



Air India plane's auxiliary power unit caught fire post-landing at Delhi from Hong Kong

Aircraft damaged; all passengers and crew safe after APU fire

New Delhi: An Air India flight, AI 315, arriving from Hong Kong, experienced an Auxiliary Power Unit (APU) fire shortly after landing and parking at the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) in Delhi on Tuesday afternoon. All passengers and crew members safely disembarked the aircraft, and no injuries have been reported. According

to a statement released by an Air India spokesperson, the incident occurred while passengers had already begun the disembarkation process. The aircraft's APU, a small turbine engine typically located in the tail section that provides power for non-propulsion functions on the ground, automatically shut down as per its system design,

which aided in containing the fire. While there was some damage to the aircraft, the airline confirmed that all passengers and crew disembarked normally and are safe. The affected aircraft has been grounded to facilitate a thorough investigation into the cause of the fire. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has been duly noti-

fied of the incident. Further details regarding the extent of the damage and the precise cause of the APU malfunction are expected to emerge as the investigation progresses. Air India has emphasized its commitment to passenger safety and stated that the aircraft will remain out of service until all necessary checks and repairs are completed.

Delhi govt hikes Olympic awards, approves free student laptops

New Delhi: In a dual announcement aimed at promoting excellence in sports and enhancing digital education, the Delhi government today significantly increased cash awards for Olympic and Paralympic medalists from the National Capital and approved a new scheme to provide free laptops to meritorious students. The decisions were made during a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta at

the Delhi Secretariat. Under the revamped Mukhyamantri Khel Protsahan Yojana (Chief Minister's Sports Promotion Scheme), cash awards for Olympic and Paralympic medalists have been substantially raised. Gold Medalists: Will now receive ₹7 crore (previously ₹3 crore). Silver Medalists: Will now receive ₹5 crore (previously ₹2 crore). Bronze Medalists: Will now receive ₹3 crore (previously ₹1 crore).

Tamil Nadu to open Hornbill conservation hub at Anamalai

Chennai: In a pioneering move for avian conservation, the Tamil Nadu government has sanctioned the establishment of India's first Centre of Excellence for Hornbill Conservation at the Anamalai Tiger Reserve (ATR) in Coimbatore district. The initiative, backed by ₹1 crore from the Endangered Species Conservation Corpus Fund, aims to protect four hornbill species native to the Western Ghats: the Great Hornbill, Malabar Pied Hornbill, Malabar Grey Hornbill, and Indian Grey Hornbill. Hornbills, often referred to as "farmers of the forest" for their vital role in seed dispersal and forest regeneration, face increasing threats from habi-



at loss, deforestation, and climate change. The new centre will focus on habitat mapping, nest monitoring, ecological research, climate impact assessments, and restoration of degraded forest areas through the planting of native trees such as fig, canarium, and myristica. ATR was selected

for its rich biodiversity and proven conservation record, having successfully protected endangered species like tigers, elephants, and lion-tailed macaques. The centre will also serve as a hub for long-term telemetry studies, breeding behaviour analysis, and genetic diversity documentation.

BSF deploys drone squadron after Sindoor operation

New Delhi: In a significant escalation of its technological capabilities and a direct response to the evolving aerial threats witnessed during Operation Sindoor, the Border Security Force (BSF) is establishing its inaugural "drone squadron." This strategic deployment aims to bolster border security along the India-Pakistan frontier against increasingly sophisticated unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) incursions. The decision to raise this specialized unit stems from a comprehensive review of the BSF's operational strengths, weaknesses, and the threats encountered during Operation Sindoor. Launched on May 7, 2025, by India, Operation Sindoor was a retaliatory strike against

terrorist infrastructure and defense bases in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), following a terror attack in Pahalgam on April 22, 2025, which claimed the lives of 26 civilians. During the operation, particularly on May 10, Pakistan responded with thousands of drones, including swarms, targeting Indian military and civilian areas. A notable incident involved a bomb-laden Pakistani drone that struck the BSF's Kharkola post in the RS Pura sector of Jammu, resulting in the fatalities of two BSF personnel and one Army jawan, and critically injuring four others. The newly formed drone squadron will be strategically positioned at specific Border Outposts.

Nagpur airport gets bomb threat

Nagpur: Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport in Nagpur was the subject of a bomb threat today, prompting a swift and comprehensive security operation. The threat, received via email in the morning, claimed the presence of an improvised explosive device (IED) disguised as a cigarette packet within the airport premises. Following an extensive search by multiple security agencies, the threat was ultimately declared a hoax, and no suspicious objects were found. The email, which arrived around 6:30 AM, was initially received by the AAI.

56 women rescued from Bihar-bound train in West Bengal; trafficking suspected, 2 arrested

Siliguri: In a major rescue operation, fifty-six young women were saved from a suspected human trafficking attempt aboard the New Jalpaiguri-Patna Capital Express late Monday night. The Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP) intervened at New Jalpaiguri station in Siliguri, detaining two individuals—a man and a woman—who were accompanying the group and failed to provide valid documentation or credible explanations for the travel arrangement. The women, aged between 18 and 31, hailed from Jal-



paiguri, Cooch Behar, and Alipurduar districts of West Bengal. They were allegedly lured with false promises of employment at a Bengaluru-based company but were instead being transported to Bihar without val-

id tickets. Authorities noted that coach and berth numbers had been stamped on their hands, raising further suspicion. During a routine inspection, RPF personnel became concerned upon

noticing the large group of women traveling together. Subsequent questioning revealed glaring inconsistencies in their travel plans. The arrested duo failed to produce any employment letters or travel documents, prompting immediate action from law enforcement. The rescued women have since been reunited with their families. Investigations are ongoing, with GRP and RPF jointly probing the case under the human trafficking angle. Officials have not ruled out the possibility of a larger trafficking network operating across state lines.

Opposition slams Election Commission over Bihar SIR

New Delhi: The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar has sparked a political storm in Parliament, with Opposition parties staging coordinated protests across both Houses. The Election Commission's decision to launch the SIR ahead of the state's upcoming Assembly elections has drawn sharp criticism, with leaders alleging disenfranchisement and constitutional violations. The SIR, initiated on June 24 and launched the following day, mandates all 7.96 crore registered voters in Bihar to submit individual enumeration forms by July 25. While the EC claims the

exercise is aimed at updating and cleaning the rolls, Opposition leaders argue it disproportionately targets minority and marginalized communities. According to EC data, over 36 lakh voters were found "not at their addresses" during the process. On Tuesday, proceedings in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha were repeatedly disrupted as MPs from the Congress, RJD, DMK, SP, TMC, and other INDIA bloc parties trooped into the well of the House, shouting slogans and waving placards that read "SIR: Stealing Indian Rights" and "Vote Bandi is unconstitutional".



Ed Sheeran names Shillong his Indian favorite

Shillong: British pop sensation Ed Sheeran has named Shillong his favourite city in India, months after performing to a packed crowd of over 30,000 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium as part of his global "÷x (Mathematics)" tour. The Grammy-winning artist made the revelation during a candid segment titled Spin the Wheel with Ed Sheeran, hosted by content creator Shabaz Says. "She just felt very different," Sheeran said,

describing the city's unique vibe, culture, and energy. His affection for Shillong extended beyond the concert stage—27 scenes from his chart-topping music video Sapphire were filmed in and around the hill station. The video, which has garnered over 12 crore views on YouTube, features Sheeran sipping local tea, buying fruit from roadside vendors, relaxing in Mattilang Park, and playing football with local children.

India's first indigenous 50-kw geothermal plant to be built in Arunachal's Tawang

Tawang: India is set to establish its first fully indigenous 50-kilowatt geothermal power plant in the Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh, marking a significant milestone in the country's clean energy journey. The project is a joint initiative between the Centre for Earth Sciences and Himalayan Studies (CESHS) and the Shriram Institute for Industrial Research, formalized through



a memorandum of understanding signed earlier this week. The plant will operate at a low tempera-

ture of 68°C, showcasing advanced indigenous bipolar process technology tailored for high-altitude

conditions. CESHS geoscience chief Rupankar Rajkhowa confirmed that three sites—Mago, Thingbu, and Damteng—have been identified following extensive structural mapping and geochemical surveys. The facility is expected to serve over 5,000 residents and be completed within three years at an estimated cost of ₹10 crore, funded by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.

Mizoram sanctions ₹1.85Cr road repairs

Aizawl: In response to mounting public concern over deteriorating road infrastructure, the Mizoram government has approved ₹1.85 crore for urgent repairs on three critical road segments across the state. The decision was taken during a high-level review meeting chaired by Chief Minister Lalduhoma, with Public Works Department (PWD) Minister Vanlalhlana and senior officials from the PWD and Finance Department in attendance. Repair work is expected to commence immediately.

Nagaland alerts districts over Assam eviction

Kohima: The Government of Nagaland has issued a high-alert advisory to all Deputy Commissioners across the state in response to Assam's impending eviction drive in Uriamghat, a sensitive area along the interstate border in Golaghat district. The directive urges district administrations to intensify vigilance and prepare for a potential influx of displaced individuals from Assam, where authorities are targeting alleged illegal encroachments on forest land. The advisory, released Tuesday, emphasizes the need to safeguard Nagaland's demographic integrity and maintain law

and order. "In view of the eviction drive against illegal immigrants undertaken by the Government of Assam, there is apprehension that some displaced individuals may attempt to cross into our State," the statement read. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma recently claimed that over 3,000 bighas of forest land in Uriamghat had been illegally occupied over the past eight years, with drone footage revealing widespread deforestation and unauthorized plantations. The area has also reportedly become a hub for illicit trade and narcotics activity.

Garukhuti to get agriculture university, aqua park, says CM

Garukhati: In a significant move to boost agricultural education and aquaculture development, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday announced the establishment of an agriculture university and an integrated aqua park in Garukhuti, Darrang district. Speaking at a public meeting in Sipajhar, Sarma emphasized the need for a dedicated agricultural institution in the region. "From Baihata Chariali to Bihpuria, there is no agriculture university. We want to set one up in Garukhuti exclusively for indigenous students," he stated, highlighting the



initiative's focus on modern and organic farming practices. The proposed university will serve as a center for academic training, research,

and innovation in sustainable agriculture, aiming to empower youth from indigenous communities with technical knowledge and practical skills.

Assam MPs oath in Sanskrit, Assamese signals cultural pride, political intent

Silchar: As the Monsoon Session of Parliament commenced on Monday, Assam's newly elected Rajya Sabha members — veteran AGP leader Birendra Prasad Baishya and first-time BJP MP Kanad Purkayastha — took their oaths in Assamese and Sanskrit respectively, marking a moment of cultural symbolism and political messaging. Baishya, returning for his second term, chose Assamese to reaffirm his regional roots and long-standing public service. Purkayastha, succeeding Mission Ranjan Das, opted for classical Sanskrit — a move seen as ideologically resonant and reflective of traditional values. Both MPs pledged to uphold the



dignity and constitutional values of Parliament. Their unopposed election in June signaled broad political consensus within Assam's legislative corridors. Observers view their induction as a blend of continuity

and renewal — combining legislative experience with youthful energy, and regional identity with national ethos. The oath-taking ceremony also included three nominated members: his-

torian Meenakshi Jain, RSS veteran C Sadanandan Master, and former diplomat Harsh Vardhan Shringla. Earlier in the day, the Rajya Sabha paid tributes to victims of the Pahalgam terror attack and the Air India crash in Ahmedabad. Birthday wishes were extended to Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge and several MPs, while obituary references honored former members including C Perumal and Vijaykumar Rupani. The linguistic choices of Assam's MPs have sparked conversations around cultural assertion and political signaling, underscoring the evolving dynamics of representation in India's Upper House.

Nagaland CM surveys NH-29 landslide site

Kohima: Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio on Monday conducted an on-site inspection of the landslide-affected stretch of National Highway 29 between Kohima and Dimapur, following severe monsoon-triggered mudslides and subsidence that disrupted vehicular movement across the region. Accompanied by Deputy Chief Minister and National Highways in-charge T.R. Zeliang, Rio reviewed damage at the Old Kohima Municipal Council dumping site, where a significant portion of the road had caved in, leaving only a narrow passage for light vehicles. The inspection also covered affected segments of NH-2 in the southern Angami region. During interactions with officials

from the State Public Works Department, district administration, and local leaders from Jotsoma village, the Chief Minister directed a detailed survey for fresh road cutting and expansion. He emphasized the need for permanent infrastructure solutions, including robust drainage systems and larger hume pipes to manage debris and rainwater flow. Rio urged the administration to initiate dialogue with landowners regarding compensation for land acquisition to facilitate road safety upgrades. He also instructed the department to compile a comprehensive damage assessment across the state's highways and submit a unified proposal for post-monsoon restoration.

Godrej to host Global Healthy Workplace Summit 2025 in Mumbai; eyes boost in corporate wellness standards

Guwahati: Godrej Industries Group has partnered with The Global Centre for Healthy Workplaces (GCHW) and Arogya World to host the prestigious Global Healthy Workplace Summit & Awards 2025 on November 20–21 at Godrej One, Mumbai. This marks the first time the globally recognised summit will be held in India, bringing to-

gether international health experts, business leaders, and policymakers to set new benchmarks in workplace wellness. The two-day summit will focus on holistic employee well-being, covering key themes such as NCD prevention, mental health, AI integration, ESG alignment, and proven wellness strategies like Arogya World's MyThali, Tobac-

co-Free Workplace, and Life-style Coach programs. The event will also announce the winners of the 2025 Global Healthy Workplace Awards. Ajay Bhatt of Godrej emphasized the importance of creating future-ready, people-centric organizations. GCHW's Barry Crisp and Arogya World's Srabani Banerjee echoed the need for data-driven, responsible

workplace health models. In Guwahati, where a growing number of corporates and SMEs are embracing employee well-being as a business strategy, the summit is likely to act as a catalyst. Regional industries are expected to explore structured health programs to boost retention, performance, and align with global health-conscious practices.

State Boards Join NCVET as Dual awarding bodies



Guwahati: The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Department of School Education & Literacy (DoSE&L), and NCVET jointly hosted a National Workshop at Kaushal Bhawan, New Delhi. The event focused on onboarding State and UT Education Boards as Dual Category Awarding Bodies under NCVET, a step seen as pivotal for workforce readiness under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Over 150 participants, including senior officials from 24 State/UT Boards, attended the workshop. The Dual Category status empowers State Boards to both train and assess learners under NSQF standards, offering comprehensive skilling op-

portunities within school frameworks. MSDE Secretary Rajit Punhani said, "This is a moment to redefine our collective identity—to make every certificate stand for excellence." Key features of the workshop included live technical support, one-on-one guidance from NCVET consultants, and detailed walkthroughs of the application process. Goa, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, and Nagaland successfully completed submissions for NCVET recognition. The Goa Board shared its onboarding experience as a case study, while frameworks like NCrf and ABC were discussed as tools to scale grassroots skilling to NSQF Level 4 and beyond.

70% jobs will come from growth centres: WB

Mumbai: Indian cities are poised to become the primary engines of job creation, with an estimated 70% of all new jobs in the country expected to originate from urban "growth centers" by 2030. This projection comes from a new World Bank report titled "Towards Resilient and Prosperous Cities in India," released today in close collaboration with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. The report underscores the immense potential of India's urban areas.

Bandhan Bank posts 11% growth; deposits cross ₹1.55 lakh crore level

Agartala: Bandhan Bank has announced an 11% year-on-year growth in its total business, which reached ₹2.88 lakh crore in Q1 FY26. The bank's deposit base rose 16% to ₹1.55 lakh crore, with retail deposits contributing nearly 68%. The loan book also registered a 6% increase, standing at ₹1.34 lakh crore. Net profit for the quarter came in at ₹372 crore. The Capital Adequacy Ratio (CRAR) remained strong at 19.4%, and the CASA ratio stood at 27.1%. MD & CEO Partha Pratim Sengupta said, "Our Q1 performance re-



flects the underlying resilience of our business and the strength of our strategic direction. We remain focused on prudent risk management and long-term value creation." In Agartala, Bandhan Bank's growing presence is contributing to stronger financial inclusion, especially in underserved and semi-ur-

ban segments. Retail banking growth, improved digital adoption, and the bank's expanding network have helped boost credit availability for small traders and self-employed individuals in the region. With over 6,350 banking outlets and 3.14 crore customers across 35 states and UTs, Bandhan Bank continues its mission of inclusive banking. The bank currently employs over 72,000 people and remains focused on expanding its retail and digital footprint nationwide.

Manipal's scarless heart surgery inspires Northeast

Aizawl: Manipal Hospital, Broadway successfully performed a minimally invasive, scarless heart surgery on a 17-year-old girl from Aizawl, Mizoram. Laldinpui (name changed), who had been grappling with breathlessness and fatigue for years, was diagnosed with a 4 cm Atrial Septal Defect (ASD). The procedure, led by Dr. Sujoy Chatterjee, Senior Consultant – Cardiothoracic & Vascular Surgery, used a small 2.5-inch incision beneath the breast, ensuring faster recovery, minimal pain, and no visible scar. The surgery was made possible under a collaboration between the Mizoram Government and Manipal Hospitals, ensuring timely treatment for patients from remote areas like Aizawl. With limited access to advanced cardiac facilities locally, Aizawl's healthcare market has seen growing dependence on metro-based hospitals. The success of this case is expected



to boost awareness and confidence in medical travel for specialized care, particularly among younger patients conscious of post-operative cosmetic outcomes. Manipal Hospitals, with its expanding national footprint and focus on affordable, high-quality care, continues to attract patients from the Northeast, offering cutting-edge treatments like Minimally Invasive Cardiac Surgery (MICS) without compromising long-term health outcomes.

TVS Motor rolls out feature-packed 2025 Apache RTR 310; targets urban riders with BTO upgrades

Guwahati: TVS Motor Company has launched the 2025 TVS Apache RTR 310, packed with segment-first features, a refreshed design, and smart tech upgrades. The OBD2B-compliant motorcycle is built for performance and rider customization, with prices starting at ₹2,39,990 for the base variant and going up to ₹2,75,000 for BTO customizations. The new Apache RTR 310 features a Gen-2 cluster with multi-language UI, transparent clutch cover, updated sequential turn signals, and bold new graphics. The Built-To-Order (BTO) platform offers premium options like Keyless Ride, Drag Torque Control, and Cornering Drag Torque Control under the Dynamic Pro Kit. It delivers a peak output of 35.6 PS at 9,700 rpm and 28.7 Nm at 6,650 rpm. In Guwahati, the launch has sparked interest among urban professionals and young riders. With a growing de-



mand for high-performance and customizable bikes in Assam, local dealerships expect strong footfall. "The BTO option and aggressive styling will appeal to Guwahati's premium segment buyers," said a local dealer. The 2025 RTR 310 is now available in five variants, including three BTO versions, across key metros like Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru,

Chennai — and expanding to emerging hubs like Guwahati. Speaking about the launch, Vimal Sumbly, Head Business – Premium, TVS Motor Company, said, "The TVS Apache RTR 310 has been a trendsetter in the naked sports segment since its debut. With the 2025 edition, we're building on its bold legacy by integrating future-ready tech,

intuitive digital interfaces, standout styling and with unwavering commitment to rider safety. This refreshed freestyler reflects the new era of motorcycling, one that is connected, customizable, and committed to sustainability. We're proud to bring this upgraded experience to our community of TVS Apache riders who live to push boundaries every day."



Croma expands in Northeast, opens Guwahati stores, offers 15% off

Guwahati: Croma, the Tata Group's trusted omni-channel electronics retailer, has expanded its footprint in Assam with the launch of two new stores in Guwahati—at VIP Road and Lohra. This marks a strategic move in the brand's push to strengthen its presence in key regional markets across the Northeast.

With over 560 stores in 200+ cities, Croma is a leader in large-format electronics retail. The new VIP Road store spans 7,700 sq ft across three floors at Chandan Nagar, positioned at the intersection of VIP Road, GS Road, and Panjabari Road. The Lohra store, covering 5,000 sq ft,



is situated on a busy transit corridor linking Beltola and Lohra, near prominent educational institutions. As part of its launch campaign, Croma is offering flat 15% off on select electronics from July 20 to August 3, followed by 12% off from August 4 to 19.

Guwahati, known for its tech-savvy youth and ex-

panding middle class, is witnessing rising demand for smart devices and premium appliances. Croma's entry is expected to offer a boost to consumer choice and competition, especially in fast-growing urban zones like VIP Road and Lohra. Both outlets operate daily from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Sanskriti University hosts global convocation, celebrating international student diversity

Guwahati: Sanskriti University, Mathura, organized a special convocation exclusively for its international students. Degrees were conferred on 35 graduates from Namibia, Myanmar, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Ghana, and Sudan across key disciplines such as Engineering, Management, Science, and Nursing. On the occasion, Dr. Renu Gupta, Dean (Academics), said, "Today is a moment of immense pride not just for our international students but also for Sanskriti University. The dedication and hard work shown by these students from different countries are truly inspiring. Wherever they go, they will carry forward the name and reputation



of our university." Chancellor Dr. Sachin Gupta remarked, "At Sanskriti University, our commitment has always been to deliver quality education aligned with global standards. Our international students stand as a living testimony to this vision. We are confident they will make significant contributions to their societies and nations. The university considers them cultural and academic ambassadors."

The event, attended by senior officials and facul-

ty members, emphasized the university's strategy of fostering global collaboration and cultural exchange. With a growing international student base, Sanskriti University is positioning itself as a hub for transnational education. In Guwahati, education consultants noted a rising interest in overseas study opportunities that are affordable and reputable. Sanskriti University's focus on internationalization, coupled with strong industry-oriented training, is being viewed as an attractive alternative by students from Assam seeking global exposure without leaving the country, aligning with the region's evolving academic aspirations.

Nissan India launches flood relief program with free towing, repair discounts and insurance support

Guwahati: Nissan Motor India has announced a comprehensive flood support initiative for customers whose vehicles have been affected by recent floods across multiple regions. The program underscores the company's strong customer-first approach and aims to minimize disruption for vehicle owners through a range of value-added ser-

vices. The relief package includes a dedicated flood helpdesk (1800 209 3456), free towing of affected vehicles to the nearest authorized service center, extended workshop hours, and full assistance with insurance claims, including excess clause fee support. Customers will also receive a 10% discount on engine oil and oil filter replace-

ments, and an additional 10% off on floor carpet replacements. A complete vehicle health check-up is also being offered to ensure continued safety and performance. "A car is more than just a machine — it connects people to their world. Our initiative is about reassurance and support in difficult times," said Saurabh

Vatsa, Managing Director, Nissan Motor India. In Guwahati, where floods have significantly impacted vehicle owners, local Nissan dealerships have ramped up operations. With extended service hours and quicker claim processing, the program is expected to ease customer distress and boost service center footfall in the region.

Tata Group, Google, Infosys: India's top employer brands



New Delhi: The Randstad Employer Brand Research (REBR) 2025 report, released today, has identified the Tata Group, Google India, and Infosys as the top three most attractive employer brands in India. This comprehensive study highlights a significant shift in the Indian workforce's priorities, with a growing emphasis on purpose-driven employment, work-life balance, equity, and attractive compensation packages. The REBR 2025 report, based on insights from over 170,000 respondents across 34

global markets, including more than 3,500 in India, underscores that today's talent seeks more than just a paycheck. They are actively looking for inclusive, future-focused workplaces that foster both personal and professional growth. Tata Group emerged as the most attractive employer brand, scoring exceptionally high on financial health, career progression opportunities, and overall reputation. These three factors were identified as the top Employee Value Proposition (EVP) drivers for the conglomerate.

Skill India Mission drives economic growth, empowers 6 crore workforce

Guwahati: India's Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Minister of State (I/C), Jayant Chaudhary, today launched a week-long commemoration of the Skill India Mission's 10th anniversary, coinciding with World Youth Skills Day. The initiative has significantly boosted India's human capital, empowering over 6 crore individuals with market-ready skills. Chaudhary termed the decade 'Kaushal ka Dashak,' emphasizing the mission's transformative

impact on India's workforce, both domestically and internationally. He highlighted the strategic consolidation of previously fragmented skilling efforts into a unified "whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach," fostering efficiency and scale. Key achievements include the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), which has upskilled over 1.64 crore youth, alongside substantial reforms across more than 14,500 Industrial Training

Institutes (ITIs). The Minister announced the impending National Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Policy, poised to revolutionize skilling, upskilling, and reskilling frameworks. He further detailed the Cabinet's approval of a ₹60,000 crore ITI Revamp Scheme, including ₹10,000 crore in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) contributions, underscoring a shift towards industry-driven curriculum and certification. Strategic reforms also encompass

the de-affiliation of 4.5 lakh vacant ITI seats and a proposed 36% increase in stipend support under the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS). A new pilot scheme for the North Eastern Region will provide an additional ₹1,500 per month for apprentices. The week-long celebrations will conclude with the 'Bharat SkillNxt 2025' event on July 22, featuring the launch of new initiatives, notably AI skilling programs for schoolchildren.

India's UPI now leads global fast payments, surpassing Visa

New Delhi: India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has officially established itself as the global leader in fast payments, outperforming tradition-

al payment giants like Visa in daily transaction volumes. This significant milestone was highlighted in a recent note by the International Monetary

Fund (IMF) titled "Growing Retail Digital Payments: The Value of Interoperability." The report indicates that UPI, a real-time payment system launched in

2016 by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), has revolutionized India's payment ecosystem and is now setting a global benchmark for dig-

ital public infrastructure. Transaction Volume Leadership: In June 2025, UPI recorded an astounding 18.39 billion transactions worth over ₹24.03 lakh

crore (approximately \$288 billion USD), demonstrating a remarkable 32% year-on-year growth. Crucially, UPI now handles over 640 million transactions daily.



Bandhan Life unveils iIncome Wealth: lifetime cover with instant income for stability

Imphal: Bandhan Life Insurance, the life insurance arm of Bandhan Group, has introduced iIncome Wealth, a new participating life insurance plan that offers instant income within 5 to 7 working days of premium payment and life cover up to 100 years. The plan combines guaranteed income, potential cash bonuses, and a unique 'Secure Policy Benefit' ensuring continued income, lump sum payout, and waiver of future premiums in case of the policyholder's death. With eligibility starting as early as three months of age, iIn-

come Wealth helps families plan for future goals like education, marriage, and home ownership. Women policyholders receive an additional 1.5% income, reinforcing Bandhan Life's focus on financial inclusion. Customers can choose between flexible premium payment terms (5 to 12 years), coverage durations, and payout options, including loan facilities up to 80% of the surrender value.

In Imphal, the product has generated interest among middle-income families and working professionals. Financial plan-

ners believe that its early income feature and long-term security fill a crucial gap in the region where income stability is often challenged by job uncertainty and limited financial instruments.

Satishwar B., MD & CEO, Bandhan Life Insurance, emphasized the significance of this innovation:

"At Bandhan Life, we are committed to solving real-life financial challenges. A vast majority of Indians live from paycheque to paycheque, often without a safety net. For many, even managing basic monthly

expenses can lead to borrowing. A job loss or medical emergency can throw families into financial turmoil. iIncome Wealth is designed to address this need head-on. Bandhan Life iIncome Wealth is more than just a policy; it's a financial solution that not only provides life cover that lasts a lifetime but also offers an immediate supplementary income. Whether used for daily expenses or savings for bigger dreams, this supplementary income empowers our customers to live with dignity and confidence."

Corporate tax foregone: Rs 99K cr in FY24

New Delhi: The Indian government is estimated to have forgone a substantial ₹99,000 crore (approximately \$11.88 billion USD) in corporate tax revenue during the 2023-24 fiscal year. This figure, provided by Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary, is attributed to various tax incentives and deductions extended to corporate entities. In a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday, Minister Chaudhary detailed the estimated revenue foregone due to these corporate tax benefits. The amount of ₹98,999 crore for FY2023-24 represents a continued trend of significant revenue foregone, following ₹88,109 crore in FY2022-23 and ₹96,892 crore in FY2021-22. Prior to this, the figures were ₹75,218 crore in FY2020-21 and a relatively lower ₹8,043 crore in FY2019-20, reflecting the impact of major tax rate reductions implemented in September 2019. The reduction in corporate tax rates has been a strategic policy of the government since 2016, aimed at stimulating economic growth, boosting investment, and fostering job creation.

Tata Motors unveils ₹3.99L Ace Pro, drawing keen demand from emerging market transport sectors

Mumbai: Tata Motors has introduced the Tata Ace Pro, India's most affordable four-wheel mini-truck, with a base price of ₹3.99 lakh. Targeted at small businesses and first-time transport entrepreneurs, the Ace Pro comes in Petrol, Bi-Fuel (CNG + Petrol), and Electric variants, offering tailored mobility solutions across rural and urban markets. Engineered for profitability and stability, the Ace Pro features a best-in-class 750 kg payload, 6.5-ft deck, and modular design suitable for container, reefer, and municipal applications. Backed by Tata's Fleet Edge connectivity platform and a 2,500+ service network, it promises high uptime and operational efficiency. Financing partnerships with leading banks and NBFCs aim to simplify ownership with flexible EMIs and fast approvals. Launching the Ace Pro, Girish Wagh, Executive Director, Tata Motors, said, "The launch of



Tata Ace had revolutionised cargo mobility in India. Over the past two decades, it has successfully empowered more than 25 lakh entrepreneurs to become a symbol of progress and possibility. With the all-new Tata Ace Pro, we are building on this legacy with renewed purpose for a new generation of dreamers. Engineered for stability, safety, and profitability, the Ace Pro unlocks greater earning potential to

fulfil the ambitions of aspiring entrepreneurs ready to take charge of their future." Speaking about the Tata Ace Pro, Pinaki Halder, Vice President & Business Head - SCVPU, Tata Motors Commercial Vehicles, said, "The purposeful Tata Ace Pro has been developed with deep customer insights and engineered to meet a diverse range of applications. It has undergone rigorous testing across various terrains and

weather conditions, covering lakhs of kilometres. With its multi-fuel options, easy affordability and enhanced drivability, the Tata Ace Pro delivers superior value across diverse use cases. It's a strategic addition to our portfolio that strengthens Tata Motors' commitment to enabling entrepreneurs and small businesses with dependable, future-ready mobility solutions. The North East, with its mixed terrain, growing commerce and expanding towns, offers strong potential for the Tata Ace Pro range. In Assam, districts like Dibrugarh, Nagaon and Barpeta support tea, agri-trade and hardware logistics where the mini-truck's high payload capacity, larger deck, tight turning radius and four-wheel stability make it ideal for daily rural hauls and first-time users. Around Guwahati, the Bi-Fuel variant balances operating cost across urban FMCG and retail networks,

while in Jorhat, Cachar and Morigaon, the EV offers a quiet, zero-emission option for fixed-route deliveries like LPG and e-commerce. Tripura's agri-linked towns like Unakoti and Sepahijala benefit from the Ace Pro's flexible, low-maintenance utility in fresh produce movement, while Agartala and Dharmanagar see growing relevance for the EV variant in organised retail and courier runs. In the hills of Meghalaya and Mizoram, including Aizawl and Champhai, the Petrol variant's efficient drivetrain and road-holding capability support mobility for FMCG and food distributors. In Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur, like Itanagar and Imphal, also show growing demand for compact mini-truck. With Star Guru support and a strong service design the Tata Ace Pro enables self-employment and business growth across the region's diverse logistics landscape."

Axis Bank seeks RBI nod for Max Life stake



Mumbai: Axis Bank may approach the Reserve Bank of India for approval to buy an additional 10 per cent stake in Axis Max Life, says a CNBC-TV18 report. The additional stake purchase by Axis Bank could fetch as much as Rs 5,000 for Axis Max Life.

The report says that if Axis Bank's stake purchase plans go through, it would become the promoter of Axis Max Life. The transaction would be carried out through preferential issue. The report adds that Axis Bank is likely to approach the central bank after the resolution of its ongoing case with Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). At the moment, SEBI is conducting an investigation into Axis Bank's initial purchase of 20 per cent stake in Axis Max Life. Axis Bank is under SEBI scrutiny for alleged inadequate disclosure and unfair price advantage in Axis Max Life stake purchase deal. Axis Bank's profit declined by 3.97 per cent in the first quarter of FY26. In the aftermath of the quarterly results, declared on July 17, the bank's share has slipped over 5% in last 5 days.

Paytm Q1 FY26: Profit at Rs 122.5 crore, strong turnaround from previous loss

New Delhi: Paytm, owned by One 97 Communications, has reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 122.5 crore for the first quarter of FY26 (April-June 2025). This marks a sharp turnaround from a loss of Rs 840.1 crore in the same period last year. The company posted a revenue of Rs 1917.5 crore, up 27.7 per cent from the same quarter previous year at Rs 1501.6 crore.

Indian fintech company, Paytm which had faced a significant loss of Rs 840.1 crore Q1FY25 and Rs 544.6 crore in Q4FY25 has seen



a strong turnaround. Its total consolidated income rose to Rs 2158.9 crore, compared to Rs

1639.1 crore in Q1 FY25. EBITDA also turned profitable at Rs 72 Cr (margin of 4 per cent).

Paytm's Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) increased 27 per cent year-on-year to Rs 5.4 lakh crore. Subscription-based merchant devices hit a record 1.30 crore as of June 2025, an increase of 21 lakh from the previous year. Monthly Transacting Users (MTU) reached 7.4 crore. Revenue from the distribution of financial services doubled to Rs 561 crore, backed by an increase in merchant loans and improved collection performance.



Yasmin Karachiwala, Soha Ali Khan promote holistic parenting as market trend rises

Guwahati: Celebrity fitness trainer Yasmin Karachiwala and actress Soha Ali Khan are spotlighting a growing consumer shift towards holistic wellness parenting in India. Speaking at a recent engagement, the duo emphasized the increasing importance of integrating fitness, nutrition, and family rituals into daily life. Their joint message was clear: "Wellness is not an event; it's a way of life."

This philosophy is reflected in their personal parenting styles. Soha Ali Khan focuses on playful, daily movement with her daughter, Inaaya. "I make sure Inaaya, and I have some form of movement every day—whether it's a little yoga, dancing in the living room, or just stretching together before bed," she said. She believes that even a few minutes of fun physical activity can strengthen family bonds and promote overall well-being. "It doesn't have to be planned. Even five minutes of moving together makes a difference," she added.

Yasmin Karachiwala, a leading name in India's fitness industry, echoed this approach. "You don't have to do tough workouts. Just keep your body moving. That's enough," she stated. Emphasizing the value of consistency over intensity,



she added, "As they get older, it's easy to become less active, so I always remind them that movement is non-negotiable—it's key to feeling good and staying strong."

In terms of nutrition, both mothers advocate balanced meals over restrictive diets. Soha creates fun, nutrient-rich recipes like Almond Banana Smoothies and Spiced

Almond Banana Jaggery Cake, often preparing them with her daughter to build a healthy relationship with food. "Involving Inaaya in meal preparation fosters a positive relationship with food," she said. Yasmin, meanwhile, opts for wholesome staples like Mediterranean Chicken Bowls and vegan flourless brownies made from almond milk, chia seeds, and peanut

butter. "My sons and I share a sweet tooth, but instead of indulging in traditional sugary treats, we opt for healthier alternatives that satisfy cravings without compromising on nutrition," she noted.

The ripple effects of such influential wellness messaging are being felt in regional areas as well. In Guwahati, wellness and fitness trends are seeing accelerated growth. Retailers in the city report a marked increase in demand for health foods, including almonds, organic snacks, and children's fitness products. Wellness clubs and diet-focused cafes are springing up in response to urban families actively seeking lifestyle solutions similar to those adopted by celebrities. Local nutrition consultants say parents are increasingly embracing structured routines and mindful food choices for their children, indicating a wider shift in market behavior. Daily rituals also play a key role in sustaining this wellness-driven lifestyle. While Soha ensures Inaaya carries a small tiffin of almonds to school every day, Yasmin reinforces the importance of sleep and movement. "Good sleep and consistent movement are the foundation for strength and lasting health at any age," Yasmin said.

IndusInd Bank plans Rs 30,000 crore capital raise

Mumbai: IndusInd Bank on Wednesday announced a capital raise of Rs 30,000 crore and realignment of board to include two members from the promoters—the Hinduja Group. This comes roughly four months after the bank came under the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) glare for unreported forex derivatives losses of around Rs 2,000 crore. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) had also raised the issue of insider trading by its former CEO, deputy CEO and three others.

The Rs 30,000-crore fundraise will include Rs 20,000 crore via debt securities through private placement in Indian or foreign currencies, and an additional Rs 10,000 crore in equity capital via instruments like American Depository Receipts (ADRs), Global Depository Receipts



(GDRs), or qualified institutional placements (QIP), the bank said in an exchange notification. The fundraising plans are subject to shareholder and regulatory approvals. The annual general meeting of the bank is on scheduled on August 29, while it will report its first-quarter results on July 28. The governance realignment with the promoters — IndusInd International Holdings and IndusInd Limited — will have two non-executive, non-independent directors.

This proposal, following the change in amendments to its Article of Association, has received an approval from the RBI, the bank said.

Yes Bank taps SMBC for ratings, margins

Mumbai: Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation's acquisition of a 20% stake in Yes Bank, the largest cross-border investment in India's banking sector, marks the final chapter in the bank's reconstruction, managing director and CEO Prashant Kumar tells Kshipra Petkar in an interview. Excerpts: I think we were given the responsibility to completely come out from the reconstruction part, bring the bank back to normal. I think the only thing which was left from this perspective was having a long-term strategic investor. With SMBC coming, that concern has been addressed. I think this is something which was immediately needed.

The bank was having A+. Already, we got one rating upgrade – we are AA-. The moment we move from AA- to just one rating upgrade, AA, funding cost changes dramatically. A large number of corporates and government departments follow the policy of doing banking with a bank which has to have a rating of AA. It will open the door for us for multiple things — deposit, loan and fee income. It



only provides lending services, and does not have transaction banking and digital solutions. With SMBC being the largest equity holder, we are hopeful that doors would be open for us to provide these services to those corporates, resulting in handsome fee income.

We want to achieve 1% ROA. We are working towards it by having an appropriate loan growth and deposit growth. In the first quarter, we already had 0.8%. Q1 numbers are not lowering our confidence of achieving that growth number in future. Deposit growth is not an issue. Deposit growth becomes a struggle where you are not able to grow your retail. Our retail growth is 20%. You will get corporate deposit if you are willing to pay a price. We are reducing our rate of interest continuously.

ED raids Ambani, Yes Bank properties

Mumbai: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) is raiding properties linked to Anil Ambani and Yes Bank as part of a money laundering investigation linked to an alleged bank loan fraud of Rs 3,000 crore, reports ANI. As per information, ED has launched a major investigation into suspected money laundering involving companies under the Reliance Anil Ambani Group (RAAGA), following FIRs registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The ED today conducted a massive search operation.

Bajaj Housing Finance Q1 profit jumps on strong credit growth

Pune: Bajaj Housing Finance reported a jump in first-quarter profit on Wednesday, bolstered by strong credit growth. The country's biggest home loan financier by market value reported a profit of 5.83 billion rupees (\$67.50 million) for the three months ending June 30, up 21% from a year ago. Demand for homes in India, especially premium residences, has remained strong over the last few quarters, with these forming a dominant part of Bajaj Housing Finance's assets. Residential real estate prices are set to rise steadily over the next few years, driven by demand for luxury properties



from cash-rich individuals, according to a Reuters poll of housing experts. Earlier this week, rival PNB Housing Finance reported a 23% rise in first-quarter profit, on robust demand for home loans. Bajaj Housing's loan assets and assets under management climbed 24% year-on-year

to 1.06 trillion rupees and 1.20 trillion rupees, respectively. The company reported a lower AUM growth during the quarter, driven by hypercompetitive intensity and slight moderation in real estate demand. Further, the company reported a well-diversified portfolio composition.



BCCI to Come Under Purview of National Sports Governance Bill

New Delhi: In a landmark move set to reshape the landscape of sports administration in India, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) will be brought under the ambit of the National Sports Governance Bill. This development, confirmed by sources within the Sports Ministry on Tuesday, signifies a major step towards institutionalizing greater transparency, accountability, and athlete welfare across all national sports federations. The Bill is expected to be introduced in Parliament on Wednesday during the ongoing Monsoon Session. Historically, the BCCI, a self-funded and influential body, has largely operated out-



side the direct regulatory framework that governs other National Sports Federations (NSFs) in India. However, with cricket's inclusion in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games, the need for all sports bodies to comply with broader national and international governance standards has become paramount.

A Sports Ministry source stated, "Like all National Federations, the BCCI will have to comply with the law of the land once this Bill becomes an Act." This move will effectively classify the BCCI as a National Sports Federation, bringing it under key government guidelines and athlete-first policies.

Siraj confirms Bumrah for fourth Test

Manchester: In a significant boost for the Indian cricket team ahead of the crucial fourth Test against England at Old Trafford, fast bowler Mohammed Siraj has confirmed that pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah will be available for selection. This confirmation ends speculation surrounding Bumrah's participation, particularly in light of India's current 2-1 deficit in the five-match series. Bumrah's workload management has been a key discussion point throughout the tour, with the team management reportedly planning for him to feature in three of the five Tests. He played in the first and third Tests, taking 12 wickets, including two five-wicket hauls. His ab-

sence from the second Test, which India won, was part of this strategy. With the series on the line and India needing to win or draw the remaining two matches to clinch the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy, Bumrah's return is a vital addition to the bowling attack. Speaking to the media in Manchester, Mohammed Siraj stated, "Jassi bhai will play as far as I know." Siraj, who has been India's leading wicket-taker in the series with 13 scalps, emphasized the importance of bowling in the right areas given England's patient batting approach. The confirmation of Bumrah's availability comes amidst injury concerns within the Indian camp.

Hameed grateful for Kohli's gesture

Manchester: England batter Haseeb Hameed has publicly expressed his profound gratitude for the consistent and unwavering support he has received from Indian cricketing icon Virat Kohli, particularly during the challenging periods of his career. Hameed highlighted Kohli's humility and willingness to offer guidance, emphasizing the significant impact it has had on his journey as a player and person. The connection between the two cricketers dates back to India's tour of England in 2016, when Hameed, then a 19-year-old making his Test debut.

Asian Games silver medallist long jumper Ancy Sojan qualify for finals in WUG

Berlin: Asian Games silver medallist Ancy Sojan has secured her spot in the women's long jump final at the World University Games in Berlin. The Indian athlete demonstrated resilience, delivering a crucial final attempt to advance to the medal round after a challenging start to her qualification campaign on Monday. The 24-year-old Sojan, who also claimed a silver medal at the Asian Championships in South Korea in May, encountered a foul on her first attempt in Group A of the qualification round. Her second jump measured 5.97m, leaving her in a precarious seventh position. However, under pressure, Sojan produced a strong final leap of 6.20m, which propelled her to fourth place within her group and tenth overall, comfortably securing her berth in the final. China's Xiong Shiqi led the



Group A qualifications with a jump of 6.41m, followed by Australia's Samantha Dale (6.38m) and Germany's Samira Attermeyer (6.22m). Ancy Sojan boasts a season's best of 6.54m and a personal best of 6.71m. She will be looking to get closer to these marks in the final to contend for a podium finish against a competitive field. In other events featuring Indian athletes on the opening day of athletics competition: Ruchit Pratapbhai Mori advanced to the semifinals of the men's 400m hurdles,

finishing third in his heat with a time of 50.58 seconds. Tennis player Vaishnavi Adkar progressed to the women's singles quarterfinals after defeating Angella Okutoyi of Kenya 6-3, 6-4 in their Round of 16 match. In table tennis, the women's doubles pair of Murad A and Vaghela D, and the men's doubles duo of Kotecha T and Wani S secured victories in their respective Round of 64 matches. However, Ayaz Murad and Devarsh Vaghela lost their singles group matches. The Indian wom-

en's beach volleyball team of Kanimozhi and Gowshika lost to Latvia in a Pool C match. In fencing, both the women's foil team and the men's Epee team suffered defeats against Poland in their respective elimination rounds. In Taekwondo, Rishita Dang was the lone Indian winner, defeating Celine Askarjian of Lebanon 2-0. India also faced a significant loss to Latvia in the men's preliminary Group B basketball match with a score of 55-111. India's contingent will be aiming for a strong performance at the World University Games, building on their best-ever showing in the last edition, where they secured 26 medals (11 gold, 5 silver, and 10 bronze) to finish seventh in the overall medal tally. Sojan's qualification for the long jump final provides an early positive sign for the Indian athletics team.

Newbie Kamboj hogs the limelight at 'nets'

Manchester: Haryana pacer Anshul Kamboj, the latest addition to India's Test squad in England, garnered significant attention during the team's practice session at Old Trafford on Monday, strongly indicating a potential Test debut in the upcoming fourth match against England. The 24-year-old's impressive showing at the nets has put him firmly in contention amidst India's growing injury concerns in the fast bowling department. Kamboj, who joined the squad over the weekend as cover for the injured Arshdeep Singh and with Akash Deep battling a groin niggle, bowled extensively and with notable control. He delivered long spells with the new ball, challenging established batters such as KL Rahul, Shubman Gill, and Yashasvi Jaiswal with his consistent lines



and lengths. His rhythm and ability to hit the "good areas" consistently drew praise and attention from the team management, including head coach Gautam Gambhir and chairman of the men's senior selection committee, Ajit Agarkar, with whom he engaged in multiple conversations. The right-arm medium-pacer also sought advice from experienced quicks like Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj, demonstrating his eagerness to learn and adapt to the demands of Test cricket. His seamless integration into the practice routine, despite being a recent call-up, was a highlight of the session.

Six Indian shuttlers barred from WUG due to administrative lapse

Rhine-Ruhr: A significant controversy has engulfed the Indian badminton contingent at the ongoing World University Games in Rhine-Ruhr, Germany, after six of the twelve selected players were reportedly barred from participating in the mixed team event due to an alleged admin-

istrative lapse by Indian officials. This oversight has sparked outrage among the affected athletes, who are terming it "career sabotage" and demanding accountability.

The issue arose during the managers' meeting on July 16, where officials from the Association of



Indian Universities (AIU), the nodal body for university-level sports in India, reportedly failed to correctly submit the names of all twelve players. As a result, only six players were officially entered for the mixed team competition, despite a full 12-member squad being selected and hav-

ing traveled to Germany. The six players who were ultimately allowed to compete were Saneeth Dayanand, Sathish Kumar Karunakaran, Devika Sihag, Tasnim Mir, Varshini Viswanath Sri, and Vaishnavi Khadkekar. badminton medal at the World University Games.