



THE MILEAGE

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BJP Reinstates Manmohan Samal as Odisha unit Chief

Bhubneswar: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Tuesday reappointed veteran leader Manmohan Samal as the president of its Odisha unit, marking his second consecutive and fourth overall term in the role. The announcement was made by BJP's central election observer Sanjay Jaiswal at the party's state headquarters in the presence of senior leaders. Samal, the sole nominee for the post, was elected unopposed. His previous terms include

stints from 1999 to 2000, 2000 to 2004, and most recently from March 2023 to July 2025. A seasoned politician from Bhadrak district, Samal belongs to the OBC community, which constitutes a significant portion of Odisha's population. His reappointment is widely seen as a recognition of his pivotal role in the BJP's historic 2024 electoral performance in the state. Under his leadership, the party secured 78 out of 147 seats in the Odisha Legislative Assembly.

Death Toll Hits 44 in Telangana Chemical Plant Explosion, Probe Underway

Hyderabad: The death toll from the devastating explosion at Sigachi Industries Ltd's pharmaceutical manufacturing unit in Pashamylaram, Sangareddy district, has climbed to 44, following the deaths of two more critically injured workers on Tuesday. The blast, which occurred on June 30, has emerged as one of the deadliest industrial accidents in recent years. According to Sangareddy District Superintendent of



Police Paritosh Pankaj, eight individuals remain unaccounted for, while 14 others are still undergoing treatment at various hospitals.

Over 140 employees were present at the facility at the time of the explosion; 61 have been confirmed safe. The explosion, suspected

to have been triggered by a chemical reaction in the plant's reactor, caused extensive structural damage and a massive fire. Rescue teams, including personnel from the Fire Services, State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), and local police, have been engaged in continuous search operations. Human remains recovered from the debris have been sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory in Hyderabad for DNA analysis.

Mamata slams BJP over migrant tagging

Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has launched a scathing attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) after a Foreigners' Tribunal in Assam issued a notice to a farmer from Cooch Behar, West Bengal, declaring him a suspected illegal migrant. The development has sparked a political storm, with Banerjee accusing the BJP-led Assam government of attempting to implement the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Bengal—where it holds no jurisdiction. The notice was served to Uttam Kumar Brajabasi, a 50-year-old Rajbanshi farmer from Dinhat, who claims to have lived in Cooch Behar his entire life. Despite possessing valid identity documents, Brajabasi was asked to prove his citizenship before a tribunal in Kamrup, Assam. The notice alleges he entered Assam illegally between 1966 and 1971. Reacting strongly, Banerjee described the move as a "systematic assault on democracy" and a "premeditated attempt to intimidate, disenfranchise, and target marginalised communities." In a post on social media, she wrote, "This unconstitutional overreach is anti-people and exposes identity of Bengal's people."

Varanasi court refuses to move 1991 Gyanvapi case elsewhere

Petition Dismissed Over Lack of Standing

Varanasi: A Varanasi district court on Monday rejected a plea seeking the transfer of the original 1991 Gyanvapi suit from the fast-track court of the civil judge (senior division) to another competent court. The application was filed by Manikuntala Tiwari, Neelima Mishra, and Renu Pandey — daughters of the late Harihar Pandey, one of the original litigants in the case. District Judge Jay Prakash Tiwari ruled that the petitioners lacked the legal standing to request the transfer, as they



were not parties to the original suit. The court deemed the application non-maintainable and dismissed it after hearing arguments from both sides. The petitioners

had contended that they were not being given adequate opportunity to present their case in the current proceedings and sought the case's transfer.

Pahalgam Terror Attack

NIA gets custody of two accused for 10 more days

Jammu: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has been granted 10 additional days of custodial interrogation for two individuals allegedly involved in a high-profile case under its scrutiny. The extension, approved by the designated special court on Monday, follows fresh leads obtained during the initial custodial period, which officials claim are critical to unraveling the broader conspiracy. According to NIA sources, the accused were first arrested in connection with suspected unlawful activities that fall under various provisions

of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). Investigators are now focusing on alleged links to organized networks and potential cross-border connections, necessitating further questioning to corroborate evidence and decode communication trails. The two provided food, shelter and logistical support to the terrorists, who, on the fateful afternoon, selectively targeted and killed tourists based on their religious identity, making it one of the most gruesome terrorist attacks in recent memory, the NIA said.

BJP a movement of values, service, and ideas: Nadda

Mainpat: The Bharatiya Janata Party is not just a political organisation but a dedicated movement of ideas, values and service, party president JP Nadda said on Monday. Addressing BJP MPs and MLAs from Chhattisgarh after inaugurating a three-day training session for them in Kamleshwarpur village in Surguja district's Mainpat tehsil, Nadda advised them to work at the grassroots level by having more coordination with the organisation. "The BJP is not just a political organization, but a dedicated movement of ideas, values and service.

The training session is not just a formality, it is a medium to prepare the leadership, strengthen the organization and motivate the workers," a party statement quoted him as saying. "He not only stressed on social awareness, but also provided guidelines to MPs and MLAs for the upcoming action plans and discussed in detail the ideology of the party, the role of the organization, the responsibility of workers and the spirit of public service," the release said. Nadda appealed to all the lawmakers of the party to take the development works and initiatives.

Karnataka to declare sudden deaths as notifiable disease, mandates autopsy

Bengaluru: In a major public health policy shift, the Karnataka government has announced its decision to declare sudden deaths as a notifiable condition, thereby triggering mandatory autopsy procedures. The move aims to improve disease surveillance and ensure greater transparency in determining causes of unexpected fatalities across the state. According to officials from the Health and Family Welfare Department, the directive will apply to all cases of sudden, unexplained deaths occurring outside hospitals or without prior diagnosis. Medical pro-



fessionals will now be required to report such cases to designated authorities, and postmortem examinations will be compulsory to ascertain underlying causes. The policy is expected to aid in early detection of

infectious outbreaks, undiagnosed cardiac issues, and other emerging health threats. Authorities believe it will also help curb misreporting and enable data-driven responses from public health institutions.



CM backs NDA unity before BTC polls; BJP to announce candidates by August

Guwahati: In a strategic move aimed at consolidating political strength ahead of the upcoming Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) elections, the Chief Minister has called for renewed unity among National Democratic Alliance (NDA) partners. Addressing party workers and regional leaders during a key meeting on Sunday, the CM underscored the importance of collaborative efforts within the alliance to ensure electoral success in the autonomous Bodoland region. He



reaffirmed that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), a major constituent of the NDA, will finalise its list of candidates by August. The

candidate selection process, according to party insiders, is being carried out with careful consideration of regional dynamics.

Nagaland Floods Claim Three Lives; Air Travel Disrupted as Rainfall Paralyzes State

Kohima: Severe flooding triggered by relentless monsoon rains has wreaked havoc across Nagaland, claiming at least three lives and causing widespread disruption. Authorities confirmed the fatalities occurred in separate incidents involving landslides and rapid water-level surges in low-lying areas. Rescue operations are currently underway, with emergency teams deployed across the worst-hit districts to locate missing persons and provide aid to stranded residents. In

response to the worsening weather conditions, all commercial flights to and from Dimapur Airport were temporarily suspended on Monday. Airport authorities cited waterlogging on the runway and impaired visibility as the primary concerns. Passengers have been advised to monitor airline updates and contact carriers for rescheduling options. Key roads connecting Kohima, Dimapur, and rural interiors have been rendered impassable due to flooding, fallen debris, and damaged

infrastructure. The state government has urged citizens to stay indoors and avoid unnecessary travel while coordinated relief measures including food distribution, medical assistance, and temporary shelter—are being scaled up in vulnerable zones. The India Meteorological Department has issued a red alert for Nagaland, forecasting continued heavy rainfall over the next 48 hours. Officials warn that conditions may deteriorate further if precipitation persists.

Unlicensed Jorhat ice cream unit sparks health fears

Jorhat: An illegal ice cream and ice manufacturing unit operating in Letekujan, Tabor, has triggered serious public health concerns in Assam's Jorhat district. The facility, reportedly functioning without any official license or regulatory oversight, has come under scrutiny for producing frozen desserts in unsanitary conditions using unsafe ingredients—products largely consumed by children in nearby tea garden communities and rural areas.

diets, and artificial food colours not approved for human consumption. "The factory is filthy, crawling with insects, and the water used is visibly dirty. These ice creams are a health hazard," said a concerned resident. The Yuva Satra Parishad, a local youth organization, has demanded immediate intervention from the district administration and food safety authorities. "If the administration fails to act, we will launch a protest. These products are poisoning our children," warned a spokesperson from the group.

Local residents and activists allege that the unit has been using contaminated water, expired ingre-

GMCH faces surge in Japanese Encephalitis; 13 dead reported

Guwahati: Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) is witnessing a troubling rise in Japanese Encephalitis (JE) cases, with 13 deaths reported over the past three months. The mosquito-borne viral disease has triggered alarm among health authorities, as 57 patients have been admitted since April, and 47 remain under treatment as of Friday.

The outbreak has intensified in recent weeks, with 10 new admissions recorded in the last 24 hours alone. Medical experts at GMCH have confirmed that the

virus, transmitted by Culex mosquitoes, is particularly affecting vulnerable groups such as children and the elderly. The worst-hit districts include Kamrup (Rural), Nalbari, and Darrang.

In the last 24 hours, 10 fresh JE admissions highlight a worrying spike in infections

Swamps, paddy fields, and proximity to pig sties are known breeding grounds for the Culex mosquito, which also uses pigs and cattle as amplifying

hosts. Despite the current surge, the number of cases remains lower than the same period last year, when GMCH had recorded 112 confirmed infections. However, the state has a history of high JE incidence, with annual cases ranging from 200 to 600 and fatalities occasionally exceeding 100.

Health authorities are urging residents to remain vigilant and seek immediate medical attention if symptoms arise. The situation continues to be monitored closely as GMCH ramps up its response to contain the outbreak.

Army brings mobile cinema to Arunachal



Itanagar: In a unique initiative to foster community engagement and build stronger bonds with rural populations, the Indian Army has launched a mobile cinema outreach programme across remote areas of Arunachal Pradesh. The campaign aims to connect with young residents in border villages by showcasing films that promote patriotism, awareness, and positive social values.

The mobile cinema units—equipped with high-definition screens and sound systems—are being deployed to villages with limited access to entertainment and educational content. According to military officials, the screenings include documentaries on national heroes, short films on career guidance, and cultural features that reflect local traditions and values.

This outreach is part of the Army's broader civic engagement strategy in the northeastern state, where rugged terrain and sparse connectivity often pose challenges to conventional outreach efforts. By using cinema as a medium, the Army hopes to educate, entertain, and encourage aspirations among the youth, while promoting national integration and mutual understanding.

Tipra Motha leader embarks on 2,500-km march to Delhi over infiltration concerns

Murasing begins 2,500-km march to Delhi over Tripura infiltration

Agartala: In a bold move to spotlight the long-standing issue of illegal infiltration in Tripura, Tipra Motha Party (TMP) leader David Murasing has embarked on a 2,500-kilometre march from Agartala to New Delhi. The initiative, which began on Saturday, aims to urge the central government to take decisive action against cross-border infiltration and to implement the long-pending Tiprasa Accord.



Tripura for 75 years. This is not just a regional issue—it's a national concern," he told reporters before setting off.

The TMP leader emphasized that the demographic shift caused by unchecked infiltration poses a serious threat to the indigenous population's identity and security. "We have become minorities in our own land," Murasing said, adding that

the march is a peaceful assertion of constitutional rights and a call for urgent government intervention. Murasing's journey is also a protest against the Centre's delay in fulfilling the promises made under the Tiprasa Accord, signed in March 2024. The accord, which was intended to address the socio-political and economic concerns of Tripura's indigenous communities.

Manipur police bust Myanmar gun racket, ceasefire breached

Imphal: Manipur Police have uncovered a major arms smuggling racket involving Myanmar-sourced weapons, exposing serious breaches in a ceasefire agreement signed by a banned insurgent group. The operation, conducted in late June, led to the arrest of four individuals, including a senior leader of the United National Liberation Front (UNLF-P), a Valley-Based Insurgent Group (VBIG). The key accused, identified as Sinam Somen-dro Meitei alias 'Richard,' a self-styled Lieutenant Colonel and Project Secretary of the UNLF-P, was apprehended following a tip-off about illegal arms dealings in the greater Imphal area. The investigation began with the



detention of Lanchenba Nongthombam, proprietor of Nongthombam Gun House, who was allegedly selling firearms without proper documentation. His interrogation led police to Richard, believed to be orchestrating the wider smuggling network. According to officials, the weapons were smuggled into India from Myanmar through porous border routes and distributed across the country using forged documents and registered gun houses as fronts. Raids at Richard's residence yielded a cache of foreign-made firearms.

Indus Towers, NEAID join forces to support flood-hit Assam, Manipur, Tripura communities

Imphal: Amid the devastating floods that had swept across Northeast India, one of the world's largest telecom infrastructure companies—demonstrated its unwavering commitment to community support during times of crisis. Under its flagship Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative, Pragati, the company distributed 1,030 dry ration kits to families in some of the most severely impacted regions, including Cachar in Assam, Imphal in Manipur, and several remote areas of Tripura. This humanitarian effort was carried out in collaboration with the Northeast Centre for Equity Action on Integrated Development (NEAID). Indus Towers employees were actively present on the ground, assisting with the



distribution and offering support to affected families, reinforcing the company's ethos of compassion

and community resilience. "We at Indus Towers are deeply committed to supporting families affected by the floods with timely and meaningful assistance," said Shri Rajender Singh Gurung, Circle CEO, Indus Towers Limited. Shri Meraj Ahmed, Co-Founder of NEAID, said, "With the support of Indus Towers, we remain committed to standing by the most vulnerable, ensuring timely relief reaches those in urgent need and supporting both their immediate recovery and long-term resilience." This collaboration underscores Indus Towers' ongoing commitment to community resilience, disaster response, and sustainable development in India's most vulnerable regions.

Bandhan Bank supports Assam cancer care with CSR grant

Agartala: Bandhan Bank has announced an extension of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) support to the Assam Cancer Care Foundation (ACCF), a joint initiative of the Government of Assam and Tata Trusts. The CSR grant will aid ACCF's mission to provide standardised, affordable cancer care across 17 districts in Assam over the next two years. The MoU was signed at a ceremonial event in Guwahati, attended by Mr. Pranab Kumar Sarmah, IAS, Secretary MERD; Mr. Partha Pratim Sengupta, MD & CEO, Bandhan Bank; Dr. (Maj Gen) Jai Prakash Prasad, COO, ACCF; and senior officials from Tata Trusts and Bandhan Bank. Mr. Sengupta stated, "Bandhan Bank is proud to partner with ACCF and support un-



derprivileged cancer patients through this critical healthcare initiative." With nearly 500 touch points and 15 lakh customers in Assam, Bandhan Bank's strong regional presence is expected to enhance awareness and accessibility to cancer care services. In Agartala, this development is seen as a positive step. Many patients from Tripura rely on Assam's medical infrastructure. Expanded services under ACCF are likely to reduce patient outflow stress and offer closer, more affordable treatment options, easing pressure on Agartala's limited cancer care facilities.

Guv's tie, growth may hint rates

Mumbai: Certain words in the Governor's speech may reflect a realignment in the policy priorities of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), according to a report by the State Bank of India (SBI). The said report explores this idea, suggesting that, in a parallel universe, ties guide monetary policy along with inflation and GDP. It looked at the ties worn by the RBI Governor during Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meetings. Instead of only watching inflation numbers or GDP data, they turned their attention to the shades of silk draped around the Governor's neck.

India positions outcome-based financing as global benchmark at UN Development Meet

Guwahati: India is fast emerging as a global leader in innovative development financing, with Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Shri Jayant Chaudhary, emphasizing India's outcome-based financing (OBF) success at the United Nations' Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (Ffd4) in Spain. Representing India in a high-level panel co-hosted by the OECD and Outcomes Finance Alliance, Chaudhary showcased initiatives like the \$14.4 million Skill Impact Bond and Project AMBER as models that unite public, private, and philanthropic capital for mea-



asurable social returns. Led by Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, the Indian delegation underscored OBF's potential to transform skilling, employment, and gender equity. On the sidelines,

Shri Chaudhary held key bilateral meetings with global stakeholders including the OECD, CIFF, UBS Optimus Foundation, and Swiss cooperation agencies to explore new avenues in gender-responsive and entrepreneurship-focused financing. In Guwahati, where job-linked skill development is a top priority, stakeholders in the startup and MSME ecosystem see outcome-based funding as a promising route to boost regional employment. With increasing youth participation in vocational programs, investors believe OBF could drive accountability, innovation, and private investment across Assam's emerging skill economy.

Nissan expands Magnite CNG rollout nationwide



Guwahati: Nissan Motor India has announced the Phase 2 rollout of its CNG retrofit kit for the New Nissan Magnite, extending availability to six new states—Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Tamil Nadu. This move follows strong customer demand and builds on the successful Phase 1 launch across seven states including Delhi-NCR, Maharashtra, and Gujarat. Priced at ₹74,999, the retrofit kit is developed and quality-assured by Motozen, a government-approved third-party vendor. Compatible with the 1.0-litre naturally aspirated petrol engine (manual), the kit is installed at authorised centres and comes with a

3-year or 1 lakh km warranty. Customers have reported improved fuel efficiency compared to standard petrol variants. Saurabh Vatsa, MD, Nissan Motor India, said, "The Phase 2 rollout reflects the growing demand for cleaner mobility and reinforces our focus on accessible, sustainable solutions." In Guwahati, demand for eco-friendly and cost-effective vehicles has steadily increased. Local dealers expect a strong response, especially among first-time buyers and fleet operators looking to reduce fuel costs without compromising on performance and boot space—an area where the Magnite continues to lead. Further expansion under Phase 3 is underway.

Aviva Life Insurance wins dual 'Product of the Year 2025' titles for retirement and investment plans

Guwahati: Aviva Life Insurance has secured the coveted Product of the Year 2025 title in two key life insurance categories—Retirement Income and ULIP—based on a nationwide consumer survey by NielsenIQ. The winning products, Aviva Signature Increasing Income Plan and Aviva Signature Investment Plan, were chosen for their in-

novation, relevance, and customer-centric design. Asit Rath, CEO & MD, Aviva India, said the awards validate the company's commitment to real-life financial needs. "We designed these plans to help customers build financial security post-retirement and adopt disciplined investment habits," he noted. Raj Arora, CEO of Product of the Year India,

praised Aviva's excellence in innovation and foresight. Ajai Kumar Tripathi, Chief and Appointed Actuary, added that the recognition is a result of combining deep consumer insight with actuarial expertise. The Increasing Income Plan offers rising guaranteed annual income with life cover, while the ULIP provides zero premium allocation

charges, 8 fund options, and loyalty additions. In Guwahati, local financial advisors observed growing interest in Aviva's retirement and investment products, especially among mid-income earners planning for long-term stability. The dual win is expected to strengthen Aviva's presence in the Northeast's competitive insurance segment.



HP introduces AI OmniBook laptops in India featuring up to 34-hour battery life

Guwahati: HP has launched its most affordable lineup of next-generation AI-powered laptops in India with the new HP OmniBook 5 and OmniBook 3 series. Targeted at value-conscious consumers, the range features dedicated Neural Processing Units (NPUs) capable of 45–50 TOPS, delivering fast, seamless on-device AI experiences. The OmniBook 5, powered by Qualcomm Snapdragon X Plus, offers the world's longest battery life in an ultra-slim design—up to 34 hours. The OmniBook 3 series, available in 14- and 15.6-inch variants, is powered by AMD Ryzen AI 300 processors and features AI-enhanced video calls, HP AI Companion, and Copilot+ integration.



Prices start at ₹69,999, with no-cost EMI options available. In Guwahati, local retailers anticipate strong traction for the new OmniBooks among university students and working professionals. With rising demand for AI-capable laptops in the city's education and startup sectors, HP's feature-rich yet sustainable

devices are expected to gain popularity, especially during the upcoming back-to-school season. Aligned with HP's sustainability goals, all models use recycled materials and are EPEAT Gold and ENERGY STAR® certified. The devices are now available in Glacier Silver across HP online and retail outlets.

Buch denies lapse in Jane Street case

Mumbai: Madhabi Puri Buch, the former chairperson of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), has rubbished claims of regulatory failure in handling the Jane Street matter. Buch, who demitted office in February, emphasised that Sebi began examining the matter as early as April 2024. The regulator took numerous steps, including identifying index manipulation, issuing circulars, and sending a caution letter to Jane Street, instructing it to cease and desist from certain trading patterns, she said. "During that period, Sebi constituted a multidisciplinary team of officials to conduct a comprehensive examination of the matter. This thorough investigation



led to the detailed findings that form the basis of the order," Buch said in a statement on Tuesday. The current chairperson, Tuhin Kanta Pandey, recently described the Jane Street case as a surveillance issue. He added that the regulator would be strengthening the surveillance and monitoring of such players and derivative trades.

SEBI began probing Jane Street's complex strategies in April 2024; the order speaks for itself.

Innova HyCross earns Bharat NCAP 5-star rating

Bangalore: Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) is proud to announce that its premium MPV, the Innova HyCross, has been awarded a prestigious 5-star safety rating for both adult and child occupant protection under the Bharat New Car Assessment Programme (Bharat NCAP). The certification was officially presented in New Delhi by Hon'ble Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari, to Mr. Vikram Gulati and Mr. Sudeep Dalvi from TKM. The Innova HyCross, built on the Toyota New Global Architecture (TNGA) platform, integrates advanced safety systems under the Toyota Safety Sense (TSS) umbrella. Key features include Pre-Collision System, Lane Trace Assist, Dynamic Radar Cruise Control, six airbags, ISOFIX child seat mounts, VSC, TRC, ABS with EBD, and All-Wheel Disc Brakes. This milestone reinforces TKM's commitment to safe mobility and positions the HyCross as a flagship offering in the Indian automotive landscape.

Aashirvaad unveils tech-led 'Bhakti Pathe' experience

Guwahati: Aashirvaad, ITC's flagship packaged atta brand, has deepened its cultural engagement with the iconic Puri Rath Yatra through a first-of-its-kind initiative, 'Bhakti Pathe'—a tech-enabled, immersive spiritual experience. Held near Bada Sankha More, Grand Road in Puri from June 27 to July 5, the activation bridges traditional rituals with modern digital innovations. The initiative features a "Prasad-Making Zone," allowing devotees to virtually prepare and offer Lord Jagannath's favourite prashads using Aashirvaad Shudh Chakki Atta. The journey culminates with a holographic darshan of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, and Subhadra on their chariots—offering a deeply emotional and accessible devotional

moment powered by AI, gamification, and immersive visuals. Anuj Rustagi, COO, Staples & Adjacencies, Foods Division, ITC Ltd., said, "With 'Bhakti Pathe,' Aashirvaad is making devotion inclusive by merging sacred rituals with technology." In Guwahati, where Aashirvaad enjoys strong brand loyalty, the campaign has been well-received. Retailers observed a noticeable uptick in consumer interest around festival-centric promotions, particularly for traditional food items. The interactive nature of the campaign is also resonating with younger consumers, driving engagement and boosting shelf visibility in key outlets. Aashirvaad continues to strengthen its staples portfolio across atta, spices, salt, millets, and ready-to-eat products.

IPM India backs T&T tech to curb illicit tobacco trade growth

New Delhi: On World Anti-Counterfeiting Day, IPM India, the affiliate of Philip Morris International (PMI), reinforced its commitment to combating the illicit tobacco trade—a market that accounts for nearly 25% of India's domestic cigarette consumption. The move comes as the Government of India begins implementing the

pack-level Track and Trace (T&T) system, aimed at curbing revenue loss, securing supply chains, and elevating regulatory oversight. With India ranking among the world's top illegal cigarette markets, PMI executives highlighted how the informal trade undermines public health, national security, and fair competition. "The

T&T rollout is a bold and transformative reform," said Navaneel Kar, MD of IPM India, adding that it would enhance enforcement transparency and consumer trust. PMI's T&T systems, already active in 140+ countries including the EU, UK, and GCC, have shown measurable results in reducing counterfeit flows.

Ujjivan SFB rolls out RuPay Select card globally

Agartala: Ujjivan Small Finance Bank has introduced its first global payment solution—the International RuPay Select Debit Card—designed to meet the evolving needs of digitally-savvy and globally mobile customers. The card is accepted across international ATMs, POS terminals, and e-commerce platforms via the RuPay-Discover Network. The premium debit card offers a range of benefits including two complimentary domestic airport lounge accesses per quarter, one annual international lounge access, ₹10 lakh personal accident and permanent disability insurance, quarterly wellness services, golf lessons, travel coupons, an annual premium health check-up, and concierge support both in India and abroad. It also supports contactless payments and comes with higher transaction limits for added convenience. Hitendra Jha, Head – Retail Liabilities, TASC & TPP, Ujjivan SFB, said, "The International RuPay Select Debit Card represents our commitment to offering modern, secure, and inclusive banking solutions aligned with global lifestyles." In Agartala, the card has seen keen interest from young professionals, entrepreneurs, and tech-savvy customers who frequently shop online or travel abroad. Its combination of lifestyle perks and global acceptance is viewed as a strong value addition to Ujjivan SFB's growing portfolio in the northeast region. The launch strengthens Ujjivan SFB's vision of digital and financial inclusion.

Tata AIA study reveals 63% of East India's Gen Z Prefer Life Insurance for retirement planning

New Delhi: Tata AIA Life Insurance, in collaboration with NielsenIQ, has unveiled key findings from its latest study titled "New Age Habits, Traditional Values: Gen Z's Approach to Financial Planning." The report reveals that 63% of working Gen Z individ-

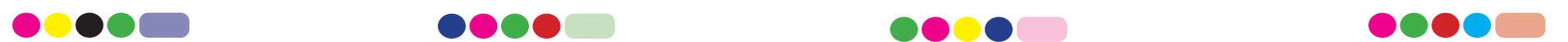
uals (aged 21–29) in East India identify life insurance as a primary retirement planning tool—the highest across all regions in India. The study highlights a prudent and balanced financial approach among East India's youth. While 54% rely on fixed or recurring

deposits, 47% invest in gold, and 43% participate in the equity markets. Term insurance adoption is also on the rise, with 11% already holding policies and 44% expressing intent to purchase one soon. Key factors influencing insurance decisions include af-

fordability (56%), tax efficiency (51%), and quality service (36%). Girish Kalra, Chief Marketing Officer, Tata AIA Life Insurance, said, "This insight confirms our commitment to serving India's youth with smart, protection-first financial solutions."

Bandhan MF launches Multi-Factor Fund

Mumbai: Bandhan Mutual Fund has launched the Bandhan Multi-Factor Fund, an open-ended equity scheme investing based on adaptive and evolving multi-factor quantitative model theme. The new fund offer (NFO) will open on Thursday, July 10, 2025 and close on Thursday, July 24, 2025. This multi-factor fund offers a diversified exposure by blending four time-tested investment factors including Momentum, Value, Quality, and Low Volatility into a single portfolio. Scheme performance to be benchmarked to BSE 200 TRI.



Godrej Chemicals commits Rs 750 cr for capacity boost, eyes USD 1 billion milestone by 2030

Guwahati: Godrej Industries Limited's Chemicals Business has announced a major expansion plan with an investment exceeding ₹750 crore, aimed at scaling operations and driving sustainable growth. The company is targeting to become a USD 1 billion global player before 2030. The expansion includes doubling Fatty Alcohol and Euric Acid capacities by

35,000 and 20,000 tons per annum respectively, tripling specialities and fermentation capacities, and doubling glycerine output. A new 30,000-ton per annum boost in Primary Surfactants is also planned. The company is enhancing its hybrid power infrastructure to raise renewable energy usage to 75%, reinforcing its commitment to sustain-

ability. Vishal Sharma, Executive Director & CEO of Godrej Chemicals, stated, "These investments reflect our strong focus on green products and innovative solutions as we continue to deliver double-digit growth." In Guwahati, one of Northeast India's rising industrial centres, the expansion is expected to benefit sectors like personal care, textiles, and

agrochemicals. Industry players foresee improved access to eco-friendly specialty chemicals, bolstering local production and reducing input costs. Godrej's focus on green chemistry, biocatalysis, and zero-waste goals positions it as a leader in sustainable innovation, strengthening its competitive edge in domestic and international markets.

This World Skin Health Day, nourish your skin with the delicious taste of California almonds



Guwahati: This year, on World Skin Health Day, the theme "No Health Without Skin Health" emphasizes the role of skin in overall wellness. Skin health now goes far beyond external skincare routines—it begins from within, with daily dietary choices. Including skin-friendly foods like California almonds, rich in vitamin E and healthy fats, support skin health and help you look and feel your best. California almonds are a powerhouse of 15 essential nutrients, many of which help with improved skin texture and tone. In addition to modern nutritional science, traditional systems such as Ayurveda, Siddha, and Unani have long recognized almonds for their skin benefits. Moreover, regular almond consumption may help protect against UVB rays, which is highly beneficial in intense Indian summers. Vitamin E and healthy fats have shown to impart anti-aging properties and contribute to skin health. Commenting on World Skin Health Day and the importance of caring for skin, Skin Expert and Cos-

metologist Dr. Geetika Mittal Gupta said, "One of my top recommendations is to include a handful of almonds as part of your daily diet—either as a snack or incorporated into meals." Popular Bollywood actress Soha Ali Khan said, "Almonds are not only nutritious but also rich in vitamin E, which supports skin health." Ritika Samaddar, Regional Head of Dietetics at Max Healthcare – New Delhi, said, "Just a handful of almonds a day, along with plenty of greens, seasonal fruits, and a balanced diet, can make a real difference." Ayurveda expert Madhumitha Krishnan said, "A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and nuts like almonds supports overall skin health." Fitness Master Pilates Instructor Yasmin Karachiwala said, "Healthy skin comes down to two essentials—eating right and staying active." Popular South Indian actor Shriya Saran said, "Almonds are my go-to snack—they're packed with antioxidants, fiber, and protein that help me stay full, energized, and support overall skin health."

Jio BlackRock plans low-cost fund

Mumbai: Jio BlackRock Asset Management plans to introduce nearly a dozen equity and debt funds in India by the year-end, focusing on small-ticket investments and bypassing distributors to reduce costs, three people familiar with the firm's strategy said. The joint venture between Jio Financial Services, backed by billionaire Mukesh Ambani, and BlackRock, enters India's 72.2 trillion rupee (\$844 billion) funds market with a business structure that threatens to shake up the sector, as it leverages its large digital network to bypass traditional distributors used by the rest of the industry. Jio BlackRock plans to leverage Jio, India's largest telecom network, and BlackRock's investment management platform Aladdin, to offer differentiated products in the crowded market, two of the three sources said. The asset manager has applied to the market regulator to launch eight funds.

Organic India, Sachin Tendulkar urge mindful consumer choices beyond product label claims

Guwahati: Organic India, a Tata Consumer Products brand, has unveiled its latest brand campaign "Sirf Naam Se Nahi, Kaam Se Organic", featuring cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar. The campaign aims to raise awareness about what truly defines organic products, encouraging consumers to seek authenticity backed by proof—not just labels. As consumer demand for organic food continues to grow, so does skepticism about label claims. Organic India addresses this gap by showcasing its stringent processes, including 600+ tests on herbs, sourcing from over 2,000 farmers,



and holding globally recognized organic certifications. Sachin Tendulkar's association with the campaign reinforces trust, highlighting the brand's

core values of integrity, transparency, and traceability. "Everything they say, they back up with action," said Tendulkar, adding that the film reflects honesty and encourages mindful choices. In Guwahati, where health-conscious consumers are increasingly exploring organic options, the campaign has sparked interest among retailers and customers alike. With growing competition, consumers in Guwahati are keen to distinguish between genuine and superficial organic offerings—making Organic India's message especially relevant.

Nothing boosts India's premium tech drive with Phone (3), Headphone (1) launch

New Delhi: UK-based brand Nothing has launched its flagship Phone (3) and first over-ear audio product Headphone (1) in India. The launch comes amid increasing government emphasis on digital empowerment and consumer tech accessibility, supported by favorable import frameworks and GST rationalisation. The Nothing Phone (3) features Snapdragon® 8s Gen 4, a triple pro-grade camera system, AMOLED display, AI-driv-

en Nothing OS 3.5 (Android 15), and is priced at ₹62,999 (12+256GB) and ₹72,999 (16+512GB). Key pre-booking incentives include a free Nothing Ear (₹14,999) and extended warranty. The Headphone (1), co-engineered with KEF, supports Hi-Res Audio, spatial sound, and offers 35-hour playback, priced at ₹21,999 (₹19,999 on launch day). Both products will be available from July 15 across major platforms and retail outlets.

Medanta highlights ethics as pillar of healthcare reform

New Delhi: The Medicity, India's premier super-specialty hospital chain, unveiled its Doctor's Day film 'Honouring the Oath', reinforcing ethical medical practice as a cornerstone of national healthcare development. Released on National Doctor's Day 2025, the film is a tribute to doctors who uphold the Indian Medical Council's Code of Ethics daily, promoting trust and accountability within the medical system. The film invokes the legacy of Bharat Ratna Dr. B.C. Roy, founder of IMA and MCI, and visually illustrates core ethical principles like non-discriminatory treatment, patient dignity, confidentiality, and compassionate care. "At Medanta, our doctors don't just take the oath—they live it," said Dr. Naresh Trehan, Chairman and Managing Director. The initiative aligns with larger policy goals that aim to improve transparency, patient rights, and ethical standards in Indian healthcare delivery. This initiative strengthens the alignment between institutional integrity and national healthcare priorities.

Toyota rolls out prestige package for Urban Cruiser Hyryder to boost hybrid SUV sales

Bangalore: Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) has launched a limited-period 'Prestige Package' for the Urban Cruiser Hyryder. The package, available from July 2025, includes 10 premium dealer-fitted accessories such as body cladding, hood emblem, and chrome garnishes—designed to enhance the SUV's visual appeal, protection, and road presence. The Urban Cruiser Hyryder continues to set



benchmarks with its self-charging strong hybrid electric powertrain powered by a 1.5L TNGA At-

kinson cycle engine and an electric motor. With its silent operation, high fuel efficiency, and multiple drive options including mild-hybrid and AWD variants, the Hyryder has become a preferred choice among urban buyers. With cumulative sales crossing 1,00,000 units since its 2022 launch, the Hyryder's momentum reflects Toyota's growing influence in India's green mobility space.

Kohli Compares Tennis Pressure to India-Pakistan World Cup Clashes

Kohli draws comparison after Wimbledon visit Monday



London: Former India cricket captain Virat Kohli has drawn a striking parallel between the mental pressure faced by tennis players and the intensity of high-stakes cricket matches, particularly India's World Cup encounters against Pakistan. Speaking during a televised conversation with tennis legend Vijay Amritraj at Wimbledon, Kohli remarked that the psychological demands of elite tennis closely mirror the rare but overwhelming pressure of World Cup knockouts and Indo-Pak clashes. "I think the experience in pressure situations can be similar," Kohli said. "But the intimidation factor and the pres-

sure that would replicate for us in a World Cup match between India and Pakistan or a semifinal or final—your legs are shivering because of sheer pressure." Kohli, who recently retired from T20 Internationals and Test cricket, was attending the Wimbledon Championships with his wife, actor Anushka Sharma. He praised tennis professionals for their composure, fitness, and mental resilience, noting that they endure such pressure consistently from the quarter-final stage onward. He also highlighted the contrast in crowd dynamics between cricket and tennis. "There are amazing stadiums to play cricket in, but I would

say it's not as intimidating as Centre Court at Wimbledon because of how close the crowd is," he explained. "In cricket, fans are far from the pitch, so you can get lost in your own space. But in tennis, the proximity of the audience adds to the intensity." Kohli further emphasized the limited margin for error in cricket, especially for batters. "You get one chance. One mistake, and you're done for the day. In tennis, players can be two sets and a break down and still come back to win." The 36-year-old also expressed admiration for Novak Djokovic, revealing that they've exchanged messages and that he's rooting for the Serbian to win his 25th Grand Slam title. Kohli's dream final? Djokovic versus Carlos Alcaraz. Kohli's comments come as he transitions into a new phase of his career, having stepped away from two formats of the game. He remains available for ODIs, with India's next fixtures expected later this year.

Erigaisi, Gukesh top seeds for Candidates gateway



New Delhi: Indian stars Arjun Erigaisi and world champion D Gukesh have been seeded as top two for the fourth FIDE Grand Swiss chess to be held at Samarkand, Uzbekistan, from September 3 to 16 where an enhanced prize purse and tickets to the prestigious Candidates tournament will be at stake.

As per regulations, the top two in both the open and the women's competition will qualify for the 2026 Candidates tournament, where the challenger for the title of world champion will be determined. The rule requiring players to have competed in 30-plus classical-rated games between July 2024

and June 2025 has excluded high-profile names such as former world champions Magnus Carlsen and Viswanathan Anand. Former world champion Ding Liren will not be participating in the event either. Fabiano Caruana, who played in all three previous Grand Swiss tournaments, will also not be taking part, having already secured a spot in the 2026 Candidates Tournament by winning the 2024 FIDE Circuit. Erigaisi and Gukesh are number one and two seeds respectively, while R Praggnanandhaa is seeded fourth, just behind Nodirbek Abdusattorov. Another star youngster, 22-year-old world number eight Alireza Firouzja, is ranked fifth.

Jay Shah mourns umpire Shinwari's death

Dubai: The international cricket community is mourning the loss of Afghanistan umpire Bismillah Jan Shinwari, who passed away at the age of 41 following an illness. A respected member of the ICC International Panel of Umpires, Shinwari had officiated in 25 One Day Internationals (ODIs) and 21 T20 Internationals (T20Is) since making his debut in 2017 during an ODI between Afghanistan and Ireland in Sharjah. His most recent international assignment came earlier this year at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup League 2 in Al Amerat, Oman. ICC Chairman Jay Shah expressed deep sorrow over Shinwari's passing. "Bismillah was a prominent umpire respected by players, peers, and officials alike. He was a regular on the international cricket circuit and had a long career ahead of him. Said Jay Shah.

Djokovic Battles Past De Minaur to Reach Wimbledon Quarter-Finals

Djokovic rallies after poor start to progress quarter-finals

London: Novak Djokovic overcame a shaky start to defeat Australia's Alex de Minaur in four sets and secure his place in the Wimbledon 2025 quarter-finals. The 38-year-old Serbian, chasing a record-extending 25th Grand Slam title and an eighth Wimbledon crown, prevailed 1-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 in a tense Round of 16 clash on Centre Court. Djokovic, the sixth seed, looked out of sorts early on, dropping the first set in just 31 minutes amid swirling winds and uncharacteristic errors—including 16 unforced errors and four double faults. De Minaur capitalized on the conditions and Djokovic's sluggish start to dominate the opener. However, the Serbian star gradually found his rhythm. A pivotal 19-minute game in the second set helped



Djokovic regain momentum, and he began to dictate play with greater consistency from the baseline. He broke late in both the second and third sets to take control of the match. The fourth set saw De Minaur surge to a 4-1 lead, threatening to force a decider. But Djokovic responded with trademark resilience, reeling off five consecutive games to close out the match in three hours

and 18 minutes. "It wasn't a great start for me—it was a great start for him," Djokovic said post-match. "But I managed to reset and hang tough in the right moments." The match was played in front of a packed Centre Court crowd, including tennis legend Roger Federer and Indian cricketer Virat Kohli. Federer, whose record of eight Wimbledon titles Djokovic is aiming to

equal, watched as his long-time rival mounted yet another comeback. With this win, Djokovic advances to his 16th Wimbledon quarter-final, where he will face Italy's Flavio Cobolli. A potential semi-final showdown with world No. 1 Jannik Sinner looms, as Djokovic continues his quest for history at the All England Club. The match was played in front of a packed Centre Court crowd, including tennis legend Roger Federer, whose record of eight Wimbledon titles Djokovic is aiming to equal. With this win, Djokovic advances to face Italy's Flavio Cobolli in the quarter-finals. A potential semi-final showdown with world No. 1 Jannik Sinner looms, as Djokovic continues his quest to become the oldest Grand Slam singles champion in the Open Era.

T20 stars Salt, Hales headline ILT20 return



Dubai: For the fourth consecutive season, some big T20 superstars from around the world will feature in the International League T20 (ILT20). England's ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2022 winners Alex Hales, Chris Woakes, Liam Livingstone, Moeen Ali, Phil Salt and Sam Curran (Season 3 Red Belt Winner - Most Valuable Player) will once again enthrall the fans with their talent and skill in the Gulf region's biggest T20 tournament, according to a release from ILT20. Besides the star-studded England line-up of players at the ILT20 Season 4, West Indies mega stars Rovman

Powell, Andre Russell, Sunil Narine, Sherfane Rutherford and Shai Hope (Season 3 Green Belt Winner - Best Batter of the Tournament) will be giving it their all for their respective franchises. Zimbabwean all-rounder Sikandar Raza and Afghanistan's premier new-ball bowler Fazalhaq Farooqi (Season 3 White Belt Winner - Best Bowler of the Tournament) are also set to dazzle in the month-long cricketing extravaganza. Australia's big-hitting batter Tim David and New Zealand's fast bowling duo Lockie Ferguson and Tim Southee have also declared their availability for Season 4.

