhroli Cucina brings festive flavours to life with celebrity chef Harpal Singh Sokhi

Guwahati: This Holi, Godrej Vikhroli Cucina, the owned media platform of Godrej Industries Group (GIG), has brought festive flavours to life with celebrity Chef Harpal Singh Sokhi. In a special Instagram video, Chef Harpal showcases how to make naturally colourful Thandai using Godrej Jersey Milk, proving that Holi celebrations can be just as vibrant—without artificial food dyes. Chef Harpal takes up a flavourful challenge to recreate the classic Thandai in four dazzling shades—without a drop of artificial colouring.

From saffron's golden glow to the deep pink of rose petals, the rich green of pistachios, and even the striking blue of blueberries—nature has all the colours needed for Holi! And what's the perfect base for

this creamy delight? Enter Godrej Jersey Milk—pure, rich, and just what's needed to tie all the flavours together while keeping the festive spirit alive. With his signature charm, Chef Harpal exclaims, "Holi hai, doston! Rang barse, par sirf natural waale!" Shantanu Raj, Head – Marketing, Godrej Jersey, shared, "Thandai, an iconic Holi drink, truly comes to life when made with high-quality milk, and Godrej Jersey Milk is a perfect companion." Chef Harpal Singh Sokhi added, "Holi ke rang jitne natural, utne hi khoobsurat! Our kitchens are filled with ingredients that add stunning colors to our food, naturally." Watch the full video here: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DHDXAgtrLE/?igsh=bXY4a2Zzam-MydTF5>.

Airtel, Reliance lose Starlink gains as IT stocks drag markets

Mumbai: Shares of Bharti Airtel and Reliance Industries dipped into the red after rising earlier due to the overall market sentiment turning negative as the trading session for the day progressed. At 11:30 am IST, Bharti Airtel shares were down 0.84% or by ₹13.90, trading at ₹1,647.30, while Reliance Industries shares were trading at ₹1,247.10, which is down 0.02% or by ₹0.30. In contrast, they had both hit their intraday highs of ₹1,717.25 (3.37% up



from previous close) and ₹1,261.55 (1.13% up from previous close) respectively, due to the positive market sentiment surrounding both of their partnerships with Elon Musk's Starlink.

Airtel had announced its partnership with SpaceX to bring Starlink internet service to India on Tuesday, while Mukesh Ambani's Jio announced its partnership with Elon Musk's Starlink on Wednesday.

Aakash to invest ₹1,000 crore in AI, digital push



New Delhi: Aakash Educational Services is planning to invest ₹800 crore to ₹1,000 crore over the next three years to enhance its infrastructure, digital capabilities, and AI-driven learning platforms, said Deepak Mehrotra, MD and CEO, Aakash Educational Services here on Monday. The New Delhi-based education provider, which started in 1988, is now ramping up its presence in smaller Indian towns, betting on the growing demand for quality coaching in Tier-3 and Tier-4 cities. The company, backed by investors including Manipal Systems and Blackstone, provides preparatory services.

Weight loss tips: Best Foods To Help Burn Visceral Fat

Incorporating these fat-burning foods into your daily diet, along with regular exercise and a healthy lifestyle, can help reduce visceral fat effectively

Visceral fat is a type of fat stored deep within the abdominal cavity, surrounding vital organs like the liver, pancreas, and intestines. Unlike subcutaneous fat which lies just under the skin, visceral fat is more dangerous because it releases inflammatory compounds and hormones that increase the risk of serious health conditions like heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and metabolic disorders. Burning visceral fat is essential for improving overall health, reducing inflammation, and preventing chronic diseases. Certain foods can enhance metabolism, regulate blood sugar levels, and promote fat-burning, making them effective in reducing visceral fat. Keep reading as we list some of the best foods to burn visceral fat. These foods will help you burn visceral fat



Eating eggs for breakfast helps control appetite throughout the day, preventing unnecessary calorie intake and promoting fat burning.

LEAFY GREENS

Leafy greens are low in calories and high in fibre, making them great for reducing visceral fat. They help regulate blood sugar levels and prevent insulin spikes, which are linked to increased belly fat storage. The high water content in greens also helps in detoxifying the body and reducing bloating.

BERRIES

Berries are packed with antioxidants, fibre, and vitamins that help fight inflammation and regulate fat metabolism. The polyphenols in berries improve insulin sensitivity and reduce fat accumulation around the organs. Their natural sweetness also makes them a great low-calorie alternative to sugary snacks.

GREEK YOGURT

Greek yogurt is high in protein and probiotics, both of which contribute to fat loss. The protein content helps build lean muscle, which in turn boosts metabolism, while probiotics improve gut health, reducing bloating and inflammation that contribute to visceral fat storage.

Incorporating these fat-burning foods into your daily diet, along with regular exercise and a healthy lifestyle, can help reduce visceral fat effectively.



AVOCADOS

Avocados are rich in monounsaturated fats, which help reduce inflammation and prevent fat storage in the abdominal area. They also contain fibre, which keeps you full for longer and prevents overeating. The healthy fats in avocados help improve insulin sensitivity, reducing the chances of excess fat accumulation around the organs.

EGGS

Eggs are an excellent source of high-quality protein, which supports muscle growth and boosts metabolism. They also contain essential nutrients like choline, which plays a role in fat metabolism.

STAYING ACTIVE IN RAMADAN

With Ramadan in full swing, Muslims around the world are observing rozas (fasts). While fasting holds deep religious significance, going without food for hours can leave you feeling low on energy. So, how do you stay active during this time? Don't worry – celebrity fitness trainer Yasmin Karachiwala has got you covered. In her latest Instagram post, Yasmin shared her “secret to working out during Ramadan,” something she has been practising for the last 30 years.

According to Yasmin Karachiwala, here is the best way to stay fit while fasting:

1. Pilates or yoga can be done anytime during the day.
 2. Cardio is best just before iftar (the meal after sunset).
 3. Strength or functional training works best one to two hours after iftar.
- In her caption, Yasmin Karachiwala writes, “The key to staying active during Ramadan? Tune into your energy. I pick one workout a day, making sure it complements my fast instead of exhausting me. Small steps, big impact!”

Yasmin Karachiwala never misses a chance to share helpful fitness tips with her Instagram followers. A few days ago, she posted a video talking about five Pilates exercises that can help release stress.

10,000 Steps Daily: How Your Body Transforms

Walking 10,000 steps has become an aspiration for many, with fitness trackers prompting you to get up and walk in the name of reaching this step count. But where did the recommendation come from, and is it worth pursuing?

“In the 1960s, a Japanese company created a pedometer called ‘Manpo-kei,’ which translates to ‘10,000 steps meter.’ The number was chosen because it sounded catchy and promoted an active lifestyle,”

explains Kelly Sturm, PT, DPT, a physical therapist and cancer rehab specialist. Yes, you read that right. This goal did not originate from health organization guidelines. Instead, it was a trendy marketing idea.

That doesn't mean it's not a worthwhile goal. “Modern research has since validated the health benefits of walking more daily, even if 10,000 isn't a strict requirement,” says Sturm. In this article, learn the pros and cons of walking 10,000 steps per day—plus other ways to stay active.

You may reduce your risk of chronic disease

“Aiming for 10,000 steps per day can help you reduce the amount of time you spend being sedentary. It can help you break habits like binge-watching TV or scrolling on your phone mindlessly,” says Kaleigh Ray, an ACSM-certified exercise physiologist.

A sedentary lifestyle is linked with health issues like heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, osteoporosis, depression and anxiety. So walking more can help lower your risk of these ailments. Every little bit counts, and 10,000 steps goes a long way, especially if the alternative is sitting. “Studies show that increasing daily step count is associated with lower mortality risk, improved cardiovascular health and better metabolic function.

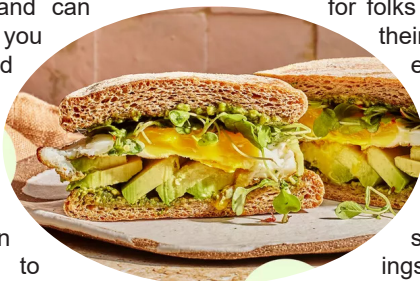


The Best Condiments for Better Blood Sugar

Eating for better blood sugar is a great habit to embrace, whether or not you have diabetes. After all, maintaining stable blood sugar levels can help reduce your risk of chronic disease and improve your sleep, mood and energy levels. When it comes to eating a more balanced diet, focusing on foods containing fiber, protein and healthy fats is a great place to start. But, it doesn't end there. How you flavor your meals can also affect blood sugar management. Despite being used in smaller portions, condiments

contribute added sugars, calories, sodium and saturated fat to meals and can affect your blood sugar levels. We spoke with nutrition experts to find out the seven best condiments they recommend using in the name of better blood sugar.

Greek Yogurt–Based Ranch



Dressing
Yogurt is often recommended for folks looking to improve their blood sugar levels. In fact, in 2024, the Food and Drug Administration approved a qualified health claim stating that consuming three servings of yogurt per week may reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes.³ In addition to protein, yogurt offers a variety of essential nutrients, like calcium, magnesium and vitamin D, that

also play a role in blood sugar management.

While you may (or may not) be enjoying the weekly amount that would offer these proactive benefits from yogurt, every bite counts, according to certified diabetes educator Erin Palinski-Wade, RD, CDCES, author of 2 Day Diabetes Diet.⁴ “Using a better-for-you refrigerated Greek yogurt dressing is a great condiment to enjoy as a dip with your meal or drizzle on top of a salad [as a way to add] a little more nutrition to your meal,” she says.

GUACAMOLE: Regularly eating avocados has been shown to help support better blood sugar management and reduce the risk of heart disease in healthy adults. Guacamole is a flavorful way to add avocado to your diet and is worth including in your condiment lineup. Two tablespoons of guacamole provide approximately 2 grams of fiber and 4 grams of fat, mostly from heart-healthy unsaturated fats. You'll also get a boost of micronutrients and antioxidants, including folate, potassium, lutein and zeaxanthin. “Guacamole is also low in carbohydrates and contains no sugar. Sodium levels may vary in store-bought guacamole, but many are close to the cut-off of 140 milligrams and considered low in sodium.



INDIA CHAMPIONS TRIUMPH

India clinch Champions Trophy with narrow win over New Zealand



Dubai, Mar 9: India have been crowned Champions Trophy winners!

India defeated New Zealand by 4 wickets in the 2025 Champions Trophy final to claim a record third title. Chasing 252, India successfully reached the target in 49 overs at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium. Ravindra Jadeja finished it off by driving the last ball of the 49th over for a four through fine leg, leading India to victory with four wickets in hand.

After the win, the Indian players rushed onto the pitch. Rohit Sharma embraced KL Rahul and Ravindra Jadeja in celebration.

Bowling first after Rohit lost his 12th straight toss, India's spinners restricted New Zealand to 251 for seven in the allotted 50 overs, with Kuldeep Yadav (2/40) and Varun Chakravarthy (2/45) making significant contributions with the ball.

India completed the chase of 252 with six balls to spare after Rohit (76 off 83 balls) and Shreyas Iyer (48 off 62 balls) shone with the bat.

For New Zealand, Daryl Mitchell (63 off 101 balls), Michael Bracewell (53 not out off 40 balls), and Rachin Ravindra (37 off 29 balls) were the main contributors with the willow. No other team has won the event thrice.

ICC Champions Trophy 2025

Rohit Sharma praises team for managing speculations after win

Dubai, Mar 10: Moments after India sealed the Champions Trophy, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli broke into an impromptu 'Dandiya' dance, holding the stumps.

Head coach Gautam Gambhir walked around the field with a rare wide grin, hugging his wards. Those were not unusual scenes after such a resplendent night. Beyond the obvious, that footage carried a profound inner meaning for the troika.

Few individuals in the last six months have been hounded as much as Gambhir, Rohit and Kohli after the team's largely ordinary

run. While the criticism might have had some merit in it, the way it was directed at them was not justified.

But now, they have a lifeline, a firmer ground to control their own destiny and a much clearer path to the future for the team. It came after wholehearted trust in the process that the management set in place before this event, as indicated by Rohit.

"Someone was telling me that we've lost only one game in the last three ICC tournaments. So, it's a great milestone to have. So, it shows a lot of quality in the team, a lot of depth, a lot of understanding with-

in the group," skipper Rohit said after the title triumph on Sunday night.

Rohit said that attitude helped the team to ward off external "pressure."

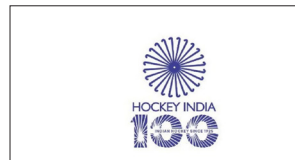
"There's too much pressure from outside. If India loses one game. There's so much speculation that happens. But, the boys have actually managed to put that aside and focus on how to win games and how to enjoy the game," he added.

Rohit was the first one to be targeted because of the way he got out after making those seemingly invaluable 30s and 40s in the longer versions of the game.

Hockey India announces record prize pool for annual awards

New Delhi, Mar 10: Hockey India has announced a significant increase in its prize pool for its annual awards, setting a record high. This move aims to recognize and reward the exceptional performances and contributions of players, coaches, and officials to Indian hockey.

The increased prize pool reflects Hockey India's commitment to promoting



the sport and encouraging talent development. The announcement has been welcomed by the hockey community as a positive step towards motivating athletes and strengthening the future of Indian hockey.

CSK tickets hit Rs 1.23 lakh on resale sites before official sales

Chennai, Mar 12: Chennai Super Kings (CSK) are yet to announce ticket sales for the upcoming Indian Premier League (IPL) season but that hasn't stopped tickets for their matches from appearing in a prominent ticket reselling website. When this daily last accessed the pages of Viago-go, the current asking price for one KMK Lower ticket is Rs 123,593 for the team's opener against Mumbai Indians at Chepauk on March 23.

Tickets, at this point in time, are listed across 12 price bands, with the cheapest at Rs 17,804. According to the website, one KMK Lower ticket was grabbed for Rs 123,593 two days ago. Right now,



there are 84 tickets available for the marquee clash against Mumbai.

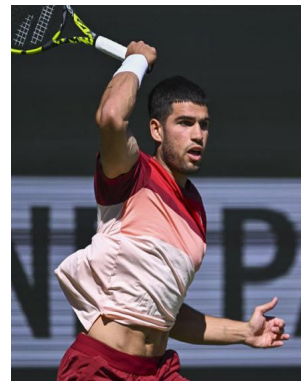
Interestingly, even the lower stand tickets (without hospitality and on the square of the wicket) are selling for 10 times its original price. For example a D lower cost Rs 1700 last season and for the same Mumbai match the price has touched Rs 20,600. Right now, tickets are available on viagogo for six of the seven home matches. Tickets are also available across venues.

Alcaraz advances to 4th round at Indian Wells; Gauff, Keys fuel US charge

New Delhi, Mar 11: Carlos Alcaraz continued his impressive run at the Indian Wells tournament, advancing to the fourth round with a commanding 6-2, 6-4 victory over Denis Shapovalov. The second-seeded Spaniard showcased his dominance by winning the first five games of the match and delivering over 10 winners in the opening set. Alcaraz, aiming to become only the third man to win three consecutive titles at the Masters 1000 tournament, expressed satisfaction with his performance but acknowledged areas for improvement.

Meanwhile, American players Coco Gauff and Madison Keys led a strong U.S. charge, securing victories

in their respective matches. Gauff overcame Maria Sakkari in straight sets, while Keys delivered a solid performance to advance further in the tournament. The home crowd had plenty to cheer about as other American players, including Taylor Fritz and Ben Shelton, also secured wins.



Amorim hails Garnacho's 'complete game' after 1-1 draw with Arsenal

Manchester, Mar 10: Manchester United manager Ruben Amorim was impressed by Alejandro Garnacho's performance as the winger put in a hard shift at Old Trafford during Sunday's 1-1 Premier League draw with Arsenal.

The Argentina international was a constant threat for the visitors from the right wing. The 20-year-old won



four fouls, more than any other player in the game, including the one that led to Bruno Fernandes's free-kick goal just before the break. Garnacho also delivered two crosses and won the majority of his duels, fared better than his recent performances, after hitting the side netting in Thursday's 1-1 draw at Real Sociedad in the Europa League.

