



## India-Pakistan drone arms race escalates

**New Delhi/Islamabad:** India and Pakistan are engaged in a drone arms race, marking a new phase in their military rivalry. On May 8, India's air-defense systems intercepted Pakistani drones over Jammu, marking the first large-scale use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in their conflict. The four-day battle saw both nations deploying fighter jets, missiles, and artillery, but drones played a pivotal role.

India plans to invest \$470 million in UAVs over the next 12 to 24 months, tripling its pre-conflict spending. Pakistan, facing financial constraints, is collaborating with China and Turkey to enhance its drone capabilities. Experts believe both nations view drone strikes as a way to exert military pressure without escalating into full-scale war. The conflict underscores the growing importance of UAV warfare in South Asia, with both countries rapidly advancing their drone technology.

## Pawan Kalyan may campaign for AIADMK-BJP alliance in Tamil Nadu

**■ Kalyan criticizes Udhayanidhi Stalin's political stance**

**Chennai:** In a significant political development, Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister and Jana Sena Party leader Pawan Kalyan has indicated his willingness to campaign for the AIADMK-BJP alliance in Tamil Nadu ahead of the 2026 assembly elections. His statement comes as the BJP seeks to leverage his popularity among Tamil Nadu's sizable Telugu-speaking population.

During a seminar on 'One Nation, One Election',



Kalyan emphasized the need for electoral stability and urged Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin to reconsider his opposition to the policy. He highlighted that former Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi had previously supported simultaneous elections, contrasting it with the DMK's current stance.

## NIA Arrests CRPF Jawan for espionage with Pakistan

**New Delhi:** The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested Moti Ram Jat, an Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), for allegedly sharing classified national security information with Pakistan Intelligence Officers (PIOs). The arrest took place in Delhi, following an extensive investigation into espionage activities.

According to officials, Jat had been actively involved in espionage since 2023, passing sensitive information to PIOs in exchange

for financial compensation. The NIA revealed that he received funds through various conduits, raising concerns about the extent of the security breach. The CRPF dismissed Jat from service immediately after his arrest, citing violations of established norms and protocols. His activities were uncovered during routine social media monitoring, conducted in coordination with central intelligence agencies. Jat was presented before the Special Court at Patiala House.

## Assam CM flags Congress leader's claim on Gogoi's wife

**Guwahati:** Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has alleged that Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi's British wife, Elizabeth Colburn, was on the payroll of the Pakistan government. The claim, which Sarma described as a "startling confession", was reportedly made by senior Congress leader Ripun Bora. Sarma stated that Bora's remarks had revealed previously unknown



details, raising serious concerns about national security. He emphasized that the presence of an individual allegedly linked to a hostile foreign state

within the personal sphere of a sitting Member of Parliament posed a threat to India's institutions.

The Assam CM further alleged that Colburn had traveled between India and Pakistan 19 times, fueling suspicions about her connections. Bora, however, clarified that Colburn works for an international NGO with operations in multiple countries, including Pakistan.

### Quick bites

**Ravi Shankar Prasad urges diaspora on terrorism**

**Paris:** BJP MP Ravi Shankar Prasad urged the Indian community in France to highlight India's fight against terrorism.

**Maharashtra fisheries drafts vision plan**

**Mumbai:** The Maharashtra Fisheries Department is drafting Vision Document 2047, focusing on climate change, AI integration, and sustainable fishing practices.

**Maoist commander killed in Jharkhand**

**Ranchi:** A CPI (Maoist) commander was killed in a gunfight with security forces in Jharkhand's Palamu district.

**President Murmu welcomes new CJI**

**New Delhi:** President Droupadi Murmu hosted a dinner at Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre to welcome the newly sworn-in Chief Justice of India, Justice Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai.

**Balasaheb Thackeray would've backed Modi**

**Mumbai:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah stated that if Balasaheb Thackeray were alive, he would have embraced Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the success of Operation Sindoor.

## SC to hear plea against NEET-PG 2025 exam's two-shift format

**SC Bench acknowledges plea, hearing scheduled soon**

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court has agreed to hear a plea challenging the National Board of Examination's (NBE) decision to conduct the NEET-PG 2025 exam in two shifts. The exam is scheduled for June 15, with results expected by July 15. A bench comprising Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih acknowledged the urgency of the matter after petitioners pointed out that admit cards are set to be issued on June 2. The court assured that the plea would be listed for hearing within a day or two.



difficulty levels between shifts. The plea seeks a directive for the NBE to conduct the test in a single shift to ensure a just, fair, reasonable, and equitable competition for all candidates.

Earlier, on May 5, the Supreme Court had sought responses from the NBE, National Medical Council (NMC), and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

regarding the petition. The petitioners raised concerns that the score normalization process may not fully address discrepancies in difficulty levels between shifts.

This development comes shortly after the Supreme Court issued guidelines to prevent seat-blocking in NEET-PG counselling and mandated the disclosure of raw scores, answer keys.

## Delhi CM warns officials over waterlogging consequences

**New Delhi:** Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta has issued a stern warning to officials, stating that they will be held accountable if waterlogging occurs in areas under their jurisdiction. Speaking at an event in Shalimar Bagh, her constituency, Gupta emphasized that officers responsible for monitoring waterlogging points must ensure proper drainage or face disciplinary action.

The warning comes after recent heavy rains led to severe waterlogging at Minto Bridge underpass, prompting concerns over the city's drainage system. Gupta revealed that last month, officials were assigned specific waterlogging points, and action was taken against those responsible for the sub-

mergence of Minto Bridge during the recent downpour.

In addition to addressing waterlogging, Gupta reassured residents that no slums would be demolished unless permanent housing was provided. She accused the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) of spreading misinformation regarding slum demolitions and highlighted that ₹700 crore had been allocated for infrastructure improvements in slum areas, including drains, streets, toilets, and parks. Delhi government has been under scrutiny for its handling of monsoon preparedness, with opposition parties criticizing its response to urban flooding. Gupta's remarks signal a tough stance on accountability.



# IMD issues 72-hr heavy rain alert for Assam amid early monsoon arrival

**Guwahati:** The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has alerted Assam to expect heavy to very heavy rainfall over the next 72 hours as the Southwest Monsoon arrives earlier than usual in parts of India, including the Northeast.

The monsoon reached Kerala on May 24, marking its earliest onset since 2009, when it arrived on May 23. Typically arriving

on June 1, this early start also recalls the record earliest monsoon arrival on May 19, 1990.

The early monsoon advance has brought pre-monsoon showers to Mizoram and pushed the Northern Limit of Monsoon northwards, covering key locations such as Karwar, Shimoga, Chennai, Saiha, and extending to 27°N/98°E.

This progression signals



deeper penetration into Assam and Nagaland. The IMD forecasts part-

ly cloudy skies with occasional rain or thunder-showers in Guwahati and nearby areas for the next five days. It expects a surge in rainfall and thunderstorms over the weekend, increasing the risk of flooding.

The IMD also warned about gusty winds and lightning in isolated pockets, which could worsen flash flooding and water-logging in areas already

saturated from pre-monsoon rains. Officials have urged residents, especially in flood-prone zones, to stay vigilant and follow updates from weather and disaster management authorities. With Guwahati experiencing frequent artificial flooding, local agencies have intensified monitoring and prepared emergency response teams to handle potential disruptions.

## Tripura Buddhists march for peace in Dhamma Yatra

**Agartala:** The India-Bangladesh border turned into a symbol of spiritual solidarity on Saturday as the historic Dhamma Yatra commenced from the India-Bangla Friendship Bridge in Sabroom under South Tripura district. The Yatra is a peaceful march rooted in Buddhist teachings set to traverse through the state up to Dharmanagar, carrying the universal message of non-violence and world peace.

Eminent Buddhist monks from Thailand, Arunachal Pradesh, and Assam joined hands with local devotees in this significant initiative. The march, based on the Dhamma and Buddha's ideals of compassion and tolerance, holds a poignant

relevance in the backdrop of global unrest and conflicts. "This Dhamma Yatra is a new ray of hope in the midst of war and violence around the world," said MLA Mailaphru Mog, who inaugurated the march. "We want to establish peace in society by following the teachings of Buddha."

The inauguration ceremony also saw the presence of Kangjong Mog, MDC of the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC), social worker Tapas Lodh, Ven Khemachara, Deputy Secretary General of the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), and Bhante Supreet, a respected monk from Thailand.

## Imphal protest: Security forces clash, tear gas fired near UPSC exam centre

**Tear gas fired, five injured; COCOMI demands resignations**

**Imphal:** Tensions escalated in Imphal on Sunday as security forces clashed with hundreds of protesters near Johnstone Higher Secondary School, where the UPSC prelims examination was underway. Tear gas and crowd control measures were deployed to disperse the demonstrators.

The protest, led by the Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI), was sparked by public outrage over an alleged directive to remove the word "Manipur" from MST buses travelling to the Shirui Festival in Ukhrul. Protesters viewed the order as an attack on the state's



identity and demanded an official apology from Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla.

The rally began from Khwairamband Ima Market, with demonstrators attempting to march towards Raj Bhavan. Security forces — both state and central — intercepted them at Kangle Western Gate, preventing further movement. By after-

noon, the situation turned volatile. Clashes broke out, prompting security personnel to fire tear gas and use crowd dispersal tactics. Despite the measures, protesters regrouped near Ima Market and continued their demonstration. Another round of tear gas was used later in the day as tensions persisted.

## Indore Couple Missing in Meghalaya

**Guwahati:** Meghalaya police have launched a search operation after a couple from Indore went missing while touring the East Khasi Hills district, prompting serious concerns about their safety.

The couple, identified as 29-year-old Raja Raghuvanshi and his wife Sonam, had rented a two-wheeler to explore Sohra, a popular tourist destination also known as Cherrapunji. Police confirmed that the pair was last seen in the area on Sunday.

Their brother, Govind Raghuvanshi, alerted the police after repeated attempts to contact them failed. "He reported that both phones had been switched off since Sunday night," a senior police official stated.

In response, police teams began combing the region. They are questioning local hotel and homestay staff, contacting vehicle rental agencies, and checking nearby areas for any clues. Officials have also asked local residents to report any sightings or information that could help locate the missing couple.

Local authorities have launched a search and rescue operation to locate the missing couple and determine the circumstances surrounding their disappearance. Officials are investigating all possible leads and urging residents to report any relevant information.

## Arunachal villagers, govt ink MoU for Siang Upper project feasibility study

**Itanagar:** Villagers from Pangkang (Kumku) in Arunachal Pradesh have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the state government to commence the Preliminary Feasibility Report (PFR) for the Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP) at Boleng in Siang district.

The MoU was signed on Friday by village leaders Taba Tamut and Bakin Tali, and Siang Deputy Commissioner PN Thungon, representing the government. The signing ceremony was attended by Arunachal Pradesh Minister for Panchayati Raj, State Transport, and Cooperation Ojing Tasing; Joint Secretary for Hydropower Hage Lailang; Chief Engineer for Hydropower Atek



Miyu; and BJP Arunachal Pradesh General Secretary Nalong Mize.

The agreement includes a development package of Rs 5 crore over three years, to be overseen by a Village Development Committee (VDC) composed mainly of families likely to be affected by the project.

The VDC will manage infrastructure improvements, health services, and livelihood programs in the village.

The MoU also provides for continuous consultations with local stakeholders to ensure the project aligns with community priorities.

## Himanta blames Nehru, Indira for Northeast's corridor failure

**Guwahati:** Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma cited Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi's "strategic failures" behind the Northeast not having a secure geographical corridor. He alleged that despite opportunities, Jawaharlal Nehru failed to include Chittagong into India and Indira Gandhi was unable to negotiate a broader and more secure geographical corridor to the Northeast.

Speaking at the 10th Governing Council meeting of the NITI Aayog in New Delhi, he said before independence, Assam was a land of prosperity with a per capita income higher than the national average.

He said Assam enjoyed robust connectivity with the global economy - "railway lines connected Dibrugarh

to Chittagong in present day Bangladesh by 1904, and the Brahmaputra served as a vital waterway linking Assam to ports like Chittagong." "The state was firmly positioned as a hub of international trade. However, the Partition of India in 1947 severed these arteries overnight. Assam was left with only a narrow and vulnerable lifeline - the Siliguri Chicken Neck - connecting it to the rest of India," Sarma said.

He said the Chittagong Hill Tracts, despite a population that was over 97 per cent non-Muslim, were awarded to East Pakistan even though on August 15, 1947, Chakma leaders hoisted the Indian flag in Rangamati, hoping to join India. "However, the allocation of Chittagong to East Pakistan (Bangladesh) dashed those hopes.



# Godrej Food Trends Report 2025 debuts theatrically, spotlighting seasonality and regional culinary revival

**Guwahati:** Godrej Vikhroli Cucina unveiled the 8th edition of the Godrej Food Trends Report (GFTR) 2025 through a theatrical food performance titled Feast for the Future. Eschewing traditional formats, the immersive event in Mumbai brought the report to life with storytelling and sensory drama, themed around "Seasons". Backed by inputs from over 190 culinary experts—including chefs, mixologists, nutritionists, and food entrepreneurs—the report underscores seasonality as the defining trend for 2025. A compelling 82% of contributors noted a re-



newed consumer interest in local, seasonal produce and culturally rooted ingredients, reshaping ev-

erything from restaurant menus to home kitchens. Tanya Dubash, Executive Director & Chief Brand Officer, Godrej Industries, emphasized food's evolving role in culture and identity. CEOs Abhay Parnerkar (Godrej Foods Limited) and Bhupendra Suri (Creamline Dairy Products Ltd.) highlighted the report's strategic value in product innovation and dairy's continued relevance in modern diets. In Guwahati, this trend is translating into a revival of traditional ingredients like black rice, moringa, and indigenous greens. Chefs and local food businesses are aligning with the seasonal shift, tapping into Assam's rich culinary heritage to meet growing demand for authenticity.

# Vi launches Rs 299 add-on, targets Siliguri market

**Mumbai:** Vodafone Idea (Vi) has expanded its Family Postpaid offerings with a new ₹299 add-on feature, enabling users to add up to eight secondary members to an existing plan. Each added member receives 40GB of high-speed monthly data, unlimited calls, and 200GB data rollover, making it one of the most cost-effective and scalable telecom solutions in the segment. The move complements Vi's current Family Postpaid range, starting from ₹701 for two members, scaling up to ₹1201 and ₹1401 plans for four to five connections. These plans offer a bouquet of OTT and



lifestyle benefits for primary members including Amazon Prime, SonyLIV, JioHotstar, SwiggyOne, and EazyDiner, along with streamlined billing and individual data allotment. As part of its digital-first approach, Vi aims to drive customer acquisition in emerging urban hubs by offering high-value, flexible plans tailored to evolving consumer needs.

# KFC India introduces 'Epic Savers': 9 chicken pieces for Rs 299 nationwide

**Mumbai:** KFC India has announced the nationwide rollout of its new limited-time value offering—"Epic Savers"—allowing customers to enjoy 9 pieces of its signature chicken for just ₹299. The offer includes 7 boneless chicken strips and 2 pieces of Hot & Crispy Chicken, available exclusively for dine-in at over 1,300 KFC restaurants across the country. The campaign is supported by a dynamic new film featuring actor Mrunal Thakur and comedian Danish Sait, celebrating the un-



beatable value of the "9 for 299" deal. Designed to enhance in-store footfall and customer engagement, the offer aims to blend affordability with KFC's globally loved taste. A subsidiary of Yum! Brands Inc. (NYSE: YUM.), KFC continues to deliver on its legacy of quality and innovation. The Epic Savers campaign reinforces its commitment to offering great taste at great value to customers across India.

# 36% stipend hike proposed to expand apprenticeship training in key sectors

**Guwahati:** The Central Apprenticeship Council (CAC), chaired by Minister of State Jayant Chaudhary, has proposed a 36% increase in stipends under the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) and National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS). The move raises the stipend range from ₹5,000-₹9,000 to ₹6,800-₹12,300, with future revisions linked to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), aligning with the July salary increment cycle. Held at VigyanBhawan, the 38th CAC meeting emphasized reforms including



degree apprenticeships, virtual training options, and broader coverage under NIC 2008 to include IT, biotech, and renewable energy. Provisions for persons with benchmark disabilities and regional cost-based stipend differentiation were also proposed. In Guwahati, a growing industrial and educational center, stake-

holders see the proposal as a catalyst for attracting apprentices into MSMEs and skill-focused institutes. The region is poised to benefit from digital training flexibility and increased employer participation, which could help bridge the gap between education and employment. The council also released a comprehensive data report by KPMG on NAPS performance. With over 43.47 lakh apprentices trained under PM-NAPS to date, the proposals aim to scale skilling efforts and align with India's 'Kushal Bharat, Viksit Bharat' vision.

# Toyota Fortuner & Legender cross 3-lakh sales, driving premium SUV demand higher

**Bengaluru:** Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) has reached a significant economic milestone with cumulative sales of its flagship SUVs, the Fortuner and Legender, crossing 3 lakh units in India. This reflects robust consumer confidence in the premium automotive segment and highlights Toyota's ability to meet evolving demand with its focus on performance, durability, and luxury. The Fortuner, since its 2009 debut, has maintained its appeal with a powerful 2.8L diesel engine producing 204 PS and 500 Nm torque, coupled



with superior off-road capabilities. Its bold design, ladder-frame chassis, and commanding presence cater to a rising upper-middle-class demographic. The Legender, launched in 2021, targets aspirational urban consumers with dual-tone styling, wireless charging, and a premium JBL audio system, while retaining strong 4x4 capabilities. A key economic hub in Upper Assam, increasing

disposable incomes and infrastructure development have contributed to a growing appetite for high-end vehicles. Local dealerships report rising sales of Fortuner and Legender models among professionals, tea estate owners, and entrepreneurs who prioritize power, comfort, and long-term value. Toyota's customer-centric T CARE ecosystem further supports ownership satisfaction, positioning the Fortuner and Legender as strategic assets in India's expanding premium SUV landscape.

# Nagaland man's life-saving heart surgery at Amrita Hospital inspires hope, spurs interest from Aizawl's healthcare seekers

**Aizawl/Kohima:** Amrita Hospital, Faridabad, has given a second lease of life to Mr. Akuminba, a 57-year-old man from Nagaland who survived a high-risk open-heart surgery. Battling severe health complications including Type 2 Diabetes, chronic hypertension, kidney failure requiring dialysis, and Acute Coronary Syndrome, Mr. Akuminba arrived in critical condition after a failed angioplasty. Following urgent dialysis initiated by Dr. Urmila Anandh, the patient was referred to Dr. Sameer Bhate, Head of Cardiothoracic & Vascular Surgery,

who led a complex triple-vessel Coronary Artery Bypass Grafting (CABG) despite a dangerously low ejection fraction of 30-35% and diabetes-related vision loss. A multidisciplinary team supported his care, from ICU to rehab, ensuring his recovery. "I came in fear, but the team gave me hope," said Mr. Akuminba, now stable and preparing for a potential kidney transplant. Mr. Akuminba's journey embodies the intersection of compassion, clinical precision, and evolving healthcare aspirations in Northeast India.



## Indo-Japan collaboration boosts disaster resilience training for NE states; IIT Guwahati at the core

**Guwahati:** To strengthen disaster risk reduction (DRR) capabilities in India's North Eastern Region, 13 delegates including officials from State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) and IIT Guwahati participated in the second technical training under Japan International Cooperation Agency's (JICA) DRR project in Japan from May 12 to 23. The three-year

initiative (2024–2026) aims to enhance the Centre for Disaster Management and Research (CDMR) at IIT Guwahati as a regional hub for capacity building. The training focused on flood and landslide challenges, with visits to advanced disaster management sites across Nagano, Kanagawa, Gunma, and Tochigi Prefectures. Delegates explored Japanese inno-

vations in hazard mapping, embankment projects, reinforced infrastructure, and early warning systems, helping tailor training modules and action plans for the Northeast. Guwahati sees immense potential in the initiative, especially with rising concerns over urban flooding and infrastructure resilience. Stakeholders believe CDMR's evolving training modules

could significantly support disaster-ready planning, protecting investments and ensuring business continuity in the region's growing urban economy. JICA India's Chief Representative, Mr. Takeuchi Takuro, noted the program reflects deep Indo-Japan cooperation and empowers IIT Guwahati to spearhead regional DRR efforts with global insights and local solutions.

## Manipal Hospitals expands Northeast focus, improving healthcare accessibility in Mizoram

**Aizawl:** Manipal Hospitals, one of India's leading integrated healthcare providers, has strengthened its healthcare commitment in Mizoram and the Northeast, marking over 15 years of clinical excellence and outreach in the region. With five superspecialty hospitals in Kolkata under its network—following the integration of AMRI and Medica Super-specialty Hospitals—Manipal has emerged as a vital gateway for advanced medical care for patients from Mizoram.



Mizoram have received treatment under Manipal's care, including 70+ successful kidney transplants at Medica with a 95% success rate. The group has collaborated with Aizawl Hospital & Research Centre since 2017 to conduct outreach

clinics in specialties such as neurosurgery, respiratory medicine, orthopaedics, nephrology, and endocrinology. In Aizawl, the growing demand for accessible superspecialty care has led to a positive shift, with more residents choosing in-state consultations through Manipal's regular OPDs. This localized access has reduced outbound medical travel and increased awareness of chronic disease management. Experts collaborate with Civil Hospital Aizawl, sharing clinical insights to advance Mizoram's healthcare.

## Thyroid-diabetes link boosts demand for integrated care solutions in India

**Guwahati:** As India faces a dual burden of lifestyle diseases, healthcare experts are drawing attention to the strong connection between thyroid disorders and diabetes—conditions that affect nearly 10% of the adult population each. Alarming, around 25% of individuals with Type 2 diabetes also suffer from hypothyroidism, often undiagnosed. This overlap is no coincidence, say medical experts, as both disorders disrupt how the body manages energy and glucose.



**Dr Rohita Shetty, Medical Affairs Head, Abbott India said,** "People living with diabetes are usually aware of their blood sugar levels and know how to manage the fluctuations. But many symptoms of thyroid disorders might go unnoticed, even though they can impact blood sugar levels. Thyroid health and blood sugar levels are more linked than you might think. That's why it's important to get regular thyroid check-ups. With the right care, thyroid disorders can be managed effectively, allowing people to live healthy and active lives."

**Dr. Nilakshi Deka, Endocrinologist, Apollo Hospital, Guwahati,** "Thyroid conditions are often neglected, with a large percentage of the population living with undetected issues and, as a result, not seeking the necessary care. Many people with diabetes may have thyroid problems without noticeable symptoms, which can

range from fatigue, memory lapses, sleeping difficulties and excessive weight gain to constipation, dry skin, cold intolerance, muscle cramps, and puffy eyelids. An underactive thyroid can also result in fluctuations in energy levels, weight, mood, and heart rate, as the gland plays an important role in regulating these functions and supporting the body's healthy development. This is why regular check-ups for thyroid function are important, especially for people with type 2 diabetes." In Guwahati, the healthcare sector has seen a spike in diagnostics and endocrinology consultations, with rising awareness fueling demand for integrated care packages. Pharmacies and clinics report increased sales of thyroid-related medication and screening tools, reflecting a shifting consumer focus towards proactive health management. Integrated thyroid-diabetes care fuels growth in diagnostics, pharmaceuticals, and telehealth across India.

## Almonds fuel PCOS breakfast market amid growing health awareness



**Guwahati:** As Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) cases rise across India, experts highlight the growing market opportunity for nutritious breakfast options tailored to hormonal health. Ritika Samaddar, Regional Head of Dietetics at Max Healthcare, New Delhi, recommends incorporating almonds into PCOS-friendly breakfasts to support hormonal balance, weight management, and sustained energy. Samaddar suggests convenient recipes such as almond and oat milk smoothies rich in fiber and protein, quinoa upma with toasted almonds, almond flour pancakes for gluten-sensitive consumers, moong dal chilla paired with almond yogurt, and whole wheat toast topped with almond butter and berries. These offerings not only cater to health-conscious women but also tap into the increasing demand for functional foods. Guwahati is reporting a surge in almond sales and related health food products. Local consumers, especially women managing PCOS, are driving demand for nutrient-dense ingredients in breakfast staples. Nutritionists note that Guwahati's evolving market is capitalizing on this health wave, with increased availability of almonds and gluten-free products enhancing consumer choice.

## Toyota Kirloskar expands Northeast presence with Jorhat dealership launch



**Jorhat:** Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) has expanded its presence in Northeast India with the inauguration of Preet Toyota, a new dealership in Jorhat, Assam. Spread over 26,000 sq. ft., the facility offers comprehensive Sales, Service, and Spares (3S) solutions, including the T Gloss studio for specialized vehicle care and Toyota U-Trust services for used car transactions. The launch ceremony was attended by Mr. Masaru Shimada, Deputy Managing Director of Toyota India & Middle East, and Mr. Arun G Nair, Vice President and Chief Representative for the East Region at TKM. Jorhat, a key economic and cultural hub in Upper Assam, is witnessing rapid urbanization and growing consumer demand for quality automobiles. The city's strategic location

along A.T. Road makes it an important market for automotive sales, with expanding potential from both urban and nearby rural customers. The entry of Preet Toyota is poised to meet this demand by offering a broad range of Toyota vehicles—from the popular Innova Hycross and Fortuner to luxury models like the Camry Hybrid and Vellfire—backed by Toyota's trusted after-sales service. Mr. Arun G Nair emphasized TKM's commitment to delivering safe, reliable mobility solutions in emerging markets, while dealer principal Mr. Akash Agarwal reiterated the focus on customer-centric service. With this new outlet, TKM's dealership network reaches 1,187 locations nationwide, reinforcing its strategy to grow in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.

## Manash Nath boosts Assam farming with silage, sustainability

**Guwahati:** From the lush green fields of Morigaon in Assam, emerges an inspiring story of innovation and grassroots leadership. Manash Nath, an agro-entrepreneur and social worker, is redefining rural prosperity through his pioneering efforts in sustainable agriculture. A Board Member of Mohabahu Agro Farmer Producer Company Ltd., Manash introduced maize silage—a nutrient-rich fodder that has transformed livestock health and farm incomes across the region. His efforts were honoured with a State Award for Maize Silage by the Department of Agriculture, Assam. Driven by the belief that farming nurtures communities and regenerates the land, Manash has helped Mohabahu Agro FPC become a trusted name in organic inputs like vermicompost, earthworms, and organic seeds supplied to tea estates, nurseries, and government bodies including the Department of Agriculture, Morigaon.

Manash collaborates closely with the Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) under MSDE and KrishiVigyan Kendra (KVK), enriching his mission with technical knowledge. He actively engages in events like FPO Mela, Agri-Horti Show, and KrishiMela to promote farmer-led enterprises. "Farming is not just about crops; it's about building communities," he says. With a vision to inspire a new generation of eco-conscious farmers, Manash is truly cultivating a greener future for Assam.



## Tata Resources & Energy Fund surges 62%, driven by Guwahati's energy growth

**Guwahati:** The Tata Resources & Energy Fund has recorded a strong performance, with its assets under management (AUM) doubling year-on-year to ₹1,048 crore as of March 31, 2025. The energy-focused thematic fund saw inflows from Guwahati rise 62% year-on-year to ₹3.12 crore from ₹1.93 crore in FY24, highlighting growing investor interest in the region. Energy megatrends such as India's transition to clean energy, infrastructure upgrades, and industrial transformation have propelled thematic funds to the forefront of investor preference amid market volatility. Fund Manager Satish Chandra Mishra



notes, "Energy is at the core of India's growth story—electrification of transport, digital infrastructure expansion, and clean energy transitions are opening multi-year investment opportunities." In Guwahati, investors are increasingly

tapping into the fund to leverage sectors like electric vehicles, green hydrogen, data centers, and green cement. The rising inflows indicate a shift towards thematic investing among retail and institutional investors in this Tier-2 city. The fund adopts a diversified approach, combining cyclical sectors such as metals and cement with structural themes like chemicals and agri-inputs. With a 14.58% annualized return over three years, the fund outperforms benchmarks like the Nifty 50. Given India's ambitious target of 500 GW non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030, energy-focused funds continue to attract robust demand.

## Royal Challenge Game Nights debuts in Guwahati, taps into Northeast's booming youth gaming market

**Guwahati:** Royal Challenge Packaged Drinking Water, a brand under Diageo India, brought its digital-first gaming initiative—Royal Challenge Game Nights—to Guwahati, marking a significant expansion into the youth-centric entertainment market of the Northeast. Held at Sarokri on GS Road, the event was a high-energy mix of VR cricket, console gaming zones, interactive challenges, and a live screening of a marquee league cricket match. After successful activations in Mumbai and Ludhiana, Guwahati became the latest destination in a nationwide roll-out aimed at engaging India's rising community of gamers and creators. The initiative aligns with Royal Challenge's strategy to evolve with modern consumer trends while staying rooted in its sporting legacy.



same competitive spirit in a contemporary, immersive format. With Royal Challenge Packaged Drinking Water Game Nights, we're building a platform that brings players together to celebrate the thrill of the game—and to always Choose Bold."

Guwahati, with its youthful population and growing appetite for digital content, offers fertile ground for such brand experiences. The city's dynamic mix of creators, tech-savvy youth, and cultural vibrancy makes it a strategic choice for lifestyle and gaming ventures looking to build regional traction. The campaign now heads to Bangalore, continuing its journey across India's evolving digital landscape.

## Tata AIA announces record ₹1,842 crore bonus

**Guwahati:** Tata AIA Life Insurance Co. Ltd., one of India's most trusted life insurers, has announced a record bonus payout of ₹1,842 crore in its participating plans for the financial year ending March 31, 2025, which will benefit over 8.15 lakh policies. This year's payout marks a 26% increase over last year's bonus of ₹1,465 crore — the highest ever in the company's history. Among other participating plans, the bonus has been declared for key participating plans such as the Diamond Savings Plan, Smart Value Income Plan, Value Income Plan and Shubh Flexi Income Plan. Participating Insurance Plans, also known as "Par" plans, are life insurance policies that share profits with policyholders in the form of bonuses or dividends. This announcement

reaffirms Tata AIA's unwavering commitment to partner with its consumers and enabling them to fulfil their dreams. "We are excited to announce another year of exceptional bonus payouts for our participating policyholders," said Kshitij Sharma, Executive Vice President and Appointed Actuary at Tata AIA. PAR (Participating) Plans make a lot of sense in the current market conditions. Tata AIA's participating plans are designed to help you meet your life goals — be it saving for your child's future, building a retirement corpus, or creating a reliable income stream — all while safeguarding your loved ones. These plans offer the perfect balance of protection and performance: Low Volatility, Equity Upside, Life Cover.

## Centrum unveils 'Recharge' energy mix featuring Anushka Sharma

**Shillong:** Centrum India has launched Centrum Recharge, a new effervescent energy drink mix enriched with 13 essential vitamins and minerals designed to boost energy, immunity, and hydration.

The product, priced at ₹10 per sachet, comes in convenient single-use packets and contains twice the vitamins and minerals compared to leading competitors, with no added sugars. To support the launch, Centrum has rolled out a multimedia campaign starring Bollywood actress and brand ambassador Anushka Sharma, highlighting the importance of replenishing vitamins and minerals lost during daily activities.

"Atish Negi, Category Lead – Vitamin & Mineral Supplements at Haleon ISC, emphasized that while many products focus on electrolyte replacement, Centrum Recharge addresses the crucial need for restoring key micronutrients like B Vitamins, Vitamin C, Magnesium, and Zinc, essential for maintaining energy and immune health.

The product is available in two variants for kids and adults. In Shillong, health-conscious consumers have shown increasing interest in convenient wellness solutions amid busy lifestyles. Retailers report positive feedback for Centrum Recharge's combination of nutrition and taste, making it a promising addition to the city's health supplement offerings. The campaign will span digital, offline, sports, and fitness platforms. Centrum Recharge is available nationwide in pharmacies, grocery stores, supermarkets, and e-commerce sites. Anushka Sharma commented, "Centrum Recharge helps people stay energized and hydrated naturally."

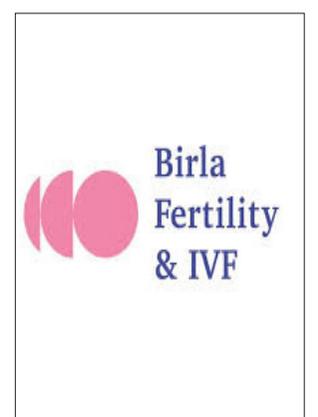
## Tide drives digital transformation for Assam's MSMEs, simplifying business management

**Guwahati:** Tide, a leading business management platform, is empowering Assam's MSMEs to take control of their finances and operations through a unified digital app. Entrepreneurs from Maligaon's hardware shops to tuition centres in Kamrup Metro are adopting Tide to bypass traditional challenges like long queues, paperwork, and limited credit access. The app offers end-to-end services including Udyam registration, GST application, digital payments via UPI, utility bill payments, and easy access to government schemes — all from a single platform. Tide also facilitates credit connections, fixed deposits with up to 9.1% interest, and soon, the Tide NCMC card

for seamless travel across metros and public transport. Its simple interface caters to first-time smartphone users, making business management faster and more accessible. In Guwahati, local traders and service providers are embracing Tide's digital toolkit to streamline financial transactions and reduce dependency on physical offices. This shift is boosting operational efficiency and enabling MSMEs in Guwahati to scale up with greater financial control and agility. Gurjodhpal Singh, CEO of Tide India, noted that MSMEs are the backbone of Assam's economy, and Tide's digital-first approach is key to unlocking their growth potential nationwide.

## What to anticipate during your fertility clinic visit (It's not what you think)

**Guwahati:** Hesitation is normal. Most couples are anxious before entering a fertility clinic. Reading and knowing about fertility treatments may not be enough and there tends to a lot of questions around what it would be like inside a fertility clinic. Will there be too many tests? Will they recommend IVF immediately? What if something is actually wrong? What will others say? But here's the reality: infertility is a medical condition—not a measure of your worth. Just like you visit doctors for any other health issue, seeing a fertility specialist for your reproductive health is no different. At a fertility clinic, your journey doesn't begin with scans or needles. It starts with a conversation. First Step: Listening, Not Testing: On day one, you aren't just immediately put through medical tests. You're heard—your lifestyle, stress, medical history, diet, even emotional readiness are all understood carefully. The goal? To know your story, not just your symptoms. There is also an initial registration, which is just to make a safe patient record. Simple Initial Tests, No Panic: Once



an initial understanding is gained, doctors would suggest the most basic of the tests and they aren't hectic at all. For women: hormone test, thyroid test, and an ultrasound. For men: semen analysis. IVF Isn't the Only Solution: Most people think that fertility clinics instantly suggest IVF, which is not the case. Good fertility clinics personalise your care, which might only need emotional or lifestyle-based intervention at times. Financial Clarity, Always: After your initial consultation with the fertility specialist, you should get a clear breakdown of all involved costs and the best fertility clinics are transparent and have financial plans to help you make informed choices.



## Iranian wrestler triumphs as Dangal returns to J&K's Ramban after years

Ramban MLA hails peaceful security post-Pahalgam attack

**Ramban:** After a five-year hiatus, the traditional Dangal wrestling event made a grand return to Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district, drawing enthusiastic crowds and international participation. The highlight of the competition was Iranian wrestler Ahmad Mirza Puria, who secured victory against Bupinder Ajnala from Punjab, claiming the coveted title.

The event, organized by the Dangal Committee Chanderkote in collaboration with the police and Army, saw over 50 wrestlers competing, including athletes from various parts of India and Iran. The competition was held for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic, marking a significant mo-



ment for sports revival in the region. Local leaders, including Ramban MLA Arjun Singh Raju, praised the organizers, particularly police officer Majid Ali, for successfully hosting the event. Raju emphasized that the return of Dangal sends a strong message about the peaceful security situation in Jammu and Kashmir, especially in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor. The event also

served as a platform to encourage youth participation in sports. Raju urged young people to embrace athletics and avoid negative influences such as drug abuse. Ramban Senior Superintendent of Police Kulbir Singh expressed satisfaction with the large turnout, reaffirming the police's commitment to supporting sports activities in the region. With its successful return, the Dangal in Ramban has reaffirmed its status.

## Cristiano Ronaldo says Al-Nassr chapter 'over'

**Saudi Arabia:** Portuguese football superstar Cristiano Ronaldo has hinted at his departure from Al-Nassr, declaring that his "chapter is over" in a cryptic social media post. The announcement comes just hours after the conclusion of the Saudi Pro League, where Ronaldo finished as the league's top goal scorer with 24 goals.

Ronaldo, who joined Al-Nassr in 2022 following his exit from Manchester United, has been a key figure in Saudi football. However, his contract with the club is set to expire this summer, fueling speculation about his next move.

A special transfer window from June 1-10 has been opened for clubs participating in the FIFA Club World Cup, allowing them to sign players. Reports suggest

that Ronaldo is in talks with multiple clubs ahead of the tournament, which will be held in the United States.

Despite his individual success, Al-Nassr missed out on the Asian Champions League Elite, losing to Japan's Kawasaki Frontale in the semi-finals and finishing third in the Saudi Pro League. FIFA President Gianni Infantino recently hinted that Ronaldo could feature in the Club World Cup, stating that discussions are ongoing between the Portuguese star and interested clubs.

Ronaldo's cryptic message, accompanied by a photo of him in an Al-Nassr jersey, read: "This chapter is over. The story? Still being written. Grateful to all." His potential departure has sparked widespread speculation.

## Real Madrid names Alonso head coach



**Madrid:** Real Madrid has officially appointed Xabi Alonso as their new manager on a three-year contract, marking his return to the club where he once played as a midfield maestro. Alonso replaces Carlo Ancelotti, who is set to take charge of the Brazil national team following his departure from Madrid.

Alonso, 43, announced his exit from Bayer Leverkusen earlier this month after a highly successful tenure, where he led the German club to a league and cup double last season. His team came close to an unbeaten treble, but fell short in the Europa League final against Atalanta.

Real Madrid confirmed that Alonso will be presented as manager at an event in Madrid on Monday, where he will address the media before officially taking charge on June 1. His first major challenge will be the Club World Cup, which kicks off next month in the United States. A statement from Real Madrid hailed Alonso as "one of the greatest legends of Real Madrid and world football." The Spaniard played 236 matches for the club between 2009 and 2014, winning six major titles, including the historic 10th European Cup in Lisbon.

Alonso's coaching career began at Real Madrid's youth academy, where he managed the U14 A team during the 2018-2019 season, winning the league and champions tournament. He later took charge of Real Sociedad's reserve team.

## Ponting urges PBKS to stay focused despite playoffs

**New Delhi:** Punjab Kings have been on a roll this IPL season but head coach Ricky Ponting feels the side has not achieved anything yet, declaring that a play-off qualification in more than a decade is merely a job half done at this point.

Punjab Kings convincingly thrashed Mumbai Indians by seven wickets to ensure a top two finish in the play-offs and two chances to enter the final of the cash-rich league. "I think it's pretty obvious to see that this is a really talented team that are all on the same page and heading in the same direction," Ponting told Jio-Hotstar in an interview. "I mean yeah, it's a great achievement till now but really, if you look back, we haven't achieved anything yet. That's the one thing I've been saying to the players since the moment we qualified," Ponting said.

"The vision for me was always to finish in the top two, and we've got there now. It's a really happy group and we've enjoyed our time in each other's company for the last ten weeks, but we've got another week to go yet," added the former Australian skipper. Ponting was effusive in his praise for skipper Shreyas Iyer. The



last time that the Ponting-Iyer duo were coach and captain, it was for the Delhi Capitals and had steered the franchise into its maiden final during the UAE leg in COVID times.

"I was pretty keen to work with him (Iyer) again. It was pretty obvious that how much money I was willing to spend on him at the auction," Ponting said. "We had a great working relationship in Delhi, we made a final in Delhi under his captaincy." Ponting feels players like Iyer make the team environment great. "I've known him as a person and as a player for a long time. He's a quality person and when you've got quality people around your team, when you're trying to make a difference and you're trying to change culture, that's what you need," he said.

## Bangladesh banks on young pacers amid injuries for Pakistan T20I series

Simmons backs young pacers amid Bangladesh injury setbacks

**Lahore:** With senior seamers Mustafizur Rahman and Taskin Ahmed sidelined due to injuries, Bangladesh head coach Phil Simmons is banking on the rest of the pace attack to step up for the upcoming T20I series against Pakistan, starting Wednesday in Lahore, as per ESPNcricinfo.

Taskin remains out with a lingering ankle injury that has kept him away from competitive cricket for two months, while Mustafizur sustained a thumb injury during his final Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 appearance for Delhi Capitals (DC) last week. "You miss your senior seamers," Simmons said, as quoted from ESPNcricinfo. "As we saw, how Fizz (Mustafizur) was bowling in the IPL then. We will miss him. It is also



a chance for somebody to take his place in this series. Let's hope one of the bowlers decide that he wants to fill in for Fizz in this series. Our bowling is usually our stronger suit in this format. But having two senior bowlers, Taskin and Fizz, out, then it balances off," he added. In Mustafizur's absence, the selectors have drafted in Khaled Ahmed. However, they

have opted not to name a replacement for Nahid Rana, who withdrew from the tour citing personal reasons. Alongside Khaled, the pace unit includes Tanzim Hasan Sakib, Hasan Mahmud, and Shoriful Islam. All-rounder Mehidy Hasan Miraz has also been brought in to replace the injured Soumya Sarkar, for strengthening their bowling attack.

## BCCI honors Operation Sindoor at IPL final event

**Mumbai:** The BCCI on Tuesday said it has invited all three service chiefs of the Indian Armed Forces to attend the IPL final on June 3 in Ahmedabad, where the event's closing ceremony will also feature a tribute to their heroic efforts during the recent



Operation Sindoor. BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia

made the announcement in a media statement. "We have extended an invitation to all Indian Armed Forces chiefs, top-ranked officers and soldiers for the IPL final in Ahmedabad to celebrate the success of Operation Sindoor," Saikia told PTI on

Tuesday.

Saikia said that the BCCI salutes the "bravery, courage, and selfless service" of the country's armed forces. He lauded the "heroic efforts under Operation Sindoor" which protected and inspired the nation.

