



Modi government engages Uddhav Thackeray before all-party delegations' international visit

Mumbai: In a significant political development, the Modi-led central government has initiated discussions with Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray ahead of the all-party delegation's upcoming visit to various countries. The outreach is seen as an effort to ensure broader consensus and representation as Indian leaders embark on diplomatic engagements abroad.

Sources indicate that senior government officials have reached out to Thackeray to discuss key



agendas related to the delegation's visit. The discussions reportedly centered on India's global priorities, strengthening diplomatic ties, and securing a unified stance on key international

issues. The engagement with opposition leaders like Thackeray suggests the government's aim to foster bipartisan to project national unity on global matters.

Tripura traders urged to adhere to Bangladesh import port restrictions

Officials stress compliance for smooth Bangladesh imports

Agartala: Officials have urged traders in Tripura to strictly adhere to port restrictions while importing goods from Bangladesh. The directive aims to ensure smooth trade operations and prevent regulatory violations that could disrupt cross-border commerce.

According to sources, local traders have been advised to follow prescribed guidelines set by the authorities for imports, including permitted goods,

customs clearance procedures, and designated entry points. The move comes after reports of certain trade activities exceeding regulatory limits, prompting authorities to reinforce existing rules. Trade between Tripura and Bangladesh plays a crucial role in the region's economic landscape, with goods such as agricultural produce, textiles, and electronics frequently exchanged. However, strict compliance with port regulations is neces-

sary to maintain seamless trade relations and avoid unnecessary delays at border checkpoints.

Officials have reiterated their commitment to assisting traders in navigating these restrictions while encouraging lawful trade practices. Further discussions between regulatory bodies and business representatives are expected in the coming weeks to address concerns and ensure a streamlined import process.

Pawar warns Raut to avoid politicizing terror outreach

Mumbai: Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Sharad Pawar has cautioned Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut against bringing domestic political issues into India's global efforts to combat terrorism. Pawar emphasized that India's stance on terrorism is a matter of national and international security and should not be influenced by local-level political disputes. His remarks come amid ongoing discussions

regarding India's diplomatic approach in tackling terrorism on the global stage. Pawar stressed that political differences within the country should not interfere with India's efforts to build international cooperation in countering terror threats.

While Raut has yet to respond to Pawar's comments, political analysts see this statement as a move to maintain the focus on national interests rather than partisan debates.

Delhi Metro tickets now available on Uber app; expansion plans underway

Uber launches metro ticketing, real-time transit info for Delhi users

New Delhi: The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has partnered with Uber to integrate metro ticketing into the ride-hailing app, allowing commuters to purchase metro tickets seamlessly through the platform. The initiative aims to enhance urban mobility by offering a unified travel experience for metro and cab users. The collaboration marks a step forward in digital ticketing

solutions, reducing reliance on physical tickets and easing congestion at metro stations. Users can now book metro tickets directly via the Uber app, simplifying the process and providing greater accessibility.

contribute to a more connected transport network. Further developments on expansion and additional services are expected in the coming months. Uber

has also announced plans to expand the service to other major cities, aiming to strengthen its presence in urban transit beyond traditional cab services. Additionally, the company is venturing into B2B logistics, focusing on improving transportation solutions for businesses. Industry experts have welcomed the collaboration, citing its potential to reshape.

Quick bites

Abhishek joins delegation

New Delhi: The Trinamool Congress on Tuesday nominated MP Abhishek Banerjee to represent the party in India's delegation that will apprise other nations about Operation Sindoor. Decision follows Yusuf Pathan's withdrawal.

Mamata backs anti-terror efforts

Kolkata: WB Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has confirmed that she will not boycott the central government's multi-party diplomatic mission aimed at countering Pakistan-sponsored terrorism.

Delhi Police ASI shoots self, hospitalized

New Delhi: A Delhi Police Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) allegedly attempted suicide by shooting himself at his residence.

3 more 'anti-nationals' held in Assam

Guwahati: Authorities in Assam have detained three more individuals on charges of alleged anti-national activities.

Modi to visit Sikkim for statehood anniversary

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to visit Sikkim on May 29 to take part in the 50th anniversary celebrations of the state's formation.

Congress slams BJP, alleging fear of dissent over professor's arrest

Congress accuses BJP of silencing dissent

New Delhi: The Congress party has sharply criticized the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), alleging that the ruling party is intolerant of dissenting opinions. This comes after the arrest of an Ashoka University professor, which Congress claims reflects a broader trend of suppressing academic freedom.



In an official statement, Congress leaders accused the BJP of using legal mechanisms to silence individuals who voice opposition. They argue that the professor's arrest is part of a pattern of targeting intellectuals and critics. BJP, however, has refuted these

allegations, maintaining that the arrest was conducted per legal procedures. Party representatives insist that the move was not politically motivated and was based on legitimate concerns surrounding the case. The incident has sparked

Mayawati appoints nephew Akash as BSP's coordinator

New Delhi: Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) supremo Mayawati has appointed her nephew, Akash Anand, as the party's chief national coordinator. The decision is seen as a strategic move to strengthen BSP's organizational structure ahead of upcoming elections.

Akash, who has been actively involved in party affairs, is expected to play a key role in BSP's future plans. His elevation within the party indicates a push toward leadership continuity and youth representation in BSP's top ranks.

Party insiders suggest that Akash will oversee key political strategies and mobilization efforts, further consolidating BSP's out-

reach among its core voter base. Meanwhile, political analysts view his appointment as a significant step in shaping BSP's leadership for the years to come.

The BSP has historically been centered around Mayawati's leadership, and Akash's elevation could mark the beginning of a gradual leadership transition. His role as chief national coordinator will likely include extensive party-building initiatives, campaign management, and coordination with regional leaders. While BSP leaders and supporters welcome the move, opposition parties and critics are watching closely to see how Akash Anand's leadership evolves.



Anurag Dhankar named Tripura's new DGP



Agartala: The Tripura government has appointed senior IPS officer Anurag Dhankar as the new Director General of Police (DGP). He succeeds Amitabh Ranjan, who is retiring this month after serving since July 2022.

The official notification from the General Administration (Personnel and Training) Department stated that the Governor, in consultation with the Union Public Service Commission, approved Dhankar's appointment.

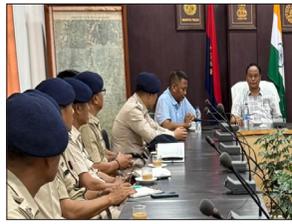
A 1994 batch Tripura cadre officer, Dhankar currently serves as DGP (Intelligence) and has held key positions including SDPO Longtharai Valley, SP of West and South Tripura districts, SP (Special Branch), and AIG (Headquarters). His experience also includes service with the UN Mission in Kosovo and deputations with the CBI and CISF.

Cyber lab opens at Imphal East Police Headquarters

Imphal: Manipur Police has launched a Cyber Lab in Imphal East District to strengthen its ability to investigate cyber crimes, particularly threats targeting the Meitei community on social media.

On Sunday, L. Kailun, Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order), inaugurated the new Cyber Lab at the Imphal East District Police Headquarters. Several senior officers attended the event to mark the occasion.

Police confirmed that Cyber Crime Police Stations across the state will now handle cases related to recent online threats allegedly made by individuals or groups from the Kuki community against the Meiteis.



Authorities reported that these threats, mainly circulated on social media platforms, aim to discourage Meiteis from attending the upcoming Shirui Festival in Ukhrul.

The control room report, released Monday, clarified that some anonymous individuals or entities, claiming to represent the Kuki community, circulated these threatening messages. Investigations so far have revealed that these organisations do not actually exist.

CM confirms Rs 60,000 Cr projects from Advantage Assam Summit in progress

Guwahati: Assam Chief Minister HiAssam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday announced that the implementation of projects worth over Rs. 60,000 crore has already begun, following investment proposals received during the Advantage Assam 2.0 Summit held in February.

Speaking at a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony in Guwahati for 20 new projects valued at Rs. 22,900 crore, the chief minister said the state is targeting a total investment of Rs. 1.5 lakh crore within the first year post-summit.

"The summit garnered investment proposals worth



Rs. 5.18 lakh crore. We made a conscious decision to filter out non-serious proposals to ensure that the gap between proposed and implemented investments remains minimal," Sarma said.

He highlighted that several infrastructure projects

announced during the summit, including the Guwahati Ring Road, the Narongi-Kuruwa bridge over the Brahmaputra, and the Guwahati-Silchar Expressway—total worth Rs. 30,000 crore—have been approved and are moving forward.

Shivraj Chauhan: Livestock IVF to be cheaper

Efforts underway to cut livestock IVF costs, boost dairy output

Agartala: Union Minister for Animal Husbandry and Dairy, Rajiv Ranjan Singh, reaffirmed the Centre's commitment to bringing cutting-edge livestock breeding technologies like in vitro fertilisation (IVF) within reach of India's farmers. Speaking at the inauguration of the second unit of the Gomati Milk Union dairy facility in Bamutia,

Tripura, the minister underscored the crucial role of scientific innovations in enhancing milk production across the country.

Singh emphasized the government's focus on two advanced technologies sex-sorted semen and IVF to improve dairy yield. "Artificial insemination using sex-sorted semen is already gaining traction.

Previously priced at Rs 850 per dose, farmers now receive three doses for Rs 750, thanks to government subsidies," he noted.

While IVF remains a costlier option, the minister said it holds immense promise in improving livestock breeds and boosting milk output. "Our research institutions are working tirelessly to reduce IVF costs

and make it more widely available. If implemented correctly, IVF can revolutionize dairy farming," Singh said.

In Tripura alone, approximately 2.7 lakh doses of sex-sorted semen have been administered, leading to the birth of nearly 50,000 female calves—a significant boost for future milk production.

Mizoram CM launches e-office for governance boost

Aizawl: Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma on Friday announced his government's strong focus on enhancing digital governance by introducing e-offices and streamlining official processes across the state.

Speaking at the digital transformation conclave in Aizawl, Lalduhoma said that the Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) government has been making constant efforts towards online services and has launched various digital platforms to ease public access and enhance digital governance after it assumed power in December 2023.

Notable among the digital platforms launched during a year and five months of the ZPM government are Mizoram State Public Grievances Redressal and Monitoring System, Kai Apps, RAMP – MSME Facilitation Cell and Portals, SDG Dashboard for tracking all villages Sustainable development goals, Mizoram State Project Monitoring Dashboard (MPLAN), and e-RAM for online tax and revenue services, the Chief Minister said. The CM highlights digital governance initiatives.

Kangpokpi district successfully conducts Operation Abhiyas civil defence mock drill

Kangpokpi boosts emergency readiness with civil defence drill

Imphal: The District Administration of Kangpokpi successfully conducted a comprehensive Civil Defence Mock Drill under "Operation Abhiyas" today at Elite Higher Secondary School, in accordance with the Civil Defence Rules, 1968.

The exercise commenced at 9:00 AM and was overseen by Deputy Commissioner Shri Mahesh Chaudhari, IAS, and Superintendent of Police Shri Manoj Prabhakar, IPS, along with other District Level Officers. The drill aimed to simulate emergency responses during hostile situations and included several coordinated activities such as distress calls to the control room, air raid warning sirens,



fire department response, emergency activation, blackout simulation, search and rescue operations, casualty evacuation, and the establishment of a temporary hospital camp. Civilians were also evacuated to a safe zone and trained on safety protocols during potential hostile attacks.

The DC stressed the importance of conducting

similar drills not just at the district level but also in sub-divisions and major villages to strengthen preparedness. He emphasized that the primary objective of Operation Abhiyas was to instill public confidence and demonstrate the administration's readiness to handle emergencies in a timely and coordinated manner.

Assam govt spends Rs 47 crore on global consultants

Guwahati: A Right to Information (RTI) application has brought to light that the Assam government has disbursed over Rs 47 crore to prominent global consultancy firms, including Deloitte, Ernst & Young (E&Y), PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), and KPMG, over the years.

The startling revelation comes from information obtained by Rakesh Hazarika, Executive Director of the Centre for Efficient Governance, through replies from a limited number of Assam government departments and autonomous bodies.

However, a significant cloud of opacity hangs over the matter as a staggering 45 departments, Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), and other institutions under the state government have failed to

respond to the RTI query.

According to the disclosed information, the Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Services Society (ARIASP), operating under the Agriculture Department, accounted for the largest share of payments, totaling Rs 23.43 crore.

Within this, Deloitte received Rs 4.17 crore for four projects, including initiatives under the Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART) and the Assam Agricultural Competitiveness Project – Agri Finance (AACF-AF). PwC was paid Rs 12.98 crore for three APART-related projects, while E&Y received Rs 6.28 crore for two other APART projects. Finance department reveals Rs 8.41 crore spent on Deloitte, PwC.

Godrej DEI Lab and Westland Books launch 'Queer Directions' imprint to boost LGBTQIA+ publishing

Guwahati: In a strategic move to drive inclusive publishing, Godrej DEI Lab, the diversity and inclusion arm of Godrej Industries Group, has partnered with Westland Books to launch Queer Directions (QD), a dedicated LGBTQIA+ imprint. The imprint will release six titles this year, spanning non-fiction, poetry, and eventually fiction, marking a significant

commitment to representation in Indian publishing. Parmesh Shahani, Head of Godrej DEI Lab and author of Queeristan, has been appointed Series Editor. "This imprint stands as both an act of solidarity and a space to nurture fresh, authentic voices from within LGBTQIA+ communities," Shahani said. Westland, with a growing

LGBTQIA+ list, sees Queer Directions as a long-envisioned project. "We couldn't have found better partners than Godrej DEI Lab and Parmesh to shape this inclusive platform," said Karthika V.K., Publisher, Westland Books. In Guwahati, a rising hub for progressive readership, independent bookstores and queer advocacy groups

have welcomed the launch. Industry insiders say QD titles could see promising traction in the Northeast, where demand for diverse narratives is growing, particularly among younger, urban audiences. The initiative reinforces Godrej's continued investment in social equity and inclusive growth across its business ecosystem.

ISRL Season 2 sees record global rider registrations

Guwahati: The Indian Supercross Racing League (ISRL), the world's first franchise-based Supercross championship, is racing ahead with momentum as it records 89 rider registrations in just three weeks for its second season—outpacing last year's tally of 85 registrations over three months. With all major athletes from Season 1 returning and new international signings, ISRL is on track for 2x growth in 2025. The roster now includes global stars like Alexander Fedortsov (USA), Adrien Escoffier (France), and Luke Clout (Australia), joining returning legends such as Matt Moss, Jordi Tixier, Reid Taylor, and India's Rugved Barguje, Ikshan Shanbhag, and Sarthak

Chavan. As the league expands its footprint, Guwahati has shown increased engagement, with local motorsport fans and potential investors eyeing the sport's business potential. With India's growing youth interest in high-adrenaline events, cities like Guwahati may emerge as future franchise destinations, boosting regional brand visibility and sports tourism. Scheduled from October to December 2025, ISRL Season 2 will span multiple Indian cities with 450cc International, 250cc International, and 250cc India-Asia Mix categories. Backed by FMSCI and Bollywood star Salman Khan as brand ambassador, ISRL continues to redefine motorsport in India.

Rupee dips 21 paise to 85.63/USD

Mumbai: The Indian rupee continued its downward trend, depreciating by 21 paise to settle at 85.63 against the US dollar. The decline comes amid persistent global economic uncertainties and fluctuations in foreign exchange markets, affecting the performance of emerging market currencies, including the Indian rupee.

The domestic currency opened weaker and faced volatility throughout the trading session. Analysts attribute the depreciation to a stronger US dollar, which gained momentum due to recent economic data and signals from the Federal Reserve on future interest rate policies. Ongoing geopolitical tensions and fluctuating crude oil prices have further weighed on investor sentiment, contributing to pressure on the rupee.

Vi expands network with 1 lakh new towers, launches 'Netties' campaign

Mumbai: Vi (Vodafone Idea Limited) has significantly expanded its network infrastructure by adding over 100,000 new towers across India in the first six months of FY24-25. This aggressive expansion underlines Vi's strategy to enhance both 4G and 5G connectivity and improve service quality amid fierce market competition.

The company has already rolled out 5G services in Mumbai, Chan-



digarh, and Patna, with launches planned for Delhi and Bangalore soon. Its 4G network has been upgraded across multiple spectrum bands (900 MHz to 2300 MHz), boosting indoor and outdoor cover-

age and serving more than 1.07 billion users nationwide.

To capitalize on the IPL season, Vi introduced the "Netties" campaign featuring animated mobile tower avatars as a cricket team, symbolizing network strength and agility. Conceptualized by Ogilvy India, the campaign includes two TVCs running across TV, OTT, radio, and social media platforms.

Medanta expands, enhancing quality healthcare and hope in Northeast India

Guwahati: Medanta, a leading healthcare provider, has reported impressive financial results for Q4 FY25, with a 14% rise in revenue to INR 9,542 million and a 20% jump in EBITDA to INR 2,476 million. This growth underscores Medanta's commitment to expanding quality healthcare across India. The company announced its first-ever dividend of 25%, sharing success with its investors and marking a milestone in its jour-

ney. Beyond numbers, Medanta's impact resonates deeply in northeastern markets. With ongoing expansions including a new 550-bed hospital in Noida and projects in Mumbai, Pitampura, Ranchi, and Guwahati, the company is increasingly accessible to underserved regions. Medanta's blend of business growth and social commitment continues to foster trust and transform lives across India's diverse markets.

Yamaha drives track riding experience in Guwahati, strengthens market presence

Guwahati: India Yamaha Motor Pvt Ltd organized a high-octane Track Day event at JR Karting, Guwahati, on May 18, 2025, attracting over 100 Yamaha motorcycle owners. The event, part of the 'The Call of The Blue' brand initiative, offered riders of the R15 and MT-15 models a hands-on introduction to track riding fundamentals, including racing lines, body positioning, lean angles, throttle control, and brake modulation. This initiative aims to promote rider confidence and safety on race tracks. Celebrating the mile-



stone production of one million R15 units in India, Yamaha also launched the 'We R One Million' contest, giving participants a chance to win premium prizes such as Yamaha R3, R15, and Fascino models. The event featured Yamaha's latest

apparel, accessories, and a photo-op zone, enhancing customer engagement and brand loyalty. In Guwahati, the event highlights Yamaha's expanding influence in the region's growing two-wheeler segment. The city's increasing enthusi-

asm for sporty and stylish motorcycles aligns with Yamaha's 2025 product lineup, including models like the YZF-R3, MT-03, and Fascino Hybrid scooters. This engagement reflects Yamaha's strategic focus on penetrating urban markets like Guwahati, where demand for premium, performance-oriented motorcycles is rising steadily. Overall, Yamaha's track day reinforces its commitment to building a strong community of riders while showcasing its updated range and racing heritage across India.

Bajaj Allianz Life launches market-linked smart pension plan targeting early retirees



Guwahati: Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance, a leading private life insurer in India, has introduced the Smart Pension plan, a super flexible, unit-linked pension product designed to boost long-term wealth creation for retirement. Anchored by the newly launched Bajaj Allianz Life Nifty 200 Alpha 30 Index Pension Fund, the plan offers exposure to 30 high-alpha stocks selected using Jensen's Alpha, promising potential market-beating returns. Customers can also select from five other fund options based on their risk preference.

The plan offers policy terms starting from 10 years with a vesting age as early as 45 years, appealing to early retirement planners. Key features include tax-free withdrawals up to 60% of the accumulated corpus at vesting, loyalty additions, a vesting boost-

er after 15 years, and flexibility to defer vesting. The product also allows unlimited free fund switches, partial withdrawals for critical illnesses, and provides a death benefit ensuring a minimum of 105% of premiums paid.

In Guwahati, financial experts report rising awareness among urban professionals about the need for diversified retirement solutions beyond traditional provident funds. Bajaj Allianz's Smart Pension plan is well-positioned to tap into this demand, providing Guwahati's workforce with a tailored, market-linked solution to secure financial independence post-retirement.

Tarun Chugh, MD & CEO of Bajaj Allianz Life, highlighted the product's role in enabling individuals to build a steady retirement income with control and confidence.



TCI reports strong Q4 & FY2025 growth, expands multimodal and green logistics

Gurugram: Transport Corporation of India Ltd. (TCI), a leading player in integrated multimodal logistics, posted impressive financial results for Q4 and FY2025. The company's consolidated revenue for Q4FY25 stood at ₹11,972 million, up 9.3% from ₹10,954 million in Q4FY24. EBITDA grew by 11.3% to ₹1,401 million, while Profit After Tax (PAT) rose 11.4% to ₹1,151 million. For the full

fiscal year, consolidated revenue reached ₹45,385 million, marking an 11.5% increase, with PAT rising 17.4% to ₹4,161 million. The growth was primarily driven by heightened demand in consumption-led warehousing sectors such as quick commerce, retail, and consumer durables, coupled with strengthened niche logistics for bulk goods and heavy machinery. TCI also enhanced

its multimodal capabilities with smart rail and coastal transport assets, improving operational efficiency. TCI's Managing Director Vineet Agarwal emphasized the company's commitment to sustainability through EV and LNG trucks and digital innovation, including AI-driven analytics and the ISO-certified TEMT tool, reinforcing TCI's strategic focus on green logistics and technology-driven growth.

Tata Power posts Rs 1,306 cr Q4 profit, bets big on Assam with Rs 30,000 cr green energy push

Guwahati: Tata Power has reported a robust Q4FY25 performance, clocking a 25% YoY rise in Profit After Tax (PAT) at ₹1,306 crore, on a revenue of ₹17,328 crore, up 7% YoY. EBITDA surged 14% to ₹3,829 crore. The company recorded its highest-ever annual revenue of ₹64,502 crore in FY25, while PAT before exceptional items rose 26% to ₹5,197 crore—crossing the ₹5,000 crore mark for

the first time. The rooftop solar business continued its dominance with over 1.5 lakh installations and a 3 GW installed base, achieving ₹100 crore PAT in Q4 and ₹209 crore in FY25. The company also reported a ₹4,000+ crore order book for third-party solar EPC projects. Its renewable manufacturing facility in Tamil Nadu produced 3,291 MW of modules and 846 MW of cells. Reinforcing its green ener-

gy leadership, Tata Power has committed ₹30,000 crore to Assam's clean energy projects, signing an MoU to develop up to 5,000 MW. The initiative will also generate 3,000 local jobs. In Guwahati, Tata Power's expansion is expected to drive solar adoption among residential and commercial users, creating business opportunities for local vendors and energizing Assam's rooftop solar ecosystem.

Samsung India unveils 'Solve for Tomorrow 2025' with Rs 1 cr grant, targets youth innovation surge

Gurugram: Samsung India has announced the fourth edition of its nationwide innovation competition 'Solve for Tomorrow 2025', offering over ₹1 crore in grants to fuel youth-led tech solutions. Open to students aged 14-22, the initiative will run for six months, with

applications accepted from April 29 to June 30, 2025. The top four winning teams will receive a ₹1 crore grant for project incubation at IIT Delhi. Additionally, the top 20 teams will be awarded ₹20 lakh and Samsung ZFlip smartphones, while the top 40

teams will receive ₹8 lakh and Samsung laptops. This edition introduces two new global themes: Social Change through Sports and Tech for Education, and Environmental Sustainability via Technology. Participants will undergo 82,000+ hours of training,

hands-on prototyping, and mentoring from Samsung leaders, IIT Delhi faculty, and industry experts. The programme is supported by MeitY, IIT Delhi, and the UN in India, aiming to empower India's Gen Z to lead sustainable, inclusive growth.

Rs 60,000 crore boost for skill development, NSTIs to become excellence hubs



Guwahati: The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship has launched a major skilling overhaul with the selection of five National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs) for upgradation into National Centres of Excellence (NCoEs), under the ₹60,000 crore National Scheme for ITI Upgradation approved on May 7. Minister Jayant Chaudhary chaired the 'Skill Milan' session with heads of the selected NSTIs in Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kanpur, and Ludhiana, to strategize future-ready skill development. The initiative aims to bolster instructor training, integrate work-based learning, and create strong industry linkages across key sectors such as automotive, textiles, EVs,

and AI. "These NSTIs will set the pace of skill development in India," said Chaudhary, highlighting the focus on institutional excellence and global competitiveness. In Guwahati, industry stakeholders and skilling institutes see this as a transformative move for Northeast India's workforce readiness. With the region's growing textile and agro-processing sectors, local leaders believe alignment with NCoE frameworks could enhance employability and investment in Assam. The upgraded NSTIs will operate with academic and financial autonomy, offering pathways from certificate to advanced diploma under the National Credit Framework, and driving India's vision for Viksit Bharat@2047.

IDFC First Bank moves ahead with fund approvals



New Delhi: Private sector lender IDFC First Bank on Tuesday said that although shareholders have rejected the special resolution seeking approval for Current Sea Investments B.V. to nominate a non-retiring, non-executive director to the bank's board, the bank will continue to work through the matter and pursue the remaining regulatory approvals in parallel. In an exchange notification, the bank said, "Regarding the right to nominate a director in articles of association not receiving requisite majority, we are confident of working through this matter, and we are also proceeding with seeking other remaining regulatory approvals in parallel."

On Monday, the bank disclosed that the proposal did not pass shareholder muster as it secured only 64.1 per cent votes, falling short of the 75 per cent required for the special resolution to pass.

NSDC unveils International Academy, 'Skill on Wheel' to enhance employability in Odisha



Guwahati: The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) inaugurated its first International Academy at the Skill Development Institute (SDI), Bhubaneswar, in a major move to enhance employability for youth across Odisha and neighboring states. The academy, launched by Odisha Governor Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati, aims to train young professionals in globally demanded skills and foreign languages,

preparing them for international job markets. In a simultaneous launch, the Governor flagged off the innovative 'Skill on Wheel' initiative—a mobile training unit designed to bring skill development directly to rural and remote areas, expanding access to industry-aligned programs across the state. With an investment of Rs. 500 crore, the SDI campus spans 47 acres near Barunei Hill, offering

multiple Centres of Excellence and industry collaborations. Odisha's Minister of State for Industries, Shri Sampad Chandra Swain, hailed SDI as the "BatiGhara" (lighthouse) for Eastern India's youth, reinforcing Odisha's vision as the Skill Hub of Purva Bharat. In Guwahati, the NSDC's initiatives signal promising spillover effects for Northeast India's skill ecosystem. As Guwahati evolves as a commercial and educational center, similar models of mobile and international training could bridge skill gaps, boosting employability and attracting investment in Assam's burgeoning workforce. The launch was attended by key government officials and industry leaders, marking a significant step in regional skill development.

Security force deployment for Arunachal's SUMP project sparks massive protests

Itanagar: The Indian government's move to deploy Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) across Upper Siang, Siang, and East Siang districts in Arunachal Pradesh to support the Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP) has ignited strong oppo-

sition from local communities, stirring tension and uncertainty. Three CAPF companies were stationed at Geku, Uggeng, and Jengging in Upper Siang, while additional forces were deployed in Yingkiong, Begging, Parong, Boleng, and Pasighat to

secure NHPC survey operations. On December 15, 2024, thousands of residents from Geku, Parong, and Pasighat protested in Parong village, demanding the withdrawal of security forces and suspension of the SUMP project. Activ-

ists, including lawyer Ebo Mili, denounced the deployment as a violation of Indigenous rights under the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and ILO Convention 169. Civil society groups have petitioned President Droupadi Murmu to inter-

vene and withdraw paramilitary forces. The Siang Indigenous Farmer's Forum insists on free, prior, and informed consent before project implementation, emphasizing dialogue over force to protect community rights and regional stability.

Skill India, Meta join forces to launch AI-powered assistant on WhatsApp, transform digital skilling

Guwahati: The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has partnered with Meta to launch the Skill India Assistant (SIA), an AI-driven digital skilling platform powered by Meta's open-source Llama models. Accessible via WhatsApp at +91 8448684032 and the Skill India Digital Hub, SIA represents the first large-scale integration of open-source AI into a nationwide public skilling mission, aiming to provide millions of Indians with easy access to skill courses, training centers, and tailored job opportunities. Union Minister Jayant Chaudhary



highlighted the initiative's potential to democratize access to skilling, especially in underserved and remote regions. Shivnath Thukral, Meta India's Vice President and Head of Public Policy, emphasized

that SIA leverages open-source AI to foster an inclusive, digitally empowered economy. Currently available in English, Hindi, and Hinglish, SIA plans to expand into regional languages, incorporating user

feedback for continuous enhancement. In Guwahati, SIA is poised to energize Assam's workforce development by connecting local job seekers with relevant training and employment opportunities, fueling growth in the region's emerging sectors. This digital intervention aligns with Guwahati's evolving economic landscape, strengthening its position as a skill hub in Northeast India. By harnessing AI on a familiar platform like WhatsApp, Skill India and Meta are redefining how skill development and job support are delivered across the country.

Hon'ble CM Lalduhoma, Minister Chaudhary launch North East Apprenticeship Pilot Scheme in Mizoram

Aizawl: Reaffirming the Government of India's commitment to inclusive growth and regional empowerment, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has launched a strategic pilot scheme to promote apprenticeship training in the North Eastern Region (NER). The scheme was jointly launched in Aizawl by Shri Lalduhoma, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Mizoram, and Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. Anchored in the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of Ashta Lakshmi and Viksit Bharat, Viksit North East, the initiative aims to provide structured, paid, and high-quality apprenticeship opportunities to youth across the region. As a key financial support measure,

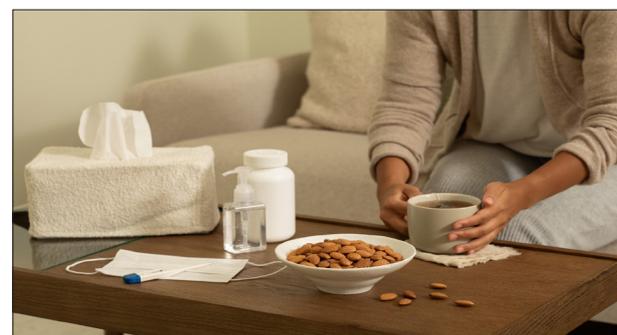


over 26,000 youth from the region will receive an additional ₹1,500 per month for one year under the pilot—over and above the regular stipend provided through the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS). Speaking at the launch, Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Hon'ble Minister (I/C), MSDE, stated: "The launch of this special pilot initiative under NAPS marks a defining moment for appren-

ticeship promotion in the North East. It opens the doors of real industry exposure for our youth—allowing them to step onto the factory floor, understand the dynamics of contemporary industry, and align their skills with real-world demand." Shri Lalduhoma, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Mizoram, expressed: "This collaboration with the Government of India will open new doors for the youth

of Mizoram and the wider North East." Over 35,000 establishments have participated in apprenticeship engagement, supported by more than 5,000 Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Melas (PMNAMs) held nationwide. The event was graced by the presence of several senior dignitaries, including Shri Lalhingllova Hmar, Minister of State, Labour, Employment and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Shri K. Sapdanga, Hon'ble Minister for Home from Govt of Mizoram. Also present was Shri Maotoshi Longkumer, Adviser for Skill Development, Employment, Labour, and Excise, Government of Nagaland, Smt. G. Madhumita Das, Additional Secretary and Financial Advisor, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India, and Shri Shreeshail Malge, Joint Secretary, MSDE

Healthy snacking drives demand for nutrient-rich foods in Guwahati



Guwahati: As awareness around weight management grows, nutrition-led snacking is witnessing a surge, especially in urban centers like Guwahati. Dr. Rohini Patil, MBBS and Nutritionist, emphasizes that healthy snacking can support weight loss goals—if done right. She advocates nutrient-dense options such as almonds, sprouts, and paneer to curb cravings and maintain energy levels throughout the day. Among her top recommendations, California almonds stand out for their 15 essential nutrients, including protein, magnesium, and vitamin E. Their satiety-boosting properties and versatility—whether eaten raw, roasted, or blended—make them a preferred snack. Other expert-ap-

proved snacks include oil-free moong dal chilla with vegetables, sprouts bhel rich in fiber and vitamins, refreshing paneer-cucumber salad, and protein-packed roasted chana. Guwahati's retail landscape is reflecting this health-conscious shift. Organic and dry fruit stores in markets like Fancy Bazaar and GS Road report a steady uptick in the sale of almonds, moong dal, and sprouts. Consumer preferences are clearly moving toward low-calorie, high-nutrition snacks, driving demand for clean-label food products. With consumers prioritizing wellness, Dr. Patil advises incorporating smart snacks into daily routines as a sustainable strategy for weight management and overall well-being.

Rapido launches its bike services in Dibrugarh

Dibrugarh: Rapido, India's leading ride-hailing platform, has launched its bike services in Dibrugarh, marking a major step forward in enhancing everyday transportation access for local residents. The app-based services are now live and available to book, offering seamless first and last-mile connectivity within the city. As one of India's largest contributors to the gig economy, Rapido has already created over 9 million jobs nationwide. Through this expansion into Dibrugarh, the company aims to generate 2,000 new job opportunities, empowering residents with economic independence and flexible earning potential. Rapido currently facilitates over 3.5 million rides daily, solidifying its position as the country's leading ride-hailing platform. "We're thrilled to introduce



Rapido's services in Dibrugarh, making dependable transportation more accessible and improving the way people move around the city," said Pavan Guntupalli, Co-founder, Rapido. "We welcome Rapido's entry into Dibrugarh and see this as a positive step toward enhancing everyday mobility for our citizens," said Hirak Jyoti Deka, DTO, Dibrugarh. By enabling residents to sign up as Rapido Captains, the launch also opens up new income generation avenues for the city's youth, supporting financial independence through flexible work opportunities.

Vi updates international roaming packs for summer travelers

Mumbai: A recent report released by Ministry of Civil Aviation recorded carrying 64.5 million passengers on international routes between January and November 2024, marking an 11.4% increase in comparison to same period in 2023. To address the needs of Indian Travellers increasingly seeking global destinations during Indian summer season coinciding with academic holidays, leading telecom operator Vi has enhanced three International Roaming (IR) Postpaid Plans designed to offer

more benefits, more convenience, and more value exclusively this travel season. These plans are revised with the onset of the summer holiday season, when outbound travel from India typically sees a sharp rise. These three revised Postpaid IR Packs by Vi offer unmatched value through Double Data and Unlimited Incoming Calls & more, designed to suit the travel needs of short-term as well as long duration travel. Vi customers can also schedule their roaming pack activation up to 60

days in advance, eliminating last-minute anxiety. To support users while travelling abroad, Vi offers round-the-clock international roaming assistance. To further safeguard the travel experience, Vi continues its partnership with Blue Ribbon Bags to offer baggage protection on all Postpaid IR packs. For a nominal charge of Rs 99, users are eligible for compensation of up to Rs 19,800 per bag if their checked-in luggage is delayed or lost beyond 96 hours of filing a complaint.



JOURNALING: YOUR MENTAL WELLNESS BOOST

In today's fast-paced world, mental well-being is often overshadowed by busy schedules and constant digital distractions. Amidst this chaos, journaling emerges as a simple yet powerful tool to promote psychological health. Whether through structured prompts or free-flow writing, the benefits of journaling include offering a safe space to process emotions, reflect on experiences, and cultivate self-awareness.

EMOTIONAL RELEASE AND STRESS REDUCTION

Writing down thoughts and feelings provides an emotional outlet, preventing the build-up of stress and anxiety. Journaling for stress release helps people process difficult emotions by translating abstract feelings into words. Studies suggest that expressive writing can lower cortisol levels, the stress hormone, resulting in a calmer mind, thereby offering one of the psychological benefits



of journaling. This form of release is particularly beneficial for those dealing with trauma, grief, or overwhelming life changes.

ENHANCED SELF-AWARENESS

Journaling fosters introspection by encouraging individuals to reflect on their actions, choices, and emotions. This practice promotes greater self-awareness, helping individuals recognize patterns in their thoughts and behaviors. Over time, journaling can lead to a deeper understanding of personal triggers, strengths, and areas for growth. How journaling helps mental health has been well-documented and tested.

IMPROVED MOOD AND MENTAL HEALTH

Regular journaling has been linked to improved mood and reduced symptoms of depression. By acknowledging and processing negative emotions, individuals can prevent rumination—the tendency to dwell on distressing thoughts. Additionally, gratitude journaling, which involves listing things one is thankful for, has been shown to enhance overall happiness and satisfaction.

BOOSTED PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

Writing allows individuals to organize their thoughts and approach problems from different angles. Journaling helps clarify situations, break down challenges, and brainstorm potential solutions. This structured approach to problem-solving reduces feelings of helplessness and promotes a sense of control over life's obstacles.

Enhanced Memory and Cognitive Function

Therapeutic writing techniques not only benefit emotional health but also improve cognitive function. Writing engages the brain, enhancing memory retention and comprehension. Reflecting on daily events strengthens recall, and documenting goals increases the likelihood of achieving them by reinforcing accountability.

INCREASED RESILIENCE

Expressive writing builds emotional resilience by fostering a sense of coherence in life's narrative. By chronicling experiences, individuals can identify lessons learned and develop a more optimistic outlook. This pro-



cess helps individuals adapt to change, build confidence, and cultivate a growth mindset.

STRENGTHENED EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Through journaling, individuals gain insights into their emotional responses and develop empathy toward themselves and others. This heightened emotional intelligence improves interpersonal relationships and communication skills, fostering healthier social connections as some of the psychological benefits of journaling.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Choose a Medium: Use a physical journal, digital app, or even voice notes.

Set a Routine: Dedicate 5-10 minutes daily or weekly to write.

Write Freely: Let thoughts flow without judgment or editing.

Experiment: Try different formats such as lists, letters, or drawings.

Instead of just recording events or daily activities, focus on exploring your emotions. Ask yourself why you



felt a certain way about an event or interaction. This deeper exploration can provide insights into your emotional triggers and help you manage your emotional responses more effectively.

Connect with what you're actually feeling and practice Labeling Emotions during this episode of the Daily Jay.

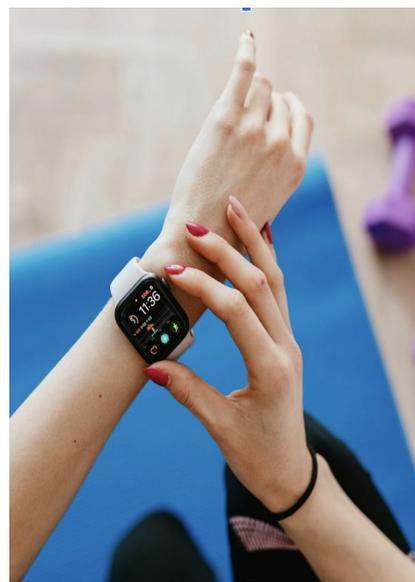
Try to be fully present while journaling. Mindfulness can turn your writing into a meditative practice, helping you center your thoughts and feelings in the moment. Observing your thoughts without judgment can enhance your self-awareness and emotional regulation.

A self-therapy journal is a personal space where you can explore your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors without judgment. To create a self-therapy journal, start by writing about events that affected your mood, describe how you felt, and explore the reasons behind those feelings. Reflect on your reactions and consider alternative ways of handling similar situations in the future. You can also use journaling prompts to explore deeper thoughts and feelings, set personal goals, and monitor your progress. Regularly reviewing your entries can provide insights into patterns and growth over time.

Wearable tech's impact on fitness and health tracking

Wearable fitness technology has revolutionized personal fitness, transforming how individuals monitor, manage, and achieve their health and wellness goals

Wearable fitness technology has become a transformative force in the realm of personal fitness, revolutionizing the way individuals track, manage, and enhance their health and wellness goals. From fitness bands to smartwatches for fitness tracking and advanced biometric trackers, these devices



have evolved to become indispensable tools for fitness enthusiasts and health-conscious individuals alike and revolutionized how wearables improve fitness.

MONITORING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

One of the primary functions of wearable health devices is tracking physical activity. Devices like Fitbit, Garmin, and Apple Watch monitor metrics such as steps taken, distance covered, calories burned, and active minutes. This real-time data helps users set and achieve personalized fitness goals, fostering motivation and accountability.

HEART RATE AND CARDIO MONITORING

Modern wearable devices, including the best smartwatch for health monitoring, are equipped with heart rate monitors that provide continuous or on-demand heart rate tracking. This feature is crucial for understanding cardiovascular health, optimizing workout intensity, and ensuring safety during physical activity. Advanced wearables also provide VO2 max estimates, helping users gauge their aerobic fitness levels.

SLEEP ANALYSIS

Quality sleep is a cornerstone of overall health and fitness. Many wearable health devices analyze sleep patterns by tracking parameters like duration, deep sleep, REM cycles, and disturbances. This data helps users identify habits that improve or hinder sleep, leading to better recovery and performance.

ENCOURAGING CONSISTENCY

Wearables often include features like reminders to move, guided workouts, and gamified challenges. These tools encourage users to maintain consistency in their fitness routines, making it easier to integrate physical activity into daily life.

Wearable fitness technology has undoubtedly redefined personal fitness by providing tools for self-monitoring, motivation, and improved health outcomes.





Rare trees face extinction

On a windswept plateau high above the Arabian Sea, Sena Keybani cradles a sapling that barely reaches her ankle. The young plant, protected by a makeshift fence of wood and wire, is a kind of dragon's blood tree — a species found only on the Yemeni island of Socotra that is now struggling to survive intensifying threats from climate change. "Seeing the trees die, it's like losing one of your babies," said Keybani, whose family runs a nursery dedicated to preserving the species.

Known for their mushroom-shaped canopies and the blood-red sap that courses through their wood, the trees once stood in great numbers.

But increasingly severe cyclones, grazing by invasive goats, and persistent turmoil in Yemen — which is one of the world's poorest countries and beset by a decade-long civil war — have pushed the species, and the unique ecosystem it supports, toward collapse.

Often compared to the Galapagos Islands, Socotra floats in splendid isolation some 240 kilometers (150 miles) off the Horn of Africa. Its biological riches — including 825 plant species, of which more than a third exist nowhere else on Earth

— have earned it UNESCO World Heritage status. Among them are bottle trees, whose swollen trunks jut from rock like sculptures, and frankincense, their gnarled limbs twisting skywards.

But it's the dragon's blood tree that has long captured imaginations, its otherworldly form seeming to belong more to the pages of Dr. Seuss than to any terrestrial forest. The island receives about 5,000 tourists annually, many drawn by the surreal sight of the dragon's blood forests.

Visitors are required to hire local guides and stay in campsites run by Socotran families to ensure tourist dollars are distributed locally. If the trees were to disappear, the industry that sustains many islanders could vanish with them.

"With the income we receive from tourism, we live better than those on the mainland," said Mubarak Kopi, Socotra's head of tourism.

But the tree is more than a botanical curiosity: It's a pillar of Socotra's ecosystem. The umbrella-like canopies capture fog and rain, which they channel into the soil below, allowing neighboring plants to thrive in the arid climate.

"When you lose the trees,

you lose everything — the soil, the water, the entire ecosystem," said Kay Van Damme, a Belgian conservation biologist who has worked on Socotra since 1999.

Without intervention, scientists like Van Damme warn these trees could disappear within a few centuries — and with them many other species. "We've succeeded, as humans, to destroy huge amounts of nature on most of the world's islands," he said. "Socotra is a place where we can actually really do something. But if we don't, this one is on us."

Across the rugged expanse of Socotra's Firmihin plateau, the largest remaining dragon's blood forest unfolds against the backdrop of jagged mountains. Thousands of wide canopies balance atop slender trunks. Socotra starlings dart among the dense crowns while Egyptian vultures bank against the relentless gusts. Below, goats weave through the rocky undergrowth.

The frequency of severe cyclones has increased dramatically across the Arabian Sea in recent decades, according to a 2017 study in the journal *Nature Climate Change*, and Socotra's dragon's blood trees are

paying the price. In 2015, a devastating one-two punch of cyclones — unprecedented in their intensity — tore across the island. Centuries-old specimens, some over 500 years old, which had weathered countless previous storms, were uprooted by the thousands. The destruction continued in 2018 with yet another cyclone.

As greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, so too will the intensity of the storms, warned Hiroyuki Murakami, a climate scientist at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the study's lead author. "Climate models all over the world robustly project more favorable conditions for tropical cyclones."

But storms aren't the only threat. Unlike pine or oak trees, which grow 60 to 90 centimeters per year, dragon's blood trees creep along at just 2 to 3 centimeters annually. By the time they reach maturity, many have already succumbed to an insidious danger: goats.

An invasive species on Socotra, free-roaming goats devour saplings before they have a chance to grow. Outside of hard-to-reach cliffs, the only place young dragon's blood trees can survive is within protected nurseries. "The majority of forests that have been surveyed are what we call over-mature.

A blend of the northeast

On a balmy summer evening, the promise of a great view leads you on a 30-metre climb up a metal staircase protruding from an oasis of teak, sal and rubber. From the top of the tower of a distillery, you witness the sweeping expanse of the bright city lights of Assam melt into the distant galaxy of Nagaland across the border. From being a part of India that rarely made news other than for its political unpredictability and civic unrest, things have turned around in recent years. Nagaland is now a bucket list destination thanks to the annual Hornbill festival. From traditional dances and costumes to local food, you'll find everything here. All of this is accompanied by the local chaang (rice beer) traditionally consumed in this otherwise 'dry' state. This fermented brew, though the local flavour, sits in a cauldron of creativity that has been stirred in recent times to produce a taste not just unique to the region, but also more refined.

The late '60s saw a modest retail liquor store open for business in the quaint hill town of Kohima. But that was not the end of a dream for owner Dani Chand, who grew up in Assam. A generation later, his son, 48-year-old Vicky Chand helms the production of high quality small batch whiskey, the only one to come out of the northeast. "What sets us apart is that despite being in the industry for years, we are still willing to learn," smiles Vicky.

Being a dry state, Radiant distillery was set up in 2012 just across the border from Dimapur in Nagaland, in Assam's Khat Khati, a small town in Karbi Anglong, which is one of Assam's only two hill districts. The hilly environs and cooler temperatures played a significant role in how the brews turned out to be, not to mention the waters of the Dhansiri, a tribute of the mighty Brahmaputra, that go into their making. All of these factors, along with the magical hands of master blender and distiller John Mc Doughall from Scotland, launched this small, passionate Northeasterner-run family business into the league of the extraordinary.

Mc Doughall blended the grain spirits sourced from Chand's distillery, perfectly with the choicest scotch malts sourced from Scotland. The journey continued by setting a maturation unit on site in Assam wherein they began maturing fresh malts and their own grain spirits made from broken rice and locally sourced corn. Under Mc Doughall's able guidance and together with resident master distiller Jeevan Chand, the distillery launched Castle Hill Dark Knight, a bamboo charcoal filtered, smokey whiskey that earned them top spot as India's only 100 per cent corn whiskey. And now, it is their recently launched three-year blended whiskey, Infamous, a complex but exclusive small batch whiskey that has sealed their supremacy in the niche alcobev space. "The water changes each time you change the location as does the temperature, so the spirit we create here, will be unique just by virtue of that," says Jeevan.



BCCI dismisses speculation over India's withdrawal from Asia Cup

India's Asia Cup withdrawal rumors escalate amid concerns

New Delhi: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has firmly denied reports suggesting that India is set to pull out of the upcoming Asia Cup. BCCI Secretary Saikia stated that such claims are purely speculative and do not reflect any official stance taken by the board. The clarification comes amid growing discussions and widespread media reports regarding India's participation in the continental tournament.

Speaking to reporters, Saikia emphasized that no formal decision has been made regarding India's involvement in the Asia Cup



and that discussions with the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) and other stakeholders are ongoing. He urged media outlets to refrain from spreading unverified information, which could lead to unnecessary confusion among fans and officials. "The reports cir-

culating about India withdrawing from the Asia Cup are purely speculative. The BCCI has not taken any such decision, and discussions about tournament logistics and participation are still in progress," Saikia stated. India's withdrawal rumors escalate.

Barcelona rules out Nico Williams transfer



New Delhi: FC Barcelona have officially stepped back from the race to sign Spain international Nico Williams. Club president Joan Laporta confirmed that while the winger was on the club's radar last summer, the Catalan giants are now exploring alternative options in the transfer market.

Williams, who emerged as one of Europe's brightest young wingers following his performances for both Athletic Club and the Spanish national team in their Euro 2024 triumph, had been heavily linked with a move to Camp Nou. His impressive form sparked interest from Barcelona, but the 22-year-old eventually committed his future to Bilbao by signing a contract extension, shutting doors to the chances of him uniting with his Spain teammate Lamine Yamal.

"We valued Nico as a potential signing last summer with Dani Olmo, but right now I think the club is valuing other players," Laporta told TV3. Barcelona's stance signals a shift in their transfer strategy,

IPL 2025 final in Ahmedabad, playoffs in Mullanpur

Mumbai: The Indian Premier League 2025 final is likely to be played in Ahmedabad's Narendra Modi Stadium, sources have told India Today on Tuesday, May 20. The mast head has also learnt that the other three matches in the playoffs will be played at the Mullanpur Stadium, home of Punjab Kings.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India has taken the decision keeping the inclement weather in mind in Kolkata,

which was set to host two of the playoffs matches, including the final. The other two matches, which were set to be hosted in Hyderabad, have been moved out of the Rajiv Gandhi Stadium, and have been given to Mullanpur.

While announcing the restart of the Indian Premier League after the forced break due to escalating tensions between India and Pakistan, BCCI hints at possible venue change for IPL playoffs.

Rice's goal clinches Arsenal's narrow victory over Newcastle

London: Arsenal edged past Newcastle United in a tightly contested Premier League match, with midfielder Declan Rice emerging as the hero for the Gunners. His decisive goal proved to be the difference, securing a hard-fought win for Arsenal at the Emirates Stadium.

The match began with both teams displaying intense energy, fighting for control in midfield. Arsenal dominated possession in the early minutes, but Newcastle's solid defensive structure made it difficult for the home side to create clear-cut chances. The visitors, meanwhile, relied on quick counterattacks to trouble the

Arsenal backline. Despite a goalless first half, Arsenal continued to push forward in search of a breakthrough. Rice, who had been instrumental in controlling the midfield, finally found the back of the net in the second half with a well-timed strike from the edge of the box. His goal sent the home crowd into celebration as Arsenal took the lead. Newcastle attempted a late comeback, increasing pressure on Arsenal's defense, but goalkeeper Aaron Ramsdale made key saves to preserve the Gunners' lead. Despite the Magpies' best efforts, Arsenal held on until the final whistle, securing an important three points.

Premiere League

Brighton keeps European hopes alive with 3-2 win

Bridgeton: Brighton & Hove Albion kept their European aspirations alive with a dramatic 3-2 win over Liverpool in a high-intensity Premier League clash. The victory at the Amex Stadium has boosted Brighton's chances of securing a spot in continental competition, while delivering a setback to Liverpool's own campaign ambitions.

The match began with a blistering pace, as both teams aimed to gain early control. Brighton took the lead through an impressive strike from Evan Ferguson, who capitalized on a defensive lapse from Liverpool. However, the visitors responded swiftly, with Mohamed Salah leveling the score minutes later, keeping the game wide open.

As the first half progressed, Brighton's attacking intent remained relentless, and they regained the lead through Pascal Groß, whose precise finish found the back of the net. Liverpool pushed hard to restore parity, creating multiple chances, but Brighton's defensive resilience kept them ahead at halftime.

Liverpool came back stronger in the second half, determined to reclaim control. Their efforts paid off when Darwin Núñez converted a well-worked team move, once again leveling

the game at 2-2. With the match poised for a tense finale, both sides continued to search for the decisive goal.

Brighton eventually sealed the victory with a late strike from Kaoru Mitoma, whose stunning effort left Liverpool's defense stranded. The dramatic finish sent the home fans into jubilation, as Brighton secured all three points and maintained their pursuit of European qualification.

Implications for the Premier League Standings

The win lifts Brighton further up the table, keeping their hopes alive for a potential European spot. With the Premier League season entering its final stretch, every point is crucial in determining the final standings.

For Liverpool, the defeat presents a setback in their chase for a higher league finish. They will need to recover quickly to stay in contention for their remaining objectives.

Brighton's manager hailed the team's fighting spirit, emphasizing the importance of the victory in their quest for European football. "It was a brilliant team performance. The players showed great determination and skill, and we fully deserved the win," he stated.

Neeraj Chopra: India's 90m javelin goal achieved



New Delhi: The 90m burden is off India's back, said star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra on Friday, May 16, at the Doha Diamond League. Reacting to his best-ever throw, which landed at 90.23m at the Suheim bin Hamad Stadium, Neeraj said he never felt personal pressure to achieve the feat, but it felt like the monkey was off India's - and Indian fans' back, many of whom believed he might never hit the magic figure.

Back in 2024, Neeraj had acknowledged that the 90m barrier had been on his mind for a while and that he was desperate to achieve it. On Friday, when Neeraj realised he had thrown past 90 metres, a sense of calm was visible on his face. The double Olympic medallist, however, said he had already broken the 88-89m barrier before and was confident he would eventually surpass the mark - a confidence he felt many Indians didn't share.

"I always thought that 90m was within reach. I had thrown 88-plus a couple of times.

KKR, RCB add Shivam Shukla, Muzarabani as IPL replacements

Shukla's arrival adds intrigue to the tournament

Bengaluru: Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) and Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) have announced the signing of Shivam Shukla as a replacement player for the remainder of the IPL 2025 season. The move comes as both teams adjust their squads following player injuries and availability concerns.

KKR and RCB, both vying for playoff spots, believe Shukla's inclusion will strengthen their respective line-ups. Team officials have expressed confidence in his ability to contribute, citing his impressive domestic



performances. While RCB and KKR continue to refine their strategies, the league's mid-season roster changes have stirred discussions among fans and analysts about team dynamics and

upcoming match results. As IPL 2025 heads into its final phase, franchises continue to adjust their line-ups for optimal results. Shukla's arrival adds intrigue to the tournament.